

Epistle

*A welcoming community
sharing Christ's love
in service
through relationships.
Welcome. Share. Serve.*

February 2020

REFLECTIONS FROM PASTOR AMY JO

YEAR OF RELATIONSHIP 2020 RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD: FACETS OF GOD

As we continue with our Year of Relationship 2020, we are engaging our relationship with God through a sermon series on the many images of God. The images that we hold of God shape the ways that we relate to God. While we can never fully know or understand God, the many and varied images that are used in the Bible to describe God each give us a different facet of the full nature of God. During worship some of the people of Saint Paul's UMC will be sharing a few words about what each image means to them, or how that image shapes the way they relate to God.

We began this sermon series with a worship service focusing on God as our Creator and how we relate to God with awe and wonder. These images fill our hymnal, including the famous second verse of How Great Thou Art:

THE MULTIFACETED IMAGES OF G D A YEAR OF RELATIONSHIPS

*When through the woods
And forest glades I wander
And hear the birds
Sing sweetly in the trees
When I look down
From lofty mountain grandeur
And hear the brook
And feel the gentle breeze
Then sings my soul
My Savior God to thee
How great thou art!*

At that first worship service, Barb Helmken shared pictures and memories of how visiting the North Shore is inspirational for her. We will continue, as we consider how we relate to God as: Holy Mystery, Friend, Shepherd, King, Wisdom, Guide, Father, and Advocate.

No image is complete in itself, but each one helps us to understand a different aspect of the nature of God.

During February, as the world is celebrating Valentine's Day, it might also be a good time to consider the image of God in I John: "God is love." The Minnesota Annual Conference is suggesting a Lenten book study of *Reckless Love: Jesus' Call to Love our Neighbor* by Tom Berlin. The book opens with the idea that if we want to really love God, then we should begin by loving the people that we meet each day. This helps us to understand the way in which our relationships are connected: Loving God helps us to better love our neighbor, and loving our neighbor helps us to better love God. May this Valentine's Day be full of God's reckless love in your life!

2020 CENTRAL LEADERSHIP TEAM

Chairperson:	Leslie Watkins
Operations:	Brent Cuttell
Foundation:	Shirley Holmay
Finance:	Kae Jewell
Outreach:	Bev Momsen
Membership Enrichment:	Jo Baker and Charles Duddingston
Lay Member to Annual Conference:	Carol Egan
Young Adult Representative:	Katie Hamilton
Clergy and Ministry Staff:	Rev. Amy Jo Bur, Lani Thompson, Lane Skoglund-Anderson, Diane Pelinka



Jo Baker



Pastor Amy Jo Bur



Brent Cuttell



Charles Duddingston



Carol Egan



Katie Hamilton



Shirley Holmay



Kae Jewell



Bev Momsen



Diane Pelinka



Lane Skoglund-Anderson



Lani Thompson



Leslie Watkins

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Helping families
nurture lifelong
disciples of Christ



CHRISTMAS GAME NIGHT

On Saturday December 21st we hosted a special game night for our children and youth of all ages to give parents a kid-free time to do last minute shopping, wrapping, cooking, or even just resting during the busy Christmas season. We spent hours playing all kinds of exciting games in the church while getting some of the winter energy out and ended the evening with a pizza dinner. We had a great turn-out and everyone had a fantastic time!



VALENTINES BABYSITTING NIGHT FEBRUARY 14th

On Friday February 14th we will be having a special babysitting night for children so parents can enjoy a relaxing Valentines date night together. All children and youth are welcome to join us at the church from 5:00 pm-9:00 pm for a fantastic evening of fun, games and fellowship! We will be making Valentines, playing all kinds of exciting Valentine themed games, and have a Valentines movie to end the night. Dinner and snacks provided. Your children and youth will not want to miss it! Friends are welcome to join. Only \$15 per child and all profits will go towards UMW Camp Scholarship Fund. Please RSVP to Lani Thompson at lani.thompson@stpaulsmn.org to reserve your spot. Youth, 6th grade and older, are encouraged to join us to help out at no cost.

SCOUT SUNDAY FEBRUARY 9th

February 9th is both Kidz 2gether worship as well as Scout Sunday, and we will be finding ways to get all of our scouts involved in worship. If you have a child who is a scout, please contact Lani Thompson at lani.thompson@stpaulsmn.org to see how they can be involved and/or acknowledged during this special Sunday service.

FAT TUESDAY FEBRUARY 25th

On February 25th, children and youth 4th-12th grade, are invited to a special night of learning and fun! We will be getting together from 6:00-7:30 pm to learn all about what Shrove Tuesday/Fat Tuesday, Ash Wednesday, and Lent are and why we celebrate them. We will be meeting in the fellowship hall to start off with a pancake feast, and end with a couple games. There is no cost, but all are welcome to bring their favorite pancake toppings to share with the group!

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Helping families
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CONFIRMATION 2019-20

In January our lesson was on *Seasons of Faith*, we discussed how, as one grows, they pass through different phases of faith Development—how it is different for every person, and how we can stay in a particular phase of faith development for a long time or even revert back to a previous stage, but one is not better than the other. It is all about how we are connecting with God and responding to His grace.

♦ Experienced Faith:

Common in younger years or the introduction into a faith life, and involves the imitation of actions. For example: a child may pray the Lord's Prayer without grasping the full meaning of all the words, but since it is something that everyone else is doing they learn how to say it.

♦ Affiliative Faith:

The dominant characteristic is belonging to a group. The individual identifies with a faith community where he or she feels a sense of belonging, and in which his or her beliefs and actions are rooted. Many confirmands, especially at the start of their confirmation journey are in this stage.

♦ Searching Faith:

Connected with the formation of identity. A stage where we begin an internal and external dialog of what we believe and why. This stage of faith adds a cognitive dimension to a person's faith journey, and a person going

through the stage of searching faith begins to integrate head and heart.

♦ Owned Faith:

It can come about only as a result of growing through Searching Faith. This is a stage of strong, vital faith that one lives by, stands by, and expresses to others. Growing into this stage does not mean one stops having or asking questions, but instead, that one has learned to embrace questions as a means to further grow and deepen one's spiritual connection with God and others.

Since we are nearing the end of Confirmation classes for this group, we also discussed what would help them continue to grow and blossom spiritually post confirmation. The students made lists of what would help them, and what would hinder their growth, and then wrote letters to their future selves that will be mailed to them post confirmation to remind them of what we talked about.

Our next confirmation class is February 12th and we will be discussing *History of the Church - both the history of the United Methodist Church as well as history of St. Paul's UMC.*

EVENTS

What's
happening and
when



**ASH WEDNESDAY
SERVICE
FEBRUARY 26th
12:30—1:00 pm**

Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent. It marks the beginning of a period of reflection and penance. In the Bible, sprinkling oneself with ashes was traditionally a sign of one's sorrow for having committed sins. In the Christian tradition, Ash Wednesday also marked the beginning of preparation for the understanding of the death and resurrection of Christ. The particular symbolism of ashes for this day comes from a practice in the Roman Catholic churches in which the ashes from the palms used in the preceding year's Palm Sunday celebration are blessed. With these ashes, the priest on the first day of Lent marks a cross on the forehead of each worshiper. This practice has become a part of Ash Wednesday services in many United Methodist churches. Please join us at 12:30 pm for this time of making a new start.

*"Patient and Forgiving One,
help us to pray not for show
or accolades,
but constantly listening for your
still, small voice.
Help us to fast not for attention,
but as one way of
emptying ourselves
that you might feed us.*

*We have broken trusts;
we have neglected the fragile;
and we have not loved our
neighbors as ourselves.
This day we turn back to you.
We repent of pain we have inflicted
and prejudice with which
we have judged.
We repent of being quick to speak
and slow to understand.
Take our torn and contrite hearts,
O God,
and mend them with your mercy.
Free us from fear,
from poor choices
and from feelings of
unworthiness or entitlement.
Free us to love like Christ Jesus
in whose name we pray. Amen."*

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REACHING OUT

Living our faith
and connecting
with our
neighbors



MN FOODSHARE MARCH CAMPAIGN

The Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign is almost here! This annual food and fund drive helps Neighbors stock the shelves for the busy summer months ahead, plus the amount they raise plays a role in how much FoodShare funding they receive later in the year – so a donation now goes even further. If questions, contact Jude Rikala 651-454-6885.

This is the largest grassroots food and fund drive in the state. Your donations help stock nearly 300 food shelves statewide. Last year the March campaign brought in \$8 million and 5.1 million pounds of food shelf items. Items needed include:

- ◆ **Protein items**- canned meat/fish, beans, nut butters
- ◆ **Rice**: white, wild, brown and Hamburger Helper, all types
- ◆ **Gluten-free flour and flour blends**
- ◆ **Personal care items**: shampoo/soap, toothpaste, diapers, toilet paper
- ◆ **Household supplies**: laundry and dish detergent, paper towels
- ◆ **Breakfast foods**: pancake mix and syrup



NEIGHBORS CLOSET IS LOW ON WINTER COATS

If you have good winter coats that you are not wearing, Neighbors Clothes Closet needs them. You may bring them to church and we will deliver them or you may donate directly at your convenience to Neighbors.



December and January are very busy times of the year. Personally, we are celebrating the birth of baby Jesus and the beginning of a new year. For church finances it is also a busy time as in December we wrap up 2019 and in January we provide an annual report of church finances for the previous year. The books are still in the process of being closed but the following information will be within a few dollars of actual numbers.

We ended the year with great news. All of our obligations were met; we paid our year-end bills, including apportionments due the MN Conference! Thank you to all who helped make this happen. Also on the good news side of the 2019 ledger, we were able to repair the roof (\$15,315) and pay the street assessment (\$22,000) because we have a healthy capital fund that has been invested wisely and provided the funds necessary for these large and unexpected expenses. Last, but very important, expenses were well controlled for the year. Our General Fund expenditures were \$277,085 against a planned budget of \$277,633. Well done!

Often a rosy picture also has some areas of concern. We continue to borrow internally from other funds,

such as memorials and mission, to pay the operating expenses that should be paid out of the general fund income. Bottom-line, our annual general fund contributions are not as much as our annual general fund expenses. This has been a trend for three of the last four years. During this year, your Central Leadership Team will be considering options for reversing the trend.

I would also like to give you a quick update on 2020 pledges. As of 1/8/2020, we have received 54 pledges, two less than last year. Total dollars pledged were \$190,890, an increase of \$8,212. For 2020, 28 pledges were an increase and there were 9 new pledges. If you haven't completed a pledge card yet, it isn't too late. You can pick one up in the office, complete it and return it to the office. Thanks to all who have pledged as this information helps us plan and manage our finances.

We have declared 2020 as the Year of Relationships in our church. The financial support you provide is a piece of the puzzle that helps us to build relationships with God, our fellow members at St. Paul's UMC and the greater community in which we live and work in.

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Finance Update as of 12/31/2019

General Fund Income	\$269,947
Less General Fund Expenses	<u>\$277,085</u>
Balance	\$ (7,138)

Less Unpaid Apportionments	<u>\$ 0</u>
Deficit After Unpaid Apportionments	\$ (7,138)

SMALL GROUPS

United with
purpose



UMW CIRCLES

Hannah Circle

Ruth Circle and Rebekah Circle have merged and their combined name is Hannah Circle. They will meet on the 3rd Wednesdays of the month—next meeting will be February 19th at 1:00 pm at church. Questions? Contact Rhea Nyquist, 651-457-5623 or Jan Marshall at 651-688-6813.

Rachel Circle

Rachel Circle will meet on February 17th at 7:00 pm at Nancy Pier-son's home. Questions? Contact Barb Jorgenson, 651-414-0054.

MEN'S GROUP

The Men's Group will not meet in February. Questions? Contact Charles Duddingston, 651-454-1733.

WEDNESDAY ADULT ED BOOK GROUP

Bertelsen Library, Noon

Starting February 5th

Consider the Birds by Debbie Blue. From biblical times to today, humans have found meaning and significance in the actions and symbolism of birds. Highlighting 10 birds throughout Scripture, author Debbie Blue explores their significance in both familiar and unfamiliar biblical stories and illustrates how and why they have represented humanity across culture, Christian tradition, art, and contemporary psyche.

Books are available to purchase on the narthex table for a \$10 donation to Garlough School but they are not required for participation. Bring a sandwich and a friend!

SUNDAY ADULT ED

Bertelsen Library

Sundays, 9:30 am

The world is complicated. Let's work through it together. Using *FaithLink*, a weekly curriculum, each Sunday this fall we will address a current event and discuss it, along with a Christian point of view, with as many viewpoints as possible. Topics will be fresh every Sunday! Join us as we connect faith and life. Charles Duddingston will convene.

Beginning Sunday, March 1st, we will take a break from our popular *FaithLink* programming to feature, for the six Sundays in Lent, a DVD discussion series entitled, "The Passion Play." Inspired by the passion play in Oberammergau, Germany, which has been produced once each decade since 1654. Located in the Bavarian Alps, the entire village participates, taking parts in the drama of Jesus' passion. In the midst of the Thirty Years War, and the deadly bubonic plague, the villagers believed their efforts would bring sanity and peace to their land. Come and share a touching story and lovely visual. Recognize your place in the passion of Jesus.

Mar. 1: The Power of a View

Mar. 8: The Importance of
Community

Mar. 15: The Role of Ritual

Mar. 22: Living the Story

Mar. 29: Telling a Better Story

Apr. 5: The Power of the Cross

Apr. 12: No meeting. Happy
Easter!



Please pray for the following:

Joys:

Hannah Grace, daughter of Peter and Tracy Grinager, born January 19th
 Barb Jorgenson's mother-in-law, Verna, feeling much better after a fall

Deaths:

Pine County Sheriff's Deputy, Ben Neel, January 8th
 Andrea Wallace Jann, Shirley Holmay's friend, January 2nd
 Faith Cunningham, Jack Baker's cousin, January 8th
 Dr. Molly Hubbard, former U of M neurosurgery resident, in an avalanche in Idaho
 Georgia Jewell Kelm, Kae Jewell's sister-in-law, December 30th

Health Concerns:

Colleen McNett, healing from breast cancer
 Bob Momsen, in transitional care recovering from infection and gaining strength
 Jack and Jo Baker's friend's new grandbaby born Jan. 6th with extra chromosome, for strength, hope and health
 Bob Mahoney, Corrine's brother, healing outcome to testing this week
 Angie, Jo Reck's friend, beginning her 2nd round of chemo for breast cancer
 Barb Helmken's brother-in-law, Reid, starting chemo for multiple myeloma; positive results for son-in-law, Loren, after brain biopsy; Dan, waiting for lung transplants
 Bryan, struggling with many issues
 Dan, Cheryl Anderson's nephew, going through another round of chemo and niece, Judy, going through long recovery from neck surgery
 Ben, Chuck Everling's brother, with cancer and in pain
 Duane Devereaux, for healing
 Bettie Robinson, recovering from successful shoulder surgery
 John Schmidt, for healing of his leg
 Loye Eckman's cousin Anne with depression and Anne's husband, Joern, with lung cancer
 Chrisana Tripodi's husband, Greg, for ongoing health concerns
 Mike LaGuire's daughter, Cheryl, healing from breast cancer
 Daniel Berntsen, Shirley Holmay's friend, recovering from bicycle accident and continuing rehab at home
 Kathy Detert's neighbor, Mary, with bone cancer
 Barb Goin's friend, Laurie, in hospice at home with a recurrence of brain cancer
 All homebound with health problems

Additional:

For family and career
 Luke Stombaugh, serving in Iraq
 Those affected by the earthquakes in Puerto Rico
 For troops overseas and for Chaplain Matthew Deitner serving in Iraq
 Australia's raging fires and the wildlife affected
 Peace and safety in our communities
 World peace

Please call the office with joys and concerns.

**OFFICE HOURS:**

Monday - Friday: 8:00 am - noon

LANI'S OFFICE HOURS:

Please contact Lani at
lani.thompson@stpaulsmn.org or
612-412-6663 to make an
appointment.

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Education Hour for all: 9:30 am
Worship: 10:30 am

2nd SUNDAYS SCHEDULE

Education Hour for all: 9:30 am
Kidz 2gether Worship: 10:30 am
Brunch: 11:30 am
Communion will be offered the 1st
and 2nd Sundays of every month.

CENTRAL LEADERSHIP

CHAIR: Leslie Watkins

ST. PAUL'S STAFF:

Pastor: Rev. Amy Jo Bur,
pastor@stpaulsmn.org

Director of Children, Youth and Mission:

Lani Thompson,
lani.thompson@stpaulsmn.org

Director of Music Ministry:

Lane Skoglund-Anderson,
laneskoglundanderson@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant:

Diane Pelinka,
info@stpaulsmn.org

**grat·i·tude**

[grat i tood]

noun

the quality of being
thankful; readiness
to show appreciation
for and to return
kindness

**THANK YOU TO THE
DECEMBER COUNTERS**

Brent Cuttell
Barb Goin
Shirley Holmay
Patricia Lamski
Rhea Nyquist
Bob Walker
Leslie Watkins

*Pastor Amy Jo will be on vacation
February 3rd-9th.*

*In the event of a pastoral
emergency, contact
Rev. Jenny Larsen of Christ
UMC—Maplewood,
612-408-0173.*

FROM NEIGHBORS INC.

Thank you so much for your
December gift to help your
neighbors! Your active support
of the community helps us to
continue our mission of providing
opportunities for our neighbors to
thrive by connecting volunteers to
people in need.....St. Paul's
UMC 2019 food donation: 1,612
pounds

*With Gratitude, Beth Skwira,
Dir. Of Mission Advancement*





February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 9:30 am Education Hour 10:30 am Worship w/ Communion 4:30 pm and 5:30 pm Music Together	3 10:30 am Music Together	4 6:30 pm Yoga	5 12:00 pm Book Group 6:00 pm Handbell Choir 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	6	7	8
9 Scout Sunday 9:30 am Education Hour 10:30 am Kidz 2gether Worship w/Communion 11:30 am 2 nd Sunday Brunch 4:30 pm and 5:30 pm Music Together	10 10:30 am Music Together	11 6:30 pm Yoga	12 12:00 pm Book Group 6:00 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm Handbell Choir 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	13 10:00 am Quilters	14 Newsletter Deadline 5:00—9:00 pm Valentines Babysitting Night	15
16 9:30 am Education Hour 10:30 am Worship 4:30 pm and 5:30 pm Music Together	17 10:30 am Music Together 7:00 pm Rachel Circle, Nancy Pierson's 6:45 pm 4H	18 6:30 pm Yoga	19 12:00 pm Book Group 1:00 pm Hannah Circle, church 6:00 pm Handbell Choir 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	20	21	22
23 9:30 am Education Hour 10:30 am Worship 4:30 pm and 5:30 pm Music Together	24 10:30 am Music Together 6:00 pm Central Leadership Mtg	25 6:00—7:30 pm Fat Tuesday for youth and children	26 12:30 pm Ash Wednesday Worship 6:00 pm Handbell Choir 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 	27	28	29 1:00 pm—5:00 pm Music Recitals

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

700 Wesley Lane
Mendota Heights MN 55118

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Email: info@stpaulsmn.org

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Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors
The People of the United Methodist Church®

**ASH WEDNESDAY
SERVICE
February 26th
12:30—1:00 pm**

