

Epistle

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

November 2022

REFLECTIONS FROM PASTOR AMY JO

Seasonal Reflections

As I write this newsletter column, we are preparing for the 99th Saint Paul's UMC turkey dinner! As all of the details come together, the church building is a hive of activity connecting the new stove, color-coding the meal reservations, and of course, making potatoes and gravy. I'm excited for this opportunity to provide hospitality to our community and raise money for missions. I am also thankful for the many, many people who work together on this all-church project! Special thanks to Carol Rix, who has served as the coordinator for the turkey dinner this year. The annual turkey dinner is a sign of the change of seasons—we know that we are moving in to late autumn, when we wrap up our outdoor, summer projects and turn our hearts to gratitude and giving thanks.

Summer Projects. At Saint Paul's UMC, we are completing many outdoor summer projects on the church property this fall. I appreciate the intentional efforts of our volunteers (and especially the Operations Team) in caring for the environment by removing invasive species from the church property and replacing them with hardy, beautiful, native plants. We have

also developed positive relationships with a number of our neighbors while working together with them. Thank you to John Grinager and Bob Brocklehurst who have taken the lead on this effort. For more information, please see John's article that describes the recent changes to the church property.



Giving Thanks. As we move from summer into fall, our culture begins a seasonal focus on giving thanks. Many medical and sociology studies have been done showing the benefits of giving thanks to both mental health and physical health. As a pastor, I also want to share that practicing gratitude improves our spiritual health. The psalms are filled with examples of giving thanks to God with a grateful heart, and I Thessalonians exhorts us to: "Rejoice always, pray continually,

give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (I Thessalonians 5:17-19.) Giving thanks recognizes that God is the source of our many blessings, turns our outlook in a positive direction, and strengthens our relationships when we say "thank you" to one another. A simple prayer to God that says "thank you" for our blessings can really lift up our spirits. But, if you're looking for new ways to develop a deeper sense of gratitude, here are a few different ideas to try:

Praying the prayer of examen begins with entering prayer with a sense of gratitude and then reviewing your day with the guidance of God's Holy Spirit. This form of prayer is attributed to St. Ignatius, and if it is new to you, I am happy to give you more information—or, you can also do a web search on "prayer of examen" to find online instructions from the Jesuit priests, who often pray this prayer together. The prayer of examen helps remind us of the many ways God is present in our lives and therefore inspires gratitude for God's continual care and guidance.

(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

I would also suggest these three very simple ideas: 1) Write a thank you note to someone who touched your life in a positive way. 2) Make a habit of ending your day by writing down 5 things from the day for which you are grateful (a gratitude journal.) 3) Try saying the Gratitude A-B-Cs: reciting something for each letter for which you give thanks. May your Thanksgiving season overflow with gratitude.

Prayer of Thanksgiving
Thank you, God, for starlit nights,
And sunny, joy-filled days.

**Thank you, God, for loving us,
And teaching us your ways.**

Thank you, God, for soaring birds
Who daily sing your praise.

**Thank you, God, for loving us,
And teaching us your ways.**

Thank you, God, for listening
To every prayer we raise.

**Thank you, God, for loving us,
And teaching us your ways.**

Amen. *Mark Burrows* ☿



Thank
you,
God!

2022 Christmas Poinsettia Order Form

Deadline: November 6, 2022

**Make checks payable to: St. Paul's UMC/ "Poinsettias" in the memo section
8.5" Poinsettias with antique gold pot/ \$20 each**

Purchased by: _____

List name(s) in honor of/ memory of/ thanks for (circle one)

<u>How Many</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Total Order Cost</u>
White _____	_____	_____
Red _____	_____	
Pink _____	_____	

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Helping families
nurture lifelong
disciples of Christ



YOUTH GATHERING

St. Paul's UMC youth in 6th-12th grade are gathering every fourth Wednesday from 5:00-8:00 pm for some guided Faith, Fellowship, and Fun. Each youth gathering is focused on a combination of a faith topic, mission project, worship participation, fellowship building, and a fun activity. In September our youth went to *Feed My Starving Children* to pack Manna Rice packs for hungry children across the world.

In October the youth met at the church to help with the annual Turkey Dinner by "checking in" the vehicles when they arrived and carrying the meals out to the cars.

Our next youth gathering is going to be a week early due to Thanksgiving. It will be on **November 16th** and we will be volunteering with Union Gospel Mission to organize and pack thanksgiving meal bags for the hungry in the twin cities area. Families and church members of all ages are welcome to join us!

2022 CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Our Church Christmas pageant will be during Kidz 2gether worship again this year on Sunday, December 11th. We will be choosing parts, rehearsing with both puppets and bells, and doing some filming for the pageant with children during part of the Sunday school hour (9:30-10:30 am) throughout November.

Please join us during Sunday school or contact Lani Schrandt (lani.thompson@stpaulsmn.org) if your children or youth would like to participate either in person or on video!

CONFIRMATION

In October the confirmation class theme was Worship and Sacraments. We discussed and learned:

~Scripture is the primary way we discern who God is. Reading, proclaiming, and responding to Scripture are at the heart of worship.

~ Active congregational participation is crucial. As the Word of God is heard in the congregation, the congregation is called to response. People need to be able to share of themselves and their gifts in worship.

~ How baptism marks the beginning of our lifelong journey as disciples of Jesus Christ.

~ How the water and the work of the Holy Spirit in baptism convey God's saving grace, the forgiveness of our sins, and new life in Jesus Christ.

~ As we pray together and receive the bread and the cup together, we are united with Christ, with one another, and in ministry to the world.

Our next class is on **November 9th** from 6:00-8:00 pm and we will be discussing "*The Wesleyan Quadrilateral*".

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Helping families
nurture lifelong
disciples of Christ



EARTHKEEPERS VBS DURING MEA BREAK

A fantastic time was had by all who came and participated in Vacation Bible School in October over MEA break. With 16 children, 4 youth, and a great group of adults the church was a bundle of energy all day. The children went in depth with the story of creation and the parable of the sower. We talked about creation, did some creating of our own, and discussed how we would want our creations to be taken care of and loved. Thank you to all who came to help lead this great experience for our kids!



MISSION TO THE EARTH - CREATING BIODIVERSITY AT ST. PAUL'S

In the spring of 2020, we were in the first stages of the pandemic and in-person religious services at St. Paul's had been suspended. Entry to the church was limited, making any effort to do interior maintenance impossible. One day I received an email from the church asking for volunteers to assist with planting two rain gardens. At the time, I did not know what a rain garden was, but since I often volunteered for projects at the church, I signed up. A local environmental group brought in enough volunteers to do the ground prep and plantings, but there was a need to water the new plantings to assure their survival the first year. In spite of near-record heat that summer, a team of us from the church created a schedule for watering and the gardens not only survived, they thrived.

During that summer, I had a meeting with two of the environmental community volunteers and we turned our attention to a property line we shared with a condominium development. We guessed that the property line had once been demarcated by an old farm hedgerow based on the vegetation that was growing in this particular area. A broken-down fence divided the properties and many non-native trees and shrubs—including buckthorn—had sprouted, grown, and in some cases, had lived out their lives unbothered by the church members or the

condominium association next door. But within the invasive tangle were some unexpected surprises: native Solomon's seal, a few black walnut trees, and black cherry. As we did our initial walk-through of this area, I emerged with hundreds of stickers on my clothing!

In 2021, under the guidance of our enviro-volunteers, we gathered other volunteers that included a boy scout seeking a project to achieve an award, a 4H group that met at our church, our church youth group, and several other church member volunteers. Collectively, we set about renaturing the property. First, we did general weed control using a weed whip to allow entry into the area under renovation. We then used chain saws and hand saws to remove diseased native trees, as well as the vast majority of the non-native brush. We hired a tree service to remove two large non-native trees. We then gathered cardboard boxes, flattened them, and laid them as a weed barrier. In all, we laid down cardboard and mulched an area that averaged 15 feet in width and about 300 feet in length. We then planted native tree saplings and shrubs in that area. Additionally, we planted a dozen native trees on other parts of the property. The city, at our suggestion, removed a diseased tree from the right-of-way and replaced it with four native trees. Along with those efforts, another group of church volunteers repaired our sprinkler system so that now we have water to support the new plantings.

In 2022, we added another 101 native shrubs and trees that now surround the church property in plastic cages. Although we lost some of these to the sudden drought in June, most have survived. Again, this effort was made by our volunteers under the direction of our outside environmental volunteers. This fall we are adding some 20 flowering plants that will add color to the southwest side of the parking lot.

In the United Methodist Church, one of our more recent initiatives has been to focus on our "mission to the earth"; groups have formed within some congregations that are called Earth Keepers. Within Christian theology there is much to support this type of mission even though, in our case, we had neglected our own property prior to the pandemic. I have been thankful to our community environmental volunteers who have inspired us to take a look at how we manage our property. In turn, I too have been inspired to not only work on our own property, but to assist our condominium neighbors to restore their property to more reflect its natural glory and to provide a home for native birds and other animals.

John Grinager



FINANCE

Support of our
church and its
mission



2022 Stewardship Campaign

Our Annual Stewardship Campaign this year will focus on a broader question. *"What is My Legacy?"* Everyone has one, and although it may be easy to do "someday", we hope this workshop will encourage you to make your legacy plan in an intentional way, vs. "letting it happen".

We invite you to join the Finance Team for a discussion on this topic on **Thursday, November 10th, at 5:30 pm**. We'll start with a light supper, and beverages will be provided. There will then be a discussion exploring information on creating a well-planned personal legacy. We have a guest speaker, Jason Howard from our congregation, who will give some

detail on the various tools available for accomplishing this important task.

Breakout sessions will then cover specific topics such as creating a healthcare directive or the process for making a gift to St. Paul's Endowment Fund. Come find out more! We expect to wrap up by 7:45 pm. Sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080b48a5a928a1fa7-legacy> or contact the office at 651-452-5683 or info@stpaulsmn.org for more information. Please also let us know if you need a ride as we are happy to coordinate rides for anyone who needs one. Hope you can join us!

Your Finance Team,
Curt Almborg, Barb Goin,
Kae Jewell, Mike LaGuire,
and Deanna Sellars

FINANCE UPDATE AS OF 9/30/2022

	<u>September 2022</u>	<u>2022 Year-to-Date</u>
General Fund Gifts	\$ 11,289	\$ 149,300
Less General Fund Expenses	\$ 20,963	\$ 183,838
Balance	\$ (9,674)	\$ (34,538)
Less Unpaid Apportionments	\$ (4,554)	\$ (4,554)
Balance After Unpaid Apportionments	\$ (14,228)	\$ (39,092)

REACHING OUT

Living our faith
and connecting
with our
neighbors



PIE NIGHTS AT GARLOUGH - CAN YOU HELP?

On Thursday, October 27th, we had our first P.I.E. (Parents In Education) Night of the school year! PIE Nights are a fun opportunity for Garlough families to come together to learn about reading and math while sharing a meal. Each child that comes to PIE Night leaves with a new book! The next PIE Night is Tuesday, January 10th.

St. Paul's mission team is looking for volunteers to help serve dinner. Volunteer hours will be approximately 5:00-6:30 pm. If you are interested in volunteering, contact Lani at lani.thompson@stpaulsmn.org.

NEIGHBORS' HOLIDAY GIFT PROGRAM

The Neighbors holiday gift program is a great way to spread joy to our community this holiday season. This program connects generous community members to families in need during the holiday season.

St. Paul's UMC has not yet received the info on our family or their requests, but soon there will be a small Christmas tree in the narthex with tags listing gifts that the family has asked for that you might like to purchase. Gifts will be delivered to *Neighbors* on December 13th, so please have everything turned in before then. You have a few weeks to be a secret shopper to make Christmas a miracle for a needy family. You can also adopt a family, individual, or senior by calling 651-306-2140 or email holiday@neighborsmn.org.



HOLIDAY LETTERS

We invite you to send a letter to our homebound family:

Phyllis Abrahamsen
6305 Burnham Circle #122
Inver Grove Heights MN 55076

Marilyn Anderson
8345 Atlas Ave.
Inver Grove Heights MN 55077

Darrell Butterwick
8725 Promenade Lane #134
Woodbury MN 55125

Emaline Devereaux
Pioneer Care Center
1131 S. Mabelle Ave.
Fergus Falls MN 56537

Diane and Willis Edgell
730 S. Plaza Dr. #307
Mendota Heights MN 55120

Carol Egan
2224 Alice Lane
Mendota Heights MN 55120

Mary Gaddy
Lilydale Senior Living
949 Sibley Memorial Hwy #412
St. Paul MN 55118

Gerry Nicklaus
Homestead
2102 S. Market St. #170
Oskaloosa IA 52577

Marion O'Connor
316 23rd Court South
South St. Paul MN 55075

Della Relation
720 Linden St. #315
Mendota Heights MN 55118

Myrle Voynovich
6536 Chamberlain Rd.
Woodbury MN 55125

EVENTS

What's
happening and
when



ALL SAINTS' DAY SUNDAY

NOVEMBER 6th

We will commemorate All Saints' Day on Sunday, November 6th.

During this meaningful service, all will be invited to light a candle in memory of family members, relatives and friends who have gone on to be with the Lord since last year's service.

HANNAH CIRCLE

Hannah Circle will meet Wednesday, November 16th at 1:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Pat Fritsche and Beda Lewis will be our hostesses and our study of the Advent season will be led by Sue Kratsch. You don't have to be a member of our circle to join us on the 16th.

THANK YOU

Messages of
Gratitude



Thank you for your generosity. Your gift of \$88.00 on September 28, 2022 (youth group) to Feed My Starving Children is providing 366 MannaPack meals to those around the world who need it most. *"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat...."* Matthew 25:35

*Mark Crea, Executive Director/
CEO*

Thank you! Our mission partners are always so appreciative as we donate proceeds from our turkey dinner sales to various agencies such as Neighbors, Inc. and Emma Norton Residence. St. Paul's Women In Faith could not have done it without the support of those who take the reservations, donate pies, bake turkeys, prepare the take-out meals, to the runners who get the meals to the cars, and especially to the supporters who purchase the dinners! Special kudos to Carol Rix who led the effort. Thank you to everyone who helped make the turkey dinner a success.

Nancy Pierson



SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Education Hour for All: 9:30 am
 Worship: 10:30 am
 Kidz 2gether Worship
 2nd Sundays of the month: 10:30 am
 Communion: 1st and 2nd Sundays of the month

VIDEO WORSHIP

Available on Facebook, YouTube (St. Paul's UMC Mendota Heights) and the church's website: www.stpaulsmn.org

CENTRAL LEADERSHIP

CHAIR: Andrea Larson

ST. PAUL'S STAFF:

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

Director of Children, Youth and

Mission:

Lani Thompson Schrandt,
lani.thompson@stpaulsmn.org

Director of Music Ministry:

Lane Skoglund-Anderson,
laneskoglundanderson@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant:

Diane Pelinka,
info@stpaulsmn.org

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteer opportunities are available on Sign Up Genius. Go to www.signupgenius.com, click on the magnifying glass in the upper right hand corner and type in the church email, info@stpaulsmn.org to find the following sign ups.

♦ ALTAR FLOWERS

Altar flowers are a beautiful addition to our service. Sign up sheets are also available on the narthex table.

♦ COFFEE HOUR

Volunteers are needed to host Sunday Coffee Hour. Sign up sheets are also available on the Fellowship Hall counter.



New Email:

Cynthia Peterfeso

cynpeterfeso@gmail.com

New Address:

Chuck Garr

6305 Burnham Circle #112
 Inver Grove Heights MN
 55077
 651-552-2733

An Individual Prayer of Purpose

by Robert J. Smith

Lord, give me courage and the grace to bear life's
 tribulations with humility,
 that I may learn through triumph and despair,
 what happiness these simple things can be:
 to give without desiring to receive,
 to love without requiring to be loved,
 to revive faith in those who doubt or grieve,
 to move the heart that never has been moved.
 Amen.

Submitted by Bob Brocklehurst



NOVEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 5:00 pm UMW Executive Bd Mtg	2 6:00 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm Handbells	3	4	5 UMW Year End Mtg
6 All Saints Sunday Daylight Saving Time Ends 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship w/ Communion	7 <i>9:30 am Music lessons</i>	8	9 6:00 pm Handbells 6:00 pm Confirmation 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	10 5:30 pm Potluck Supper 6:15 pm Legacy Planning	11	12
13 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Kidz 2gether Worship w/Communion	14 <i>9:30 am Music lessons</i>	15 4:45 pm PIE Night	16 6:00 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm Handbells 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	17	18	19
20 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship	21 <i>9:30 am Music lessons</i> <i>5:45 pm 4H, Fellowship Hall</i> 6:00 pm Finance Mtg	22	23 6:00 pm Handbells 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	24 Thanksgiving Office Closed	25 Office Closed	26
27 1st Sunday of Advent 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:45 am Charge Conference	28 <i>9:30 am Music lessons</i>	29	30 6:00 pm Handbells 7:00 pm Chancel Choir			

Italicized events are conducted by outside groups renting space at the church.

Daylight Saving Time Ends November 6th.
The office will be closed November 24th & 25th.

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

700 Wesley Lane
Mendota Heights MN 55118

Phone: 651-452-5683
Email: info@stpaulsmn.org

NON PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE PAID
TWIN CITIES MN
PERMIT #2316

Address Service Requested

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

