

HERALD

St. Paul United Church of Christ
202 E. Main
Carlinville, IL 62626
Rev. Katrina Palan, Intentional Interim
Office: 217-854-4046
E-mail: stpaulucc@nwcable.net

December 2020

Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

Advent comes from the Latin word, *Adventus* or coming or arrival. It is the marking of time a preparation for the celebration of the birth of Christ our Savior. Advent is a time of waiting. We wait each year in eager anticipation to remember the birthday of the Savior, the Messiah. I know that this year, we have been waiting, not for the birth of a Savior, but a re-birth of our lives back to a time of normalcy. And, still, we wait. I am tired of waiting since March. Imagine being a people who waited over 400 years for a prophecy of a Messiah to come true. It would be difficult.

Advent is a time when the sky gets darker earlier. It is usually a gloomier time, due to shortened sunlight. It is usually a time when the weather gets colder and more unpredictable. As things get busier with the parties, shopping and traveling, our lives seem to get a little out of sync. This year, we will not be able to have the parties, shopping is online or limited and traveling curtailed a bit. It will be different.

I have noticed that Christmas seems to become a bit more commercialized, the shopping frenzy comes a little earlier. The focus somehow has changed from a birthday party for the Messiah to a time of retail sales. Maybe it is not such a bad thing that we have to slow down and be at home more. Maybe we can spend this time with family, making gifts or food to share rather than overspending an already full credit card. Maybe, this year Christmas can be about Christ.

Instead of lamenting the things we cannot do right now, I would like to ponder the star of Bethlehem. It was this star that led the Magi to the stable where Jesus was born, becoming an important symbol in Christian tradition. We remember that Jesus

told the people who followed him (John 8:12) *"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."* Once again in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5: 14-16) Jesus say *"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."*

As a witness to these scriptures we light candles on Christmas Eve and sing, Silent Night. This is a tradition that I, being in many churches over my years, have experienced each Christmas eve, no matter what state, or country I have lived in or faith tradition I was in. Once again, we are not having in person services, so, **I would invite you and your family to bring a jar, with a lit candle in it. Place it on the steps outside of the front sanctuary door between 5 and 7 pm on Christmas eve** as a testimony to the light of Christ that shines in the darkness. We remember that the light overcomes darkness. Let this combined light be our witness to the world, no matter what happens, We are still the Church, Jesus is still the Light of the world!.

Pastor Katrina



NEWS Notes

ANGEL TREE GIFTS: All gifts need to be **returned** to the church no later than **Sunday, December 6th**. Please remember that all gifts need to be placed in a bag, unwrapped, with the tag attached. The doors by the office will remain unlocked Mon-Thurs 8:30-12:30. Gifts may be placed under the coat rack by Fellowship Hall.

HAT & MITTEN TREE: We will be collecting **hats and mittens** during the *month of December*. At this time, we are collecting *hats and mittens only*; they will be donated to the Carlinville Schools. The tree is in the entryway by the office, and you may drop your items off Monday – Thursday 8:30-12:30. Thank you for your donations!

REFRIGERATOR: The refrigerator in the Friendship room has quit. If you have a refrigerator that you are not using and would like to donate it would be greatly appreciated. The opening for the refrigerator is 36x72. Thank you!



Please see the insert to place your poinsettia order. You may also call your order in to the office at 217-854-4046, then mail your check. **Ordering deadline is December 4th**.



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES 2020

Like everything else, we cannot have live services, but we will have two options. We will be having the **Facebook live service at 7 pm on December 24th**. We also have made a “deal” with the radio station **WSMI 106.1 to have our service broadcast at 7 pm**. This broadcast will be recorded, so it will not in in sync with the Facebook service. The Facebook service will remain on Facebook to be viewed after the service if you cannot attend at 7 pm.



Christmas Eve Luminaries

Once again, we are not having in person services, so, **I would invite you and your family to bring a jar, with a lit candle in it. Place it on the steps outside of the front sanctuary door between 5 and 7 pm on Christmas eve** as a testimony to the light of Christ that shines in the darkness. We remember that the light overcomes darkness. *Let this combined light be our witness to the world, no matter what happens, We are still the Church, Jesus is still the Light of the world!*

Thank you

I appreciate all the cards and phone calls from my church family. It means a lot.

Thank you,
Marilyn Best



The following activities have been cancelled due to the current COVID restrictions:

- Christmas program-Drive by live Nativity
- Sunday School
- Youth Group meetings
- Tuesday Morning Coffee
- Women's Quilting
- Men's Group
- All in person meetings. Meetings and Confirmation will be Zoom meetings.

If your group needs help with a Zoom meeting please contact Pastor Katrina. 217-854-4046

THANK YOU

The **Sr. Youth** would like to thank everyone for supporting our cinnamon roll fundraiser!! We had a great response and are grateful for your support. We hope to be able to meet again soon, however that decision will be based on safety protocol and the guidelines at the time. All youth grades 6-12 are welcome and we would love to have you join us! Stay tuned for info and stay safe!

Sr. Youth Group leaders, *Donna, Amy, and Joan*

Jr. Youth: We are finishing up our sales with the Senior Youth for cinnamon rolls and had a tremendous success. We more than doubled the orders from last

year. We hope to be able to meet in person again soon! Thanks, *Gretchen Killam*

Be Prepared

So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.
Matthew 24:44 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 36-44



W S O N Q R C B W A T C H W V
 L Z K H E X P E C T S E U O D
 N L V Q F E R G J L E M T V U
 F M V E M A K N I C G A H R W
 Y D H O U S E H Y K M J I W Z
 Z F C N O V W G O O W N E R U
 X Q R P A N A C T U H J F L V
 U Z L E J O G Y M Y R L R H Q
 A I H M B E L H K C E W P S R
 N M O X I K N O W X J J F R E
 G Z X R E A D Y Y T T F C M V
 E B V F C P D I H P W O I T L
 L C U Q H E Q G W P T T Z E B
 S G W Q S Q I C D T Z W M Z R
 S I L N T N S D D A Y J B Q B

KNOW	SON	EXPECT	HEAVEN	HOOR
ANGELS	HOUSE	WATCH	TIME	THIEF
OWNER	READY	COME	NIGHT	DAY

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Transition Team Update

The Transition Team continues to meet weekly to clarify the identity, vision, and mission of St. Paul United Church of Christ. With the recent tightening of COVID-19-related restrictions, we have begun meeting via Zoom (computer) rather than in-person.

The Transition Team is currently studying our church's **heritage**. This is the **first of five focus points** we will use to clarify St. Paul's identity, mission and vision **before our church begins the search for a new pastor**.

As we study our heritage, The Transition Team is **soliciting feedback** about St. Paul's UCC from **every** member of the congregation. To this end, we recently began the process of contacting members to participate in one of our listening sessions, where members meet in small groups/individually with two members of The Transition Team. For consistency, we are using the same set of topics to generate discussion in each of the listening sessions. And to encourage free expression and provide confidentiality, names of participants are not associated with their responses. The responses from all listening sessions will eventually be compiled by topic and reviewed by The Transition Team to find common themes. We received very constructive responses during our initial sessions held at the church in November, and attendees seemed to feel that it was a worth-while process.

If you have not been contacted yet to participate in a listening session, you can either **hold tight and wait for a call as we work through the alphabet, or feel free to call anyone on the Transition Team to set up your listening session**. We would love to get a call from you! If you have moved or think your contact information might be out of date, this is a great time to contact the church office and update your information so that we can reach you. In light of the recent COVID-19-related restrictions that limit in-person meetings, we will be finding creative ways to meet with each of you. We plan to meet by Zoom and/or telephone if possible, but we are open to using other formats. We will also be developing a paper questionnaire for situations where we can't otherwise meet with congregation members.

Making sure that everyone has an opportunity to honestly and openly share their joys and concerns about St. Paul's United Church of Christ is very important to this team. **Every opinion matters**. Let us hear from you!

The Transition Team can be contacted by:

Email-- TRANSITION_TEAMStPaulUCC@gmail.com
(Checked regularly by Eric Ratcliff)

Regular mail--St. Paul UCC Transition Team, 202 East Main, Carlinville, IL 62626

Phone/text --Leave a message which will be returned as soon as possible

Eric—217-556-8806

Heather—217-371-1888

Joan—217-825-9244

Leland—217-971-4044

Rich—217-556-2640

Wanda—217-825-9290

With the love of God and all of your prayers and support, The Transition Team is truly blessed and will continue to move forward toward the completion of their assigned task.

FINANCIAL REPORT

General Account

Income	\$19,044.00
Expenses	<u>14,308.42</u>
Balance	4,378.42

Liabilities

Organ:	30,997.97
Air Conditioner	3,918.72





- 1 Stephanie Schroeder
Laura Hammann
- 2 Joe Konneker
- 4 Julie Wallis
Abby Ashby
- 5 Devin Whitworth
- 8 Dennis Hammann
Martin Kasten
Natalie Strobe
Janie Lackman
- 9 Tina Prose
- 10 Darlene Barkley
Emily Arndt
Emily Dixon
- 11 Aidan Groves
Don Pool
Jennifer Lapp
Angela Goodwin
Emily Hammann
- 12 Karen Eichen
Andy Harding
Delaney Sanson
- 13 Elizabeth Dixon
Jesse Bernhardt
- 14 Cloey Mack
- 15 Margye Morse
Mike Dixon
- 16 David Slightom Jr.
Robert Wiese
Emily Witt
Katelyn Barber
- 18 Sandra Johnson
- 19 Erin Sanson
Henry Walden
- 21 Amy Wise
- 22 Tracy Pocklington
Casey Gillespie
- 24 Karen Hildebrand
Bill Klaus
Jim Gillespie III
Melissa Snider
- 26 John Thoron
- 29 Heather Lohnes-Kanllakan
Haley Stratton
- 30 Beverly Klaus
Jacob Dixon
Patti Snider
- 31 Alexandria Dixon



- 2 Dean & Gloria Wiese
Robert & Sherlyn Hammann
- 3 Andy & Kate Harding
- 12 Jim & Kathleen Gillespie
Rod & Becky Bernhardt
- 22 Mitch & Mary Walden
- 30 Kirby & Judy Bates
- 31 Brian & Norma Mitchell



If you have **changed your mailing address** or **email address**, please let the office know so we can update our records.

If you have gone from a **land line telephone number to a cell phone number only**, please let us know that as well.

Call 854-4046 or email your changes to
stpaulucc@nwcable.net

The angel said to [Mary],

"THE HOLY SPIRIT
WILL COME UPON YOU,
and the power of
THE MOST HIGH
WILL OVERSHADOW YOU."

LUKE 1:35, NRSV



St. Paul United Church of Christ
202 E. Main
Carlinville IL 62626
Sunday School 10:00 am
Sunday Worship 10:00 am

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Church Staff

Rev. Katrina Palan – Intentional Interim Minister
Linda Leefers—Church Secretary
Kathy Witt—Treasurer
Brian Mitchell—Financial Secretary
Elner Ivers—Organist
Debbie Costello—Choir Director
Norma Mitchell—Custodian

Church Council Officers

Jerry Eiffert—President
Katie Cervi—Vice President
Kristina Wise—Secretary

Office Hours: 8:30am – 12:30 pm Monday through Thursday

Email:

Pastor Katrina: stpaulpastorucc@gmail.com
Linda: stpaulucc@nwcable.net
Transition team: TRANSITION TEAMStPaulUCC@gmail.com