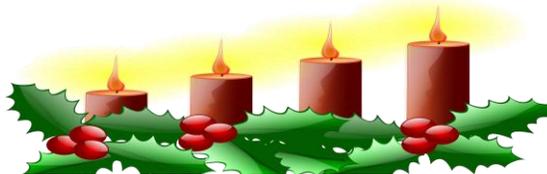


# The Messenger

## December 2023



St. Paul United Methodist Church  
P.O. Box 130  
400 West G St.  
Elmwood, NE 68349-0130  
Phone: 402-994-6735  
Email: [stpauelmwood@gmail.com](mailto:stpauelmwood@gmail.com)



Pastor Michelle Chesnut  
Cell phone: 402-314-7988  
Email: [mchesnut@greatplainsumc.org](mailto:mchesnut@greatplainsumc.org)  
Website: [elmwoodmurdockumc.com](http://elmwoodmurdockumc.com)

Ebenezer United Methodist Church  
P. O. Box 307  
220 Kansas Street  
Murdock, NE 68407  
Phone: 402-867-3191  
Email: [murdockumc1@gmail.com](mailto:murdockumc1@gmail.com)

### DECEMBER MISSION PROJECT – SANTAS FOR SENIORS

For our December Mission project at the Elmwood and Murdock churches, we will be collecting items to send holiday care packages to seniors affiliated with our churches – those in care centers or shut-ins or those in particular need of holiday cheer. If you know of a senior that should be added to the list, contact Pastor Michelle. You can help by donating cash or these items to be used in the care packages by December 10th:

- Large print wall calendars
- Large print devotional
- Lip balm and unscented lotion
- Seasonal flavored tea and cocoa

*Please check page 5 for an ongoing mission project.*

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### SPECIAL CHRISTMAS PROGRAMS ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH

The children of St. Paul and Ebenezer UMC will be presenting each of their Christmas programs on December 17<sup>th</sup> during the worship service at the respective churches. The children and teachers have worked diligently to present their programs for everyone so come and enjoy this special presentation.

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### CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICES, DECEMBER 24, 2023



5:00 p.m. Ebenezer UMC, Murdock

6:30 p.m. St. Paul UMC, Elmwood

*(St. Paul's offering will be donated to the Elmwood Rescue Squad.)*

## UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

### Cass County Food Pantry Distribution

Saturday, December 16, 2023, 9:00–11:00 a.m.

Location: Old Village Town Hall Building  
113 West E Street, Elmwood

### Elmwood Community Center

The Center is open for meals at noon or the weekday lunches can be delivered upon request or can be picked up at the center. Call 402-994-2145 to make a request for lunch.

Our Breakfast Buffet is happening again this month on Sunday, December 17, 2023 from 10:00am-12:30pm.

Please make reservations by Friday, Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>.

### Cookie Decorating at The Elmwood Community Center

Saturday, December 9, 2023, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Cookies, frosting and sprinklers will be provided, and you can use your creativity to decorate.

\$1 per cookie or 6 cookies for \$5

Come and have some fun!

### Quarter Auction at The Quonset, Elmwood

Friday, December 1, 2023, 5:30 p.m.

\$5.00 per ticket

Benefiting the Elmwood Rescue to purchase new monitors and defibrillators.

Many vendors will have gift baskets for the auction.

## UWF CORNER

The Elmwood UWF will meet on Monday, December 4, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. at Laurel McReynolds' home. Please bring a potluck dish to share with others.

Murdock UWF has invited all the women of the churches for their annual Christmas Luncheon on Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 12:00 p.m. The singing entertainment will be provided by the Vanderford Family. Please RSVP to Kellie Brewer by call or text (402-432-3797) by November 29<sup>th</sup>.

## CHURCH MEMBERS IN ASSISTED LIVING CENTERS

Roger Bornemeier, Havelock Manor, #16  
6330 Platte Ave., Lincoln, NE 68507

Marcie Miller, Bailey Point  
7208 Van Dorn St., Lincoln, NE 68506

Steve Henk, Louisville Care Center,  
410 W. 5<sup>th</sup>, Louisville, NE 68037

Wanda Neben, Legacy Estates, #51  
7202 Van Dorn St., Lincoln, NE 68506



## December Birthdays-Elmwood



Clayton Miller – December 2

Karen Howard – December 2

John Stephens – December 3

Carolyn Oehlerking – Dec. 5

Patricia Brennan – December 6

Gerry Wilhelm – December 6

Donna Amberly – December 8

Nicholas Brewer – December 8

Jessie Lansink – December 10

Dalton Wheeler – December 10

Rex Clements – December 15

Scott Rorie – December 17

Debra Lenz – December 18

Wayne Stubbendeck – Dec. 19

Harvey Bornemeier – Dec. 19

Dana Kollars – December 23

James Stubbendick – Dec. 24

Gary Bornemeier – December 26

Angelo Leone – December 28

Conner Clements – December 28

Tom Lenz – December 30

Joel Clements – December 31



## December Birthdays-Murdock



Emily Zakaras – December 1

Ella Zierott – December 3

Emerson Chesnut – December 5

Jane Leadabrand – December 6

Charles Zierott – December 10

Asha Murdoch – December 15

Thad Bornemeier – December 16

Ramona Oehlerking – December 21

Haddie Zierott – December 22

Jeff Backemeyer – December 24

Harvey Mills – December 24

Cindy Mills – December 25

Tim Schmitt – December 26

Steve Cawley – December 27

Whitney Koehn – December 27

Tara Bornemeier – December 28

Melissa Meyer – December 28

Cheryl Patterson – December 29

## PASTOR'S PEN



Happy December! This year December marks the beginning of Advent. Advent for the church is the beginning of the new year. I have always thought it was interesting when we choose to start new things. Corporate America starts their fiscal years in September. New appointments for the church start in July. Our calendars start of course with January and for the church the year starts with Advent.

I suppose in some ways it makes sense that the church year starts with Advent. It is the time leading up to and preparing for the birth of Christ, who is a very important individual in the life of the church. ;-) It's four weeks of preparing, learning, listening, often with an invitation to slow down while also being the busiest time of the year. Advent is the beginning of the church year but the end of the calendar year. We have to cram in all the parties, all the doctors' appointments, all the school programs, church programs, baking of goods, cleaning the house for guests! In all the craziness of the end of year things, are we really working to prepare our hearts for the beginning of something new?

The birth of Christ is a big event now. But when it first happened...it was pretty simple, really kind of overlooked. The leaders of the day paid no attention to a pregnant teenage girl from humble beginnings. To a certain point I doubt the citizens of Nazareth paid much attention to a pregnant teenage girl. There was no hubbub, no craziness, no parties, or programs or anything really. In fact, this girl who is 9 months pregnant has to leave her home, walk/ride a donkey for many miles so that she can be counted in a census! Not because she is carrying God's child but because she is married to Joseph and his homeland was Bethlehem. She gives birth to this baby not in a palace, not surrounded by doctors or world leaders but with her husband at her side, no pomp and circumstance. The Bible says the angels did praise the birth of Jesus but there was really nobody else around.

A quiet Christmas? What would that look like today? In some ways we may have gotten a taste of that in 2020, although it wasn't as crazy, by then some of the craziness of life had returned. What would it look like if we took time to contemplate what is really happening in the story of Jesus' birth? What would it be like to really experience the silence of the Silent Night?

This Advent we are doing a sermon series called Comfort and Joy. We are looking at the joy that the birth of Jesus brought but also what does it look like to receive his comfort? Isaiah 40:1 says "Comfort, comfort my people! says your God" Are we bringing comfort? In the preparation we are doing for the coming of the Lord are we bringing comfort? What does that look like? I pray as we explore that this month, you will take some time out of your holiday season to think about comfort, the comfort the birth of Jesus brings us but also the comfort we can share with each other. Merry Christmas!

Until Next Time,  
Pastor Michelle



### **CHOIR SINGERS AND BELL RINGERS NEEDED**

Bell practice starts at 6:30 p.m.  
on Wednesdays  
Choir practice starts at 7:30  
p.m. on Wednesdays  
Both at Elmwood St. Paul UMC





**save the date!**



# **Quarter Auction**

**coming your way!**

**Friday, Dec. 1st**

**Doors open: 5:30 pm - Auction starts: 6:30 pm**

**At the Quonset**

**More details coming soon! Mark your calendars!**



**We will wave these paddles...**



**To help the  
Elmwood Rescue  
buy these paddles!**



**(monitors & defibrillators)**



# THANK YOU



## To the Youth Group

Thank you for collecting food and money for St. Paul UMC Food Bank. Your help with this mission is greatly appreciated. Thank You!



## Candy Cane Lane

Holiday Extravaganza Candy Cane Lane was a success with your help. The light snow falling with all those wonderful homemade items would make Hallmark jealous. Thank you to everyone for helping with Candy Cane Lane by giving of your time, talents, and generosity.

## St. Paul UMC Food Bank Dec. 16th



Cookie trays have become a tradition at the December Food Bank distribution with your help. If you would like to provide some homemade candy or cookies for this distribution, you can bring them to the Food Bank on Friday, Dec. 15 between 4:30pm – 5:30pm or Saturday, Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> between 8am-8:30am or make arrangements with Laurel and Linda.

Thank you so much for helping to make this Christmas special.



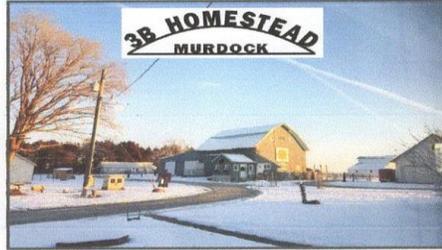
## ONGOING MISSION PROJECT – COLLECTING PLASTIC FILM FOR PARK BENCHES

As part of an ongoing mission project, the Elmwood and Murdock churches will be supporting the Elmwood Murdock FBLA and FCCLA groups in collecting 1,000 pounds of plastic film. If the groups collect their goal, they will earn two recycled plastic benches for the Elmwood Park.

Plastic film will be collected at both churches until March 15. Please collect and bring these plastic film types to help earn park benches:

- plastic grocery shopping bags
  - bubble wrap and ice bags
- plastic shipping envelopes (Amazon)
- bread bags and newspaper sleeves
  - cereal bags and Ziploc bags

# The Living Nativity 2023



You are invited to  
**The Living Nativity**  
 at the 3B Homestead, Murdock, NE. In a fun,  
 untraditional and refreshingly educational way, real stable  
 animals help tell the beautiful Christmas Story from Luke 2.  
 Many families and friends make this event a yearly  
 Christmas tradition!



**Dates and Times:**

Open to the public on Saturdays and Sundays.

- Nov. 25, 26 and Dec. 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17 anytime from 2:00 - 5:00 pm..

Open for private visits on weekdays between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

(Groups of home schoolers, preschoolers, assisted living folks, 4-H clubs, church groups, friends, etc.)

- Call 402-867-1802 and leave a message to schedule a date and time.

Open as a drive-through tour on December 23 & 24, anytime from 1 to 4:30 pm.

- Stay in your car and listen to a podcast while viewing the animals.

This Christmastime event is not a nativity "scene", but a unique presentation of the real reason we celebrate Christmas. While there, enjoy the grand 1888 barn, some cocoa, interacting with all the animals, the music, and the gift shop. Plan about 1 1/2 hours for the event. The Living Nativity is a free community outreach of the 3B Homestead, LLC. Donations are accepted to help defray expenses.

Mark and Sondra Buell | The 3B Homestead, LLC | 7603 298th Street, Murdock, NE 68407

Located on Highway 1 between Murdock and Elmwood, Nebraska which is a  
 35-40 minute drive from both Lincoln and Omaha.

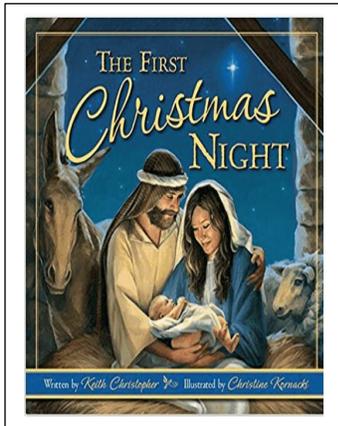
website: [www.3BHomestead.com](http://www.3BHomestead.com) | email: [3BHomestead@gmail.com](mailto:3BHomestead@gmail.com) | cell: 402-867-1802



Visit the Facebook page, 3B Homestead, for more information.



@ThreeB-Homestead



## A Christmas Prayer

God, make us aware  
 that in Thy name  
 The Holy Christ Child  
 humbly came  
 To live on earth  
 And leave behind  
 New Faith and Hope  
 for all mankind.  
 And make us aware  
 that the Christmas story  
 Is everyone's promise  
 Of eternal glory.



# December 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 5:30pm Quarter Auction at the Quonset	2 12:00pm UWF-M Christmas Luncheon
3 9:00am Worship Service – M 10:35am Worship Service – E 3:00pm UMYF - E	4 6:30pm UWF – E	5	6 6:30pm Bell Practice 7:30pm Choir Practice	7	8	9 10:00am Decorating Christmas Cookies – Community Center
10 9:00am Worship Service – M 10:35am Worship Service – E	11 7:00pm Church Council – M	12	13 6:30pm Bell Practice 7:30pm Choir Practice	14	15	16 9-11:00am Food Pantry Distribution
17 9:00am Worship Service – M 10:35am Worship Service – E	18 7:00pm Church Council - E	19	20 1:30pm Sew 'N Sews – M  6:30pm Bell Practice 7:30pm Choir Practice	21	22	23
24 9:00am Worship Service – M 10:35am Worship Service – E  5:00pm Christmas Eve Service – M 6:30pm Christmas Eve Service - E	25 Christmas	26	27 No Practices	28	29	30
31 New Year's Eve Online Worship Service available on Facebook and Church's website						

**St. Paul United Methodist Church  
P. O. Box 130  
400 West "G" Street  
Elmwood, NE 68349-0130**

**Address Service Requested**



**Mondays, December 25, 2023 and January 1, 2024**