

DECEMBER 2021



United  
Church of  
Christ

# ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

114 S Broad St. Middletown, OH 45044



"By listening to  
the still  
speaking God,  
we seek to  
connect people  
to God and to  
others through  
worship,  
service, and  
fellowship."

We are a church  
that values:  
Welcome  
Fellowship  
Outreach  
Tradition



"What do We Bring to the Christ Child?"

I'm sure many of us – if not all of us at one time or another were introduced to a new child in the family or through friends we have known. The inclination for us is to bring a gift to this child, be it a stuffed toy, rattle or some other cute gift to show our joy in this new arrival.

But, as Christmas draws near, what gift do we bring to the Christ child? The Magi brought gold, frankincense and myrrh – but what gift do we offer to Him? No rattle or other toy could ever come close to other gifts we can consider.

How about love and respect for Him, shown through the love and respect we give to others around us? Now that's a lasting gift for sure! Or how about dedicated service to Him by the service we can provide to others?

You see, no material gift is adequate for this child. He doesn't want presents for Him – He wants us to present ourselves in dutiful and humble service to others. Thus, He will treasure those gifts of love and service just like a child we may know who clutches the first stuffed toy they receive.

Christmas is a time when we give gifts to those we love. Hopefully, we give a gift or two that is meaningful to them. What could be more meaningful to the Christ Child than the giving of ourselves in service to Him and all His brothers and sisters throughout the world we live in?

He does appreciate the gift of oneself so much that He continually gave of Himself everyday of His life – and even gave His life for all of us.

So, let's celebrate His glorious birth with the sole intention of each of us giving more of ourselves to His service through our service to others. Then, will we truly realize the immense significance of gift-giving from the heart.

On behalf of Sue and all the Staff at St. Paul's, I wish each of you and your families a most blessed Christmas and holiday season!

Shalom,  
Pastor Rich

# Hanging of the greens!

December 4 @  
9am-12 pm

Please RSVP to Pastor Rich if you  
are able to attend.



## December Volunteers



DATE	GREETER	REFRESHMENTS	USHERS	LITURGIST	OPEN/CLOSE
------	---------	--------------	--------	-----------	------------

December 6	J. Ratliff	C. Kiniyalocts	L& D Adams	C. Lowman	J. Williams
------------	------------	----------------	------------	-----------	-------------

**Communion** J. Brewer/ D Flory

December 12	L. Adams	J. Batliner	C. & J Batliner	C. Batliner	J. Williams
-------------	----------	-------------	-----------------	-------------	-------------

December 19	R. Lyons	S. Luh	T & M Shibley	J. Brewer	J. Williams
-------------	----------	--------	---------------	-----------	-------------

December 26	J. Williams	G. Sorrell	R. Lyons J. Rockwell	D. Flory	J. Williams
-------------	-------------	------------	-------------------------	----------	-------------



We continue to pray for our  
homebound members  
and those with ongoing health  
concerns:

Virginia Elam Lorraine Clark  
Charlene Hale Frances  
Stoutenborough  
Calleigh Barraclough Judy Curtis  
Barbara Liggett Ruby McQuade  
Sandy Clift

**HATSOFFTOYOU**



To close out our year, today we salute a man who has been diligent in taking care of our investments and steadfastly engages in the life of the church through his efforts on the Church Council.

Bryan Canter puts together the budget for the church and handles the other financial investments that keep us afloat. He is a thoughtful and quiet member of the Council who faithfully performs the duties entrusted to him. He demonstrates wisdom and dedication to the tasks he takes on and we thank you, Bryan, for all of your efforts on behalf of St. Paul's. "Hat's off to you!"

Many thanks to those of you who have donated clothes and money to the work of this ministry since its inception back on March 2nd. Special thanks to the Church Council for supplying shelves and racks for our use and for their sincere support of this ministry by giving us use of several rooms. Without your help, we would be hard pressed to exist.

The flow of customers is steadily increasing, and much thanks go to Jim Rockwell from our church and JoAnne from the Catholic church as they have been the only volunteers to work at the Closet since its beginning. We certainly can do with more volunteers. We are open from 10-1 every Tuesday and we give clothing, shoes and toiletries away – free to those who are in need.

If you have clothing – in very good condition – that you would like to donate – you can bring them to church with you and drop them off; as we are located in the old library and old nursery next to it; or drop them off anytime between 10-2 Tuesday through Thursday. But please, call first just to make sure someone is here.

Thanks again for all your support!

Pastor Rich

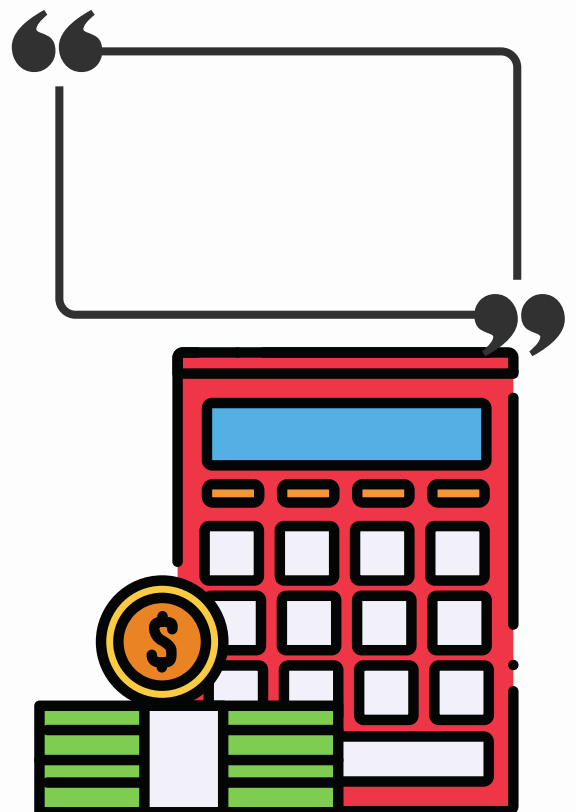


The Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund is a Special Mission Offering that congregations have been supporting for over 100 years.

The offering is administered through the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance, the charitable arm of the Pension Boards. Funds provide direct financial support to those who serve the church and are facing financial difficulties. Active and retired clergy, lay employees, and their surviving spouses may be eligible for the Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and/or Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks.



**Middletown Interfaith  
Clothes Closet**  
We've Got you Covered



ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
MIDDLETOWN, OHIO

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING - OCTOBER 24, 2021

Meeting called to order after Sunday church service.

Member quorum required was met with 25 members present.

Meeting was called to ask for funds needed for necessary plaster work to be done. After discussion, a motion was made by Chuck and seconded by Jennifer to pay \$9,675.00 to Old World Plaster to complete the work. The motion passed.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by  
Judith S Brewer,  
Church Council Secretary

**ST. PAUL'S UCC  
MIDDLETOWN, OHIO**

**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

**NOVEMBER 21, 2021**

OPENING PRAYER – Co-Moderator – Barb Flory

APPROVAL OF MINUTES from Congregational Meeting. There was a question regarding the date of the meeting listed in the agenda. It was decided to table the approval until the May 2022 Congregational meeting.

PRESENTATIONS:

Proposed 2021 church budget – Bryan Canter. Bryan explained the budget line by line pointing out the reasons for the increases and decreases.

The Pastor's Report Annual Report, the Service Report and the Property Report were included In the meeting agenda for those attending to read.

DISCUSSION & VOTE for the proposed budget – Barb Flory/Rick Lyons.

After discussion, a motion was made to accept the proposed budget for 2020 by Dan Flory and seconded by Chuck Clark. The motion passed.

CO-MODERATORS' COMMENTS

Rick – no comment

Barb – thanked everyone for sharing their time and talents to the church.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Pat Beatty wished to thank Rev. Luh for his visits...his concern, wit & humor was greatly appreciated.

CLOSING LITANY – PSALM 67. The meeting closed with a reading in unison.

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us

So that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations.

May the peoples praise you, God; may all the people praise you.

May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples with equity and guide the nations of the earth. May the peoples praise you, God; may all

the peoples praise you. The land yields its harvest; God, or God, blesses us.

May God bless us still, so that all the ends of the earth will fear him.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Judith S Brewer,  
Church Council Secretary

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
MIDDLETOWN, OHIO

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

NOVEMBER 14, 2021

PRESENT: Judy Brewer, Bryan Canter, Rick Lyons, Barb Flory, Chuck Clark, Julie Ratliff, Jennifer Batliner, Carl Batliner and Rev. Luh.

OPENING PRAYER: Chuck

APPROVAL of Minutes from September 26 & short congregational meeting on Oct. 3, 2021.

Motion to approve Jennifer/Chuck. Motion passed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA. Items 5-8 added under new business. Motion to approve as amended.

Chuck/Julie. Motion passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT. There was a question regarding the sleeping bags for Shalom...How much money was brought in as donations for purchase of sleeping bags and how much money was spent to purchase additional bags to go with those which were donated? Chuck will check with Ann. Motion made to table the acceptance of the report until the matter is clarified. Bryan/Barb. Motion passed.

PASTOR'S REPORT

In addition to my visitations to our shut-ins, I participated in the wedding of Brandi Adams this past Friday.

- We are gearing up for the Totem Fest Service on the 21st where we will remember those members who have passed on this year.
- The Clothes Closet has had steady customers these past weeks and donations keep coming in. A plea has been put out for more volunteers as we only have the same two people doing the closet each week – and I'm sure they would like a break.
- Our Bible Study continues on Tuesdays and we are starting to study the New Testament – the Book of Matthew this coming Tuesday. Those who are interested can join us.
- I would like to see us, as a Council, plus any others interested, have a mini retreat at the church – perhaps on a Saturday morning to engage in a discussion about where we are as church and what we think will be happening in the future and ideas as to what we can do. I really think we need to prayerfully think about doing this to find what ways we can not only survive but maybe thrive as a congregation. I would suggest we do this sometime in January.
- I would also like us to consider either getting different hymnals for worship or signing up for a license to print more standard hymns in our bulletins. Too many of the well-known hymns have had their words changed in this hymnal – and some have had different tunes from what people have been used to. There are some excellent hymnals out there which have some new material but maintain the old standards and we could discuss this at another meeting, if you are interested.

I will be on vacation the week of November 28th – but on call for any emergencies.

Again, thank you for your confidence in me with the salary increase. I will do my best to serve you faithfully this coming year and I look forward to serving you in 2022!

Shalom, Pastor Rich

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. BUDGET. Bryan explained the proposed budget for 2022. During the discussion, a few items were changed. A motion was made to approve the amended budget to take to the Congregation on November 14 for a vote. Carl/Julie. Motion passed.

2. SCHOLARSHIP DISCUSSION. Carl will find out more information. Tabled until December.

3. CLOTHING CLOSET CONCERNS. More volunteers are needed. A plea has been put out by Rev. Luh.

4.DIRECTORY UPDATE. Tabled until December.

5. CHRISTMAS BONUS. A motion was made to raise the amount from \$50.00 to \$75.00. Jennifer/Judy. Motion passed. Also, it was decided to purchase two \$25.00 gift cards for two special volunteers.

6. DECORATE THE CHURCH. Saturday, December 4th starting at 9:00am.

7. ADVENT BELL RINGING. Carl asked if the church bell can be rung at noon every day during Advent. Can the bell be programmed to do this? Rick will check with Larry to see if this is possible.

8. FLASH MOB. This is a proposed activity involving all the Middletown faith-based community to participate in a flash mob song to kick off the holiday season. This will happen Saturday, November 27 at n the grand opening of the ice-skating rink coming to downtown Middletown. A song will be picked and each church will take a section to perform. A few of St. Paul's members have expressed interest. Due to the small number Interested, Barb will check with the person in charge to see if we can go together with another church. She will let those who expressed interest what she finds out.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

1. AUDIT. Ann will put checks into Quick Books for 2019/2020. Once completed, Bryan and Carl will be able to do the audit.

CO-MODERATORS' REPORTS – Barb & Rick. Barb asked if there was anyone interested in helping Judy & Dan with communion. Rick said he would be interested.

SERVICE – Julie, Judy & Jennifer. Judy asked to be taken off the committee for the time being due to home concerns.

WORSHIP – Barb. Robert Walker will fill the pulpit on Nov. 28 and Dec. 26.

FELLOWSHIP – Chuck. No report

PROPERTY – Rick. Chuck mentioned that the hallway going up to the sanctuary was too dark.

Rick will check to see what can be done. There was a question concerning the doorbell – Rick will check with Ann. Rick is also looking for someone to do the snow removal. He was given a few suggestions from council.

BUDGET & FINANCE – Bryan & Carl. Already discussed in New Business #1 & Old Business #!.

NEXT MEETING: December 12, 2021

NEXT MONTH OPENING PRAYER: Barb

Attendance: October 2021 – 123 (25/5 week average)

October 2020 -- 99 (24/4 week average)

Respectfully submitted by,

Judith S Brewer, Church Council Secretary

# December 2021



SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

			1	2	3	4
6  Worship 10:15 am	7	8  Bible Study 1pm  Closet Closet 10-1	9	10  Woodworker Group	11	12
13  Worship 10:15 am  Council 11:30 am	14	15  Bible Study 1pm  Closet Closet 10-1	16	17	18	19
20  Worship 10:15 am	21	22  Bible Study 1pm  Closet Closet 10-1	23	24  Christmas Eve Service 4:30 pm  Office closed	25  	26
27  Worship 10:15 am  <b>Pastor on vacation till 12-4</b>	28	29	30	31		

St.Paul's UCC  
114 S.Broad St.  
Middletown, OH 45044



## OPEN AND AFFIRMING

1015 a.m. Worship Service  
Nursery Provided • Lift to Sanctuary • Handicap Accessible  
Holy Communion celebrated on the first Sunday of the month.

Rev. Rich Luh, Pastor  
Marsha Minge, Choir Director • Barbara Flory, Pianist

Office Hours Tuesday-Thursday, 930am-2pm or By appointment

Church Office Hours Tuesday-Thursday 11am-2pm  
Office 513-422-4519  
E Mail: [stpaulsuccmidd@att.net](mailto:stpaulsuccmidd@att.net) WEB PAGE: [stpaulsuccmidd.org](http://stpaulsuccmidd.org)

---