

Rooted in the past,
living faithfully in the present

St. Paul's United Church of Christ

January
2020

*"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

 **God
is still
speaking,**

UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

A New Year's Prayer

Yes, God, we are disoriented. We live in the age of disorientation. We cannot see straight. We cannot feel bottom. We cannot find true north. We cannot sense steady ground. We cannot see a lighthouse in our spiritual foggy. We have been kicked around, knocked down, and keeled over. Our culture's collective concussion often swings us from nauseousness to headached to dizzy to backpained and weary at every turn. This age of disorientation seems terminal some days, Lord. Our confusion and delusion sometimes seem to be drowning us. Like Peter who once believed in You and Your Way of Justice, Mercy and Humility but who then doubted his purpose and began sinking into the water he once traversed, we are drowning from our own lack of trust in the preeminence and necessity of You, O God defined by Love.

Gracious One, help us. Raise us up. Calm our storms. O God, help us not to give up. Help us not to silent our inner voice that tells us right this is not the way it is meant to be and it is not the way it will always be. Help us to know that You are with us and You will have the victory, the victory where the first shall be last and the last shall be first, where the valleys shall be exalted and the mountains and hills made low, where the crooked path shall be made straight and the rough places made plain, and where the children and the most vulnerable among us shall lead us.

O God of Perfect Grace, may we receive into our hearts the gifts You have given us, gifts by which we persevere and persist, above all Your gift of Grace. May we take care of each other and ourselves and the earth, knowing all things and beings are Your creation and our bodies are temples of Your spirit. May we in this disoriented and disorienting age get the rest we need, eat the food we should eat, and engage in activity good for our well-being and our wholeness and the earth's. May we take time to stop and sit and smell the blossoms of beauty all around us. May we take the time to stop and sit and see the tender tenacity of each blessing given to us in this earth, on this earth. May we take the time to move and walk and experience the forest from the trees and the trees in the forest. May we marry each moment we have with friends and family and loved-ones.

Yes, God, You who are Community, may we in turn care for and honor our inner need to experience community. Help us to see that the only way to do this is to experience it. May we be inspired by your own faithfulness toward us. May your love-moved life living and breathing and moving in the world move us to live-out our love for each other and for your church. May it move us to a greater commitment to faith and to this community of faith throughout the year. Help us not to be creatures of the habitual search for perfection or the perfect community.

(Continued on next page)

And finally, O Lord of Love, I pray that from this we would seek to apply the law of love, the only essential law in the universe, to our world and to our nation. May we see in friends our soil, our food, our medicine. May we see in the stranger a longing for belonging and fill it. May we see in each other kindness, compassion, care for family and community. May we see in each other we all seek good lives. May we see in each other eyes God's love mirrored, and help us to magnify and progress that love.

May this be the year not of rage or restlessness or ridicule but of a year of transformation, rootedness, and a cultivation of Your way in the world. May the Lighthouse of Your Love melt break the fog and lead us to the home of Your realm.

Amen.

I wish you all a wonderful and blessed New YearPastor Don



There is a slight change in the Church office hours. The new office hours will be Tues-Wed 11am-2:15pm **Thurs 8am-12pm**
Thank you.....Ann



Community Happenings

Around Middletown and surrounding areas ...

January 2 New Year/Zero waste habits

Make 2020 the year you finally let go of all that excess trash in your life. Tonight we'll be chatting about:
1329 Vine St Cincinnati Ohio (Hosted By Simply Zero)

January 7 Triple Moon Coffee Presents: Nalani Proctor

Nalani Proctor is a solo songwriter based in Iowa. Growing up in the small towns of Keokuk, IA, and Kahului, HI shaped her love of music, and sharing stories, but also pulled her in opposing directions of belonging, never quite fitting in as Hapa Hawaiian. Now, she's carving her own way, pulling from her personal experiences, her love of acoustic World music, underground punk and rock, folk tales she loves to retell, drawing themes from nature, painting, crafting, and sneaking in the few Hawaiian words she knows. She sings deceptively simple melodies over sometimes clunky guitar playing, letting her feet walk among organ pedals to create a soundscape to get lost in. Learn more about this one woman band at www.nalaniproctor.com, listen on spotify, apple music, or any preferred streaming service.

January 20 National MLK Day

Join us on Monday, January 20 from 12pm-5pm for FREE general admission to the museum in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Details and special program offerings at <https://freedomcenter.org/mlk-day-2020>

January 25 Woman's Self Defense Class

Free women's self defense class presented by Officers Collins and Buchanan of Hamilton City Police. RSVP to Yvonne at yvanbibber@thebenison.com
Hamilton YWCA

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES****DECEMBER 8, 2019****PRESENT:** Barb Flory, Chuck Clark, Rick Lyons, Julie Ratliff, Darlene Adams, Larry Adams, Pastor Don Erickson**ABSENT:** Judy Brewer, Bryan Canter**OPENING PRAYER:** Darlene**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 10, 2019** Approved as written. Julie/Chuck**APPROVAL OF AGENDA** Approved as written**TREASURER'S REPORT** Approved to file for audit. Julie/Larry**PASTOR'S REPORT**—Rev. Erickson reported he has written an Advent Bible study and will distribute it at church. He is working 15-20 hours a week covering sermon preparation, Bible Study preparation, pastoral care, visiting, consulting with council about profile preparation, and has set out a box to collect cards from people wanting visits**NEW BUSINESS**

1. Monthly benevolences: We will continue with the present schedule except change September from Tensing (since he is now covered in the budget) to Needy Fund. Julie/Darlene. January—St. Paul's Needy Fund; February—Hope House/Center for Women and Children; March—One Great Hour of Sharing; Lenten Offering—CUE; Easter—Abilities First; May—Strengthen the Church; June—Crayons to Computers; September—St. Paul's Needy Fund; October—Neighbors in Need; Thanksgiving—SHALOM; December—Christmas Fund—Veterans of the Cross
2. Office calendar—Council would like to see a large wall calendar in the office so we can tell at a glance when inspections are scheduled and when Friendship Hall is reserved, etc.
3. Christmas Eve service will be at the traditional time of 4:30 p.m.
4. Chili lunch—Larry will make chili and Chuck will be in charge of making peanut butter sandwiches for lunch after worship on December 15.
5. Christmas checks—Council will remember the pastor, Ann in the office, choir director, and custodian with \$50 checks. Chuck/Darlene
6. Undecorate the church—Members will be asked to stay after church on December 29 to help take down the Christmas decorations. Need—it was voted to help a member in need. Larry/Chuck

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. SHALOM—We will cover dinner and breakfast in March. There is a possibility we will be asked to help with food the week of December 15.
2. Profile—We're working on the membership list and will divide the list into active and inactive and finalize it at the January council meeting
3. Bylaws—we decided to update the wording after the profile is finished
4. Cell phone for minister—It was voted to get a phone and a basic phone plan for the minister so that number can be used for emergencies. That way the minister is reachable other than during office hours. This phone and plan will be passed from one minister to the next.
5. Use and capacity of sanctuary—Council will revisit this in January. Larry will ask the fire marshal but thinks the comfortable capacity is 150 in the sanctuary and 130 in Friendship Hall. Telephone tree was updated for use for inclement weather.

CO-MODERATORS' REPORTS—Barb & Rick—no report**SERVICE**—Julie & Judy—waiting to hear about SHALOM's need**WORSHIP**—Barb & Darlene—no report**FELLOWSHIP**—Chuck—working on next quarterly volunteer assignments**PROPERTY & MAINTENANCE**—Rick & Larry—boilers have been repaired and there is a contract for working on the blowers. The elevator was checked at no charge. Larry is working on a handout on ALICE training for the members in the event of an active shooter. We'll choose a date to train/inform the membership in January.**BUDGET & FINANCE**—Bryan—no report**NEXT MEETING:** January 12, 2020 after worship**NEXT MONTH OPENING PRAYER:** Judy

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Flory, Acting Secretary

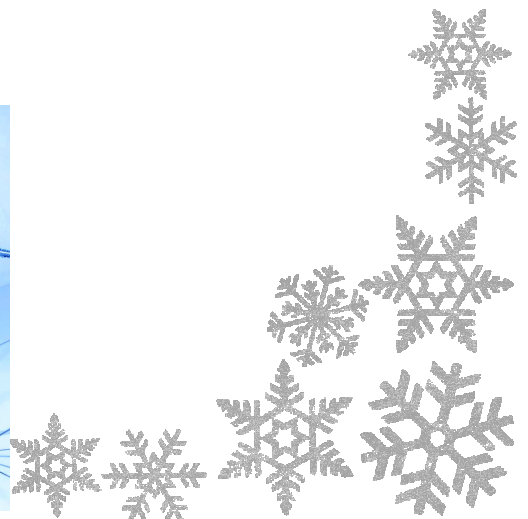
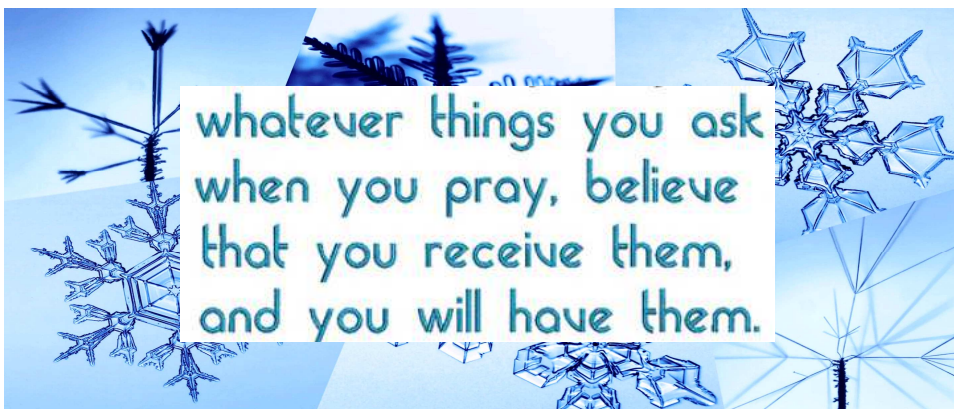
We are keeping in prayer.....

*Virginia Elam Lorraine Clark Cleo Habig Amanda
Lorig
Carroll Stein Charlene Hale Frances Stoutenbor-
ough
Shirley Fore Kathryn(O'Conner) Kuhn*

Prayers for our service men and women..

Chase McConnehea

Jake Burley



January 2020

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8 Choir 4:30 pm	9	10	11
12 Council 11:30 am	13	14	15 Choir 4:30 pm	16	17	18
19	20	21	22 Choir 4:30 pm	23	24	25
26	27	28	29 Choir 4:30 pm	30	31	

* Bible studies are held at Triple Moon Coffee shop 1100 Central Avenue, Middletown

*Reminder that children's Sunday school is held during worship on the
2nd, 3rd, and 4th Sundays of the month in the fellowship hall*

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
114 S. BROAD STREET
MIDDLETOWN OHIO 45044

OPEN AND AFFIRMING
10:15 a.m. Worship Service

Nursery Provided • Lift to Sanctuary • Handicap Accessible
Holy Communion celebrated on the first Sunday of the month.

Rev. Don Erickson
Marsha Minge, Choir Director • Barbara Flory, Pianist

Pastors Office Hours Tuesday, Wednesday 9:30a.m—2:00 p.m. Thursday by appointment
Church Office Hours Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday 11:00 am-2:00 pm

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