



PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Today is November 24th, and my thoughts are focused on Thanksgiving...thanks and giving...the two parts of November 27th. But I cannot stay in that mode because this coming Sunday is the first Sunday in Advent! This year's Christmas story is from the Gospel of Matthew. The author gives us a closer look at Joseph than the others. Read Matthew 1: 18-25 through 2: 11-12 (and if you are brave enough read the escape to Egypt and the massacre of the infants.)

Advent brings us weekly themes of hope, peace, joy and love. The color of Advent is purple or blue. Blue as in **Blue Christmas** which this year will be held on **December 10th at 7 PM**. I know this year has brought difficulty on so many levels for so many people. This service acknowledges the grief and loss that many of you are experiencing. And, it doesn't have to be just this year's loss but any form of loss that Christmas time triggers for you. It can be a challenging season.

However, I have witnessed profound acts of kindness that brought out the better angels among us. We have helped and taken care of each other. John 1:5 reads "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." I also want to remind you that we are Christmas people. We are people of hope, peace, joy and love.

I am very privileged to be your pastor, and I feel incredibly blessed to be with you. My prayers are with you always. Jeff and I pray that each of you are filled with the wonder of God's love, the joy of Mary and Joseph at Jesus' birth, the voices of angels, and presence of shepherds and Magi and the peace of the Christ child asleep on the hay.



MERRY CHRISTMAS from Pastor Bonnie and Jeff

THE CHRISTMAS FUND

This year the Christmas Fund has chosen Matthew 2:10 - "When they saw the star, they were filled with joy" as their theme. The Christmas Fund was established to be such a star shining bright in the darkness by providing financial assistance to retired and active UCC ministers, faithful church workers, and their families. In 2024 this fund offered \$1.7 million in support of 766 individuals across the United Church of Christ. Gifts have provided, among other things, hearing aids and assisted with medical bills. You will find special envelopes available with your bulletin on December 7th to be collected by December 21. Your offering no matter how big or small ensures these folks experience the love of the church in their hour of need.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Christmas Eve services will be filled with the love of carols, the joy of the Christmas story and the peace of candle lighting. I'm filled with hope that you will attend either the 2:30 or 4:30 PM services. Yes, that is a change from former Christmas Eve services. O Come Let Us Adore Him!



BLUE CHRISTMAS - WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10TH - 7 PM

This is a very intimate and simple service of prayer, song and candle lighting. If you are experiencing feelings of loss, this service is designed to gather with others who are experiencing similar feelings. As always, all are welcome. If you know someone who might find this type of service beneficial as they cope with recent or not so recent grief, please invite them.



THE SECRET PALS CHRISTMAS PARTY and Pal Reveal will be held on Sunday, December 14, at 12:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Bring an appetizer or dessert to share and a gift for your 2025 Secret Pal. New names for next year will be drawn at the event. If you are currently a Secret Pal or if you would like to be one in 2026 and are not able to attend on the 14th, please let Bernice know. We also need to discuss who can take charge of the Secret Pal Club. If you haven't been a member of the Secret Pals in the past but would like to join, please come on the 14th or see Bernice for details.



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

A \$5.00 donation toward the purchase of poinsettia plants will give you the opportunity to honor or remember a loved one at Christmas and also brighten and decorate our sanctuary.

Forms can be found on the greeters stand and can be returned to Betty Z., Karrie or Bernie with \$5.00 cash or a check made out to St. Paul's by December 14.

Donations beyond the cost of the poinsettias will be used for future Altar Committee needs



MISSION COMMITTEE

Bundle Up Brown Street

Thanks to the generosity of the St. Paul's congregation we sent 21 overloaded Christmas bags to Mr. Williams 3rd grade class at Brown Street Academy in Milwaukee. Each child received a colorful Christmas bag filled with a new warm jacket, socks, books, toys and treats. On behalf of the children who will know a warm and Merry Christmas because of your thoughtfulness, The Mission Committee sends its deep gratitude. **Remember - The Mission Committee** is collecting gift cards from Walmart and Target for "The Christmas Clearing Council of Waukesha County". The gift cards will go to kids in need from age 12-18. There will be a decorated card box on the table near the elevator. The last day for gift card collection will be 12/14, as they will be turned in by 12/16.



Women's Guild

With St. Paul's 34th annual Cookie Walk coming up on December 6, the November meeting was mostly Cookie Walk related. Volunteers are in place for the big day, cookies are being pledged, items for the Christmas sale are being assembled, Peggy's cookie decorators are signed up and eager to frost, and Santa Claus has us on his busy December schedule. Hoping that the 34th is our best Cookie Walk ever thanks to so many who are willing to bake the beautiful cookies and volunteer to help make our sale a success. We are blessed!

Your cookies for the sale can be dropped off in the fellowship hall on Friday, December 5, at 9 AM to noon, and at 5 PM to 7 PM. Please invite friends and neighbors to the Cookie Walk. The doors open at 7:30 AM, numbers are assigned at arrival and customers can shop the Christmas sale in the sanctuary while waiting for the cookie sale to begin at 9 AM.

The Guild will not meet in December. The next meeting will be held Thursday, January 15, at noon. St. Paul's women are invited and encouraged to bring a bag lunch and join us. Dessert will be furnished.

ST. TERESA OF CALCUTTA IN NORTH LAKE will be hosting a Versiti blood drive on Thursday, December 18, from 1:30 to 7:00 PM. Appointments can be made online at <https://donateblood.versiti.org> or call Rita at 262-719-2915.



DECEMBER	GREETERS	LITURGIST
7th	Bernice D. & Donna R.	John D.
14th	Vicki & Eugene D.	Jill L.
21st		Curt H.
24th		
28th	Jacquie B. & Jack D.	Jill P.

ST. PAUL'S 185th ANNIVERSARY

Another joyous celebration at St. Paul's complete with recognition of our "saints" and articles from Beulah's collection of table cloths and aprons. The Rev. Rachel Baumann's warm-hearted message was much appreciated. And, St. Paul's Pot Lucks are always five-star! Thanks to all who participated.



THANK YOU!

I received this text from Rev. Lois: "If you could, thank the congregation for welcoming me and helping me when I'd forget something. They Blessed me so much."

My personal thank you to each of you who stepped in during my absence and your prayers. You are all very dear to me. Bonnie.



Thanks to Rev. Rachel Bauman, our Associate Conference Minister, for attending our 185th Anniversary and for her message.

Thank you to Rev. John Helt for presiding over the funeral service for Ron Smith on November 8th.

A big thank you to those who have submitted their pledge card for 2026 and to Connie, Eugene and Vicki for organizing this year's stewardship campaign.

Lynn D. should get a standing ovation for employing her bulletin board talents and creating the Creation Care's Recycle Corner near the kitchen complete with a mini recycle bin etc.

A thank you also goes to Sue M. for printing the recycle brochures. If you haven't gotten one yet, we have restocked the display so help yourself.

Our thanks go to Kay O'Keane for filling in for Jill L. while she was on vacation.

Another thank you to Lynn D. for using her calligraphy skills to label our new photo directories. And if you haven't thanked Lynn, Cindy C. and Vicki D. for their ability to work collaboratively to produce an outstanding photo directory, please do so. - Also, there are cards on the greeters stand with updated addresses for John & Polly E., Diane S., Pastor Bonnie and Jeff. Be sure to pick one up!



**Change of
Address**

Thank you to Jodi S., Debbie S. and the Mission Maniacs for coordinating this year's Veteran's Celebration including a guest speaker and Breakfast!



SOMETHING TO SHARE

As I was gathering my thoughts about the meaning of Blue Christmas, I found the following credited to Kelly's Treehouse.

If you know someone who has lost a very important person in their life and you're afraid to mention them because you may make them sad by reminding them that they died — you're not reminding them, they didn't forget that they died. What you're reminding them of is that you remembered that they lived. And that is a great, great gift.

French Toast Casserole

½ loaf French bread (approx. 8 oz.) cubed

½ c. butter

1 c. packed brown sugar

6 eggs

2 c. milk

2 tsp. vanilla extract

2 tsp. cinnamon (divided)

1 T. brown sugar for topping

Powdered sugar for topping (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 425. Butter 13x9 baking pan and set aside.

2. In a small saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Stir in brown sugar until dissolved and mixture is smooth. Pour into 9x13 pan and spread evenly.

3. Add bread cubes, spreading over sugar/butter mixture.

4. In medium sized bowl, whisk eggs, milk, vanilla and 2 tsp cinnamon. Pour over top of bread cubes, ensuring that all pieces of bread are saturated. Sprinkle with remaining 1 tsp cinnamon and 1 T. brown sugar.

5. Bake in preheated oven for 25-30 minutes until top is golden brown. Remove from oven and sprinkle with powdered sugar if desired.

From Misti — *I used bakery made Walmart French bread. Try using PAM rather than butter to keep from sticking on the bottom. I used powdered sugar but wish I hadn't—it looked prettier without. Finally, I drizzled maple syrup (small amount in a zig-zag pattern) across the top right before serving* The assembled casserole can be refrigerated overnight and baked for a morning breakfast.

St. Paul's United Church of Christ
Church Council Meeting Minutes October 13, 2025

The Church Council Meeting came to order at 6 p.m. Those in attendance were Kay O., Fred D., Curt H., Connie J., Debbie S., and Vicki D. Kay read an opening prayer.

The September Council Meeting minutes were approved with corrections. The September Financial Reports were reviewed and approved. Pastor Bonnie's report is that she is working on a place to move that can help Jeff.

The New Church Directory is complete, and we are pleased with how it looks. We plan to hand it out starting at the 185th Church Anniversary. The Financial Planning/Investment Committee is looking for members. Kay will ask some potential members for interest. The snowplowing season will be starting soon. Kay will contact Jeff Schulteis regarding this years' plowing.

Pastor John H. will not be able to attend the 185th Church Anniversary. Still waiting to hear from Pastor Don N. Pastor Rachel B. will be speaking at the 185th Anniversary service. The Stewardship letters and pledge cards have been sent out. Will have a Stewardship moment for the next 2 Sundays. The Blessing of Pledges will be November 9. Hymnal shortage is noted at special events. There are 10-15 hymnals in the balcony. They should be moved to the main church pews. Will monitor to see if shortage continues and possible order more.

Kay will print the review form for Pastor Bonnie for church members to fill out. The review form will be handed out with the bulletin. They are due November 23. Kay will edit the form, so it can be used for Jill. Jill's form will be given to choir, pastor, and Sunday School teachers. Upcoming dates: Blue Christmas 12/10 7 p.m., Chili Dinner 2/22/26. Discussion regarding service times for Christmas at 2:30 and 4:30 p.m. Will need to discuss further with Pastor Bonnie.

For the upcoming budget, the council should review financial reports and flag anything that is over or expected to increase. Creation Care may propose improvement project for 2026 and should bring that to the annual meeting. Motion to combine Creation Care and Garden Committee into one budget was approved.

Liaison Report- Building and Grounds-Fred- No news. Concern regarding the outhouse. Is it functional? Is it locked? Will check with Jack D. and Bill E. Christian Education- Debbie- Continue to look for help, even for a day. Guild-Vicki- Guild planning 110th and 185th Anniversary potluck on 11/2. Technology-Kay- No news. Creation Care-Curt- Developed recycling brochure. Lynn D. made a recycling display by kitchen cart. May hand out recycling brochures with bulletin. Fellowship-all- No news. Music-Vicki- No news. Mission-Kay- Christmas Child Boxes and Brown Street Academy coats and Waukesha County Clearing House gift card collection to start soon.

The meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m. Our next meeting is November 10 at 6 p.m.



December 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Seniors	3	4 Cookie Decorating 9 AM	5 Cookie Drop off 9 AM to noon, and from 5 – 7 PM	6 Cookie Walk 9 AM
7 9:30 Worship	8 Council mtg 6 PM	9 Barb B.	10 7 PM Blue Christmas Service	11	12	13
14 9:30 Worship Children's Christmas program Secret Pal Gathering 12:30	15	16	17	18	19 Blood Drive @ St. Calcutta 1:30—6:30	20
21 9:30 Worship	22 Norb & Barb B., & Erik & Connie J. Anniversary	23 Chapel Bell items due to Donna	24 Christmas Eve Services 2:30 & 4:30 PM	25 Mike J. Marvin S.	26	27 Charles K. Jr.
28 9:30 Worship	29	30 Jodi S.	31	Merry Christmas!		