

## COVID COMMITTEE REPORTS

We're ready to return, but we will care for each other as we do! Our Administrative Board established a Covid Committee to oversee our re-entry to our sanctuary. That group of about a dozen active members has met several times and has developed an approach to worship that is designed to control the risks to all in the best way possible. An important factor remains the directive of our Iowa Bishop that in-person worship be suspended to and including Sunday, January 10, 2021.

Plans are to begin worship back in our sanctuary on Sunday, January 17th, at the usual time. No Sunday School yet-that will be a later decision to include our teachers. Some things to expect:

1. Entry to the church will ONLY be through the west door.
2. Masks are required and will be available if you come without one. Face shields are not a substitute.
3. We will observe social distancing, both with entry in and out and as we are seated; 6 foot of separation from those with whom we don't live.
4. No coffee fellowship after worship.

The usual important directives will continue: if you have any Covid symptoms or have been exposed to someone with those symptoms, stay home; and if you're a "high risk" person, consider staying home until you're not.

It will soon be time to rediscover our church family and to resurrect our church life. We can do this with your help!

## 2020 CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

In memory of our parents  
Given by Dick and Betty Point

In memory of Lester and Eva Ary  
Given by the Cook families

In memory of Jean and Jack Cook  
Given by their grandchildren

In memory of Kip and Miki Fisher  
Given by Jan and John Cook

In memory of our parents  
Given by Don and Jeanne Blackstone

In memory of Carvel and Bea Burkhart  
Given by the Burkhart Family

In memory of Terry Burkhart  
Given by Linda Burkhart and Michael Burkhart  
and family

In memory of Dr. and Mrs. M.D. Hayden  
Given by Dr. Pat Harrison and family  
and Linda Burkhart and family

## POINSETTIAS (continued)

In memory of our mother and grandma,  
Delores Taylor,  
Given by Mike and DeAnna Taylor and family

In memory of our mother and grandma,  
Jean Smidt,  
Given by Mike and DeAnna Taylor and family

In honor of Doyle and Margaret Simonsen  
Given by Mark and Kathy Simonsen and family

In memory of Jim and Mary Morgan  
Given by Mark and Kathy Simonsen and family  
and Chuck and Sally Knoblen and family

In memory of loved ones  
Given by Mary Jo Carnine

In memory of Harold Parker  
Given by Wes and Sue Parker

In honor of Clare and Fran's 21 1/2 birthday  
on 12/25/2020  
Given by Bonni Conley

In memory of Paul Wetherell  
Given by Carol Wetherell  
Brenda and Monty Kluger  
Brad and Zona Wetherell and Justin Dixson  
Brent, Monica, Cole, and Blake Ann Wetherell

In memory of George Phipps, Joyce Phipps Pyle,  
Patty Pyle, and Colleen Hultman  
Given by Neil and Jodi Phipps

In memory of our loved ones  
Given by the Jim Corrington Family

In memory of Dick and Connie Means, Ronald  
Means, Norma Longstaff, and Marvin Miller  
Given by Doug and Julia Miller

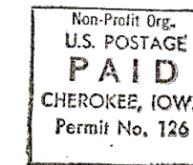
## CONTACT US

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



## January 2021 UMW Buzz

The UMW Executive Board will meet on Monday, January 11th, at 9:30 a.m. in the Schuldt Dining Hall.

Charity Circle will meet on Wednesday, January 20th, at 1:30 p.m. in the Schuldt Dining Hall.

## PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY

We extend our deepest sympathy to Flo Jensen and all of her family. Flo's grandson, Mathew James Williams, 26, of Paullina, Iowa passed away Friday evening, November 20th, due to injuries received in a motor vehicle accident. A memorial service for Mathew Williams and a time of sharing memories was held on Saturday, November 28th, at the Boothby Funeral Home in Cherokee. Burial will be in the O'Brien Liberty Cemetery at Calumet, Iowa.

## PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY

We extend our deepest sympathy to Tom and Linda Rutter and all of their family. Tom's sister, Jean LaVonne Benedict, 81, passed away at her home on Saturday, November 21st, of natural causes. A memorial service will be planned in Shelton, Washington at a later date. A graveside service will be held in Marcus, Iowa in early July 2021.

## PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY

We extend our deepest sympathy to Mike and Cara Lubeck and all of their family. Mike's brother, Dennis Paul Lubeck, 65, passed away on Monday, November 23rd, at Methodist Care Center in Des Moines, Iowa. A funeral service for Dennis Lubeck was held on Friday, November 27th, at the Greenwood-Schubert Funeral Home in Cherokee, with Pastor Jonathan Riggert officiating.

## PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY

We extend our deepest sympathy to Larry and Shelley Lenz and all of their family. Larry's mother, Elsie Virginia Lenz, 96, of Cherokee, passed away Friday morning, December 4th, in the Cherokee Specialty Care. Private family services for Elsie Lenz will be held at a later date. The Boothby Funeral Home in Cherokee is assisting the family with arrangements.

## PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY

We extend our deepest sympathy to David and Colleen Elliott, Arlene Christensen, and all of their family. David's mother and Arlene's sister, Dorothy J. Elliott, 91, of Cherokee, passed away on Saturday, December 5th, in the Cherokee Regional Medical Center. Private family services for Dorothy Elliott were held at the Boothby Funeral Home on Wednesday, December 9th, with Pastor Cris DeCious officiating. Burial followed in the Oakhill Cemetery.

## PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY

We extend our deepest sympathy to Judy O'Neal and all of her family. Judy's brother, Frank "Pots" Holway, 78, passed away on Saturday, December 5th, in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

## PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY

We extend our deepest sympathy to Lee Ann Christensen and all of her family. Lee Ann's mother, Betty Jean Siegfried, 92, of Cherokee, formerly of Minnetonka, Minnesota, passed away on Sunday morning, December 6th, at Accura HealthCare. A private family graveside service for Betty Siegfried was held at Lakewood Cemetery in Minneapolis, Minnesota on Monday, December 14th. Boothby Funeral Home assisted the family with the arrangements.



# THE DOME

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ST. PAUL'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
January 2021

## MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

This morning I have been thinking a lot about the finance situation in our church family here at St. Paul's United Methodist Church. Over the years, other pastors and I have joked when asking each other the question, "What do you have in your church? Do you have tippers or tithers?" Most pastors and church attenders will smile at this because they realize that the question being asked is, "Do you have people that invest and seriously support your church or is your church filled with people who throw a dollar or two into the offering plate?"

I can remember that my great-grandmother used to take me to church on different occasions. She attended the local United Methodist Church in her area. She was always Methodist! She sat in the same place, shook hands with the same people, exchanged a few words of fellowship, and always had a one dollar bill rolled up in her hand ready for the offering plate. I noticed when the plate passed in front of me it was filled with rolled up one dollar bills! I am not saying that it was a good or a bad thing that she and many others only placed a rolled up one dollar bill into the offering plate. She also donated pies, cakes, cookies, and sold things like knives through the United Methodist Women. She also volunteered hours of her time for fundraisers and funeral dinners. But, I knew at that young age that it was going to take more than a few one dollar bills from people to run the expenses of the church. I also knew that she and her friends spent quite a bit more money on drinks and bingo cards at her weekly visits to the bingo hall.

Please don't think me being hard on her. She was a wonderful woman and a widow. She did not have a large income and for the most part lived off of Social Security. So, I don't fault her at all with her decisions. I know that she was always very pleased when I became a United Methodist preacher. I do, however, understand that there is a range of giving in our congregations that goes between the tipping and the serious giving that we receive in the church. This is the other word that is used in that question. Tithing.

I have to tell you, however, I have a problem with tithing. Not that tithing is a bad thing in itself, but people have an attitude that tithing is like being taxed. In the Old Testament, God instructed the people to bring their tithing and offerings into the church and not steal from the Lord. The word tithe means ten percent of your income. People then ask, "Does this come before taxes or after taxes?!" An offering is everything after the ten percent. But, is this what we are expected to do today? Is God going to punish us if we don't tithe and give an offering?

I think that we have the question and the concept wrong. I don't believe that God wants us to think of the

giving of our finances as a tip for good service. I don't believe that God wants us to see our tithing like a tax that has to be paid. I believe that God wants us to give with a good attitude and with a heart full of joy. God wants us to see it as investing in God's kingdom in our church and our community. God wants us to invest in our community of faith just as we invest and spend money on anything in our lives that truly matters to us. When we have been pleased with how God has helped us through our church family we will have a reason to invest in the kingdom of God. When we realize that our lives are better because of what Christ has done for us, we want to pass on that blessing and make it possible for our church to reach out and help other people who need help in our community and beyond. This is missional giving. But, the giving starts in our church to keep our church doors open and keep the vision alive.

Many in our congregation wouldn't dream of not saving up for retirement. Likewise, we wouldn't dream of gambling our finances away. We diligently and keenly watch over our expenditures and make sure we save up for a rainy day. However, we need to consider our church here at St. Paul's. Just as there was a sacrificial giving through the years from those who came before us to build our building and keep our bills paid, it is our turn. I am encouraging all of us to take a personal responsibility as we move into 2021 to watch over the finances here at St. Paul's UMC and invest in our future. I want you to consider the questions this morning from the Lord as you will face God one day and he will ask, "Were you a tipper, a tither, or an investor in my kingdom?"

If you have not returned your pledge card to our Finance Committee, please consider doing it as soon as you finish reading this article. Our pledges on which we build our budget for the new year are down over \$120,000 this year. We need all of our church membership to step up to the plate, and it's time to invest in our future generations. Please consider being an investor here at St. Paul's, so that we can keep our doors abundantly open! God Bless You!

See you Sunday!

-Pastor Cris

## LIFTING UP IN PRAYER

Please keep the following members of our church family in your prayers: Priscilla Bainbridge who had knee replacement surgery on December 10th and Jeff Blum who had an emergency appendectomy on December 14th. If you'd like to let Priscilla and Jeff know you're thinking about them, here are their addresses: Priscilla Bainbridge 709 West Beech Street, Cherokee, IA 51012. Jeff Blum, 510 North Craig Drive, Cherokee, Iowa 51012.

## PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY

We extend our deepest sympathy to Will and Sarah Cook and all of their family. Sarah's father, Paul L. Patterson, 81, of Bloomington, Illinois, passed away on Saturday, December 19th. Cremation rights have been accorded. A private family service for Paul Patterson will be held on Monday, December 28th. Burial of ashes will be at the Funks Grove Cemetery in Funks Grove, Illinois.

## THANKS FROM THE KNOBENS

Thank you to our church family and friends for the 50th anniversary wishes. We feel very blessed to hear from you.  
-Chuck and Sally Knobens

## THANK YOU FROM CAP

We want to thank you for the money and food you have recently given to the Christian Action Pantry (CAP). We serve 60 to 70 families each month, so you can see how much you have helped.

Sincerely,

Teresa Westcott, Jeff Blum, and all the volunteers

## FINANCE COMMITTEE NEWS

Because of a favorable mistake made when reviewing expenses, and a slight increase in giving in September, October, and November, pledges are at 85% of what we had budgeted to the end of November. Thankfully, we also received \$41,000 in two large gifts and \$30,500 from the Payroll Protection Program. Without these blessings, we would have an approximate \$27,000 shortfall at the end of the year. As it is, we may have a small surplus to carry us into next year.

There is serious concern for our 2021 financial needs. As of December 2nd, we have received 39 pledges with \$59,720 being allocated to the General Fund, \$9,925 to Capital Improvement, and \$6,410 to Next Generation. At this time last year, we had double the pledges and three times the dollar commitment. As the committee worked on the 2021 budget, it was our thought that as we return to in-person church services, giving would also return to a more normal level. Therefore, we budgeted \$201,440 for next year's pledges. If you have not made a 2021 commitment to St. Paul's, please consider doing so. Please, let us all continue to generously fulfill our church's ministry. Thank you for your concern and for your support.

## UPPER ROOM DEVOTIONALS

Over the past several weeks, I have delivered the Upper Room Devotionals to many members of our St. Paul's Church family. I have also mailed copies to a number of people. If you would like the January/February issue of the Upper Room, you may phone me directly at 221-1530. I will be glad to deliver the Upper Room magazine to your home. I can also send it in the mail, if you would prefer to receive it that way.  
-Meribeth

## HY-VEE RECEIPTS

We'd appreciate it if you'd please continue to save your Hy-Vee receipts. While the church is closed, you may slip the receipts through the mail slot located to the right of the doors leading into our Education Wing. Thanks!

-Jeff Blum