

### ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS GIFT GUIDE

The Missions Committee will again be offering the Alternative Christmas Gift Guide as one way to give a Christmas gift to a loved one, as well as making a difference in the life of someone else in need. In this gift guide, you will find various agencies and missions that are really making a difference in the world. Why not consider making a donation to these agencies in honor of a special person in your life? We encourage you to look through the gift guide and give this idea some consideration. An order form is included and the Missions Committee will be present in the narthex before church from December 1st through December 22nd to assist you with any order and offer you an acknowledgement card that you can use with all gifts. This year we will be offering gifts from the Heifer Project, Church World Services, and missionary support for the Kies, as well as a collection on December 8th for Cherokee's own Needy Children's Auction.

### CHRISTMAS COOKIE TIME APPROACHES

Our Christmas cookie plate project will be Sunday, December 8th. As you begin your holiday baking, the cookie batch you set aside for St. Paul's will help to maintain the numbers and varieties of this holiday treat that we have enjoyed for years. Your donated cookies will be sorted to trays starting at 9 a.m. on December 8th, so dropping your contribution by the church kitchen on Saturday the 7th or first thing on the 8th will be important. Call the church office if you need someone to pick up your cookies. Proceeds of this project support the many ministries here at St. Paul's.

### CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

We are looking forward to our children's Christmas program on Sunday, December 15th, during our morning worship. Following the service, our traditional soup luncheon will be served in the Schuldt Dining Hall. No reservations are needed. Please join us!

### CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

In our family tradition here at St. Paul's, we will have our Christmas Eve service on December 24th, at 5:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. Come warm your hearts as we gather together to officially welcome Christmas Day and the Christ Child into our hearts.

### VISITATION TEAM MEETING

The St. Paul's visitation team will be meeting on Wednesday, December 4th, at 9:30 a.m. in the office.

### UMW CHRISTMAS BRUNCH CANCELED

The UMW Christmas Brunch that had been scheduled for Thursday, December 5th, has been canceled.

### CARE & SHARE SHOP NEWS

The Care & Share Shop is in need of donations of bath towels, drinking glasses, cooking pots and pans, and silverware. If you have any of these items you would be willing to donate, please bring them to the church. If you are interested in volunteering in the shop, please contact Jennifer Decious at (712) 229-7628.

The Care & Share Shop has new hours. We are now open Wednesday and Friday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. On Thursdays, the shop is open from 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Please spread the word. Also, please like Saint Paul's Care and Share Thrift Shop on Facebook and Instagram and share our posts to get the word out to people. We appreciate your support!

### OUR SHARED MINISTRY

#### LITURGISTS FOR DECEMBER

December 1 Don Blackstone  
December 8 Linda Rutter  
December 15 Children's Program  
December 22 Linda Appleby  
December 29 Amy Stief

#### CHILDREN'S MESSAGE FOR DECEMBER

December 1 Jeanne Blackstone  
December 8 Pastor Cris Decious  
December 15 Children's Program  
December 22 Dave Appleby  
December 29 Amy Stief

#### GREETERS FOR DECEMBER

December 1 Kevin and Karla Wilkie  
Bob and Jeanine Schroder  
December 8 Darrel and Sue Paulsen  
Rod and Priscilla Bainbridge  
December 15 Virgil Pyle  
Lowell and Sharon Bennink  
December 22 Joan Lucas  
Larry and Joyce Goodrich  
December 29 Roni Timmerman  
Lowell and Sharon Bennink

#### USHERS FOR DECEMBER

December 1 Peggy Rasch  
Wes and Sue Parker  
Scott Osborn and Marla Conley  
December 8 Peggy Rasch  
Dick Point  
Donna Lucas  
Amy and Madi Stief  
December 15 Macaib Appleby, McKenna Benson,  
Amelia Brown, Aurora Christensen,  
and Maverick Stief  
December 22 Austin Lucas  
Dave and Donna Lucas  
Scott Osborn and Marla Conley  
December 24 Sue Parker  
Austin and Meg Lucas  
Dave and Donna Lucas  
December 29 Roni Timmerman  
Doug and Sandi Stowater  
Lowell and Sharon Bennink

#### OUR STEWARDSHIP

Date	Worship Attendance	General Fund	Next Generation
November 3	139	4,968.00	629.00
November 10	126	3,187.00	429.00
November 17	126	2,879.00	229.00

#### OUR MINISTRY SUPPORTED

Budget expense 44 weeks into the year: \$198,484  
Received to support budgeted expenses: \$171,091

#### CONTACT US

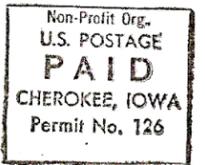
Church Phone (712) 225-3955  
Pastor Cris's phone (515) 423-6421  
The Rev. Cris Decious cris.decious@iaumc.net  
Meribeth Adams meribethadams@outlook.com



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



### December 2019 UMW Buzz



**Executive Board Meeting - Monday, December 9th  
9:30 a.m. in the Schuldt Dining Hall**

**Advent Tryst at St. Paul's UMC  
Wednesday, December 11th at 9:30 a.m.**

**No December Circle Meetings**

*"For Unto Us a Child is Born." Isaiah 9:6*

## PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY

We extend our deepest sympathy to Sherry Held and all of her family. Sherry's brother-in-law, Dale Harris, 92, of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, passed away on October 26th, at the Emmetsburg Care Center. A memorial service for Dale Harris was held on Thursday, October 31st, at First United Methodist Church in Sioux Falls.

## PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY

We extend our deepest sympathy to Tiffany Christensen and all of her family. Tiffany's grandmother, Peggy J. Grashoff, 83, passed away on October 28th, at Accura Healthcare in Aurelia, Iowa. A funeral service for Peggy Grashoff was held on Friday, November 1st, at Boothby Funeral Home, with Pastor Cris Decious officiating.

## PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY

We extend our deepest sympathy to Louis and Sheree Hausmann and all of their family. Louie's mother, Ruth Iona Hausmann, 96, passed away on October 31st. Mass of Christian Burial for Ruth Hausmann took place on Tuesday, November 5th, at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Cherokee. Father Mark Stoll officiated at that service.

## PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY

We extend our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Wilma Irene Wenck. On November 5th, Wilma passed away at her home in The Gardens Assisted Living in Cherokee, having reached the age of 92. A memorial service for Wilma Wenck was held on Friday, November 8th, at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, with Pastor Cris Decious officiating.

## PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY

We extend our deepest sympathy to Dawson and Connor Voge. Their grandfather, Gerald "Jerry" Voge, passed away at Accura Healthcare in Cherokee on November 16th, at the age of 81. A funeral service for Jerry Voge was held on November 20th, at the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, with Father Mark Stoll officiating.

## WARMEST CONGRATULATIONS

We warmly congratulate Dustin and Jessica Wieland on the birth of their son. Benjamin David Wieland was born at the Cherokee Regional Medical Center on Thursday, November 7th. He weighed 6 lb. 14 oz. and was 20 inches long. Benjamin's very proud grandparents are Will and Sarah Cook of Cherokee, Kenny and Melanie Petersen of Correctionville, and Dennis and Jan Wieland of Aurelia.

## THANK YOU FROM THE UMW

The United Methodist Women would like to give a very big thank you to all those who helped with the Election Day luncheon and bake sale. Together, the bake sale and luncheon cleared over \$2,000. Thanks to everyone's efforts, we had another very successful fundraiser for our church!

## THANKS FOR ALL THE BAKE SALE ITEMS

Thanks to everyone who brought goodies for the Election Day bake sale. We took in \$680, so we were very pleased!

-Jeanne Blackstone



## MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

RING!!!! This ringing sound is how we are approached every Christmas season by the Salvation Army bell ringers who stand outside the local businesses. What an annoying sound! In fact, it has come to the point where many of the businesses where Salvation Army bells are rung for the red kettle campaign ask for the bells to not be rung. This is because the sound can be annoying for people with sensitive ears and the sensitive workers listening to the ringing over a long period of time.

Perhaps the bell ringing actually becomes the voices of those who are suffering in this world and have needs that are annoying to the rest of us. RING...this family doesn't have enough money to pay their electric bill this month. RING... this small boy needs a new coat and boots. RING... this woman needs a place that is safe from an abusive situation but cannot get the financial help she needs to rent her own place. RING... this little girl needs grocery vouchers to get her some food until the end of the month.

What are these needs that bother and haunt us? Are they pictures of the derelict from broken families in our community? Are they lazy and inept people who have come to sponge on our faith communities? No. They are God's children that have worth and value. They are people who are trying to make it through the Christmas season with joy and peace in the midst of a struggling life. There will be many that pass me by that are struggling to maintain any sense of joy and peace. There are struggles beyond what my mind can imagine possible who need our compassion and love.

Let's make a point this Christmas season at St. Paul's to pay attention to the struggles that may be going on right under our comfortable noses. All we want to do is float gracefully through this season and deal with our own aches and pains. But God has called our Body of Christ to meet the needs of those caught in poverty. Yes, they need a hand. They need our hand. A hand reaching out and lifting up.

Thank God that we have food pantries and programs available locally to people. Families show up and get help from food pantries and programs. We just ended our food drive. While it may only be one can to you, or one dollar to you, it is one can in a bag of groceries. It is your dollar put together with my dollar to buy a tank of gas or help with an electric bill.

For many years we have stood in solidarity here at St. Paul's in our Alternative Christmas Gift Program. As a family of God in Cherokee, we have stood and supported four programs at Christmas time. Together we have made a difference in Cherokee, our state, our country, and Africa. Last year you may have given the gift of a llama, sheep, goats, or geese through the Heifer International program. This means that you made a difference for an impoverished family. Now they have had help that has been a hand-up, not just a hand-out.

Perhaps you gave to Larry and Jane Kies from Zimbabwe last Christmas. Their instruction to farmers has created hope for the future of their country. Skills and knowledge come at a cost. You may have given to the Church World Service Blankets Program. One ten dollar blanket made a difference to warm a child during this year. Stan Sitzmann has used your donations for the Needy Children's Auction. This year he is celebrating his 50<sup>th</sup> year. In this final year, your donation makes a difference to each family in need.

Let's help struggling families this Christmas who are in constant fear and dread of what tomorrow brings to their home and children. We don't want them to lose hope and confidence in God. They inevitably blame God for their conditions. God is reaching out through us. How can we help?

As the body of Christ, we realize that this problem in our town, in our state, and in our world is bigger than all of us. But, the body of Christ working together and asking God for answers gives powerful results. Together we can make a difference. God is bigger. When we join together in unity this Christmas to monetarily give beyond our immediate family to St. Paul's "Four Gifts of Love" 2019 Alternative Christmas Gift Program, we are pleasing God. God is pleased when we decide to make Christmas about giving to help those around us living in need.

While we may not notice that needy family that is living in a hut on a dirt floor or a rental, and don't have enough clothing or food, it doesn't mean that they aren't there. It just means that you don't see them. This Christmas, join me and others to remember the poor and needy as we pass the Salvation Army Bell Kettles. Say a prayer for those in need and drop in some change. Change brings change. Give the gift of warmth, health, living, and hope this Christmas. Let's create a truly Merry Christmas not just in our house, but in homes everywhere. Enjoy your December.

See you Sunday!

-Pastor Cris

# THE DOME

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF ST. PAUL'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
December 2019



**OUR AWESOME 3RD GRADE STUDENTS**  
These 3rd grade students were presented their Bibles during the worship service on Children's Sabbath Sunday, October 27th. (Left to right): Amaria Harman, Connor Gordon, Mya Benson, Noah Anderson, and Grady Anderson. The children also received crosses that were lovingly tatted by Veda Santos and Donna Campbell.

## THANKS FROM THE SCHMIDTS

We want to thank everyone who helped make the cinnamon roll sale so successful! You parents and Senior High youth were so willing to do what needed to be done. We were sorry we could not be a part of it this year, but all of you stepped up and we have been told you did a great job. Special thanks to Jeff Blum for overseeing the purchase of the rolls, setting up for the sale, and doing whatever else needed to be done. Thank you, again this year, to Shelley Lenz for managing the kitchen: baking, frosting, cleaning, and directing! Thank you, St. Paul's members and friends, for purchasing the rolls. Your donation makes the Christmas season memorable for the boys at the Midwest Christian Home. God bless you! -Craig and Monica

## PHYLLIS PARROTT'S CORRECT ADDRESS

Phyllis Parrott's new address is 540 Iowa Street, Denver, IA 50622, c/o Tricia Kurtz.

## CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

Orders are now being taken for poinsettias from Blooming House. The cost for each poinsettia is \$15.50, and they may be taken home on Christmas Eve by those who purchased them. The last day to order poinsettias this year will be Monday, December 9th.

## THANKS FOR THE FOOD BANK DONATIONS!

The Missions Committee extends a heartfelt thank you to all who donated food or cash for our 2019 Food Drive. The three Food Banks in Cherokee were very appreciative of the boxes of food we delivered to them this week. The \$105 in cash donations was given to Trinity Food Bank to help with the baskets they assemble for needy families at Thanksgiving and Christmas. They indicated that this would be very helpful in purchasing some perishable items for those baskets. A total of 340 nonperishable or personal hygiene items were donated by our generous congregation, and for this great effort we are very thankful!

-Sue Parker, Missions Committee

## SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGING

Sign-up sheets are now on the display board in the narthex to ring bells with the Salvation Army. Time slots start on Friday, November 29th. Please consider volunteering an hour or so of your time, as 90% of the money collected in Cherokee County helps local people in need.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL UPDATE

Because of the Thanksgiving holiday, there will be no Sunday School classes on December 1st. However, Jeanne Blackstone will be handing out her awesome Advent calendars that Sunday during the Children's Message, so we hope to have many children in church. Sunday School classes will resume on December 8th.

## CLERGY CHRISTMAS DINNER

We are looking for three or four volunteers to help set up the place settings on the tables in the dining room and also to clean up afterwards and wash the dishes for the annual clergy district Christmas dinner on Friday, December 6th. If you are able to help us with this, please contact Pastor Cris. Thank you.

## 2019 NEEDY CHILDREN'S AUCTION

In 1969, Stan Sitzmann organized the very first Needy Children's Auction. This year Stan will be putting together the 50th, and also his last, Needy Children's Auction on Saturday, December 14th! Stan will be visiting St. Paul's on Sunday, December 8th, as we have designated that Sunday as our Special Offering for this Auction. Let's make this a great response as we thank Stan and his team for their 50 years of helping out the children of our community. Due to the fact that our collection is so close to their shopping days, we are changing our format a bit. If you are making a donation by check, please make it out to the Needy Children's Auction. If you make a cash donation, please use the regular envelopes found in the pews or the Special Offering envelopes that will be inside your bulletin on December 8th. Be sure and clearly mark on the outside of the envelope that the donation is for the Auction. This will enable us to get the funds to the committee in a timely manner. Donations for the Auction will be taken from now until December 8th through the church. Donations may also be sent to Stan Sitzmann at Accura Healthcare, or they can be dropped off at Noggin Water to Abby Harding. Let's make the 2019 Needy Children's Auction a **GOLDEN EVENT!**