

# MONTHLY NEWS OF SAINT PAUL BENSON

## Inspiration

March 2020

We are God's people, working together to accomplish something bigger than ourselves, effecting change in our community, in our nation, and around the world—all in the name of Jesus Christ.

### PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE

According to wikiHow, "memory can be a fickle thing. Sometimes we remember the smallest details of moments that we'd rather forget, and we struggle to recall the most important things." Is there anyone else that makes a to-do list each morning, not so much to feel a sense of accomplishment as to remember what 'to do' during the day? Wiki-How continues, "if you take the time to understand how your memory works, you can use these natural tendencies to remember more things, more easily." Well now, there's an open door to encouraging one's gray matter! Perhaps we can apply this to the Lenten journey we

find ourselves beginning. Lent offers us a time to remember what is truly important in our lives, altering them for the better, and forgiving ourselves for the human flaws that can consume us.

First, *be mindful about creating memories*: is God calling you? During the Lenten season God's call to us is to slow down and breathe; to consciously look at where we have been and where we should be going; to turn around from that which harms us and to step into whole living with the Eternal. These next six weeks offer us afresh the chance to create memories with loved ones, friends, or a loving fur baby! A memory that we can cherish is something for which our hearts long, our inner spirits crave, and our minds need to stay sharp. *If you make this moment a significant and conscious act of storing a memory, you may find it much easier to recall the memory later.*

Second, *engage your visual memory*: where do you see God? A great-granddaughter's smile; the swirling leaves on a windy, grey day; the deep set eyes of an elderly friend? Social media offers a plethora of beautiful images reminding us of God's presence. On any given Sunday morning, the Saint Paul Sanctuary paints in breathtaking stained glass the presence of God. One of the rituals over the past thirty years is that of a 5:45 a.m., block and one-half walk to work! It has been a joy, even on the most inclement of mornings, to savor that brief jaunt visually...dark, moon, the outline of the bell tower, a simmering boiler chimney...each memories to remind me of God's presence in this place. Rather than worrying about what to give up in these next six weeks, perhaps we can take inspiration from making a visual memory. *It can be hard to remember everything that you hear...memory is a primarily visual function.*

And third, *use your imagination*: how is God made manifest to you? Reading Scripture can be an informative place to begin about God-images..."our Rock and Hiding Place," writes the psalmist. My dear friend, the Rev. Susan Sanders, always says, "I don't need pictures or movies...I can imagine Jesus for myself!" Many hymns and songs of faith offer a glimpse into what a manifestation of the Almighty could be for you. "The care the eagle gives her young" has always inspired me to think of God in tangible terms. "A mighty fortress" might bring comfort to you. Or "somebody knockin' at your door" could bring you to know God's care and love, even when we don't expect it. *Conjure a vivid mental image* these next six weeks, give your spirit pause to wander through the Scriptures or the hymnal and see how God might appear to you anew.

Now, where did I put my glasses?

Rev. Jerry

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Stephanie Rosenberger  
*Director of Children's  
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Sue Bacon  
*Communications Coordinator*

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*Building Engineer*

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The Inspiration is published monthly. Information is due to the editor by the 19th of the month to be included in the next issue.

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# Feel the heat - Opportunity for Giving

Perhaps you have noticed that during February our building seemed to be either hot or cool but rarely just right? We are blessed with a complex system for heating that involves a large boiler, a midsize boiler and a furnace; when all three are working, we are able to control our heating fairly well to mediate between the temperatures outdoors and indoors. Our smaller boiler gave us a bit of a scare this last month, but after some bedrest and a week of inpatient surgery it will be back and running before you read this - and for significantly less than a replacement system. We welcome donations for this "hospital bill," aka the repair bill for the boiler, which came in at around \$10,000. Mark your donation "boiler repair" and we will gladly credit to our fundraising efforts for this project.

## Staff Transitions

I find it bittersweet to report that our Financial Secretary, Connie Almgren, has decided to retire after over ten years of dedicated service at Saint Paul. Connie has provided consistent and accurate care for our financial matters and we will miss both her good work and her personality.

Beginning in March we will be transitioning to a slightly different configuration to care for our financial affairs. Jayne Meisinger, our Membership Secretary, will add the title Financial Secretary to her portfolio. She will have responsibilities for using the same system that updates our membership records to update our giving records.

We have hired Noni Cambridge to fill the position that for now will be known as Bookkeeper to handle payroll and tasks related to the church checkbook. Noni already serves in this capacity at two other United Methodist churches in Omaha, and I look forward to working with her to increase our efficiency and implement best practices in this department. In addition, I will be working with a few volunteer lay people to reorganize our process for invoice/spending approvals in our various departments so we have better clarity about our spending channels.

I hope you will join me in thanking Connie for her service, supporting Jayne as she adds to her portfolio, and welcoming Noni to Saint Paul UMC.

Rev. Ahlschwede

I would like to furnish \_\_\_\_\_Easter Lilies @ \$10 ea.:

In \_\_\_\_\_ honor \_\_\_\_\_ memory of:

\_\_\_\_\_

In \_\_\_\_\_ honor \_\_\_\_\_ memory of:

\_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_

The five weeks of **March** will take us on the Lenten journey as we hear familiar stories of Christ's work in and among us. The preaching theme from Pastors Stephanie and Marta will be words that begin with the letter "w" as found in the lectionary Gospel accountings. Wait and watch...and be in worship!

## M & M Continues

Our monthly M & M service to be held Wednesday, **March 18**, at 6:00 p.m. will be a special service of healing for mind, body and spirit. We will celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion with an anointing of oil as part of our time together in the Roth Chapel.

## Clergy Corner—Rev. Marta Wheeler

It's hard to believe that some of our youth group members are preparing for high school graduation this spring! When I became the youth pastor at St. Paul over four years ago, most of the youth had been newly confirmed and were in the 7-8<sup>th</sup> grade.

It is rewarding to work with young people who are developing their talents. This may involve art, music, math, writing, and acts of kindness.

Most gratifying are those light bulb moments that occur most often when giving food to the hungry and drink to the poor. When they see the Christ in the people they are serving, the walls between "us" and "them" begin to tumble.

St. Paul's youth group is joining up with other groups this year on a monthly basis. Plans are in the works to meet up with youth from First UMC, Hanscom Park UMC, and St. Paul's African refugee congregation. We pray that as new relationships are built there will be an expansion of ideas and acceptance of others. In our present day culture of keeping quiet about your faith, it is easy to feel like there are few United Methodist teens that have similar beliefs and values. Please be excited for us and continue your prayers as faith develops through learning, serving, praying, and playing and trusting in the Holy Spirit.

## Watch for Social Security Scammers

Changes in Social Security cost-of-living benefits that went into effect January 1, 2020, will open the window to a new round of scams. The SS imposter scammers will use this as an opportunity to confuse you with messages about your accounts. These criminals mislead victims into making cash or gift card payments or wiring money to avoid a phony threat to shut down their Social Security account.

Remember, the Social Security Administration will NOT call you to demand payment with prepaid gift cards or cash.

Here's to Healthy Living!  
Health Ministry Team

## March Dates to Remember

### Tuesday, March 3

Serve Dinner at Siena/Francis  
4:45 p.m.

### Saturday, March 7

United Methodist Women  
9:30 a.m.

### Sunday, March 8

Daylight Savings Time Begins

### March 14/15 Weekend

Undie Sunday

### Sunday, March 15

Enneagram III Class  
2:00 p.m.

### Monday, March 16

Church Council  
7:00 p.m.

### Wednesday, March 18

M&M Healing Service  
6:00 p.m.

### Saturday, March 28

Spring Clean-up Day  
9:00 a.m.

### Saturday, March 28

Dinner Group  
6:45 p.m.  
at Brazen Head  
319 North 78th Street

## March Communal Offering

Your special gifts to UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) contribute to an 80 year tradition of being on the front lines of providing disaster response and recovery. This offering helps support the small but impactful UMCOR staff, who are trained specialists in disaster response and recovery. Funds also ensure adequate training for emergency response coordinators, construction volunteers, and case managers who assist victims of disasters, chainsaw gangs and Sheetrock installers. Thank you for giving generously.



**The Big Garden is your local hands-on mission & justice agency.  
We are your mission dollars at work.**

What we're up to this spring:

- We're already planting the 25,000 vegetable, herb, and native prairie seeds that we will grow this season.
  - We're planning our new 2020 garden builds & orchards at area schools & non-profits.
  - Our education staff is currently teaching 8 classes/week in six OPS middle schools.
- Our education staff will soon teach an additional 24 classes/week in 10 area elementary schools.
  - We're hiring 2 part-time education assistants.
  - We're preparing to hire 6 young adult summer interns.

Thank you for your support. We couldn't do it without you!  
Learn more at [www.BigGarden.org](http://www.BigGarden.org)

## Habitat for Humanity

Founded in 1984, Habitat for Humanity of Omaha is a Christian ministry dedicated to eliminating sub-standard housing in Douglas, Washington, and Burt Counties. They believe affordable housing plays a critical role in strong, stable communities and can help families break the cycle of poverty.

Here are some numbers that show the impact Habitat had in the Omaha metro area in 2019:

56—homes built or renovated

10,900+— total sweat equity hours completed by Habitat Omaha homebuyers

\$549,000+— in property taxes paid by Habitat Omaha homeowners

82,800+—volunteer hours served

0—free houses given away

Saint Paul is part of a coalition of faith-based organizations that builds a Habitat house each year. This year the coalition will be building a house at 1709 Laird Street. Volunteers with different skill levels are needed. If you have any questions about volunteering, call Kent Bacon at 402-533-2208 or email him at [kbacon@abbnebraska.com](mailto:kbacon@abbnebraska.com).

## Another Delivery to Schools

Thanks to the generosity of St. Paul members and friends, the Mercy & Justice team was able to make another delivery of hats, mittens and scarves to the three elementary schools that are in our neighborhood. This time the schools received 29 hats, 6 scarves and 44 pairs of gloves/mittens.

A big thank you to everyone who has contributed to the "hat and mitten tree" in Mission Central.

## BART Clothes Closet

The next Benson Area Refugee Clothes Closet will be Saturday, April 18. Clean spring and summer clothes for men, women and children are needed. New underwear and socks are always appreciated, all sizes, colored preferred over white. Gently used shoes/housewares are also welcome. Please drop your donations off at St. Paul the week of April 12.



**February Special  
Offering for  
Together  
\$509.00**

UNDIE  SUNDAY

 MARCH 14/15 



Bring to Church Office Now or Place in Mission Central

Brought to You by the  
**SAINT PAUL MERCY & JUSTICE TEAM**

## *Learning, Serving, Praying, and Playing*

Last month Saint Paul's youth group had a great time sledding and skating together at Mahoney State Park. If only we'd captured the wipe-outs in the snow on camera!



We also had a good time serving, dancing, and cleaning up at the Valentine's Day party for the Childhood Development Center. Another youth group time was spent making beautiful art together.

**March 8<sup>th</sup>, Sunday, 4-5:30** Meet by the chapel doors before 4 pm. Youth from the African Youth Group will join us for fun activities.

During this time, the parents of youth will meet with Pastor Stephanie in the library to discuss TOE (the One Event Re-imagined) and our involvement in this exceptional event of mission, spiritual formation, and fun with youth across the Great Plains Conference connection.

**March 24<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday, 5:30-7:30-Ronald McDonald House** volunteering for one of the birthday parties for kids receiving treatment at Children's Hospital or their siblings. This is sponsored by the *Simon Says Live a Better Life* foundation.

**March 29<sup>th</sup>, Sunday**, Meeting with youth from Hanscom Park and First United Methodist. Details to be determined.

Rev. Marta Wheeler

## Photos from Family Sledding Party at Mahoney State Park

The St. Paul Youth invited the youth from the Burundian congregation that meets in our building to a sledding and ice skating party at Mahoney State Park on Sunday, February 9. The Burundian youth had never gone sledding before, so it was a new experience for them. We had a great time!





# **Omaha Together One Community**

**11th Annual Spring Fundraiser**

## **Celebrating Community**

**Omaha Design Center  
1502 Cuming St, Omaha**

**Tickets: \$25 (\$30 at the door)  
For Tickets call: (402) 344-4401**

**Silent Auction    Cash Bar  
Appetizers    Dessert  
Live Music**

**Saturday, March 28, 2020  
6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.**

MARCH 2020

# UMW NEWS



**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

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**Box Tops for Education**

Save for Rose Hill  
Elementary School

UMW General Meeting  
on Saturday, March 7, at 9:30 a.m.  
in the Parlor

The speaker will be Nancy Schober  
on Palestinian Life and Conditions.

St. Paul United Methodist Church is  
hosting the District Meeting on  
April 4, 2020. Volunteers are needed  
for various activities, so please  
contact Lorraine Hahn if you have  
any questions or wish to help.

UMW Spring Luncheon  
Saturday, April 25 at 11:00 a.m.  
in Fellowship Hall

The program will feature the musical talents of  
Dave Marsh, and is sponsored by  
Humanities, Nebraska

## Thank You

Thank you all who sent heartfelt expressions of love and care through cards, condolences, and remembrances. It has meant so much to have this support as we grieve Bill's passing. Over the years, Bill talked with fondness about his time spent serving St. Paul United Methodist Church.

Pam Cotant and Family

## Memorials

For Bill Repair—Alvina Hjortsvang, Gary & Barbara Repair, Jim Boston

For Betty White—David White

For Dan Thompson—Bonnie Thompson

For Shirley Edwards—Martha Shields

## Photos from the Valentine's Day Spaghetti Dinner & Dance



Eating spaghetti and dancing were the highlights of the Valentine Day party with the Child Development Center on February 12.



## Hospitalizations

Ruby Meck, Don Wilcox, Linda Mead

## Honorariums

For Jerry Brabec—Martha Shields

## Congratulations

To Ryan and Lauren Edwards in the baptism of their daughter, Sylvie Christine, on February 16. Sylvie's great-grandfather is Vance Taylor.



## Book Club

*The Meaning of Mary Magdalene*, by Cynthia Bourgeault, is the book the Book Club will be discussing at its March meeting. The Book Club meets at Immanuel Village on Saturday, March 14, at 8:30 a.m.

For directions, call Dee Maycock at 402-571-5599.

The Dinner Group will meet on Saturday, March 28, at Brazen Head. Meet outside the chapel after the 5:00 p.m. worship, or meet the group at the Brazen Head, 319 North 78 Street, at 6:15 p.m. All are welcome.





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## WORSHIP

5:00 PM  
Saturday Casual  
Roth Chapel

9:15 AM  
Sunday Fusion Contemporary  
Fellowship Hall

10:30 AM  
Sunday Traditional  
Sanctuary

12:00 PM  
African & Bhutan Services

## OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
Sunday: 8:00 AM - 11:45 AM  
402.556.2433 [stpaulomaha.org](http://stpaulomaha.org) @stpaulbenson



RECONCILING MINISTRIES NETWORK

SAINT PAUL *Benson*

PROUD TO BE A  
RECONCILING CONGREGATION



With God's love as our foundation,  
we celebrate friendship with all of God's  
people, affirming all sexual orientations and  
gender identities.

Together, we will seek justice for all and do  
good in our community, nation and around the  
world in the name of Jesus Christ.