

MONTHLY NEWS OF SAINT PAUL BENSON

Inspiration

January 2020

PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE

Happy New Year to friends and members of Saint Paul Benson!

We give thanks for the year 2019, for all the surprises and gifts (and even dark days) that have awakened and taught us.

As the year 2020 is rung in, may we be prepared to listen, learn, and live our lives as disciples of Christ. Being grounded spiritually is the basis for all that we do. Weekly worship brings us to a place of unity and helps us get the week off to a good start. Daily prayers, Bible study, choir practice, and giving of our energy to matters that are meaningful to us are terrific in grounding us.

The focus this month is on "Resistance." This word is taken directly from our baptismal vows that were agreed upon when we were baptized and confirmed in the United Methodist Church. *"Will you resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?"* Each week the themes will be developed through the sermon, music, and liturgy as we focus on how we might live out our baptismal vows. Upon reviewing the history of this congregation we see that resistance to evil, injustice, and oppression has been part of the identity of this safe place.

Beginning January 26 from 2-3:30 pm, we will be offering classes on the *Wisdom of the Enneagram*. The Enneagram is proof that ancient teachings are still relevant today. It is a personality tool that goes deeper and can be used for personal transformation and development. Upon discovering our deepest direction in life, we can overcome barriers to God and others, realize our unique strengths and gifts, and find direction in life by letting go of fears and troublesome habits. We all know that human nature is complex. The yearning for spiritual growth and transformation is a universal trait, although some may not be aware of this. Bring a friend and we will walk this path of spiritual discovery together as we more fully realize our value to our divine Creator. The deadline to register for Enneagram is January 16th. The fee of \$15 includes the book. Register in the church office or online.

May the life of our congregation be a blessing to God as we let our lights shine into the New Year!

Pastor Marta Wheeler

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.

January Dates to Remember

Saturday, January 4

Great Plains
Epiphany Worship Service
2:00 p.m.

Tuesday, January 7

Serving Dinner at
Siena/Francis House
5:00-7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, January 8

UMW General Meeting
9:30 a.m.

Monday, January 13

Church Council
7:00 p.m.

Monday, January 20

Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Church Closed

Saturday, January 25

Dinner Group to
Boyd & Charlies BBQ
6:15 p.m.

Sunday, January 26

Enneagram Begins
2:00 p.m.

Saint Paul Benson

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Stephanie Rosenberger
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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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Year-End Gifts

Your year-end gift helps us to close 2019 with our budget and mission share obligations paid in full. Year-end gifts must be received in the church office by December 31st to be credited on 2019 giving records.

Winter Weather Closure Policy

If Omaha Public Schools are closed because of snow, the church office is closed and no church-hosted activities will take place. If Omaha Public Schools are closed because of cold, the church office will be open and all church-hosted activities will take place.

If Omaha Public Schools have a two-hour late start because of snow, the church office will open at 12:00 noon, and all church-hosted activities after 12:00 noon will take place.

If Omaha Public Schools dismisses early because of snow, the church office will close at 2:00 p.m. and no church-hosted activities will take place after 12:00 noon.

Training Class for Hearing Loop

Weather permitting, instructions on how to use the hearing loop will be given by the installers on Sunday, January 12, in the sanctuary at 10:00 and in Fellowship Hall at 10:15.

If you have hearing aids or cochlear implants, you are invited to attend one of these sessions to learn how to connect the telecoil in your hearing aid or cochlear implant to the loop. The installers should be able to answer any questions you have about use of the loop. You will also learn where to sit in order to take advantage of the strongest signal.

This sound enhancement is made possible through a generous ministry grant from the Nebraska United Methodist Foundation and donations from members of this church.

Clergy Corner—Rev. Stephanie Ahlschwede

*" May the simple beauty of Jesus' birth
summon us always to love
what is most deeply human,
and to see your Word made flesh
reflected in those whose lives we touch."*

Roman rite, Second Sunday after Christmas

I hope that in these days following Christmas you have found space to rest a bit - to rest from travel and the energy of reunions and planning; but also to rest with the assurance of God's love that we learn and practice over and over again in the Christmas story.

Saint Paul is a congregation whose love has touched many lives this year. We strive to see each other as fully human, to reach out to the community around us and to see our neighbors around the world as our siblings in faith. I thank you for your deep commitment to seeking, summoning, sharing and receiving the love that we celebrate in the Christmas season - all year long.

Many thanks - Rev Stephanie

in Worship

"I can see clearly now, the rain is gone..." What a theme song for a new decade! This song by UK recording artist, Johnny Nash, in 1972 offers the hearer great hope for a "bright, sunshiny day." Thematically, worship in January follows, not only Jesus' baptism, but also our baptismal vow to "resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves." It is no great secret that our denomination has been embroiled in an internal struggle on what it means to pursue Christ's call to resist oppression, injustice and evil. Perhaps as we gather and listen to the possibilities for Saint Paul Benson as we contemplate 2020, we will begin to see more clearly Jesus in our midst.

We reflect on this image of resistance with a special service of worship on **January 04** at 2:00 in the Sanctuary. This theme will be shared at two locations in the Great Plains Conference with a service occurring in Topeka, as well as Omaha. All are welcome to gather for inspiration as we set our hearts and minds on the task before us at General Conference in May.



We begin the New Year with Epiphany worship **January 04/05**, the celebration of the sacrament of Holy Communion, and the reflection on what it means to "Choose Another Way." We are joined by David Schack, organist and the Solid Brass Quartet as part of 10:30 worship. There will be no mid-month M & M worship in January or February. All services are graced by the Joy Bells offering special music on the weekend of **January 25/26**.

Stephen Ministry

After six years of ministry in St. Paul Benson, the Stephen Ministry is ending. Our last meeting will be on January 8, 2020, at 6:30 PM.

Over the six-year period we have had seven trained Stephen Caregivers. The minimum commitment asked at the beginning was two years and yet all our current caregivers have stayed beyond that. In the six years all but one of our caregivers has had a care receiver. In that time, we have worked with about 12 care receivers for various amounts of time. Another part of our ministry, which will continue, is the grief ministry. The Stephen Ministry sends a series of four books to person and families who have lost a loved one. The books go out from 1 month after the death to 11 months after. This has been a part of the program that has been helpful for many in the grief process and we will continue to make it available in the future.

Thank you for your support and prayers for this important ministry of the church.

Peace,
Kathy Rice

Angel Tree Gifts

The Mercy & Justice Team gathered on December 16 to wrap some of the Angel Tree Gifts. The gifts went to children and youth who may not receive any other gifts. Their names were obtained from the Nebraska



Department of Human Services and from Youth Emergency Services.

Thank you to everyone who took a name and shopped for a gift.



Another Delivery of Hats and Mittens, Scarves & Coats

The Mercy and Justice Team has made another delivery of warm clothing to the elementary schools that are in Saint Paul Benson's neighborhood. Delivered in early December were 2 coats, 34 hats, 7 scarves and 24 pairs of mittens/gloves.

Thank You from Benson West Elementary School

Dear St. Paul United Methodist,

Thank you so much for the beautiful handmade hats and gloves along with the warm coats. They will make a huge difference for our kids this winter.

Sincerely,
Tara Lane



December Special Offering for
United Methodist Student Fund
\$ 545.00

Christmas Pageant

The Christmas story came to life at Saint Paul Benson at the 10:30 worship service on December 15. Youth narrators read the story of the birth of Jesus from the Gospel of Luke, the congregation and choir sang Christmas carols, and Mary and Joseph, angels, shepherds, kings and a star appeared as the story unfolded. The pageant is sponsored by the Children's Ministry.



Advent Fair

I want to thank all the volunteers who helped make the Advent Fair successful. A very special thanks to Deb Kelley and Dee Davis for a job well done again as co-chairs. The crafts were amazing! We couldn't have this event without the volunteers and Deb and Dee.

Stephanie Rosenberger



Egg salad for the sandwiches—we couldn't have the Advent Fair without it.



Pictures with Santa



Cookie decorating—and eating



Dee Davis and Deb Kelley—the ones who plan and execute the event each year

What Makes the Advent Fair Special?



Sprinkles—lots of them



Popcorn sculptures prepared by Steve Roberts and Steven Rosenberger



Members of Dee's & Deb's families, who make cookies the day before



The crafts—so many cute ones

Learning, Serving, Praying, and Playing

One Sunday evening in December our youth had a great time playing sardines with another youth group. They were a great help assisting in various ways with the Advent Fair, and cutout and decorated cookies that you purchased at the Cookie Walk.



Thank you for your donations that encouraged us as another successful fund raiser for doing missions in 2020 is on the books!

A very good December with the youth group was topped off by participation in the Country Club Luminary Event. The sidewalks of Saint Paul were peacefully glowing!

January activities include:

Sunday, Jan. 5th 3-5 pm, bowling with youth group from 1st UMC. Cost \$12

Sunday, January 12th 4-6 pm, winter hiking! Dress warm.

Monday, Jan. 20th 10am-noon, MLK Day of Service and lunch-TBD.

Our experiences are enriched when friends are invited and welcomed!
Thank you for your support and prayers.

Rev. Marta Wheeler

Photos from the Luminary Evening



Some of the children from Saint Paul Child Development Center sang Christmas songs for the December 4 UMW meeting.

YOUTH &
CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES
INVITE YOUR FAMILY
TO JOIN US FOR

WINTER FUN

SUNDAY

FEBRUARY 9

3-6 PM

SLEDDING AND
ICE SKATING

MAHONEY STATE PARK

\$6 ADMISSION

INCLUDES SKATE RENTAL

BRING A FAVORITE SLED
OR TOBOGGAN

FRIENDS WELCOME



SAINT PAUL

Benson

#DoGood

JANUARY 2020

UMW NEWS



EXECUTIVE BOARD

**President
Belinda Johnson**

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Mary Stolzer**

**Secretary
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**Treasurer
Lorraine Hahn**

**Advisor
Kathy Rice**

Box Tops for Education

Save for Rose Hill
Elementary School

Reconnect with Old Friends
(or Make New Ones!)

You are invited to the
United Methodist Women Meeting
January 8, 2020, at 9:30 am
Fellowship, Friendship, and Faith.
Our speaker will be Sandy Hanna
reviewing her exploration
of the Holy Land.

If you need a ride call 402-659-4092

Thanks to all who contributed to the
Cookie Walk to assist the youth
of our church.

For your calendar:
February 8, 2020

Ecumenical Legislative Briefing Day
Christ United Methodist Church, Lincoln
Anyone who is interested in the bills before the
Unicameral can attend. Contact Lori Hahn if
you would like to carpool.
Details on the UMW bulletin board

Hospitalizations

Pearl Spicka, Joan Swanson, Ramona Repair, Sue Sherman

Memorials

For Penne Carpenter—Bob & Patti Griffiths, Warren & Belinda Johnson, Nick & Mary Stolzer, Bob & Joanna Lonnecker, Thomas & Carol Zettergren

For Micki Leslie and Scott Leslie—Jerry & Pat Leslie

Christian Sympathy

To Ramona Repair and family in the death of her husband, Bill Repair

To Kent & Sue Bacon and family in the death of Kent's brother

Honorariums

For Sue Bobek—Maria Johnson, Cynthia Fontenello, Annette Farquhar

A Thank You Message from the Guatemala Stove Builders

The stove builders of Guatemala team from St. Paul would like to thank everyone for your prayers, support, and school supplies for our recent trip to Guatemala. There were 6 team members from Omaha along with 8 others constructing 20 stoves for 20 families of Guatemala. We build stoves over 5 days with several days of sight seeing and shopping.

Thanks again for all of your support.

Mary Cave

The photo on the left is a "before" picture. It shows the place where the Guatemalan family cooked before their new stove was built. The photo on the right shows the family with their new stove.



Book Club

Invisible Thread, by Laura Schroff, is the book the Book Club will be discussing at its January meeting. The Book Club meets at Immanuel Village on Saturday, January 11, at 8:30 a.m. For directions, call Dee Maycock at 402-571-5599.

The Dinner Group



will meet on Saturday, January 25, at Boyd & Charlies BBQ. Meet outside the chapel after the 5:00 p.m. worship, or meet the group at Boyd & Charlies, 1418 South 60th St, at 6:15 p.m. All are welcome.



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OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68104

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WORSHIP

5:00 PM
Saturday Casual
Roth Chapel

9:15 AM
Sunday Contemporary Fusion
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 @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.