

MONTHLY NEWS OF SAINT PAUL BENSON

Inspiration

GUEST PERSPECTIVE

Dear members and friends of Saint Paul,

As you know, leading up to the February 2019 General Conference in St. Louis, there were wide-ranging discussions regarding the way human sexuality is recognized within the United Methodist Church. Thanks to Revs. Shreve, Wheeler and Brabec, Saint Paul worked harder than many churches to discern a direction which would best reflect a loving Christian future. At the conclusion of the special General Conference, I, like many of you, was disappointed in the outcome. But - we are still United Methodists, and our church is more than this one issue. John Wesley tasked us to be accountable to each other (*have you read his 22 questions lately?*) I believe we are individually called to be Christ's ministers to the world and to each other, until Christ comes again.

So how does Saint Paul minister to our LGBTQ brothers and sisters? After more than a year of Bible studies, discussions, and a survey of the membership, the Church Council unanimously approved the effort for Saint Paul to join the Reconciling Ministries Network. As such, we will explicitly stand up for our belief of loving everyone created in the image of God. Saint Paul will continue onward as a United Methodist Church and will follow the Book of Discipline. Just as it has always been, is now, and will always be; our communion table is the Lord's and is open to all. Christ loved his disciples as well as prostitutes, tax collectors, and other outsiders. We choose to share our love with those who are different. We say to those who are heavy laden, "come and rest with us; worship, cry, laugh, hope, and work for a better future for all of God's creation with us."

I want to thank Saint Paul's Church Council for taking time to attend several extra meetings as we discussed the issues and determined our consensus. If you would like to learn more about the Reconciling Ministries Network, a great resource is their website: rmnetwork.org.

We have discerned who we are and will now share it with world. Peace and love to you as we celebrate Christ's victory over death.

Shawn Ammon
Chair, Church Council

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.

Letter from Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr.

April 24, 2019

Omaha St Paul UMC
5410 Corby St
Omaha, Nebraska 68104

Dear Friends:

The cabinet and I are pleased to announce that Rev. Stephanie Ahlschwede will be appointed as your pastor beginning the first day of July 2019. This appointment concludes a long process of discernment, and we have prayed asking for God's wisdom about the best available leadership for your church, and this is our decision.

I extend my best wishes and prayers to all of you during this transition of pastoral leadership for your congregation.

Grace and peace,

Ruben Saenz Jr.

Saint Paul Benson

5410 Corby St.
Omaha, NE 68104
402-556-2433
FAX 402-939-0055
www.stpaulomaha.org
E-mail:
saintpaul@stpaulomaha.org

Rev. Marta Wheeler
Associate Pastor
402-902-8545

Rev. Jerry Brabec
Minister of Worship
402-676-4751

Rev. Kathy Rice
Director of Stephen Ministry
402-556-2433

Stephanie Rosenberger
*Director of Children's
Ministries*
402-598-7772

Sue Bobek,
Membership Secretary
402-556-2433

Connie Almgren
Financial Secretary
402-677-4815

Sue Bacon
Communications Coordinator
402-556-2433

Chris Jones
Building Engineer
402-677-8834

St. Paul
Child Development Center
402-556-3885
Katy Smith, *Director*

Community Counseling
402-354-6891 x23
Julie Lord, *LIMHP & PLADC*
Tabitha Jameson, *MA, LIMHP*

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Editor: Sue Bacon
To contact the editor:
Phone402-556-2433
Email.....
sbacon@stpaulomaha.org
Address: ...5410 Corby Street
Omaha, NE 68104

Sustainable Future-Balanced Budget and Mission Connected

4-24-19 Income \$125,157 Expenses \$140,467

New Logo Reflects Fresh Outlook for Saint Paul

In recent weeks, you may have noticed an updated logo on your worship flyer or on our social media profiles. This new graphic is the result of the Church Council's desire to re-brand Saint Paul and give our collateral material an updated look. And, since our church has undergone a lot of changes since the previous logo was put into use 15 years ago, it was time for a change.



The woven ring symbolizes the community spirit of the Saint Paul family. While you may see it used most often in the traditional United Methodist color of red, it can easily be changed to reflect the liturgical season or a special occasion. The modern fonts were selected to add a youthful accent to our marketing.

You may have also noted that the logo does not include the words "United Methodist Church." In March, the Church Council voted to move forward with the new branding without the denomination listed. The news associated with the struggle over the acceptance of the LGBTQ community at the recent General Conference has been largely negative. The younger, more progressive audience and potential membership we need may – unfortunately – find the denomination's name a non-starter. To appeal to a wider group, we've chosen to rebrand as simply, "Saint Paul Benson."

Use of the new logo will continue to spread including as updates to our website and interior signage in the near future. This is an exciting time to be part of our creative, lively Benson neighborhood and Saint Paul is ready to move forward with the updated branding.

The Way Forward Process Moves Saint Paul

Although February's Special General Conference on human sexuality ended without an inclusive decision, Saint Paul chose to continue its journey toward joining the Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN).

At the **March 18** meeting of Church Council, Rev. Scott Shreve proposed having members complete a one-question survey to gauge the congregation's support of RMN membership. The Council agreed to meet again on April 1 to discuss survey results and to vote on the matter. The surveys were mailed to all members of Saint Paul on March 19 and asked for a "Yes" or "No" response to this statement: "I want St. Paul to be a Reconciling congregation that intentionally seeks to include persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities in both our policy and practices."

The final tally of signed surveys showed 95% of respondents affirming Saint Paul's joining of RMN. People on both sides of the issue were invited to attend the Council meeting **April 1** and share their views. Council heard from several prior to voting unanimously to continue the RMN membership application. The next step in the RMN application process is to craft and adopt a brief welcoming statement which will be approved at the **May 13** Church Council meeting.

in Worship

The entire month of May occurs during the liturgical season of Eastertide. On the Jewish calendar there are 50 days between Passover (Pesach) and Shavuot (pronounced Sha-woo-oat), which is a harvest festival. The day is supposed to coincide with the day of the giving of the tablets of the law at Mt. Sinai after the Exodus and the celebration of the Old Covenant. The early Christian Church borrowed the idea, celebrating 50 days after the resurrection event as Pentecost and the New Covenant in Christ. During the Fifty Great Days of Easter we welcome new member, Susan Dimmitt, to the piano on **May 05** as she fills the 10:30 service with music during the time of Gathering. The Joy Bells joyfully ring all services **May 11/12**.

Our mid-month M & M service held Wednesday, **May 15** at 6:00 p.m. will continue our focus on the Spiritual Disciples led by your clergy. We will observe the Sacrament of Holy Communion as part of our time together in the Roth Chapel. As always, there will be M & M's a plenty!

The annual "one of a kind" celebration of the joining together singers from Temple Israel, Omaha's Reform Jewish congregation, and Saint Paul Church is scheduled for Friday, **May 17** and Sunday, **May 19**. This tradition has taken a variety of formats over the fifteen years of its happening. The combined ensemble will be conducted by the Rev. Jerry Brabec and joined by Cantor Wendy Shermet with Temple accompanist, Julie Sandene at the piano. The combined choir will offer a variety of liturgical songs sung in both English and Hebrew. Friday evening's 6:00 p.m. Shabbat will be observed at Temple at 132nd & Sterling Ridge. On Sunday, Cantor Shermet will bring a farewell message to our congregation at 10:30. She will be officially retiring from her cantorate effective June 30.

The first **Single Sunday Service** will be celebrated Memorial Day weekend with morning worship in the Sanctuary at 10:00, **May 26**. Rev. Wheeler continues the preaching series on the "fresh expressions" to which our faith community is being called and what that means for Memorial Day as a national holiday in the life of our country. Our morning worship will include music from Joy Bells, The Choir and oboist, Darci Gamerl. There will be no children's or youth Sunday school, so plan to worship with the entire family as you enjoy this extended weekend. As always, the Saturday evening service will be held in Roth Chapel at 5:00 p.m.

Notable Luncheon

The annual celebration of those nearing, or previously achieving, their ninetieth natal anniversary (also known as a 90th birthday!) are invited to attend a brunch gathering in Fellowship Hall on Saturday, **May 18** at 10:00 a.m. "Notable Nineties" is Saint Paul's way of saying, "where would we be without you" to a group of members whose wisdom and longevity is to be admired! Marilou Dohe hosts an always entertaining program. For more information or to RSVP your plans to attend call the church office.

Clergy Corner ~ Rev. Jerry Brabec

(On staff at St. Paul Church since 1990, Rev. Brabec has been appointed to serve in an ordained clergy capacity since 2000.)

Although now officially retired, we continue to celebrate the gifts and graces of the ministry of the Rev. Scott Shreve. Pastor Scott's spirit and self giving ways brought so much to Saint Paul Benson and we will be forever grateful for his sharing. In the United Methodist tradition, the Bishop and Cabinet have begun the process of naming a replacement clergy person who will serve Saint Paul Church effective July 01, 2019. Most new appointments throughout the Great Plains Annual Conference begin on this date. Different than Congregationalist, many Lutheran sects, Presbyterian, or United Church of Christ, UM clergy serve by appointment, not call...this is the nature of our episcopacy system, much like our Roman Catholic sisters and brothers. We are hopeful that, through the discernment given by Bishop Saenz and leadership of the Rev. Chad Anglemeyer, Missouri River District Superintendent, our new clergy leader will be embraced by the love and fellowship that exemplifies the members and friends of Saint Paul Benson. Wait for the letter to be read announcing a new lead pastor to shepherd this faith community.

School Kits for UMCOR

Relief supply kits help provide care for the most vulnerable during times of crisis. UMCOR collects school kits, cleaning buckets and hygiene kits assembled by United Methodist volunteers for distribution after disasters in the United States and its territories. UMCOR operates two relief-supply depots, UMCOR Sager Brown and UMCOR Depot West, located in Louisiana and Utah, respectively, and works with a network of depots across the United States.

In some areas, children lack access to books and essential school supplies. Classes are held in inadequate buildings. School kits may be some children's only educational resource. St. Paul Mercy & Justice Team is sponsoring the collection of school kits, which will be taken to Annual Conference and eventually go to one of UMCOR's warehouses.

If you can help put school kits together, you can pick up plastic bags in the church office. Here is the list of items needed for each bag:

- One pair blunt scissors—Round tip only—No plastic scissors
 - One box of 24 crayons—Only 24-count boxes are accepted
 - Three one-subject notebooks—No marble composition books—No 3 or 5-subject notebooks
 - One pack of loose-leaf paper—100-200 page packets are acceptable—Wide or college rule accepted
 - One hand-held pencil sharpener—1 inch or longer—Remove from packaging
 - One ruler—12 inches or 30 centimeters long—Sturdy or flexible material accepted
 - Six unsharpened pencils—plain
 - One eraser—Two inches or larger
 - \$1 dollar bill for shipping postage
- Contents of kits or the containers of kits should not be imprinted with cartoon characters, advertisements, religious, patriotic, military or camouflage symbols.

Kits will need to be brought to the church by Sunday, May 26.

Communal Offering for May—Native American Ministries

As a member of The United Methodist Church, your gift, on this day, equips Native congregations to worship and serve as only they can. When you support Native American Ministries Sunday, you equip seminary students who will honor and celebrate Native American culture in their ministries. And you empower congregations that are finding fresh new ways to minister to their communities with the love of Christ.

Dr. Richard Twiss, a member of the Sicangu Lakota Oyate from the Rosebud Sioux Reservation in South Dakota, asked: "Will we be allowed to develop new ways of doing church that honor God's purposes for the creative expression of our cultures? Will new ministry partnerships and coalitions form? Will you help be a part of this wonderful process of reconciliation, restoration and release?"

**April
Special Offering**



**UMCOR
\$1,525.00**

Big Garden Spring Plant Sale

The Big Garden sells high-quality vegetables, herbs and native prairie plants and flowers. Their plants are sustainably grown in their greenhouses using organic practices. They are located at 5602 Read Street, and the sale is open Thursday, Friday and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. until May 18.

If you'd like more information, go to BigGarden.org/plantsale

Meeting with Bishop Saenz

Bishop Ruben Saenz has planned a series of regional meetings through the Great Plains Conference to address the decisions made by the 864 delegates from around the world at General Conference. The meeting for the Missouri River District was originally scheduled for March 24, but had to be rescheduled because of the flooding in our area.

The meeting is now scheduled for Saturday, May 4, at Omaha St. Andrews UMC, located at 15050 West Maple Rd, Omaha.



**JOIN THE FUN
AT ST. PAUL
KIDS PRE-K AGE 4
THROUGH
5TH GRADE
WELCOME!**

**VBS
2019**

ROAR!
Life is Wild * God is good

JUNE 3 - 5
Each Night: Dinner 5-6 pm;
Activities 6-8 pm

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!
If you can help lead or feed, call
the Church Office (402) 556-2433
or email Stephanie:
srosenberger@stpaulomaha.org

ST. PAUL BENSON ~ 54TH & NW RADIAL

The poster features a lion roaring in a circular frame at the top center. Below it, the word "ROAR!" is written in large, orange, 3D block letters with a blue shadow. Underneath "ROAR!" is a red banner with the text "Life is Wild * God is good". The dates "JUNE 3 - 5" are prominently displayed in blue, with the schedule "Each Night: Dinner 5-6 pm; Activities 6-8 pm" below. The bottom section contains a call to action for volunteers, including a phone number and an email address. The entire poster is decorated with cartoon illustrations of a giraffe, a lion, a rhinoceros, a buffalo, and a bird.

Learning, Serving, Praying, and Playing

We appreciate the youth that participated in the Good Friday service by dramatically reading parts. We are also grateful for the youth that led us into the joy of the resurrection at the Easter Sunrise service!

Having youthful energy to help serve the UMW Spring Luncheon was very helpful!

April was a month of serving and rehearsing. Thank you to each youth that worked hard and their parents that provided support as well!

Saturday, May 4th-1-2:30 pm-meet at the church's north parking lot for a surprise! This will be a fun day with friends!

Sunday, May 19th-4-5:30 pm-We will meet by the chapel doors and go from there!

June 23-27th-Mission Trip to Colorado. We will do mission work in Denver and then travel to the nearby mountains for exciting and fun adventures. We plan to take Amtrak to Denver and will use public transportation as much as possible.

The St. Paul Youth Group thanks you so much for your kindness, prayers, and generosity in supporting their Mission trip to Denver.

Rev. Marta Wheeler
402-902-8545



A Thank You Note from the Boy Scouts

Dear St. Paul United Methodist Church,

We can't tell you enough how much we appreciated the use of your facility for our Blue & Gold celebration last weekend. The space worked beautifully and the kids had an amazing time! Thank you so much for working with us last minute to make this happen for the Scouts!

Shauna Mullably

BART Update

We want to thank all those who came and supported the Voices for Change concert Sunday, April 28 here at St. Paul.

Our Clothes Closet Saturday, April 13, had 125 participants come through. We had 17 volunteers on Thursday for set-up and 22 on the day of the clothes closet—not counting those from the Presbyterian Church of the Master who brought laundry supplies. Twelve from St. Paul volunteered. Thank you!

We are giving 2 scholarships of \$1000 each to refugee students attending Benson High School on their awards night May 1. The scholarships are to support higher education.

The HomeDish program continues strong and the last dinner was Ethiopian—one of the cooks was just 21 and had been here only one month.

Citizenship class continues to go well on Sunday afternoons. BART will participate in Omaha Gives.

Sunday School

The last Children's Sunday School before their summer break will be May 19. Many thanks to everyone who taught a class or helped with classes this year.

Children's Sunday School will resume in the fall.

Mental Health

If you are looking for resources in this area, they can be accessed at the National Alliance on Mental Illness, www.nami.org, the Nebraska Family Helpline operated by Boys Town at 800-866-8660 or the Community Counselors at St. Paul Church, Julie Lord and Tabitha Jameson, 402-354-6891 x 23.

Do you enjoy planting flowers? Spring planting at St. Paul Benson is Saturday, May 11, from 9 to 1. Everyone is welcome to join in, and we welcome plant donations as well. We can find spots for sunny or shade plants, perennials or annuals.

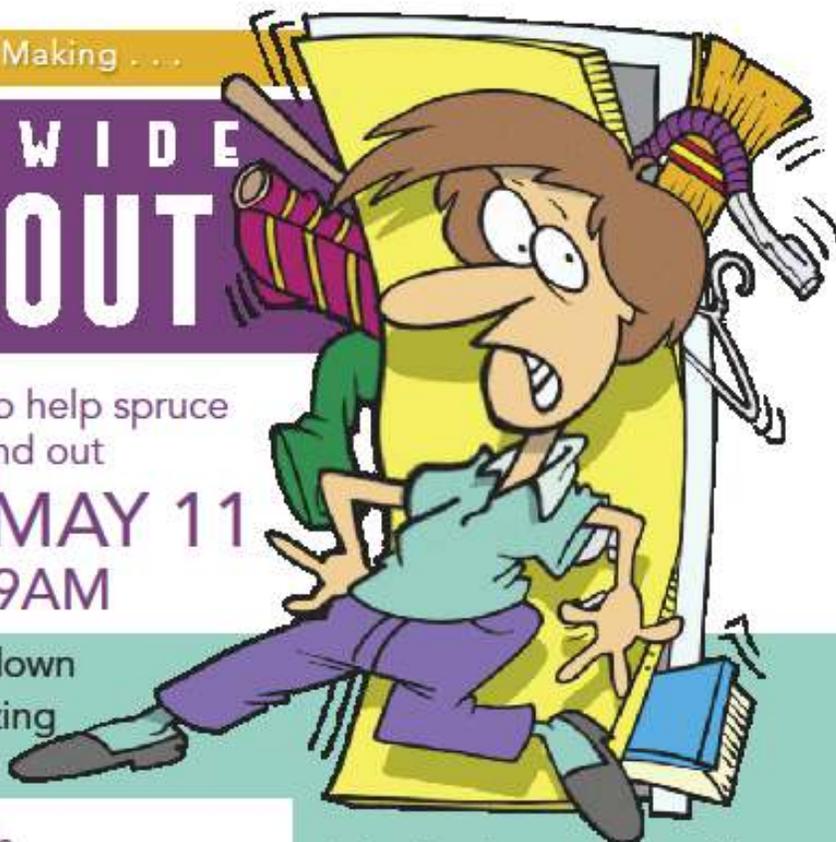
An Event 75+ Years in the Making . . .

CHURCH-WIDE CLEAN-OUT

Volunteers are needed to help spruce up the Church - inside and out

SATURDAY, MAY 11
BEGINNING AT 9AM

Consider this a fun trip down memory lane or an amazing treasure hunt!



Deep clean window seals
Move storage spaces
Purging unnecessary clutter
Kitchen cleanup (organize & reduce)
Archive organization
Cleanup of 3rd & 4th floors
Organize the A/V closet
Purge the attic
Much more!

Saint Paul members will get a chance to claim purged items.

Watch for a special table (or two!) of goodies on Saturday & Sunday, May 11 and 12.

You could own a piece of Saint Paul history!

Anything left unclaimed on Monday, May 13 will be donated.



10 Volunteers are Also Needed to Join the Adult Ministries and Congregational Care Teams for a "Planting Party!" Bring Your Work Gloves & Help Beautify the Grounds

SIGN-UP SHEET POSTED IN CHURCH OFFICE!

MAY 2019

UMW NEWS



EXECUTIVE BOARD

President
Marjorie Shreve

Vice President
Mary Stolzer

Secretary
Connie Crawford

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Kathy Rice

Mission Focus

Laos, Laos Samphan Methodist Church of the Global Ministries, Laos Mission Initiative. Women's Leadership and Organizational Development—supporting the Methodist women's organization and its Members through economic skills training in Laos.

Mission Witness:

Hannah Reasoner at the Global Mission Fellows International in New York.

Box Tops for Education

Save for Rose Hill Elementary School

UMW General Meeting Wednesday, May 1, at 9:30 a.m in the Parlor

The speaker will be Carol Isaac from the Douglas County Health Department. She will be addressing issues related to Maternal Child Health.

Remember the
UMW Mini Mart on May 4 & 5

President's Update

Thanks to all who came, and all who helped make the Treasures from the Bible—Women's Legends UMW Spring luncheon a wonderful time of fellowship. We want to thank especially Belinda Johnson who cooked, Marilou Dohe, who did the tables and the rest of the committee and volunteers who always appear "out of the walls" when needed for last minute food prep and table arrangements. Thank you!

One focus of the national UMW for this quadrennium is Maternal and Child Health. Our speaker, Wednesday, May 1, is Carol Isaac from the Douglas County Maternal-Health Department. All are welcome: 9:30 gather and fellowship: 10:00 program.

The next Mini Mart is the week before Mother's day May 4-5. Think about what Mom might like and check out the tables of homemade treats and gifts. As always the proceeds support world and local missions.

Our April speaker was from Mosaic, an organization that advocates for those with intellectual difficulties and was very inspiring and a place to seek support for family and friends of those with such different abilities.

Coming in June 5 is a speaker from Youth Emergency Services, which we support through gifts and working at the Tip Top Thrift shop.

Marjorie Shreve, President

Hospitalizations

Penne Carpenter, Bill Cadwalader

Memorials

For Martha Ann Orr—Kathryn Bartlett

For Thomas Buffington—Seline Family Foundation

For Frances Johnson—Chris & Gail Johnson

Congratulations

To Kaitlyn Waszak, who will graduate from the University of Nebraska with a Communication Sciences and Disorders major. She will be pursuing a Doctorate in Audiology from UNL this fall.

To Vance Taylor’s grandsons, who are graduating this month—Craig Taylor will graduate with a bachelor of science degree in geology from Wichita State University, and Garrett Taylor will graduate with a doctors degree in pharmacy from Kansas University.

Congratulations to Jason Evenson

Please join Arlin and Sandra Evenson as they celebrate the graduation of their grandson, Jason, from Metro Community College. He will be receiving his Associates in Culinary Arts & Management during the commencement ceremony at UNO Baxter Arena on May 10 at 7:30. Jason became interested in cooking/baking around the age of 7 or 8. He inherited his great grandma’s talent in the kitchen and has provided his family and friends with many great meals over the years. His grandmother loves to volunteer him to bake something for various functions (sometimes without asking first!)

Thanks to everyone who has supported Jason on his journey to achieving his goal.

Bridge Players Wanted

We’re looking for people who like to play fun party bridge. Our marathon group meets monthly—September to May, with an all-group gathering in the summer. The times are set by the team players.

The second Thursday of every month another group meets in the parlor, and there’s a group that meets the second and fourth Friday of every month off site.

If you are interested in being a member or substitute, contact Annette Conser, 402-493-4810.

The Dinner Group will meet on Saturday, May 18, at



Fernando’s. Meet outside the chapel after the 5:00 p.m. worship, or meet the group at Fernando’s, 380 North 114 Street, at 6:15 p.m. All are welcome.

Book Club

Beekeeper’s Promise, by Fiona Valpy, is the book the Book Club will be discussing at their May meeting. The Book Club meets at Immanuel Village on Saturday, May 11, at 8:30 a.m. For directions, call Dee Maycock at 402-571-5599.



Stephen Ministry in Action:

From a Stephen Care giver:

I’ve been a Stephen Minister for nearly ten years and can truly say it becomes a part of your life. I’m more in tune with people’s needs, and I always do my best to listen, care, and model the love of Jesus. It’s amazing to see God working through me to change lives.”

Kelly

If you ordered plants from the Child Development Center, you can pick them up on Friday, May 10



5410 CORBY STREET
OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68104

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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WORSHIP

5:00 PM

Saturday Casual
Roth Chapel

9:15 AM—May 5, 12, & 19

Sunday Contemporary Fusion
Fellowship Hall

10:30 AM—May 5, 12, & 19

Sunday Traditional
Sanctuary

10:00 AM—May 26

Sunday Combined Service
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