

GUIDING LIGHT

Make this flashlight to remember that God, our light, always shows us the way.

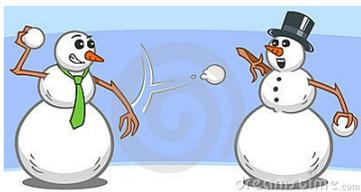


What you need:

- Flashlight with handle strap
- Yarn (6 to 8 inches)
- Colorful pony beads
- Stickers (including foam letters)
- Batteries

What you do:

1. Tie the yarn through the flashlight's handle strap so two equal lengths hang down.
2. String the pony beads onto the two yarn lengths, and secure the ends with knots.
3. Decorate the flashlight with stickers. Use letters to spell "God is light."
4. Keep the flashlight by your bedside as a reminder of God's guidance. Use the flashlight to read a Bible verse before bed each night!



St. Paul's United Methodist Church

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The Messenger

January 2015

Other News

Women's Bible Study

The Thursday evening Women's Bible Study will resume on January 21 at 6pm for an eleven week study by Beth Moore called *Breaking Free*. This study looks at the *Book of Isaiah* through the lives of the kings who ruled during the prophet's ministry. These kings exemplify many of the obstacles to freedom with which we must deal. If you'd like to join us, please contact the church office or Pam Gombert for further information.

Envelopes for 2016 will be ready for pick up on Sunday, December 26th.

Thank you

I feel so proud of the care and loving support of our community's families by our church. This feeling comes to me at the end of a year where I have seen generosity all year long, to missions, to youth, to calls to contribute to families within and outside our church membership. Thank you, St. Paul's United Methodist Church, for your time, donation, work, and financial generosity to others.

~Marilyn Springmann

Help! We are in desperate need for people to sign up for the welcome desk for the new year!! Your help is appreciated. Thank you!

Hurting World

Clark Retirement Community was founded in 1906, and for more than 100 years has created a community of dignity, compassion and respect centered on the lives of older adults and those who care for them. Clark provides a full continuum of care to residents in Grand Rapids, and also provides services to people throughout the greater Grand Rapids community.

Clark was originally founded as a home for retired Methodist ministers, thanks to the generosity of Melvin and Emily Clark. It has grown and expanded over the years to embrace approximately 500 residents on two campuses, with over 400 staff. Clark is an ecumenical community, welcoming people from all walks of life and all faith backgrounds.

The vision of Clark is to serve God by partnering with older adults in ways that add meaning and value to their lives. We ask that you give generously to this important mission.

Epiphany and the Adoration of the Magi

“We three kings of orient are; bearing gifts, we traverse afar.” Who were these three pagan kings and, more importantly what is their significance in the story of the birth of Jesus? Commonly found in manger scenes which also include heavenly Angels, lowly shepherds, and the Christ child, these regal figures and their camels are part of the nativity scene which we have come to love. We may know them as Caspar, Balthasar, and Melchior, although a careful reading of the gospel of Matthew gives neither name nor number. In chapter 60 Isaiah foretells a time when “darkness covers the earth” and “God’s glory will appear over you.” A radiant light will be a beacon to the pagan nations whose “wealth will come to you.” Camels will come “carrying gold and incense.” And in Psalm 72 we read “the kings [will] present gifts...let...gold be given to him!” So there IS a fulfillment of the Old Testament in the visit of the Magi bearing gold and frankincense.

Wait a minute...the kings came bearing THREE gifts. So far we have gold and frankincense...but what about myrrh, and why are all three gifts important? We have gold because only gold is fit for the birth of a king. Incense, used in worship, indicates the incarnate nature of God in Christ. But why myrrh? Myrrh, a sticky, bitter aromatic resin, is obtained from a tree found in eastern Africa and is used in preparing the body of the dead for burial. So myrrh indicates we anticipate the death of this King, a death that will save His people from their sins. Who are these people He has come to save? It would make sense to assume these were the Jews, for Jesus was a Jew and he was of a line of significant ancestors which included King David. But these Magi did not worship the LORD, the God of Jews. In fact, we believe they were pagans who studied the heavens and followed Zoroaster. Thus the Magi have come to represent all non-Jewish people who come paying homage to the Christ child. Paul, in the New Testament, makes it clear that salvation is for both the Jew and non-Jew alike, by looking in faith to Christ (Eph. 2:17-19). The Magi were following a “star” that appeared in the east and led them in a westerly direction throughout their nightly travels. As months past, the star faded until finally they were no longer able to follow their guide. So, rather than give up either quest, the Magi chose to seek directions from Herod, the local ruler; surely he would have knowledge of the emergence of a newborn king! Instead of seeking to pay homage in the manner of the three kings, Herod’s response was to seek to kill the baby, an action which announced to the Jews the existence of a new young king. In this way, thanks to the Magi, the birth of Jesus was made known to Jew and Gentile alike.

On **Epiphany Sunday**, January 10, we celebrate the manifestation (“epiphany”) of the incarnation of Jesus Christ and recognize the role of the Magi in announcing His birth to all the world. All three gifts of the Magi are necessary to convey the true revelation, the true epiphany, of who this child is and what he is destined to do. That’s why for hundreds of years we’ve sung of three kings, not two, not four.

**O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.**

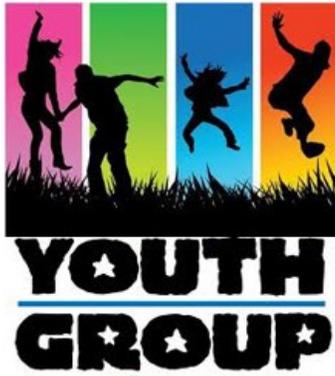
November 2015 Statistical Report

St. Paul’s General Fund Balance

	INCOME	EXPENSE	NET (+-)		BEGINNING BALANCE	YTD BALANCE	NET (+-)
November	\$25,644	\$26,016	—373		01/01/2015		
YEAR TO DATE	\$258,306*	\$265,715	—7,410	SAVINGS	\$ 8,228	\$ —986	—9,214

Average attendance: November: 102
Budget and Fund report available upon request
*includes \$10,000 from savings





Sunday, January 3

No meeting

Sunday, January 10

That Thing We Do on Sundays from 12-2pm @
St. Paul's UMC

Sunday, January 17

Ice Skating from 12-2pm @Wyoming Park UMC

Sunday, January 24

That Thing We Do on Sundays from 12-2pm @
St. Paul's UMC

Sunday, January 31

5th Sunday Celebration Potluck from 12:30-2:30pm @
Wyoming Park UMC

ICE SKATING PARTY!!

January 17

From 12pm to 2pm

Meet a Wyoming Park UMC!



**OUR YOUTH ARE
HUNGRY...AGAIN!**

Our Youth are hungry again! They will be meeting at St. Paul's in November and December.

To provide a meal go to: TaketHEMEAL.com, Username: youth; Password: youth. Or contact Bill Cummings at williamcummings@outlook.com.



5th Sunday Celebration Potluck

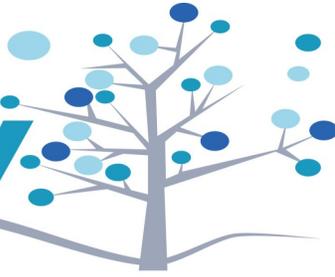
January 31

From 12:30pm to 2:30pm

Come and join us at St. Paul's UMC

for food, games and fun!

january



Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

					1 7:15-AA 9am-Suzanna Circle 12pm-AA	2 7:15-AA
3 7:15-AA 9am-Sunday School 10:15am-Worship	4 7:15-AA 12pm-AA 6:30pm-FA 7pm-Stephen Ministry	5 7:15-AA 12pm-AA 7pm-SPRC 7pm-Trustees	6 7:15-AA 9:30am-Rachel Circle 12pm-AA 5:45pm-Praise Team 6:45pm-Handbells	7 7:15-AA 12pm-AA 6:30pm-Cub Scouts	8 7:15-AA 12pm-AA	9 7:15-AA
10 7:15-AA 9am-Sunday School 10:15am-Worship	11 7:15-AA 12pm-AA 6pm-Love and Logic 6:30pm-FA	12 7:15-AA 12pm-AA	13 7:15-AA 12pm-AA 1pm-Needlecraft 5:45pm-Praise Team 6:45pm-Handbells	14 7:15-AA 10am-Caregivers 12pm-AA 6pm-John Knox 6:30pm-Cub Scouts	15 7:15-AA 12pm-AA	16 7:15-AA
17 7:15-AA 9am-Sunday School 10:15am-Worship 12pm-Youth Ice Skating	18 7:15-AA 12pm-AA <i>Newsletter Articles Due</i>	19 7:15-AA 12pm-AA	20 7:15-AA 12pm-AA 5:45pm-Praise Team 6:45pm-Handbells	21 7:15-AA 12pm-AA 6:30pm-Cub Scouts	22 7:15-AA 12pm-AA	23 7:15-AA
24 7:15-AA 9am-Sunday School 10:15am-Worship	25 7:15-AA 12pm-AA 6pm-Love and Logic 6:30pm-FA	26 7:15-AA 12pm-AA 7pm-Church Council	27 7:15-AA 12pm-AA 5:45pm-Praise Team 6:45pm-Handbells	28 7:15-AA 12pm-AA 6:30pm-Cub Scouts	29 7:15-AA 12pm-AA	30 7:15-AA
31 7:15-AA 9am-Sunday School 10:15am-Worship 12:30pm-Potluck						

THIS AND THAT



Suzanna Circle will meet on Friday, **John Knox** will be collecting beans, rice and pasta January 1, at 9am. All women are welcome! If you have questions please contact Peg Edvenson @ 455-8167 or pedvenson@gmail.com.

for the month of January. Team 2 will volunteer on Thursday, January 14 at 5:45pm.

The Food Pantry is unable to use anything that has been opened or has expired. Please check before donating. Thank you for all your support!

Rachel Circle will meet on Wednesday, January 6, at 9:30am in the lounge. Harriet Slamp is the hostess; Bev Gassdorf is co-hostess; Devotions by Harriet Slamp; Jackie Lenau has the program.



LET THERE BE LIGHT

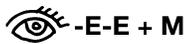
In a world of darkness, God guides us so we can walk in his ways.

Directions: Write the name of each picture, subtracting and adding letters as indicated. Then fill in the blanks to complete 2 Samuel 22:29, NIV.

“ Y O U , _____ , A R E



_____ ; T H E



_____ M Y



_____ D + _____ + _____ - T + S

I N T O _____ .”



2 SAMUEL 22:29, NIV



Seeking the Best

I believe that appreciation is a holy thing—that when we look for what’s best in a person that we happen to be with at the moment, we’re doing what God does all the time. So in loving and appreciating our neighbor, we’re participating in something sacred.

~Fred Rogers



The MESSENGER

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Church Council

Staff Comments: Pam Gombert reported that Pastor Erin will return to the pulpit on January 3, 2016. She has her January series of sermons in place. Pam, Erin and Steve Place from Mosaic United Methodist Church had lunch together to catch up on recent church business.

Worship: 1) Sharon Gould reported all sermons and scripture readings are in place for worship services during January. 2) Plans are being developed to explain Epiphany in the church bulletin and/or newsletter. Other liturgical seasons will be covered later. 3) Chancel choir will not sing during January, but will extend their season until the end of June. Thanks to Georgene Greene for her work.

Hospitality: Nothing to report.

Over the Wall: Roni McNeil reported that St. Paul's will Christmas carol at Hamilton Elementary on Thursday, December 17 at 10 am and 2 pm.

Missions: Orlan Lehman asked that if anyone can stay after church on Sunday, Dec. 20 to help wrap gifts for the Hamilton families, Kris Wood would greatly appreciate it. They will deliver the gifts afterwards.

SPRC: Tom Orsborn reported 1) incoming and outgoing members of SPRC have been acknowledged. 2) Preliminary discussions were held regarding the use of St. Paul's staff by Mosaic UMC. If Mosaic used St. Paul's staff, Mosaic would be responsible for the additional costs for time spent. 3) Buddy reports were provided for all staff members except Erin. 4) Tom Orsborn will work with Bill Cummings, assisting with Youth Group

planning and financials. They will also be reviewing the summer, 2016 youth mission trip. 5) A question was asked if there is to be a youth representative to Church Council. There can be, but hasn't been one for some time.

Finance: Bill Van Port Fleet reported income for 2016 has been estimated at around \$200,000.00 Christine Bonk reported 69 families/individuals have pledged. The pastor's salary, insurance, and pension costs for 2016 have increased. Lay staff salaries, pension and insurance costs for 2016 have decreased. The expense budget for 2016 was unanimously approved as presented by the Finance committee.

Trustees: 1) A different sound board has been tried and returned. It was a demo model. Trustees are not currently looking to replace ours. 2) Trustees will follow up on the UMW bulletin board in the Lounge which is often taken down and moved. They will check with AA to see if they are taking it down at their meetings.

Mosaic UMC: Tom Orsborn made a motion that "St. Paul's United Methodist Church establish a 12 month covenant with Mosaic United Methodist Church for the use of St. Paul's United Methodist Church facilities." Flo Goss seconded the motion. Discussion included: 1) Determining worship service start times will be the biggest challenge. 2) There will be a written business use agreement covering building use, staff usage, finances/costs, conflict resolution, and regularly scheduled progress meetings between St. Paul's and Mosaic. 3) Trustees need to check into our liability insurance and see if

any additional costs will be incurred by Mosaic using our facility. 4) Members wondered if the church conference has a template agreement which could be used as a model for ours. 5) Steve Place, pastor of Mosaic UMC, may be asked to attend our church council meetings on a quarterly basis to facilitate communication between the churches. 6) Trustees may need to find a storage closet for Mosaic to use. 7) SPRC will work with Jane Asher if there ends up being any changes to nursery staffing due to Mosaic's use of our facility. 8) Steve Place should have an office somewhere in the building. 9) Possibility to have joint worship service and / or pot luck as a way for both congregations to meet each other. 10) Sunday, March 6 is the first Sunday that Mosaic will need to use our facility. 11) If the motion passes, Pam Gombert would make the following assignments: SPRC – staff use; Trustees – building use, liability insurance; Finance – cost of utilities; Worship – worship times; Church Council – regularly scheduled meetings; Church Council and Pastor Erin – conflict resolution. A vote on the motion was taken with unanimous approval. Pam Gombert reviewed committee assignments. She asked our leadership teams and committees to work out details in early January, 2016; with the goal being to report details at the January 26, 2016 Church Council meeting.

Pam Gombert thanked all outgoing Church Council members for their work.

The meeting adjourned with prayer requests being heard and prayer.