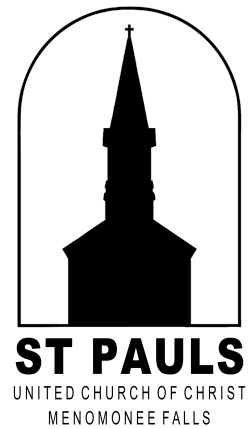


EVANGEL

April 2, 2024



Post from the Pulpit

As I ...

... sit down a few days before Easter to cobble together an article for the April newsletter, I am well aware that the clock is running! And I'm not talking about the clock that runs when tall athletes run up and down the court in fairly short pants, hoping to be playing basketball in April for all the marbles. No, no. I'm talking about the clock that is running out on my tenure as your interim pastor. My clock is about to run out. For most basketball teams in the Big Dance, time has already expired. My alma mater, Michigan State, got bounced out long ago; if you're a Wisconsin grad, yours did, too. I would be hard-pressed to name the teams, men's as well as women's, that hoisted trophies a year ago, but I'm sure I was glued to the telly at the time. I will be glued to the church Easter Sunday when we affirm and experience the joy of the resurrection. And there may be moments when I will be overcome by the joy of it all! I've never been hesitant, even as a card-carrying male, to express my emotions.

Over the nearly 18 months that we have been together as pastor and people, I have mentioned the name Fred Buechner. Fred's gone now, but, along the way, he authored a bunch of books on the Christian faith and life. It's common for people like me to quote people like him. As it turns out, most rock-solid, earnest, in-church-often Christians find it difficult to read articles and books about the Christian faith and life. I can understand why. Many of those books are written by academics for other academics, not for normal people like us. Many of us prefer to settle in with a juicy English novel or mystery, but Buechner's an exception to the rule. His books are actually comprehensible. In one of his books, for example, Buechner says, "Faith begins with a lump in the throat." On Easter Sunday, I expect to have an occasional "... lump in the throat." Joy does that to you. It causes emotion to bubble up in the throat, making it difficult to sing and speak.

Recently, I preached a sermon in praise of men who are able to express emotion publicly. In a prior life, this was discouraged. Like those Brits over there beyond the water, we men know the virtue of a "stiff upper lip!" "But the times," as Bobby Dylan once wrote, "they are a-changin'." Finally,

after years of hard work, some of us men have come to realize it's alright to let it all hang out, alright to express emotions, especially joy.

I anticipate experiencing some joy as some of us gather on the front lawn of the church on Easter morning for a "sunrise" service. We're going to miss the sunrise by a few hours, but never mind. There will be some joy floating around. Some are convinced that outdoor services are literally "for the birds." After all, it's argued, there's no organ out there, no sound system, often no heat! According to the morning paper, it's going to be a little nippy out there at 8:00 this coming Sunday morning. Even so, that's God's temple out there! Out there it's possible to hear birds singing, possible to see flower buds trying their best to show up and trees trying to leaf out; it's possible to feel, if not the warmth of the sun, at least the warmth that comes when friends and loved ones huddle in a circle and sing, "Christ, the Lord, is risen today." To do that is an occasion of joy, an occasion that carries at least the potential of a "... lump in the throat."

It occurs to me that joy has always been one of the hallmarks of my ministry. No surprise there. When the apostle Paul got around to writing a letter to the Galatians, he named "the fruits of the Spirit" (Galatians 5.22). Guess what? "Joy" is #2 on the list, right after "love." According to Paul, joy is a major deal, a major ingredient of the Christian life. To miss the joy is to miss one of the major consequences of living the Christian life. If there's no joy in it for you, something ain't right. To make sure all of us experience this God-given, God-intended joy, and before the clock runs completely out, let me tell you why I love being a pastor and teacher of the United Church of Christ.

Over the course of my career, I have known the joy of PROVIDING PASTORAL CARE. Ordained pastors have the privilege of standing with God's people in time of "trial and rejoicing," as it says in the UCC Statement of Faith. A spiritual guide must be an attentive listener and spiritually confident, whether in the living room, the hospital room, the funeral home, the coffee shop. Such occasions provide the basis of trust. Without trust, essential, necessary conversations will not take place. Such conversations evoke a shared willingness to open oneself to the leading of the Spirit through prayer and the gifts of the Spirit, to open oneself to that which is of God.

In public settings, primarily in the company of the gathered community of faith, pastors lift up the word of God as revealed in scripture TO BUILD THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH. There's joy in doing that. In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, Chapter 4, we pastors are encouraged "... to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ." Building that "body" represents a bit of a challenge, given the current drift of the wider culture away from the church, but, when it happens, there's joy in it. This "drift" began in the late Sixties when it was discovered that the Baby Boomers (those born between 1946 - '64) were not showing up in church, generally speaking. The Boomers (now 60 - 78 years of age) were the first generation to find other things to do on Sunday mornings. That means their kids and grandkids are not in church either, generally speaking. Books have been written to explain why this is so; fortunately for Mickey, who has to cram all this into our April newsletter, I don't have space in this article to indicate why this is so.

What I know is that there's joy in chipping away at the task of building the body of Christ. When I showed up back in the fall of 2022, it was clear this needed to be done. The church had been through a tough time. A shot of continuity and stability was needed. For the past 18 months or so, we've been working on that together. I'm probably not totally objective about this, but it seems we've made some progress in this regard. And there's been joy ... at least from my side of the table.

Strong communities of faith then become instruments of outreach and mission. And there's joy in this, too, the joy of being involved in PUBLIC MINISTRY AND MISSION. As I'm sure we all realize, it just feels good ... to do good. As I have said routinely, I see a bunch of "good" going out the door of our church. Routinely, we're running food to our local food pantry; we're running stuff down to St. Ben's in Milwaukee ... or out to Grafton with Mr. Bob's for our homeless brothers and sisters ... or supporting our homebound friends ... or knitting prayer shawls. The list goes on. That's public ministry, in case you were wondering. In addition, we are a 5 x 5 church! That means we support our denomination (through OCWM - it's in our budget), as well as all the special offerings of the UCC (and there are 4 of them).

Each church, no matter the size, exists for mission. It's our life-blood. It quickens the heart in a good way! It gets the blood running. It touches the soul. Energized by the example of Jesus, we reach out as a church to those in need. We reach out first ... and ask questions later. Having read the parable of the Good Samaritan, we know that my neighbor is anyone in need. We get that! And, because we get that, we know the joy that comes in reaching out and extending God's love to those who need us. As we do that ... joy!

Over the past 18 months, I have known the joy of serving as interim pastor of the church. I have known the joy that comes in being a pastor, in building the community of faith, in being involved in mission. My hope and prayer for your new permanent pastor is that she, too, working harmoniously with all of you, will know the same joy, the same

Blessings on our journey,

Pastor Steve



Send a note & put a smile on someone's face!

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| -David & Anne Marie Bast | -Lorrie Tatz |
| -Harlan & Cathy Schnabel | -Hilde Lowen |
| -Paulette Kornmann | -Dorothy Duehring |
| -Earl Flaskrud | -Sharon Whitman |
| -Mary Kurtz | -Hal Maury |
| -Keith Farnham | |

(Please contact Mickey if you know someone who should be added to this list)

DENISE "DENI" SERIO

It is with tremendous sadness and shock that St. Pauls UCC announces the passing of Denise "Deni" Serio. Pastor Steve received a call on Monday, March 25th from Deni's good friend, Sonny, letting us know of her passing over the weekend. It was an unfortunate accident that took Deni from this earthly home. Please pray for her family, good friends, Sonny & Dave, and her entire church family. Her celebration of life will be held Thursday, April 18th at 6pm at St. Pauls.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

TUESDAY, APRIL 2

7:30pm - Bell Choir

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3

6:15pm - Cabinet

7:30pm - Board of Trustees

7:30pm - Board of Deacons

SATURDAY, APRIL 6

9:00am - Meditation Group

(for more info, contact Terry Tracy,
terencepatricktracy@gmail.com)

SUNDAY, APRIL 7

9:30am - Communion Service

(Guest Pastor: Rev Stephen Gifford)

9:45am - Children's Church

10:45am - Fellowship

10:45am - Confirmation Class postponed
until April 14 (Pastor Steve on holiday
today)

10:45am - Mission Task Force Meeting

TUESDAY, APRIL 9

7:30pm - Bell Choir

SATURDAY, APRIL 13

9:00am - Meditation Group

(for more info, contact Terry Tracy,
terencepatricktracy@gmail.com)

SUNDAY, APRIL 14

9:30am - Service

10:45am - Fellowship

10:45am - Confirmation Class

10:45am - Prayer Shawl Ministry

MONDAY, APRIL 15

6:30 - 8:30pm - Open Knit/Crochet

ATTN: CONFIRMATION FAMILIES

The April 7th Confirmation class has been postponed to April 14th.

Pastor Steve will be on "holiday," as they say in the UK, with family and friends from April 1 - 8.

NEW MEMBERS

New members will be received April 28. If you desire to be received as a member of this community, either by letter of transfer or profession of faith, please contact Pastor Steve (989.388.7657). According to our Constitution, only active members of the church have the right and the privilege to vote at called meetings of the congregation.



VOLUNTEER SCHEDULES:

LITURGIST SCHEDULE:

Apr 7 Gladys Hoagland

Apr 14 Kate Tracy

USHER SCHEDULE:

Apr 7 Team #1: Maury, Martin, Rubatt,
Seehaver

Apr 14 Team #2: Gibowski, Gardebrecht

GREETER SCHEDULE:

Apr 7 Dethloffs

Apr 14 Gardebrechts

COFFEE HOUR HOST:

Apr 7 Jean Lipenski

Apr 14 Eileen Mattfeld

COURTESY DRIVER:

Apr 7 Sue Schuelke

Apr 14 Gibowskis

STORM CLEAN UP - HELP NEEDED

The Trustees are going to do a Winter Storm Damage cleanup on Saturday, April 6th at 9AM. If there are any other church members that are interested in helping the Trustees and the Boy Scouts with this cleanup please let one of the Trustees know. (Mike Gresen, Paul Martin, Mike Maury, Bob Trapp, Blaine Harris, Lynn Bauman)

**Please join the Trustees with clean up,
Saturday, April 6th from 9am-noon**

MANY DESERVING THANK YOU'S

* I just wanted to thank so many people for the Easter cards and also cards sent at other times during the past year. It is so much appreciated. Also, thanks for the Easter basket delivered in person by Pastor Steve as well as his visit. Loved to hear the organ on Easter Sunday on Facebook.

IN Christian Love ~Hilde Lowen

* **Thanks to the members of Boy Scout Troop 321!** The scouts help whenever asked and setting up for the recent Easter Bunny visit was no exception. The boys moved tables and chairs and did some light cleaning. The event was a success because of their help!

* **Mike Maury** deserves a huge show of gratitude! He is at church early nearly every Sunday to open up the doors and make the coffee. He is so dependable. We want to say, "Thanks Mike, we notice and appreciate all you do here at St. Pauls!"

TREASURER NEEDED

We are still in need of a volunteer to sit on the Church Cabinet and perform the treasurer duties. If you can balance a checkbook and understand how to pay bills electronically, we can teach you the rest. Prior treasurer's include: Tom Lindow, Amy Dethloff, and Andy Toebe; they'd be happy to answer your questions. We need a detail oriented person willing to give some time to do the Lord's work. If interested, please contact Mickey or Chris Sparrow.



Who will feed the kids this weekend?

Our confirmation class is asking for your help. They've teamed up with Blessings in a Backpack and are in need of individual applesauce containers and instant oatmeal. Please donate if you are able! Collection container in Guild Hall.

DO YOU PLAY THE PIANO and/or THE ORGAN, AND SING?

St. Pauls UCC is looking for a talented pianist/organist & vocalist to lead music during Sunday worship services.

St. Pauls United Church of Christ in Menomonee Falls, WI is looking for a part time pianist/organist. Ability to play both piano and organ is preferred. Must be able to play 48 Sundays a year including Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, Rally Sunday (first Sunday after Labor Day), as well as 3 additional services, Ash Wednesday evening Service, Maundy Thursday evening service and Christmas Eve evening service. Hours are 6 – 8 per week which includes an hour long Sunday service, consulting the pastor or administrative assistant on appropriate selections, and researching and registering the copyright for online streaming with our licensing services, OneLicense and CCLI. Traditional Protestant hymns and contemporary church music repertoire required. Must find your own replacement for the four Sundays not present. Salary negotiable, experience considered. Contact the church office to schedule an interview which will include playing the piano and organ. Additional skills considered would be ability to accompany soloists, vocal accompaniment to hymns. Potential for referral for weddings, and funeral opportunities with separate remuneration.

Please contact St. Pauls United Church of Christ at saintpaulsinthefalls@gmail.com or call (262) 251-5160 for details.



April 2024 "Most Needed Items"

- Pasta Sauce
- Canned Carrots & Peas
- Canned Chicken
- Canned Peaches & Apricots
- Cereal
- Chicken Noodle Soup
- Chunky Soup
- Crackers
- Donations for Fresh Fruits & Vegetables
- Jelly
- Mashed Potatoes (Bags or Boxes)
- ALWAYS NEEDED — Brown Paper Grocery Bags !



The Prayer Shawl Ministry

Prayer shawl crocheters and knitters will gather the second Sunday of each month after church as well as the third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m

OPEN KNIT/CROCHET NIGHT

Knitters and crocheters and people willing to learn are invited to Guild Hall for fun, conversation, and the joy of yarn!

The third Monday of each month, for April, it's

April 15th at 6:30pm

All are welcome!

Contact Sarah Welke @ 262-893-0150 or swelke6@gmail.com with any questions



JIGSAW PUZZLE NIGHT

Friday, April 19th @ 6:30pm

Hosted by Women's Fellowship

Join us for a fun night of puzzle making and fellowship. Bring a snack, appetizer, or dessert to share, and bring your own beverage. We will have some puzzles available, but if you have a puzzle you would like to put together feel free to bring it.

Contact Sarah Welke with any questions.

262-893-0150 or swelke6@gmail.com



St. Pauls United Church of Christ
N89W16856 Appleton Ave.
Menomonee Falls, WI 53051

phone: 262-251-5160, leave a message
email: saintpaulsinthefalls@gmail.com
Pastor Steve Davidson's Cell: 989-388-7657

CAN'T MAKE IT TO CHURCH? FIND US LIVE ON:

Facebook

&

YouTube





St. Pauls UCC teamed up with The Menomonee Falls Downtown Business Improvement District (BID) to celebrate Easter on Saturday, March 23rd. Learn about more great events in downtown Menomonee Falls on their website at <https://www.menomoneefallsdowntown.com/>



Blanket Tying took place on Friday, March 15th. It was fun for all ages!



CARBERRY, Sandy & Tim (48)	04/10
GIBOWSKI, Bill & Pam (51)	04/14
JANSETT, Scott & Carol (56)	04/27
ALMONTE, Laura & Freddy(19)	05/05



APRIL BIRTHDAYS!

SCHMIDT, Kalo	04/01
LEAR, Brenda	04/09
NOOYEN, Michael	04/16
TRACY, Kate	04/20
MAURY, Michael	04/21
GARDEBRECHT, Robert	04/23
HOAGLAND, Lucian	04/27
SCHUELKE, Susan	04/28
DETHLOFF, Mike	05/01
KARCH, Michael	05/01
LUNDE, Addison	05/01
FLASKRUD, Earl	05/04
EISEN, Darlene	05/05



St. Pauls United Church of Christ's Mission Task Force

Invites You to attend a



Mental Fitness Workshop

Tuesday, April 16, 2024

5:30 - 7:30pm

(5pm dinner)

\$20/person

Presented By: Treva Wetherell, Life & Leadership Coach
& Terri Donlin, ICF Certified Coach

Based on *Positive Intelligence*, this workshop will help build your mental fitness so you can remain calm, clear-headed, stress-free, even in the middle of handling life's greatest challenges. You'll learn about three core mental muscles and practices to help grow them, so you can shift your inner balance of power from your Saboteurs (your negative self) to your Sage (your positive self).

And there will be fun and laughter along the way!

Register through St. Pauls UCC's website
stpaulsucc.org or click the QR code:



Questions?

Call the church office during the hours of 11am - 3pm Tues-Fri at
(262) 251-5160 or leave a message.

Email: saintpaulsinthefalls@gmail.com

St. Pauls UCC

N89W16856 Appleton Ave

Menomonee Falls, WI 53051

The Easter Lilies have been lovingly given:

In Honor of

- ***Grandma Elaine Laabs** by the Frank family (Shawn, Jeff, Taylor, & Devan) (1)
- ***Our parents/grandparents – Rick & Judi Jegl and Dave & Chris Grossmann** by Mickey, Jason & JJ Jegl (2)
- ***Our Loving Parents** by Wendi Medrow & Lenny Schweigert (1)

In Memory of

- ***Bob & Dee Bruss** by their children (1)
- ***Robert I. Buss** by Carol Buss & family (1)
- ***Victor & Lucille Carberry and Joseph & Betty Jane Stuetgen** by Tim & Sandy Carberry (2)
- ***Earl Dethloff** by the Dethloff family (1)
- ***Mom/Grandma, Tina Brockman** by the Frank family (Shawn, Jeff, Taylor, & Devan) (1)
- ***Our Parents** by Pam & Bill Gibowski (1)
- ***Joe & Betty Stuetgen and Earl Gresen** by Sue Schuelke & Mike Gresen (2)
- ***Dr. Howard & Genieve Schloemer, Michael & Clarice Newman, Noelle's twin Margaret, Aunt Arleen Wick, Aunt Valerie Hennes, and Aunt Sylvia Rheingan** by Karolyn, Russell, Kaylin, & Noelle Newman (2)
- ***Melvin & Jean Golner** by Jennifer, Cal, Sophia, & Patti Prochazka (1)
- ***Husband, Paul E. Schmidt, Parents, Tony & Muriel Meyer, and Paul W. & Joyce Schmidt** by Kalo Schmidt (3)
- ***Robert & Miriam Tank** by the Sparrow family (1)
- ***Loved Ones** by Kate & Terry Tracy (1)
- ***Ralph & Beatrice Trapp** by Bob Trapp (1)

In Celebration of Easter

- *Bob & Jayne Gardebrecht (1)
- *Tom & Kam Lindow & Family (1)
- *Julie & Mike Loth & Family (2)
- *Kate & Terry Tracy (1)
- *Jean Lipenski (5) – making it possible to complete the cross and fill each sanctuary window.

