

St. Pauls United Church of Christ



Sunday, January 5th, 2025
Epiphany

St. Pauls United Church of Christ
Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin
(* = YOU MAY STAND.)

RINGING THE BELLS, WELCOMING THE LIGHT

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE: “The Child,” from *Tableaux for Christmas*, G. Young

***CALL TO WORSHIP:**

Leader: Like the Magi, we long to follow God.

ALL: We want to pick up the hems of our robes and run in the direction of God.

Leader: Like the Magi, we want to kick up dust with our feet and make a joyful ruckus.

ALL: But the stars can be hard to see from here. So just as you guided the Magi, guide us. Reveal what it is you want us to hear today, so that we can follow you.

***OPENING SONG:** “As with Gladness” #173

***CALL TO CONFESSION:**

Leader: Friends, one of the gifts of confession is it allows us to begin again. For in this moment of prayer, we name our shortcomings and mistakes. We receive God’s grace, and we start again. The slate is wiped clean. The prayer of confession is an act of beginning again and again and again. So join me in prayer. Even here, God is already doing something new. Let us begin again. Let us pray:

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION:**

God of new beginnings, We admit that we often follow the well-worn path, simply because others have been there before. Sometimes this is holy and humble, but there are days when a new path needs to be tread. On those new-beginning days, O God, give us the courage to follow your star. Give us the courage to go home another way. Give us the courage to kick up some dust and walk in a new direction for the sake of justice, love, and neighbor. For when you are doing a new thing, we want to have the courage to follow. With hope in our hearts we wander, we travel. Amen.

***WORDS OF FORGIVENESS:**

Dear travelers, No matter the roads you've taken, the steps you've made, or the paths you've traveled, there is nowhere you could go that would land you outside of God's love.

Hear and believe the good news of the Gospel:

ALL: Regardless of the path we travel, of how lost we may get, or the twists and turns along the way, we do not walk alone. We are loved. We are forgiven. We have every chance to begin again.

Thanks be to God for a love like that!

***SHARING GOD'S PEACE:**

Pastor: The peace of the Lord, Jesus Christ, be with you all.

ALL: And, also, with you.

READING FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE *(NRSV^{ue})*

Liturgists Reading: Isaiah 43:16-21 (p.851)

Pastor's Reading: Matthew 2:1-12 (P.1132)

SERMON:

"The road isn't straight"

Rev. Emma

Sancomb

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

...We ask these things in the name of Jesus who taught us to say when we pray:

THE LORD'S PRAYER (ALL QV)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

***SERMON SONG: "What Child is This" #162**

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

**We believe in a God who is with us,
a God who is beside us in the mountains and valleys,
holding our hand through every bump and turn.
And in the chaos of our journey,
we believe that God sees
what we cannot always see:
a path home by another way.
Therefore, trusting in this ever-present and guiding God,
we lace up our shoes.
We look for God's fingerprints in the world.
We trust that there are paths still unexplored,
paths that God has only begun to invite us down.
And like the Magi, we dare to follow.
May it be so, Amen**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

Leader: Every gift we have comes as part of God's good creation. Let us honor and participate in the Creator's vision of true peace, flourishing, and abundance by prioritizing the needs of others over the excesses of self. Let us embrace gift-giving as our love language and commitment. May our generosity be a witness to the world of the Living God among us.



(Please place your offering in the plates as they are passed, give through your usual method, or click on the QR code to the left by using your cell phone camera and clicking on the St. Pauls Giving website.)

***DOXOLOGY**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise God all creatures here below
Praise God for all that love has done
Creator, Christ, and Spirit one. Amen.*

***DEDICATION**

Leader: Loving God - we dedicate these gifts that have been shared for the welfare of your beloved community. May they bring peace into the world and serve as a signal that God is with us. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

The United Church of Christ practices open communion in which all baptized Christians attending are invited to commune together regardless of Church affiliation. Once served, please hold each communion element until all are served so that we may commune together.

The bread trays contain gluten free bread in the center cup.

The wine trays contain grape juice in the center ring.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION:

Pastor: The Holy One be with you

ALL: And also with you

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

ALL: We lift them up to God.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the One who guides our life together.

ALL: It is our joy to offer gratitude and praise.

God, you never promised us that way would be clear. You have, however, created us in your image – the image of One who is Wisdom, who is Love, who is Courage.....And so we join with all the saints who have gone before in gratitude for your abiding presence:

ALL: Holy, holy, holy, God of power and presence all that is, is full of your glory Blessed is the One who comes in the name of Love

Pastor: Sacred is your presence and blessed is Christ with us...
...And so, in remembrance of Christ with us, and in the assurance of your Love persistent, we offer our lives, our ministries, and our church in the service of your healing work as we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

ALL: Christ has died; Christ has risen; Christ will come again.

Pastor: Pour out your Spirit on this community and these gifts. Make them a taste of your Kingdom through Christ with us, that we might leave the Table both nourished by your Love and still hungry for justice for all your people.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS

(Please wait until all elements have been distributed)

During the distribution, please join us in singing #414 “Eat this Bread”

Pastor: Take and eat, this is the body of Christ, broken for you. **Amen.**

Pastor: Take and drink, this is the cup of the new covenant, poured out for you. **Amen.**

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AFTER COMMUNION**

ALL: Nourishing God, Sometimes we tell ourselves that too much has taken place to begin again. We think the world is too far gone. We think we have made too many mistakes. We tell ourselves that we couldn't possibly begin again. But then we come to this Table and we get a glimpse of your kingdom. We come to this Table and all are welcomed, all are seen, all are fed. And just like that, we have hope. Just like that, we begin again. Thank you for the gift of this fresh start. Thank you for planting hope deep in our bones. Thank you for meeting us in ordinary bread and juice to remind us that it's never too late to build your kingdom here. Amen

LITURGY OF FAREWELL

Leader: Our church family is constantly changing. People come and go. Babies are born. Children grow up. People commit themselves to one another. Loved ones and friends among us come to the end of their lives. Individuals move into our community and church life. Others leave us, moving away to new places, new experiences, and new opportunities. It is important and right that we recognize these times of passage, of endings and beginnings. Today we share the time of farewell with our pastor who is leaving.

ENDING AN AUTHORIZED MINISTRY/RECOGNITION OF THE END

Chris Sparrow: On January 7th 2024, this local church called Rev. Emma Sancomb to serve as pastor and teacher.

Rev. Emma Sancomb: I thank St. Paul's UCC, its members and friends, for the love, kindness, and support shown me these last seven months. I ask forgiveness for the mistakes I have made. I am grateful for the ways my leadership has been accepted. As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned here.

PEOPLE: We receive your thankfulness, offer forgiveness, and accept that you now leave to minister elsewhere. We express our gratitude for your time among us. We ask your forgiveness for our mistakes. Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will not leave us at your departure.

Rev. Emma Sancomb: I forgive you and accept your gratitude, trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God.

VOWS OF RELEASE *All are invited to rise in body or spirit.

Mr. John Kletti: *addressing the congregation*

Do you, the members and friends of St. Paul's United Church of Christ release Pastor Emma from the duties of pastor and teacher?

PEOPLE: We do, with the help of God.

Dr. Shelia Feay-Shaw: Do you offer your encouragement for her ministry at Cedar Communities?

PEOPLE: We do, with the help of God.

Mr. John Kletti: *addressing the authorized minister*

Do you, Emma, release this local church from turning to you and depending on you?

Rev. Emma Snacomb: I do, with the help of God.

Dr. Shelia Feay-Shaw: Do you offer your encouragement for the continued ministry here and on the relationship with another who will come to serve?

Rev. Emma Sancomb: I do, with the help of God.

WITNESS OF THE ASSOCIATION/ CONFERENCE

Church officers may come forward.

Rev. Jane Anderson: On behalf of the Southeast Association and the United Church of Christ, I witness to the words spoken: words of thankfulness, forgiveness, and release. The member churches of our association and conference hold each of you in prayer. We pledge our support in the transitions signified in this service.

PEOPLE: Thanks be to God.

PRAYER

All who are able may stand.

Rev. Jane Anderson: Let us pray.

ALL: God, whose everlasting love for all is trustworthy, help each of us to trust the future which rests in your care. The time we were together in your name saw our laughter and tears, our hopes and disappointments. Guide us as we hold these cherished memories but move in new directions, until that time to come when we are completely one with you and with each other, in the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN:** “We Three Kings,” #172

***BENEDICTION:** Parting message from Pastor Emma

***POSTLUDE:** “Festive Postlude,” Robert J. Hughes



+ Enlightened: Service Prayers for Christmas 2C/Epiphany was written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ.

+ Communion Liturgy adapted from Enfleshed Liturgy written by M Jade Kaiser

+ Liturgy by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

+Permission to podcast / stream the music in this service obtained from CCLI, License #A-11468142 (copyright) & #A-20746503 (streaming). All rights reserved

+Permission to podcast / stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE, License #734533-A. All rights reserved.

+Communion liturgy adapted from M Jade Kaiser, Enfleshed Liturgy.

RESOURCES FOR PERSONAL DEVOTIONS

Lectionary Readings for January 12, 2025

~ Isa 43:1-7

~Ps 29

~ Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

~Acts 8:14-17

LITURGIST SCHEDULE:

Jan 5 Amy Dethloff
Jan 12 John Rubatt
Jan 19 Pam Gibowski
Jan 26 Marcus Seehaver

USHER SCHEDULE:

Jan 5 Team #1
Jan 12 Team #2
Jan 19 Team #3
Jan 26 Team #4

GREETER SCHEDULE:

Jan 5 Kate & Terry Tracy
Jan 12 Julie Loth
Jan 19 Sarah Welke
Jan 26 Mike Maury

COFFEE HOUR HOST:

Chris Sparrow
Julie Loth
Sarah Welke
Jean Lipenski

OUR STAFF:

Pastor: Rev. Emma Sancomb
Guest Musician: Dr. Kelly Kazik
Bell Choir Director: Chris Sparrow
Pastor Emeritus: Russell Knoth
Admin. Asst.: Stephenie Osuji

~~~

You can reach the office at 262-251-5160 or  
email [saintpaulsinthefalls@gmail.com](mailto:saintpaulsinthefalls@gmail.com)

**OFFICE HOURS**

Church Office: **Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday 9:00am-1pm**

**CPR (Church and Pastor Relations Committee) MEMBERS**

Julie Loth [jmhloth@gmail.com](mailto:jmhloth@gmail.com)  
Mike Dethloff [mdethloff62@gmail.com](mailto:mdethloff62@gmail.com)  
Terry Tracy [terencepatricktracy@gmail.com](mailto:terencepatricktracy@gmail.com)  
Amy Krohn [jakrohn@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jakrohn@sbcglobal.net)  
Sue Schuelke [sschuelk@charter.net](mailto:sschuelk@charter.net)  
Jennifer Seehaver [jennifer@seehaver.com](mailto:jennifer@seehaver.com)

## **SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Andy Toebe  
Pam Gibowski  
Drew Olson  
Chris Sparrow  
Paul Martin

### **PRAYER REQUESTS (To be added to the prayer chain, please contact Julie Loth 262-422-0267)**

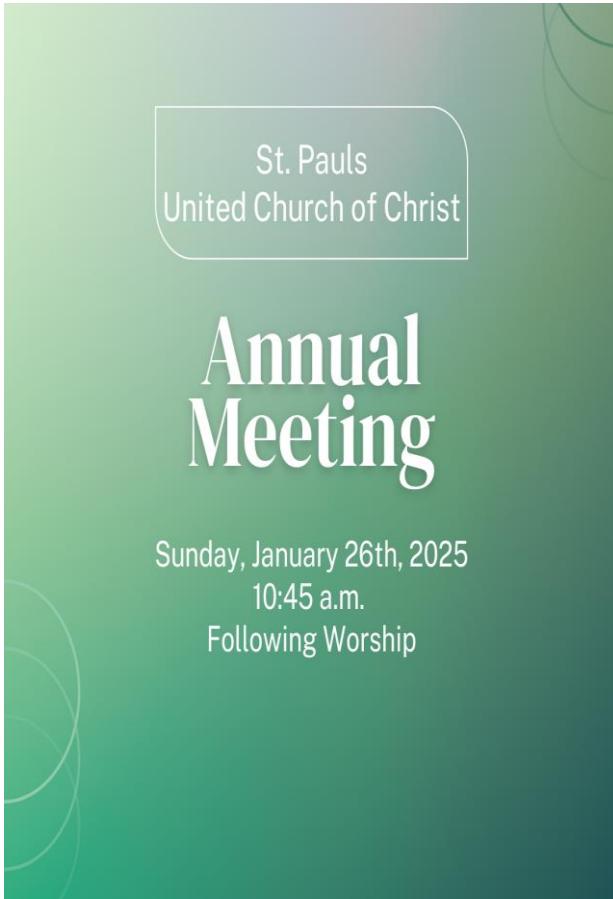
- Julie Loth - Whose cousin, Scott Schwinn, died this past November and for his family going through their first Christmas without him.
- Darlene Eisen - who is home recovering from a broken hip.
- Jaye Gardebrecht - Whose brother, Dale passed away and brother Kurt who is going through treatment for his cancer that has returned.
- Carol Rubatt - We celebrate that her CT scans came back good.
- Jean Lipenski - Brother, Dan, is recovering from a stroke.
- Steve Hecky - 6-year-old grandson, Graham's continued medical journey.

**Don't forget to complete the Who's In The Pews Form located on the end of the pew near the main aisle.  
PLEASE put completed forms in the offertory plate.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **COLLEGE STUDENT CARE PACKAGES**

We are putting together care packages for our college students. If you have a student, please let the church office know and please provide their address. If you'd like to donate small snacks, gift cards, or a note of encouragement, we have a box in Guild Hall. We will plan to ship in January in time for the start of the second semester. Thank you!



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## **SUNDAY, January 5, 2025**

9:30am - Worship

10:30am - Fellowship Hour

## **TUESDAY, January 7, 2025**

7:30pm - Bell Practice

## **WEDNESDAY, January 8, 2025**

4:00pm - Bible Study

6:15pm - Cabinet Meeting

7:30pm - Individual Committee Meetings

## **SATURDAY, January 11, 2025**

9:00am - Meditation Group

## **SUNDAY, January 12, 2025**

9:30am - Worship

10:30am - Fellowship Hour

## **TUESDAY, JANUARY 14**

7:30pm - Bell Choir Practice

## **THURSDAY, JANUARY 16**

6:30am-8:00pm - Prayer Shawl

## **SATURDAY, JANUARY 18**

9:00am - Meditation Group

9:00am-Noon - Cookie Baking

12:00pm-5:00pm - Cookie Walk

## **SUNDAY, JANUARY 19**

9:30am - Service

10:45am - Fellowship

11:00am - Women's Fellowship

## **TUESDAY, JANUARY 21**

Food Pantry

7:30pm - Bell Choir Practice

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22**

4:30pm - Bible Study

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 23**

Food Pantry

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 25**

9:00am - Meditation Group

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 26**

9:30am - Service

10:45am - Fellowship

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 28**

7:30pm - Bell Choir Practice