



NEWS FROM SAINT PAUL BENSON

Inspiration

DECEMBER 2021

Pastoral Perspective

REV. STEPHANIE AHLSCHEDE

The season of Advent is a season for gathering wisdom; our path of expectation leads us through ancient stories of migration and hope, liberation, and release. We encounter John the Baptist, Mary and Elizabeth, Shepherds, and Innkeepers and finally, the Holy Family - all of whom find support and wisdom in the ancient teachings of the Hebrew scriptures, and whose stories we now find in the Gospels.

Throughout these scriptures runs the theme of God's light and love touching the lives of the people who are wise enough to listen, and who in their wisdom choose to move forward in faith. We journey with them this season, drawing from the same sources of wisdom: scripture, prayer, and the support of our faith community. We journey with them as we give of ourselves: spending time together in worship, working through our reverse advent calendar, inviting friends & neighbors to join us at Saint Paul events to remind us of our connections to one another and the stories of our faith.

In this newsletter, you will find opportunities to grow in wisdom, share God's love, and join the beautiful journey towards Christmas. Please join us as often and as in as many ways as you are able as we embrace the season's wisdom, love, and hope.

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The Inspiration is published monthly.
Submit info by the 19th of the month to
be included in the next month's issue.

Email Kristin
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in WORSHIP

ADVENT: The Beginning of the Church Year

The season of Advent has been with us since the fourth century, although it has not been a part of the liturgical observance of all denominations and churches. With the mixing of Christmas and Advent leading to Christmas Day, the two may be confused. Advent marks the beginning of the church year; a season to prepare for the coming of Christ. It is part of the cycle of seasons including Christmas, and Epiphany, all related to the coming of Jesus.

The 4th weekend of Advent, as part of **December 18** Chapel worship at 5 PM and our Sunday service at 10 AM **December 19**, we will join in celebrating the traditional setting of Advent Lessons and Carols. The Solid Brass Quartet will join David Schack at the organ and The Choir as we celebrate the promised coming of Christ through song and scripture.

We gather to celebrate **Christmas Eve** with two services of candles, carols, and communion in the beauty of the Saint Paul Sanctuary. The **3:30** and **7:30** services will include the singing of Malotte's "The Lord's Prayer" with The Choir leading the later worship. This rich tradition was established as collaboration between the Rev. Dr. Alva Clark and the Honorable Judge Walter Cropper in 1953. It will be the 68th consecutive year the beautiful melody has graced our worship. Finally, in bidding "auld lang syne" to 2021, we will keep Wesley's "Covenant Service" observance at both in-person services, **January 01/02**. At this year's end, we give thanks for the dedication and vibrant leadership offered by the many volunteers who grace the Music Ministry of Saint Paul Benson. Your perseverance and commitment make worship a true blessing from God!

Rev. Jerry



HOLY LISTENING

CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER SERVICES FIRST WEDNESDAY 10AM & 5:30PM

Join Rev. Marta Wheeler for "Holy Listening," a quiet half-hour prayer time in Roth Chapel. On December 1, the first Wednesday in Advent, prayers of healing will be included for

those who mourn or seek a time of quietude during the holiday season. Join us on Wednesdays, December 1 and January 5 at one of these gentle prayer services where we allow the scriptures to wash over our souls.



ANGEL TREE

The Mercy & Justice team invites you to support children in need with selections from the Angel Trees found in the Chapel and Sanctuary. Gifts due to church office Dec. 15.



HAT AND MITTEN TREE

Hats, gloves and mittens are welcome on the Mitten Trees in the Chapel and Sanctuary. Your warm gifts will be distributed to students at Fontenelle and Benson West Elementary.



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.

year-end GIVING

Please deliver or postmark year-end gifts by December 31st for inclusion in 2021 giving statements. We appreciate your on-going support of the ministries of Saint Paul Benson!

Our December Calendar

DECEMBER COMMUNAL OFFERING: UM STUDENT DAY

This offering channels hope to young scholars. The burden of prohibitive debt can be overwhelming, limiting bright and qualified students. Supporting United Methodist students gives a financial boost and helps them realize their dreams with a spiritual boost. Your contribution is an acknowledgment that the church is confident in them and their abilities.

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Thursday 9:00 – 4:00; Friday 9:00 – 1:00

SUNDAYS

8:00 AM	PianoSide Chat Worship Available on YouTube	
8:45 AM	Soul Journeys for Women	Library
10:00 AM	Sunday Worship Service	
	In-Person in the Sanctuary and YouTube Livestream	
11:15 AM	Sunday School (Children Age 4+)	Room 313
12:15 PM	Kirundi/Kiswahili Worship (Wesley Hall) & Facebook	
5:00 PM	Bread & Cup (Dec. 5 and 19)	Fellowship Hall

MONDAYS

9:00 AM	Lectio Divina Prayer Group	Offsite
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TUESDAYS

1:30 PM	Prayer Shawl Ministry	Library
5:45 PM	Bell Choir Rehearsal	Balcony
7:00 PM	UNorthodox (Dec. 14 and 28)	Flavas, 6052 Maple
7:00 PM	Choir Rehearsal	Room 250

SATURDAYS

5:00 PM	Worship	Roth Chapel
5:30 PM	Umoja Choir Rehearsal	Wesley Hall

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1

10:00 AM	ENOA Foster Grandparents	Fellowship Hall
10:00 AM	Holy Listening Morning Prayers	Roth Chapel
5:30 PM	Holy Listening Vespers	Roth Chapel

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4

2:00 PM	Advent Fair & Paul-A-Palooza!	Lower Level
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MONDAY, DECEMBER 6

7:00 PM	Church Council	Parlor
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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12

5:00 PM	Country Club Luminaria Event	Neighborhood
6:00 PM	MasterSingers Concert	Sanctuary

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17

9:00 AM	ENOA Senior Companions	Fellowship Hall
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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19

5:00 PM	Children's Pageant Video Premier	Fellowship Hall
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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24

Office Closed

3:30 PM	Christmas Eve Worship	Sanctuary
7:30 PM	Christmas Eve Worship	Sanctuary

Children's Christmas PAGEANT AN ABSOLUTE "MUST SEE!"

You won't want to miss the world premiere of the 2021 Children's Christmas Pageant Video! Join us

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19
5PM FELLOWSHIP HALL**

The video will be shown as an exciting part of

Bread & Cup

worship. And yes, dinner will be served! This is a great opportunity to invite family & friends to join in the fun.

The video will also be posted on our YouTube channel later. (Search for "Saint Paul Benson")

**WORLD
PREMIERE**

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

Give the gift of wise caring as we make our way through Advent.

Gather items each day, and bring your final collection to Saint Paul Benson for distribution to Together Omaha's street outreach program and pantry. Financial donations may be mailed, made online, or dropped at the Church Office (be sure to note "Together" or "VNA" on your check.)

Thank you!



29 Grab a box or drawstring bag* to hold your gifts!
*Examples available at Walmart & Michaels for around \$3

30 *Giving Tuesday*
Donate to VNA's Homeless Shelter Program

More info: TogetherOmaha.org

SAINT PAUL
Benson
#DoGood



5 GIVE YOURSELF THE GIFT OF *Worship* EACH SUNDAY

Invite a Friend to Join Us!

12 IN PERSON IN THE SANCTUARY 10AM

19 OR WATCH YOUTUBE 10AM LIVESTREAM

Search for "SaintPaulBenson"

SERMON BY PHONE (402) 210-2091

1 TOILET PAPER

2 HOT CHOCOLATE MIX

3 PEANUT BUTTER AND/OR JELLY

4

JOIN THE FUN 2-5PM
Advent Fair & Paul-A-Palooza!

BONUS ITEM: WARM SOCKS

8 TOOTH PASTE & TOOTHBRUSH

9 CANNED BEANS

10 CAN OF TOMATOES

11

POP-TOP CAN OF RAVIOLI

7 *Caring Tuesday*
GRATITUDE: List & pray over three things for which you are grateful.

6 SINGLE-WRAPPED BAR OF SOAP

12 IN PERSON IN THE SANCTUARY 10AM

15 DIAPERS AND/OR WIPES

16 BAG OF RICE OR DRIED BEANS

17 SPAGHETTI SAUCE

18

BAG OF PASTA

14 *Giving Tuesday*
VOLUNTEER: Give the gift of time to an organization or individual.

13 MAC & CHEESE

12 IN PERSON IN THE SANCTUARY 10AM

BONUS ITEM: MITTENS / GLOVES

22 BOX OF CEREAL

23 CAN OR POUCH OF TUNA

24 *Christmas Eve*
IN-PERSON 3:30 and 7:30PM
(YouTube Livestream 7:30)

25

Merry Christmas

NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT: CONNECTING IN NEW WAYS

As the year draws to a close, I want to celebrate highlights as we continue down the path of New Church Development.

UNorthodox has been faithfully meeting since September, establishing a rhythm of invitation and fellowship. Our mission partnership for September and October was Youth Emergency Services (YES) which helped us reflect on claiming our identity in the world. During the first two months, UNorthodox raised over \$400 for YES through fundraising and giving. Our service projects included the assembly of over 100 lunch bags made for Street Outreach, 55 hygiene kits for the Teen Center, and encouragement letters for homeless teens in our community.

We are thankful for your support and continued prayers during this initial launch! The UNorthodox mission partner for November and December is Refugee Women Rising (formerly known as BART.) Watch for an opportunity to participate in our service projects in the near future.

If you know of anyone who would like to take part in this new ministry, please contact me or the office for more information.

Blessings!

Pastor Andrew



"POP" THIS ONTO YOUR CALENDAR!

Kick the new year off in style and celebrate with Bread & Cup! Our **Sunday, January 2nd** gathering at 5PM in Fellowship Hall will feature a "pop-up" meal from a guest restaurant. This friend-and-fund raiser is a great opportunity to discover Bread & Cup's unique brand of fun and fellowship. More info coming soon so start thinking about who you will invite!



WHERE ARE YOUR ENVELOPES?

If you like the convenience and tradition of monthly giving envelopes, please contact the Church Office. While not required, we are happy to supply so you have them on-hand. Help us rebuild our list of Giving Envelope Fans!

in TOUCH

Honoraria

Judy Buono, in honor of MaryAnn Kirchner

Omaha Festival Teachers Assoc. in thanks for facility use.

Celebrations

Congratulations to Audrey Madison and Andrey Stoecker on their wedding October 2nd. Audrey is the daughter of Jim and Lynda Madison.

Congratulations to Lindsey Goding and Ben Penlesky on their wedding August 14. They are making their home in Milwaukee. Lindsey is the daughter of Bob and Janelle Goding.



TREATS
FOR YOUR
EARS, EYES &
TASTEBUDS

*Sunday
December 12*

NEIGHBORHOOD
LUMINARY EVENT
5 PM

THE BEANERY
COFFEE TRUCK
5-8 PM



MASTERSINGERS

CONCERT
6 PM

IN OUR SANCTUARY

10 free & 10 discounted
tickets available in the
Church Office! Or buy in
advance online
(MasterSingers.com)
or at the door.

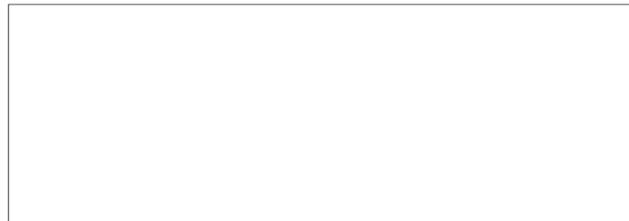




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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



advent fair

SATURDAY DECEMBER 4 • 2-5PM

YOUR HOLIDAY PAUL-A-PALOOZA!
Something for Everyone!

Buy Tickets to Create a Variety of Kid-Friendly Crafts
Homemade Food and Treats-to-Go! Coffee Bar!
Book Sale! Quilt Sale! 10,000 Villages Boutique!
Cookie Decorating! Photos with Santa! Much more!

join us! **WORSHIP**
5PM CHAPEL

SAINT PAUL BENSON LOWER LEVEL

Let's Get Social!

Follow, Like, Subscribe and Friend us! Whether on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or YouTube, you'll find us by searching for "SaintPaulBenson."