



NEWS FROM SAINT PAUL BENSON

JANUARY 2022

Pastoral Perspective

REV. STEPHANIE AHLSCHEDE

I love Christmas. And the season after it, when the Wise Ones travel to find the infant Jesus and his family and then choose to return home by another way. I also like the season after that one, where we get to hear stories about Jesus growing up and finding his way through life and ministry. Perhaps I like all the seasons of the church year?

I do worry about us a bit though, in the season after Christmas, because I am pretty sure no matter how mellow the weather was in the first part of December, at some point it will be cold and windy and I will have snow rage. This is a predictable part of winter on the Great Plains.

Do you know what else is predictable?

We, the Great Plains people, will channel our hard-earned wisdom and make it through with grace and dignity until we see Spring again.

We can do this.

A season ago, when I was letting my mind wander over thoughts and dreams for Saint Paul this season, I found myself thinking how this season of the church year extends the stories of people and wisdom from the Christmas season into our own lives and helps us to find our way through winter.

The wise owl that you see in our print materials first signaled the wisdom of the Prophets and John the Baptist, calling to us to be ready for the arrival of the Christ Child. Now we enter a season where we greet the Holy Family, Shepherds and Wise Men, and draw from their wisdom as we rely on our stored energy and look towards Spring.

We are a people with a tradition of many types of wisdom: scripture, prayer, song, and gathering. As we move forward in this next season, may we channel the wisdom of our faith with thanksgiving and hope.



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Submit info by the 19th of the month to
be included in the next month's issue.

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RECONCILING MINISTRIES NETWORK

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.

in WORSHIP

RING IN THE NEW YEAR: WITH WESLEY AND FRIENDS

Our first worship experience of the New Year 2022 will be to celebrate a Wesleyan renewal of the covenant, with services of sung communion on **Saturday, January 01** at 5:00 p.m. in the Roth Chapel and our Sunday morning service, **January 02** at 10:00 in the Sanctuary, with special music by The Choir and David Schack, organ. (Remember: the Sunday service is livestreamed on YouTube each week!)

We will remember our baptism and be thankful the weekend of **January 08/09**.

In-person services the weekend of **January 22/23** will be graced by the Joy Bells offering special music. As always, we thank all of the worship leadership provided by the Joy Bells and The Choir.

Rev. Jerry



BFF: FIRE & ICE GALLERY OPENING

Beat the post-Christmas doldrums with a trip to the Paint-by-Number gallery! It will be open with a new selection of art created upon the "Fire and Ice" theme as part of January's BFF (Benson First Friday) gallery crawl. Join the fun Friday, January 7th from 5 to 7 PM.

Benson First Friday started several years ago and has grown into a healthy non-profit that now reaches into other communities. It includes a Green Team and a network of galleries. Our own Paint by Number gallery literally puts us "on the map" on Benson First Fridays, the signature event of what is now known as BFF. Thanks to an anonymous donor, Saint Paul is a business sponsor of this monthly Benson arts community effort.



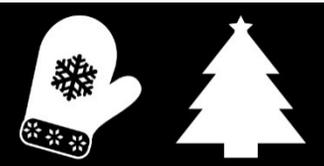
A NEW YEAR OF UMW BEGINS!

United Methodist Women (UMW) will begin a new year of service and fellowship on Wednesday, January 5th. All women are welcome to meet in Roth Chapel beginning at 9 AM. Coffee and snacks provided (of course!)

refresh

REFRESH CAMPAIGN

A huge "thank you!" goes out to everyone who participated in our Refresh building campaign. Your gifts have helped us cover unexpected costs of repairs and helped refurbish four difference spaces used for weekly programs. Special thanks to our anonymous donor who gave \$1000 in matching funds! We appreciate your continued support of our facility.



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.

Our January Calendar

JANUARY COMMUNAL OFFERING: HUMAN RELATIONS DAY

Human Relations Day is one of six special Sundays in the United Methodist Church. We remember the legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with support for community-based programs throughout the United States and Puerto Rico.

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 (Jan. 2 and 16)	Fellowship Hall

MONDAYS

9:00 AM	Lectio Divina Prayer Group	Offsite
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TUESDAYS

1:30 PM	Prayer Shawl Ministry	Library
7:00 PM	UNorthodox (Jan. 11 and 25)	Flavas, 6052 Maple

SATURDAYS

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

SUNDAY, JANUARY 2

5:00 PM	Bread & Cup Pop-Up Event	Fellowship Hall
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MONDAY, JANUARY 3

Office Closed

TUESDAY, JANUARY 4 AND JANUARY 11

5:45 PM	Bell Choir Rehearsal	Balcony
7:00 PM	Choir Rehearsal	Room 250

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5

9:00 AM	UMW	Roth Chapel
10:00 AM	Holy Listening Morning Prayers	Roth Chapel
5:30 PM	Holy Listening Vespers	Roth Chapel

FRIDAY, JANUARY 7

10:00 AM	ENOA Foster Grandparents	Fellowship Hall
5:00 PM	BFF Paint-by-Number Gallery	Room 404

SUNDAY, JANUARY 16

8:00 AM	Finch Family Pancake Fundraiser	Fellowship Hall
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MONDAY, JANUARY 17

Office Closed (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20 AND JANUARY 27

5:45 PM	Bell Choir Rehearsal	Balcony
7:00 PM	Choir Rehearsal	Room 250

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22

12:30PM	Recital	Sanctuary
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ENJOY A "TASTE OF HEAVEN"

You're invited to a special evening with **Bread & Cup** worship on Sunday, January 2 beginning at 5PM in Fellowship Hall. Help us raise funds for this outreach program and enjoy a delicious menu, created and catered by Taste of Heaven including: smoked ham, ribs, mac-and-cheese, cornbread, peach cobbler and more!

Tickets are \$15 each and available in the church office (or call 402-556-2433.)

Bring the family and enjoy the fellowship!



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 January 4th. While allowing the scriptures to wash over our souls, we will pray for the people in our lives and for the world. Then, the first steps toward writing a personal **Rule of Life** will be provided.

Join us in the Chapel and bring someone who would also benefit from the quietude.



CHILDREN & YOUTH

CHILDREN

Weekly Sunday School resumes January 9 at 11:15 AM in Room 313

YOUTH

January 9 4:00 PM

Service project. Meet in 4th floor youth room.

ICE SKATING & SLEDDING!

January 23 2:00 PM – 4:30 PM

Youth and Children's annual ice skating & sledding party at Mahoney State Park near Ashland. Bring a sled and ice skates or rent for a small fee. All church members and friends are invited to join the fun!



a good time was had by all!

Thanks to the hard work of an army of volunteers, Advent Fair was a great success!

Clockwise from top left: Advent Fair Ladies Deb Kelley and Dee Davis decorated a tree with crafts of Advent Fairs past; the Kupzyk boys enjoyed the photobooth with mom Sara; Rev. Steph got a squeeze from Santa and Hay-ley; the popcorn boys – Steven Rosenberger and Steve Roberts – had a constant line of hungry customers; Debbie Stecker and family enjoyed a full day of fun; and Pearl Spicka served homemade lunch to customers at “Pearl’s Christmas Café.” Save the date for 2022: December 3!



NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT: CONNECTING IN NEW WAYS

As 2021 comes to a close, I want to thank everyone for their support of New Church Development. As a newly appointed pastor here at Saint Paul Benson, I didn't know what to expect or what would be accomplished in the first 6 months. But with your help, we have been hard at work! We have met bimonthly for Bread & Cup (the "dinner church" experience) and UNorthodox (the "bar church" experience) since September and have consistent groups of individuals that have found a resting place in those ministries. None of this could have happened if this community of faith wasn't open to thinking outside of the box to find new and exciting ways for people to find us.

We are always looking for more people interested in new forms of connection, growth, and missional opportunities. If you know of folks that you know would benefit from these ministries, let me know! I want to connect and invite them to join us.

Pastor Andrew



WHOOOOO HAD FUN AT ADVENT FAIR? WE ALL DID!

What a wonderful time we all had Saturday, December 4 at the return of **Advent Fair!** Our winter Paul-A-Palooza event was an awesome opportunity to reconnect with family and friends and create memories as we brought in the holiday season.

We offer a huge "Thank You!" to Deb Kelley and Dee Davis for organizing the crafting stations. They worked for months to prepare – and wow - did they outdo themselves this year! Pearl Spicka and Priscilla Randall organized the to-go dining options, serving homemade turkey noodle soup and Pearl's famous egg salad sandwiches to the hungry masses. Connie Crawford was inspired to organize both the Used Book Sale *and* the UMW Quilt Sale. Plus, we were thrilled to welcome Santa and Elf Hay-Ley (who had a strong resemblance to our own Kim Alger!)

We can't wait to do it again – so mark your calendars now for **Saturday, December 3, 2022**. We hope to add more "new" things as we celebrate Saint Paul Benson's truly unique tradition.

IRA DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION

We have fielded questions about IRA disbursements, and offer this info to assist as necessary:

A charitable IRA is a special provision allowing donors age 70½ or older to exclude from taxable income certain transfers of IRA assets that are made directly to public charitable organizations, including Saint Paul Benson and the Saint Paul Foundation. Generally, a qualified charitable distribution is an otherwise taxable distribution from an IRA plan or SIMPLE IRA owned by an individual who is age 70½ or over that is paid directly from the IRA to a qualified charity.

To make a donation using this process, contact your IRA Plan Administrator to make a gift from your IRA to Saint Paul. Your IRA funds will be directly transferred to Saint Paul to help support ministry.

Please note that IRA charitable rollover gifts do not qualify for a charitable deduction.

in TOUCH

Memorial

Jackie Christoph, in memory of James and Marlea Husebo.

Christian Sympathy

To Jeanne Roussell and family in the death of her husband, Ellis.

Notes of Thanks

Over 30 bags of much-needed food and clothing were donated to Together Omaha through your use of the "Reverse Advent Calendar!" Thank you for showing your generosity as a way of celebrating the season!

The Thanksgiving food drive was also a huge success! Orene Taylor and Char Wilcox delivered dozens of bags of groceries to the Living Faith pantry.

It was another successful year for the Secret Angel Tree! Gifts were delivered via Dept. of Health & Human Services and Y.E.S.

Thank you!



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



STUCK INSIDE? WE'VE GOT THE CURE FOR YOUR WINTER BLUES!

Our alternatives to in-person worship will keep you entertained, informed & connected to Saint Paul Benson!

PHONE A FRIEND

Each week, a timely message and scripture are recorded and available simply by making a phone call. Sermon-by-Phone is quick and easy!

Hear the latest at

402-210-2091

CATCH US ON THE 'TUBE

We have an amazing assortment of videos on our YouTube channel!

- Watch a livestream or recording of Sunday's 10AM service
- View a new episode of Pianoside Chat every Sunday at 8AM. (We're closing in on our 100th episode!)

Search for "Saint Paul Benson" at [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

LET'S GET SOCIAL

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