

Inspiration

NEWS FROM SAINT PAUL BENSON

FEBRUARY 2022



Pastoral Perspective

REV. STEPHANIE AHSCHWEDE

There's a phrase in Isaiah 61:2 that is repeated in the Gospel of Luke, a call to "proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and... comfort all who mourn." I find myself repeating these ancient words to myself as I consider what this year, and this month, will be like for us as a faith community. We have nearly completed two years living within a global pandemic; at times I want to scream that this is not fair and I would like a better gift for us all, perhaps peace or an end to climate change, or a more equitable distribution of resources.

And yet the ancient voice of wisdom calls to me, calls to our community of faith to remember how God has been faithful to us these past years, these many years, all of the years.

The scriptures ask us to reach to our spiritual centers for the strength to offer comfort to those who mourn, and in doing so to lift up the promise of the blessings we find each day even in the midst of the unknown and unwished-for.

We are reassured time and again that we will find wisdom to claim and share when we join the prophets in proclaiming that this year, this month, this day - each moment belongs to God and carries with it the hope of resurrection.

This year February leads us directly towards Lent, with plenty of time to practice the discipline of proclamation - how will we share the good news of God's presence in our lives? How will we comfort those who mourn? I've made a short list; I am confident you can think of additional options as we move through this month of blessings and wisdom.

what's with all the green?

Green is the standard color for "Ordinary Time," the stretches of time between Easter and Christmas, and Christmas and Lent. It is meant to represent the anticipation and hope in the resurrection of Christ.

Green symbolizes the hope and life of each new day.

ways you can proclaim God's favor

- ♥ Keep a thanks/blessings journal
- ♥ Send a Valentine
- ♥ Give to February's communal offering
- ♥ Donate hot chocolate/hand warmers to Y.E.S.
- ♥ Bring donations for the Mitten Tree
- ♥ Call a friend and ask how they are doing
- ♥ Pick a shelf in your home and show it love by sorting the contents
- ♥ Give away three items of clothing you no longer wear
- ♥ Attend Holy Listening Feb. 2, and listen
- ♥ Invite a friend to join you for Bread & Cup worship
- ♥ Call Sermon-by-Phone (402) 210-2091 for a timely message
- ♥ Add a pair of googly eyes to your mailbox for fun!
- ♥ Sign up for a Lent study group
- ♥ Join the Art Group that meets here bi-monthly
- ♥ Learn to crochet or knit with Saint Paul's Prayer Shawl group
- ♥ Volunteer as an Usher or Office Helper

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

Email Kristin
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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

FEBRUARY FOCUS: ON THE ROAD TO EASTER

The Christian Year calendar is our guide for worship and faith formation. It has two major cycles: the Advent-Christmas-Epiphany cycle (ending **February 27 with Transfiguration Day**) and the Lent-Easter-Pentecost cycle (in which we celebrate **Easter April 17.**) In the three-year process of reading Scripture, we find ourselves in "Year C," focusing heavily on the Gospel accountings of Luke.

From the blasts of the shofar reminding us to heed the warning call and turn our lives around (repent), the imposition of the ashes on our hand or head, our observance of **Ash Wednesday, March 2** is a tradition for Saint Paul with a 7:00 PM worship service.

February is also **Black History month**, and, as has been our tradition for over 25 years, a wide variety of culturally appropriate music will be offered in worship during both PianoSide and our sanctuary service each week. We are appreciative of the ministry through music of the volunteers and friends that bring meaning and encouragement to each service.



READ. DISCUSS. LEARN. LOVE.

PLAN NOW FOR LENTEN STUDIES
BEGINNING ASH WEDNESDAY,
MARCH 2

WEDNESDAYS | 10:30 AM

LED BY REV. ANDREW

"Love is the Way: Holding on to Hope in Troubling Times"

Through Bishop Michael Curry's practical theology and sharing of his life experience, Curry offers answers to questions: "how do I find God's love? Do I have to love my enemy? Can love really change the world?" Please purchase book in advance.

WEDNESDAYS | 6:00 PM

LED BY REV. ANDREW

"Jesus and the Disinherited"

Famously known as the text that Martin Luther King Jr. sought inspiration from in the days leading up to the Montgomery bus boycott, Howard Thurman's treatise helped shape the civil rights movement and changed our nation's history forever. Please purchase book in advance.

MONDAYS | 10:00 AM

BEGINS MARCH 7 | LED BY REV. JERRY

"Meet John. Follow the Way!"

Take a tour of the gospel of John from author, Dr. Adam Hamilton. Workbooks and conversation round out our trip that follows the path to God. Materials provided; 6-week study.

Rev. Jerry

WARM HEARTS. WARM HANDS

SUNDAY SCHOOL
KIDS LEAD EFFORT



You're invited to warm the hands and tummies of vulnerable people through your donations of hot drink packets and hand warmers. Items collected at the Sanctuary's Mission Central will be distributed by Together and Y.E.S.

Thanks for your help!

BEAT WINTER BLAHS WITH CREATIVITY!

HAVE FUN & MAKE FRIENDS

Add some color to your life by joining our **Art Group!** Meets two Thursdays per month at 10 AM in the library. All media (watercolor, acrylic, etc.) and all skill levels welcome! Plan on joining the fun February 10 and 24.

If needle arts are more your passion, join our **Prayer Shawl** group each Tuesday at 1:30 to crochet and knit to your heart's delight. Everyone is welcome!

UNorthodox

Join Pastor Andrew & Crew!

TUES., FEB. 8 & 22
FLAVAS
6052 MAPLE

Holy Listening

Join Pastor Marta

WED., FEB. 2
10 AM & 5:30 PM
ROTH CHAPEL

NEW BOOK CLUB FORMING!

Warm up this February with a new and perhaps recurring book club with Revs. Steph and Marta. Our first book is a "juicy" mystery novel set in the Galapagos Islands.

"Wish You Were Here" by Jodie Picoult

This may not be your usual church book selection, but it is sure to take us to a far warmer climate – plus we'll help ready Rev. Wheeler for her upcoming trip to the region. Participants are asked to procure their own copy or audiobook and read ahead of time.

Thursday, February 24 | 7-8 PM

Zoom link will be provided upon RSVP
Call the Church Office to reserve your spot!

FUN FOR THE YOUNG *and* YOUNG-AT-HEART!

CHILDREN

Weekly Sunday School at 11:15 AM in Room 313

YOUTH

Meet most Sundays at 4:00 PM. Contact Rev. Wheeler for details.

ICE SKATING & SLEDDING!

February 27 2:00 PM – 4:00 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!

AUTO/ONLINE OFFERINGS: UPDATE YOUR PLEDGE INFO!

Did you know you can schedule your pledge *and* make special gifts through the church website? Many members have switched to online giving and appreciate how easy it is to use.

To set up an account, navigate to the Donate page on our website (SaintPaulBenson.org), click the "Create Profile" button & follow the prompts.

If you made a change to your 2022 pledge, please be sure to log in and update your recurring gift; your online account is protected and can only be accessed by you.

If you are currently using a credit card to make your payment, consider switching to an electronic check or EFT. Doing so will save Saint Paul up to 3% on each transaction and put your entire donation to work for the church.

Call the Church Office if you have any questions.

Thank you for your support!

Our February Calendar

FEBRUARY COMMUNAL OFFERING: TOGETHER

By supporting Together, we are supporting a vision of a community of prosperity - where everyone has safe & affordable housing, food security, health, and wellness. When people need help, Together provides assistance including emergency housing and utility services. By giving generously, we extend the Christian values of Hope, Dignity, and Compassion to tens of thousands of people in the local area. *Thank you!*

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 (Feb. 6 and 20)	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 (Feb. 8 and 22)	Flavas, 6052 Maple

THURSDAYS

10:00 AM	Art Group (Feb. 10 and 24)	Library
5:45 PM	Bell Choir Rehearsal	Balcony
7:00 PM	Choir Rehearsal	Room 250

SATURDAYS

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

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2

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

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4

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

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13

4:00 PM	Youth Group	Room 401
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SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27

2:00 PM	Ice Skating & Sledding Party	Mahoney St Park
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SAVE THE DATE



OMAHA TOGETHER ONE COMMUNITY (OTOC)

13th ANNUAL SPRING FUNDRAISER

SUNDAY, APRIL 3

TICKETS AVAILABLE IN MARCH!



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



in TOUCH

Christian Sympathy

To Rev. Stephanie Ahlschwede, Todd Wyatt and family in the death of her mother, Margrethe Ahlschwede.

To the family of Carol Pruitt in her death.

To the friends and family of Walt Thomas in his death.

To Hank Bauer and family in the death of his wife, Nancy.

Memorials

For Walt Thomas: Tip & Orene Taylor, Belinda Johnson, Lloyd & Debra Roitstein, Jan Biga, Jean Schmid, Bob Martette, Becky King, George Lamperton, Shawn Ammon.

For Ellis Roussel: Timothy & Jennifer Benson.

In memory of mother's birthday: Judy Buono

Congratulations

Kendall and Ashley Taylor welcomed baby boy Emmet Patrick on December 30. Tip and Orene Taylor are Emmet's grandparents. Big sister, Noa, is very excited!

The baptism of Merrick Phillip Rudolf, son of Phillip and Amber, was celebrated January 23.



Let's Get Social!

Follow, Like, Subscribe and Friend us! We're easy to find by searching for "SaintPaulBenson" on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or YouTube.