Inspiration

MONTHLY NEWS FROM SAINT PAUL BENSON

FEBRUARY 2023

PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE

In the weeks leading up to Valentine's Day, I find myself surrounded by aisles and piles of candy and cards for sale. These Valentine reminders began the day after Christmas, even while we were still awaiting the arrival of Epiphany and the Magi. Even so, I am a fan of February. It might be cold but it is a short month and there are so many reminders of love around us. Here at Saint Paul, we celebrate each day that we believe in a God whose love is for everyone, and who encourages us to show care for all people every day in multitude ways.

An obvious way that we give and receive care is through worship, and our services from now through Easter demonstrate God's love and presence in myriad ways. With Ash Wednesday (February 22nd) we move into a season where we contemplate God's sacrificial love and how we respond to this generous gift.

Some scriptures are written as letters which I think can be read as "love letters" as we reach into sacred texts for words of encouragement and wisdom.

This month, I invite you to write your own letters of care. Visit Mission Central in the Sanctuary to pick up a greeting card (or write your own at home) and send to someone for any reason at all. Who doesn't enjoy receiving "real mail?" If you leave the envelope with a member's name on it or addressed to a non-member with both their name and address written, we will mail it for you!

Perhaps you prefer showing your love with a gift. We welcome donations of Forever stamps for this "love letters" project, or kids' underwear for Undie Sunday, or even gifts for our Refresh program where your financial donation helps us continue with facility repairs and renovations. As you'll see in this edition of the Inspiration, there are so many opportunities in the coming weeks to remember and celebrate God's love, and renew your commitment to share God's love wherever you go.

Peace be with you and may God's love abide in you!

Steph

Rev. Stephanie Ahlschwede

Love Letters

You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all

2 CORINTHIANS 3:2

FEBRUARY 4/5

Letter of Encouragement

We are encouraged to let our light shine.

FEBRUARY 11/12

Valentine

We are to be reconciled in love.

FEBRUARY 18/19

Letter of Acceptance

We think about the journey ahead and accept the discipline of Lent.

FEBRUARY 25/26

Thank You Note

We seek to have a close relationship with God, one of blessing and thanksgiving as Jesus does.

MARCH 4/5

Letter of Concern

We share concern for neighbor and the World.

MARCH 11/12

Letter of Friendship

We express love for all and welcome guests from Temple Israel.

MARCH 18/19

Letter of Celebration

We greet the new Great Plains UMC Bishop

MARCH 25/26

An Invitation

We encourage friends to return for a Saint Paul family reunion.

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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

Rev. Jerry Brabec

February is the month we remember much: rodents and their shadows, loves lost and won, presidents past, and this year, Ash Wednesday.

We remember the beginning of Lent with the blasts of the shofar reminding us to heed the warning call and turn our lives around (repent), the reading of scriptural messages of God's purpose for our lives, and the imposition of the ashes on our hand or head. Our observance of **Ash Wednesday, February 22** at 7:00 PM is a tradition for Saint Paul.

February is also Black History month, and a wide variety of culturally appropriate music will be offered in worship each Saturday evening in Roth Chapel at 5:00 PM.; PianoSide (released on YouTube each week at 8:00 AM) and Sunday mornings (in-person and livestreamed on YouTube) at 10:00 AM.

We are appreciative of the ministry through music of the many volunteers and friends that continue to bring meaning and encouragement to each service.

Stay Connected

FOLLOW, LIKE, SUBSCRIBE AND FRIEND US!
We're easy to find by searching for "SaintPaulBenson" on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or YouTube.

You got to have Faith

Rev. Faith Kubai

I missed you all so much during the Christmas festivities but I had an amazing trip to Dallas. My visit to Lovers Lane UMC inspired me to continue growing our upcoming congregation here at Saint Paul. It was a great opportunity to gather information and return to Omaha with renewed excitement.

My invitation stands to all of you to join us for a prayer service at 3:00 PM each Sunday in Roth Chapel. **We are intentional in making prayer a lifestyle.** In Ephesians 6:18, Paul admonishes the Ephesians, "…and pray in the spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. Be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people."

This month, I am kicking off my first book study – and I hope you'll make plans to join me! We'll start with a pre-Valentine's Day celebration on Saturday, February 11 at 3:00 PM; enjoy some sweet treats, meet new friends, and learn about the book selection. **"Learning to Pray: A Guide for Everyone"** by James Martin, SJ, is a NY Times bestseller. We will explore many topics including why, how, and when to pray to best feed our soul and build intimacy with our Creator. The study will be held via Zoom each Tuesday night at 7:00 PM beginning February 21.

From the Desk of . . .
Rev. Marta Wheeler

When I arrived at Brighton Gardens Senior Living recently, I was delighted to hear Lorraine Hahn leading a hymn sing with the group of folks assembled for Holy Listening. Depending on who takes part, each of our services has its own feel. Perhaps you can join us for one of our Ash Wednesday Holy Listening services:

Wednesday, Feb. 22 9:30 AM Brighton Gardens & 11:00 AM Elk Ridge Village

Join us and greet some of Saint Paul's long-standing members and encourage other folks you know living in these centers to attend. The Holy Spirit will surely connect all who attend the Ash Wednesday service at Saint Paul that evening.

Thank you to each person who prays and visits with people who are not able to attend worship. By reaching out, it helps brighten our day as well.

I'm also excited with the thought of joining Rev. Steph, the Youth Group and the Children's Ministry at Mahoney State Park on February 5th. Pray for us as we take to the ice and the sledding hill! *Wheee…*

Celebrating a Century

VANCE TAYLOR

As a child in rural Buffalo County, Nebraska, Vance attended a one-room school known as "Old Stanley" where just over 30 students in seven grades were accustomed to walking to school and toting their lunches. He still has copies of the classical poems memorized and a 2nd grade booklet indicating his 160 days of punctual attendance. He graduated from Riverdale High School in 1940.

Life on the farm could be a struggle through the mid- '30s drought and plagues of grasshoppers but Vance learned the value of hard work, driving a tractor by age 12; gas was available at 5 gallons per dollar – if you could afford it!

He has fond memories of driving to Kearney in 1939 to see the stars of Cecil B. DeMille's blockbuster movie "Union Pacific" as they did a brief trackside promotional stop prior to its premier in Omaha.

In summer of 1942, Vance took a job in Cheyenne, Wyoming, making changes to B17 bombers for a company managed by United Airlines. He was drafted in 1943, completed basic training in St. Petersburg, FL, and was assigned to Headquarters Squadron of the Army Air Corp at Bolling Field in Washington, DC.

At the Pentagon, Vance worked in statistical control division of the Office of Management Control. The work was restricted, requiring around-the-clock staffing by both civilians and military personnel. In 1946, Vance was discharged as a Staff Sergeant.

Vance married Mildred in 1945 and together they raised two sons, Douglas and Dean. They joined Saint Paul in 1950. He retired from Mutual of Omaha after 37½ years.

Saint Paul was lucky to draw on Vance's experience in investing, tax prep and finances. He and Mildred were leaders of a counting crew for 35 plus years, and he was a founding committee member for the Saint Paul Foundation. He also spent time on the Finance Committee. He is a proud life member of the American Association of Individual Investors.

Vance will turn 100 on February 15th. Your "Happy Birthday" messages may be sent to:

9820 Emmet Street
Omaha, NE 68134-4510

VANCE JOINS SAINT PAUL'S "CENTURY CLUB" ALONGSIDE

Jean Bailey, Jean Schmid, Caryl Stearnes, and Frank Webber

Tickets Available Soon! $15

Music of Ireland

A Favorite Tradition Returns to Saint Paul!

United Women in Faith

Spring Luncheon

Saturday, March 11 | 11 o'clock

Musical Program by Dave Marsh

Meditation in Motion: BUILD A BETTER BODY WITH TAI CHI

Lane Sidebottom will lead a 45-minute class **each Wednesday at 4PM beginning February 1**. We'll meet in Room 111, easily accessible through the Corby Street door with the red awning. Gain serenity, strength, balance, and flexibility!

MERCY & JUSTICE TEAM SAYS: "REMEMBER PEARL PANTRY IN FEBRUARY!"

Pearl Pantry welcomes your February donations of peanut butter, jelly, tuna, and soup with pop-top lids. Bring your donations to Mission Central in the Sanctuary. Thanks for your continued support!

WHY LIMIT IT TO JUST ONE DAY?

undie ~~sunday~~ month

The Mercy and Justice team invites you to support kids in our neighborhood schools by donating NEW underwear in child sizes during February and March. Any style/size for K-6 kids welcome! Drop donations at Mission Central in the Sanctuary.

Card Writing Ministry

Reach out to folks you're thinking about! Select a greeting card from Mission Central, write a note and place it in special box. We will mail it for you if it's for a member or if you include an address. Want to help this project? We are accepting donations of Forever stamps and looking for volunteers to keep the notecards sorted and refreshed.

TIS THE SEASON FOR

BOOK STUDIES

INVITATION TO PSALMS

Rev. Jerry Brabec, Leader
Mondays Beginning February 6
10:30 AM in the Library

Monday Morning Musings returns! Engage with the Psalms at the deepest level of your heart, where God's faithfulness confronts our life's challenges.

LEARNING TO PRAY: A GUIDE FOR EVERYONE

Rev. Faith Kubai, Leader
Tuesdays, Beginning February 21
7:00 PM via Zoom

Explore why, how, and when to pray to best feed our soul and build intimacy with our Creator. NY Times bestseller book available for $10.

MY BODY IS NOT A PRAYER REQUEST

"Steph & Marta Read a Book"
Wednesday, March 1 ~ One Time Only
6:30 PM in Room 111

Author Amy Kenny exposes ableism in the church and casts a new imagination to engage in disability justice. Books available for $15 or online.
Read now. . . discuss March 1st

Sledding & Skating Party!

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5 | 2PM
MAHONEY STATE PARK

The Children's and Youth Ministries invite you to an afternoon of winter fun at Mahoney State Park. All friends and family are welcome - grab your sled or toboggan or rent skates at the park.
$6 park entry fee.

PRAYERS *for God's People*

Congratulations

The baptism of John Joseph Kuhn was celebrated on Sunday, December 25. He is the son of Megan & Matt Kuhn and grandson of Sue Dimmitt.

Christian Sympathy

For Denise & Dennis Lawrence, Ben Lawrence and the extended family in the death of their mother, Rozanne Christensen

For Mary Stolzer, the Robinsons: Susie & Hank, Kayla & Jacob, Kylie & Spencer, and family in the death of husband, father & grandfather, Nick Stolzer

Memorials

For Diane Klima: Karen Spencer-May & Marc May

For Milford Spicka: Cheryl & George Adamson, Christine Brotherton, Judy Buono, Anna Carlson, Connie Crawford, Marilou Dohe, Claudia & Jack Griger, Amber Leed-Kelly & Brian Kelly, Jim Lee, Pat Prochaska, Debbie Stecker, Mary & Nick Stolzer, Marta & Dennis Wheeler

For Audy Blair: Barbara & Bob Blair

For Mary Buono; For Family: Judy Buono

For Rozanne Christensen: Jerry Brabec, Belinda Johnson

United Women in Faith

All Women Welcome!

WED., FEBRUARY 1

9:30 AM ROOM 111

WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

In-person at Immanuel Village or via Zoom

"You Will Never Believe What Happened to Lacey" by Amber Ruffin

Saturday, February 11 at 9 AM

Meet on the 2nd floor "Hub" through the south entrance.

Call Connie Crawford for info 402-660-8211.

AUTO/ONLINE OFFERING:

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 2023 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.

Our February Calendar

COMMUNAL OFFERING: GUATEMALA STOVE PROJECT

With your support, the UMC Guatemala Stove Project has built over 2,000 stoves in Mayan communities, providing vented stoves for hundreds of families. Stoves use 2/3 less firewood and are off the ground, reducing damaging fires, decreasing lung and eye problems, and improving the situation of local workers who are hired to build the stoves. Please join us by giving generously to this project.

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
9:30 AM	The Choir Rehearsal	Room 250
10:00 AM	Worship	
	In-Person in the Sanctuary and YouTube Livestream	
11:15 AM	Sunday School	Room 313
3:00 PM	Prayer Service	Roth Chapel

MONDAYS

9:00 AM	Lectio Divina	Offsite
9:00 AM	Quilters	Offsite
10:30 AM	Monday Morning Musings	Library
7:00 PM	MasterSingers	Roth Chapel

TUESDAYS

1:30 PM	Prayer Shawl Ministry	Library

WEDNESDAYS

4:00 PM	Tai Chi	Room 111

THURSDAYS

5:45 PM	Joy Bells Rehearsal	Balcony
7:00 PM	The Choir Rehearsal	Room 250

SATURDAYS

5:00 PM	Worship	Roth Chapel

MONDAYS - THURSDAYS

4:00 PM (Varies)	Omaha Girls Rock	Rooms 254-6

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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1

8:00 AM	ENOA Foster Grandparents	Fellowship Hall
9:30 AM	United Women in Faith	Room 111

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5

2:00 PM	Sledding & Skating Party	Mahoney St. Park

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9 and 16

7:00 PM	MasterSingers Rehearsal	Roth Chapel

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11

9:00 AM	Book Club	Immanuel Village
11:00 AM	Chili Prep	Fellowship Hall
3:00 PM	Valentine's Treats & Study Kick-off	Fellowship Hall
4:30 PM	UWF Mini-Mart	Chapel
4:30 PM	Chili Pickup	Chapel

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12

9:30 AM	Chili Pickup	Gathering Area
9:30 AM	UWF Mini-Mart	Gathering Area

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14

11:00 AM	ENOA Foster Grandparents	Fellowship Hall

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19

8:30 AM	Pancake Feed	Fellowship Hall

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21

7:00 PM	Book Study "Learning to Pray"	Zoom

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22

7:00 PM	Ash Wednesday Worship	Sanctuary

SAINT PAUL
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#DoGood

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ALL CHURCH
pancake
breakfast

Proceeds to UMCOR

SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 19
8:30 - 11:30 AM
FELLOWSHIP HALL

$10 PER PLATE
INCLUDES SAUSAGE,
BEVERAGE AND
ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT PANCAKES!