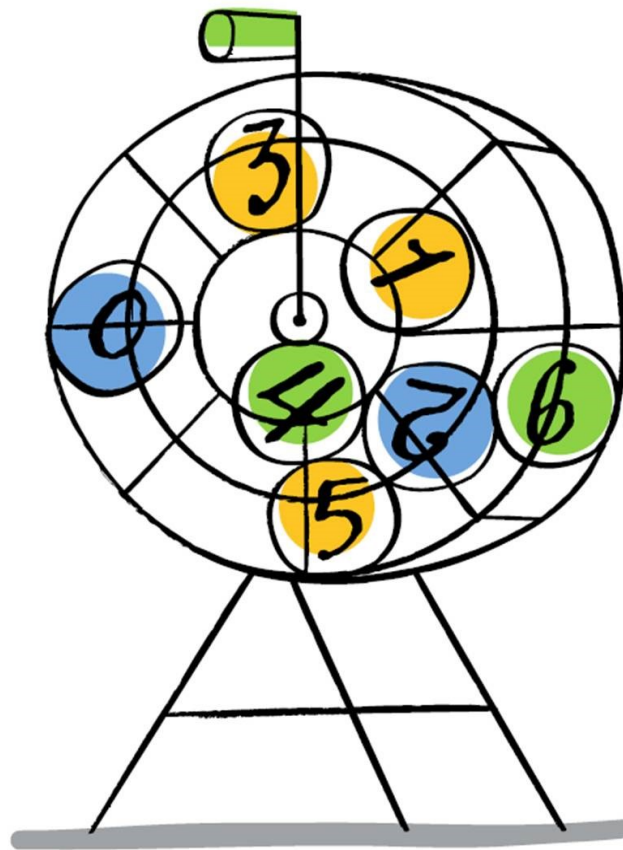


THE PORTLIGHT

A newsletter for members and friends of Portland Avenue United Methodist Church



BINGO & Fellowship

Saturday, January 14 @ 1:00 pm

Come and play BINGO on Saturday, January 14, at 1:00 pm. The Congregational Care Team is hosting this event. There will be prizes!

You are encouraged to bring a snack to share, your favorite beverage to drink, and to bring a friend who doesn't regularly come to The PORT.

January 2017

Our Mission

"To grow followers of Jesus who change the world."

Our Vision

"To be a safe harbor along life's journey."

The **PORT**
A safe harbor along life's journey.

Pastor's Message *Rev. Carol Zaagsma*

I cannot remember a time ever where I so anticipated the turning over of a calendar year than I do this year. I've just had enough of 2016...celebrity deaths, including David Bowie, Dan Haggerty, Harper Lee, Patty Duke, Prince, Muhammad Ali, Morley Safer, Pat Summitt, Gene Wilder, Arnold Palmer, Leonard Cohen, John Glenn, Zsa Zsa Gabor, George Michael, Carrie Fisher and Debbie Reynolds (the last five of which were in the month of December alone), along with the vile rhetoric that was constant in a contentious political race, have made for what seems like a steady dull ache for a long time now.

I'm not usually that affected by celebrity news, but this year feels a little different – so many people I grew up watching on TV, or at the movies, or in the news due to their accomplishments, made the headlines again for one last time upon their death. They are people who, albeit it at a distance (since I didn't know any of them personally), had an effect on my life. My circle of friends would say the same. Consequently, many of us feel just a little off balance right now.

When I feel off balance, I tend to look for something that can serve as a toehold to help me regain my center. The ritual of taking down the calendar for a year that is ending, and the act of putting up a brand new one for the coming year, is one way for me to concretely feel a new start. This year I feel the need for this ritual more than most.

But the other thing that helps me is to center on Christ. Leaning on Christ, and finding strength from my faith, has helped more than a time or two when things feel out of whack. The rhythm of the church calendar can really help with this, so I am looking forward to what we are doing here at church in the coming weeks.

This Sunday, which is New Year's Day, we'll participate in a Wesleyan Covenant Renewal Service. In 1775, John Wesley introduced a covenant service as an important part of ones' spiritual life. It was a time for

Methodists to gather annually in a time of self-examination, reflection, and dedication, wholly giving up themselves and renewing covenant with God. As time has gone on, this service is most often observed on the Sunday of or nearest to January 1. So, on New Year's Day, we'll gather for church and take a new look at our own faith, with the opportunity for renewal with a new start. Of course, we'll have communion, too.

After Epiphany on January 8, and focusing on the wisdom of Martin Luther King, Jr. on January 15, we'll begin a new series on "How, Then, Shall We Live?" based on a book by Wayne Muller. Here's what we'll look at during each of those weeks:

Jan. 22 – "Who Am I"

Jan. 29 – "What Do I Love?"

Feb. 5 – "How Shall I Live, Knowing I Will Die?"

Feb. 12 – "What is my Gift to the Family of the Earth?"

So church, and the rhythm of life lived here in community, does help keep me grounded when so many other things are out of control. It also helps me maintain hope in what lies ahead.

In Lamentations 3:22-23, we are assured that, "the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end, they are new every morning." Ecclesiastes 11:7 reminds us that, "light is sweet; how pleasant to see a new day dawning." And in Revelation 21:5, God offers a promise when saying, "See, I am making all things new." With every new year...actually with every new day, and even with every new minute, this promise is before us. So if you also are looking forward to renewal ahead, begin the new year here at church, where your faith will be strengthened as you are reminded of the new life we have in Christ.

Journeying in faith with you,

Pastor Carol



Membership Exploration Class

Have you been visiting The PORT for a while and wonder what membership is all about? If so, come to membership exploration class on Sunday, January 22, from 11:15-12:15. We will talk about the United Methodist denomination and about the specific

ministries here at The PORT. If you're interested in learning more, even if you choose not to join right now, then come to meet with others who are also exploring. RSVP in the office or with Pastor Carol at (952) 888-6070 or carol.zaagsma@paumc.org.

January 2017



- Jan. 1 N/A
- Jan. 8 Rylie & Joshua
- Jan. 15 Katelyn & Luke
- Jan. 22 Madolyn & Oliver
- Jan. 29 Janea & Jeremiah

Youth Group News

We closed out 2016 making gingerbread houses and trying to stay warm during what felt like an arctic freeze! We took the last couple weeks off to enjoy time with our families to help celebrate the true meaning of Christmas, the birth of our Savior! January will start us off for the last half of our year which will entail our spring lock in, more volunteering, the plant sale and our dinner fundraiser which will help get us prepared for Ultimate Challenge Camp!



January Schedule for Sunday Volunteers

	January 1	January 8	January 15	January 22	January 29
Coffee & Treats	N/A	Judy Richardson-Mahre	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Claire Perry & Helen Witt
Greeters	Darlene & Mark Wicks	Tim & Diane Madsen	Charles & Karen Groth	Bob & Barb Deese	LaVonne Robinson & George Dalin
Ushers	Bruce Benson Linda & Dave Schesso	Guy Moore, Pat Ekstrom, Scott & Kathy Swenson	Wayne Andersen, Sharon Beckler, Linda & Dave Schesso	Bruce Benson, Scott Swenson, Steve & Kathy Soucy	Wayne Andersen, Sharon Beckler, Bob Deese, Pat Ekstrom
Welcomers	Steve & Kathy Soucy	Kathy Swenson	Helen Witt	Jeff Chamberlain	Marilyn Anderson
Reader	Pat Ekstrom	Katelyn Hagerty	George Dalin	Rod Bacheller	Tim Hagerty
Sound	Eric Richardson-Mahre	Tim Madsen	Dave Smith	Eric Richardson-Mahre	Tim Madsen
Media	Dave Smith	Barb Andrus	Nathan Peine	Tim Madsen	Dave Smith
Nursery	Mary Lou Johnson	Janet Rush	Denise Carroll	Linda Lounsbury	LaVonne Robinson
Closer	Floyd Ekstrom	Paul Richardson	Jeff Carroll	Tom Wellman	Floyd Ekstrom
Communion Stewards	Jim & Marilyn Anderson	<p>Want to serve on Sunday mornings? Let the office know and we'll put you in touch with the appropriate coordinator</p>			
Communion Servers	John & Claire Perry, Verne Witt, Mary Nelson				

Mission Outreach

Operation Christmas Child

Despite less than ideal road conditions, twelve of us arrived in Eagan to process shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child on December 17. Thanks to all of our members who filled shoeboxes, Pastor Carol dropped off 49 filled shoeboxes from The PORT!

Eight processing stations were open when we arrived. Teams were assigned to the various stations and worked to make sure each box was labeled with the gender and age and that it didn't contain any inappropriate items (unsafe items, liquids, war-related items). Then the shoebox was taped shut so that no items would fall out, and then placed in a carton with 16-20 other shoeboxes for shipping around the world.

Music was playing. We were reminded to pray for each

child who would receive the gift box; the only gift they might receive all year. There were all sizes of boxes, from infant shoe size to boot size. Some were so full we could barely close the cover! Others were sparse. There were "filler items" to add but the items were not universal for all ages, so we had to use some discretion when adding items.

We were part of the last teams to process this year. When there were about 165 boxes left to process, the countdown started. It was exciting to be part of a project that brings news of Jesus to children who might not otherwise hear the good news and receive a personal gift. There was cheering as each team completed processing by finishing up their remaining boxes. I expect we will do this again next year. If you haven't done this before, join us next year.

~Article by Pat Ekstrom



We celebrate YOU during January

If you have a birthday during the month of January but your name isn't on our list, PLEASE LET US KNOW, so we can update our records for next year.



01 - Kumba Sheriff
02 - Kathy Soucy
04 - Larry Seldon
05 - Jeanne Hansen
 Emma Mahre
06 - Marilyn Anderson
 Donna Livingston
08 - Megan Mahre

09 - Mason Smith
10 - Jael Medzagoh
 Olivia Smith
11 - Rod Bacheller
12 - Chaz Brobst
 Inge Lystad
14 - Carol Cox
 Nancy Stinson

15 - Merlin Gilbertson
19 - Neil Livingston
22 - Alisa Smith
24 - Peter Anderson
25 - Dale Miller
27 - Daniel Medje
28 - Traci Darnell
31 - Linda Dicks

Sunday Morning Coffee Fellowship

Fellowship on Sunday mornings provides a welcoming atmosphere for all who come to worship together, and just a great place to come and share a story or two with people you know or others you're getting to know better. Many volunteers stepped up to do the set up and provide the goodies this fall. THANK YOU to all for this gracious hospitality!



Volunteers are now needed to sign up for the next few months. Sign up sheets are on a clipboard in the Wesley Room. If you feel like you would like to sign up for some Sunday but couldn't "go it alone," invite someone to partner with you - twice the fun, half the work. Homemade or store-bought goodies are graciously received—whatever you can offer is a blessing.

Coffee & refreshments are served from 9:30-10:00 am.

2017 Flower/VEAP Chart

The 2017 VEAP/Flower Chart is posted in the narthex. Thank you to Verne Witt for creating such a beautiful chart. If you'd like to recognize an anniversary or birthday or other special day, make note of it on the chart. As the time arrives, you may place your payment in the offering plates with a note in the memo line indicating what it is for. Prices are \$15 for a VEAP food basket (100% of which is donated to VEAP food shelf) or \$17.50 for flowers (which are yours to take home after worship). If you'd like a plant instead of flowers, we encourage you to purchase one and bring it that day for the altar, so that you will have a plant to take home that you want.

Caregivers Support Group

All caregivers are welcome to come to our next meeting on Tuesday, January 24, from 6:30-8 pm at Applewood Pointe (8341 Lyndale Ave S). We'll be discussing Chapter 2 of *The 36-Hour Day* by Nancy Mace and Peter Rabins. This is a great group for encouragement amid the ups and downs of caring for loved ones.

From the Mailbox

Thank You

A big thank you to the PAUMC congregation for your generous Christmas gifts to staff this year. Your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated.

~Camille, Dale, Paul, Peggy, and Pastor Carol

Address Update

Koffi and Sena Bruce
14527 Kipling Ave S
Savage, MN 55378

Additional News

New Door Sweeps

The Trustees installed new door sweeps (the rubber strips along the bottom) on our exterior doors in an effort to keep out cold drafts and unwanted pests. The new sweeps result in a slight amount of resistance when closing the doors. Please take extra care when you come and go to make sure the doors latch shut behind you so that our building remains secure.



All Church Conference

Our annual All Church Conference is scheduled for Sunday, January 29 after worship. A light lunch will be provided (free-will offering appreciated). At this meeting, 2016 year end reports and the 2017 budget will be presented for discussion and adoption. All are welcome to attend.

Human Relations Day

This special UMC offering strengthens United Methodist outreach to communities in the United States and Puerto Rico, encouraging social justice and work with at-risk youth. Special envelopes will be inserted into bulletins for this offering on January 15.

Bits and Pieces

Disaster Recovery Center Now Open

Residents in Hennepin County were recently declared eligible for assistance for disaster-related damage to your home, personal property or business from September flooding. Visit disasterassistance.gov or call (800) 621-3362 for more information.

Free Tax Preparation Assistance

Help in preparing your tax return is available at Creekside Community Center (9801 Penn Ave S, Bloomington).

Prepare + Prosper is for individuals earning less than \$35,000 per year, or families earning less than \$55,000 per year. Served on a lottery system based on those present at time of sign-in, here are the dates they are open:

Saturdays, Jan. 21-April 15 (8:15 am sign-in time)

Tues. & Thurs., Jan. 24-April 13 (5:15 pm sign-in time)

AARP Tax-Aide is for middle to low income families and individuals. They serve on a first-come, first-served basis. They are open Mondays and Tuesdays, Feb. 6 - April 17, starting at 9:00 am.

BINGO with Bloomington Police

Play BINGO with Bloomington's Finest on Monday, January 9, from 1:30-2:30 pm at Creekside Community Center (9801 Penn Ave S, Bloomington). Snacks and prizes will be provided. To register (deadline is Thurs., Jan 5), email reservations@bloomingtonmn.gov, or call (952) 563-4944.

Coffee Talk

Dr. Christ Bargmann shares key tips and strategies on staying true to your resolutions and getting rid of any extra holiday weight and stress in his presentation "Your Best Year Ever!" You will leave with easy action steps on increasing energy throughout your day, increasing productivity, and decreasing stress levels. This program is Wednesday, January 25, from 10:00-11:00 am at Creekside Community Center (9801 Penn Ave S, Bloomington). Register by Monday, January 23, by email to humanservices@bloomingtonmn.gov or by calling (952) 563-4944.

January

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10:00am Worship/ Communion	2	3 6:00pm Calm Parenting Support Group	4 6:15pm SonRise Rehl 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	5 6:30am Men-Brkfst Grp	6	7
8 8:45am Handbells 8:45am Education 9:30am Fellowship 10:00am Worship 11:15am Mission Outreach	9	10 7:00pm Trustees Mtg	11 6:15pm SonRise Rehl 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	12 6:30am Men-Brkfst Grp	13	14 1:00pm BINGO
15 8:45am Handbells 8:45am Education 9:30am Fellowship 10:00am Worship 11:15am Evangelism & Church Growth Mtg	16	17 Newsletter Deadline	18 6:15pm SonRise Rehl 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	19 6:30am Men-Brkfst Grp	20	21
22 8:45am Education 8:45am Handbells 9:30am Fellowship 10:00am Worship 11:15 New Member Exploration Class	23	24	25 6:15pm SonRise Rehl 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	26 6:30am Men-Brkfst Grp	27	28
29 8:45am Handbells 8:45am Education 9:30am Fellowship 10:00am Worship 11:15am All Church Conference	30	31				

Portland Avenue United Methodist Church
8000 Portland Ave. S., Bloomington, MN 55420



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE EXPEDITE

Join us for worship on Sundays at 10:00 am
Sunday School (8:45 am) and Coffee Fellowship (9:30 am)

Staff

Rev. Carol Zaagsma (Pastor) carol.zaagsma@paumc.org
Camille Kratochvil (Administrative Assistant) paumc@paumc.org
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