

THE PORTLIGHT

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

2017 Christmas at the PORT



**December 17 @ 10 am
Christmas Cantata (Winter's Grace)**

**December 24 @ 10 am
Children's Christmas Program**

**December 24 @ 4:30 pm
Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship**

December 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*

All earth is waiting...to see the Promised One.

These are the opening words of one of my favorite Advent hymns, *Toda la Tierra (All Earth Is Waiting)*, UMH #210. The word Advent means “coming” or “arrival.” During Advent, we find ourselves waiting for the “arrival” of the baby Jesus, or the “coming” of Christ among us...anxiously waiting for Christmas Day.

A big part of waiting involves getting ready. Children might prepare a list of presents they hope Santa will bring. Adults might send out invitations to social gatherings they are hosting. And, of course, there is shopping for gifts.

Sometimes in the frenzy of getting ready we forget what it is we are waiting for. We see Christmas Eve, or Christmas Day, or perhaps the weekend before, or the weekend after...whatever date we will gather with family or friends...as a stressful deadline for which we will have to have all the shopping and baking and cooking and cleaning done. And in the midst of the countdown, we forget about the Christ in Christmas.

We forget that we are waiting for “Emmanuel,” or “God with us.” We forget that we are waiting to see the “Promised One.” We focus on the frenzy and stress around us, and lose sight of the real reason for the season.

Who will be today’s prophet, announcing the coming of the “Prince of Peace?” Are we ready as a church to be such a prophet? And since “I am the church; you are the church; we are the church together,” I must ask, are you and I ready to be such prophets?

As we come to the end of a year of very challenging political, social, and economic times, I think the world is looking for such a prophetic voice to cut through the frenzy and the stress. The words of the hymn continue...*All the world, bound and struggling, seeks true liberty...it cries out for justice and searches for the truth.* I think the world is looking for a different way...a way out of the frenzy and stress...a world that is not bound and struggling.

One way I hope to be such a voice this year is in my gift-giving habits. Sure, I will participate in some traditional gift exchanges, but I want to look more closely at the gifts and Fruits of the Spirit that I can share particularly during this season of giving...like the gift of prayer, especially for someone who is going through a particularly difficult time with the holidays this year...or the gift of listening to people around me; to give them a chance to talk about what is troubling them...or the gift of gentleness when I’m driving on the road or checking out at the grocery store...or the gift of joy and love by spending time with the important people in my life instead of just buying that next perfect gadget I think they might like...or the gift of faith in the telling of the story of who I am really waiting for this Christmas.

These are ways we can live into our call as Christians... they are ways we can show others “Emmanuel,” or “God with us.” *All earth is waiting...to see the Promised One.* While waiting this year, will you join me in living into the promise of Jesus Christ by opening the doors for all to see and feel His presence now?

Peace,

Pastor Carol



Faith in the Family

Night Time Blessing

In addition to evening prayers, a bedtime blessing can be a wonderful thing for a child or other loved one. At bedtime, place your hand on the child’s head or shoulder and say a short blessing that you think of, or use one of these recommended by Traci Smith in her book *Seamless Faith*:

“God bless [child’s name]. Amen.”

OR... “[Child’s name], may the peace of God, which is bigger than anything we understand, fill your heart and your mind, and may you know God’s love always. Amen.”

OR... “[Child’s name], may the God of hope fill you with joy and peace, not only tonight, but tomorrow and the next day and all the days of your life. Amen.”

What a blessing it would be for one of any age to hear these words over and over again every night.

December 2017



Youth Group News

Dec. 3 Madolyn & Olivia
 Dec. 10 Jeremiah & Becca
 Dec. 17 Katelyn & Oliver
 Dec. 24 Joshua & Janae
 Dec. 31 Rylie & Luke

We had so much fun at our lock in! we played games, ate way too much food and stayed up until our eyes couldn't stay open any longer! It was so much fun to have friends come and some of our camp counselors joined in on the fun too! December 3rd will start us off with a meeting and talking about the plagues in the bible. December 17th we will get together to decorate gingerbread houses and enjoy some holiday fun. This will bring us to our end of 2017 and will look forward to getting back together after the holidays. Merry Christmas!! ~Melissa Kuyper

December Schedule for Sunday Volunteers

	Dec. 3	Dec. 10	Dec. 17	Dec. 24	Dec. 31
Coffee & Treats	Pat Ekstrom & Sue Wells	Volunteer Needed	Carol Cox	"Potluck" Treats (everyone bring something)	Congregational Care
Greeters	Jim & Marilyn Anderson	Floyd & Pat Ekstrom	Matthew & Robin Hanson	Rod & Peggy Bacheller	Laurette & Jacob Lawson
Ushers	Linda Schesso, Scott Swenson, Terry Wells, Gregory Christensen	Bruce Benson, Bob Deese, Steve & Kathy Soucy	Bruce Benson, Guy Moore, Myron & Ginny Karki	AM - Bruce Benson, Pat Ekstrom, Linda Schesso PM - Scott Swenson, others TBD	Bruce Benson, Jack Cornforth, Jim & Marilyn Anderson
Welcomers	Ginny Karki	Judy & Eric Richardson-Mahre	LaVonne Robinson	Jean & Guy Moore	Kathy & Steve Soucy
Reader	Nathan Peine	Melinda Matton	Bob Deese	Neil Anderson	Ardy Anderson
Sound	Dave Smith	Eric Richardson-Mahre	Dave Smith	Tim Madsen	Eric Richardson-Mahre
Media	Tim Madsen	Dave Smith	Dave Smith	Barb Andrus	
Nursery	Barb Deese	Janet Rush	Denise Carroll	Linda Lounsbury	LaVonne Robinson
Closer	Steve Knopp	Jeff Carroll	Floyd Ekstrom	AM - Harvey Erstad PM - Jeff Carroll	Wayne Andersen
Communion Stewards	Peggy Erstad, LaVonne Robinson	<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	Steve & Kathy Soucy, Mary Nelson, Verne Witt				

Spiritual Growth

Gratitude and the Heifer Project

The Sunday School classes are focusing on gratitude for Advent this year.

For 24 days they will be recognizing daily blessings and collecting money towards a donation to the Heifer Project.

Each day has a theme and a suggested donation mentioned on the Gratitude List. We are encouraging families to discuss everyday blessings we typically take for granted.

Sunday School children will receive jars for their donations on Sunday, December 3.

Please bring all jars/donations to Sunday School on Sunday, January 7 (we will be counting our donations and selecting our gift that day). Members of the congregation are welcome to join in on the fun. Copies of the Gratitude list are available in the Narthex.

~Traci Darnell



"Our children have breakfast in the morning and milk to drink."

Florence Dambeni and her husband Aaron Tembo in their sunflower field. -Heifer Zambia

Mission Outreach



Operation Christmas Child

Bring your filled shoeboxes to worship on Sunday, December 3. We will bless them and then take them to the distribution warehouse where they will be prepared for shipment around the world.

Please note that some guidelines have changed due to increased customs regulations, so candy, gum, toothpaste, seeds, and powdered drink mixes are no longer permitted.

Hanging of the Greens

Come one, come all - we're going to spruce (pun intended) The PORT up for Christmas. We've got trees to put lights on, wreaths to hang, and decorations to place around the building. We'll start at 10:00am on Saturday, December 3.

Thank you to the Congregational Care Team for providing some treats for the morning. With many hands, we should finish our decorating within an hour or two.



We celebrate YOU during December

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

- | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 02 - Steve Knopp | 15 - Daisy Castro | 24 - Lori Moreland |
| 03 - Mary Rathbun | 18 - Karen Groth | Mary Murphy |
| 04 - Fredrick Wilson-Bahun | Linda Schesso | 31 - Claire Perry |
| 10 - Russ Cox | 19 - Billy Cottier | |
| 12 - Leo Castro | 21 - Cy Carpenter | |

Happy Birthday!



Coffee Fellowship

The tradition of offering coffee and treats on Sunday mornings is much appreciated at The PORT.



THANK YOU to all for your gracious hospitality in serving coffee and treats each Sunday. A sign up sheet for the new year is 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.

Coffee & refreshments are served from 9:30-10:00am in the Wesley Room.

Caregivers Support Group

After a little break, the Caregivers Support Group will meet again on Tuesday, December 5, from 6:30-8:00pm. We are reading *The 36-Hour Day* by Nancy Mace and Peter Rabins, so see Pastor Carol if you'd like a copy of the book. We're ready to discuss chapters 9 and 10, but don't let that deter you if you'd like to jump into the group for the first time. You'll find the information helpful and the support wonderful.



From the Mailbox

Address Updates

Scott Swenson, new email: stspop@gmail.com

Trenton Olson
9350 Collegeview Rd Apt 109
Bloomington, MN 55437

Godwin & Friedoline Wilson
127
Rue Agbalekpedogan Maison #64
Lome, Togo



Thank You

Do you believe in Miracles? I do! I believe that I received one last Friday, November 17. Of course it was the Lord's gift to me. I want to thank my beloved PAUMC family for helping this to happen through the many prayers and acts of kindness from you. Thanks also for the 26 people who took me to the Methodist Hospital each day to get my radiation treatment with the hope of shrinking the tumors to help me live a little longer. I have a fast growing cancer called Follicular Lymphoma 3rd stage. My largest tumor is completely gone. There are some smaller ones left and it could come back but I'm thankful that for now, I still have my miracle. Thanks to all of you for helping!

Love and prayers and the Lord's blessing,
Betty Belk

Bits and Pieces

Fare For All



FARE FOR ALL

Fare for All is a co-operative food buying program open to everyone. There are no financial requirements or qualifications to take part in this program.

Distribution will take place this month on Wednesday, December 12 from 11:00am to 1:00pm, at Creekside Community Center (9801 Penn Ave S, Bloomington).

Package Prices are as follows:

- Produce Pack** **\$10**
This pack includes five varieties of fresh vegetables and two varieties of fresh fruits
- Mini Meat Pack** **\$11**
This pack contains at least four assorted meats between (3-5 pounds). This does not include pork.
- Combo Pack** **\$20**
This pack combines the mini meat and produce packs.
- Mega Meat Pack** **\$25**
This pack contains seven to nine different meat items.

For more information, please call Creekside Community Center at 952-563-4944.

Creekside Boutique

There are a wide variety of handcrafted items for sale at the Creekside Boutique, so it could be a great place to select unique gifts for Christmas.

You will find both crocheted and knitted scarves, mittens, slippers, towels, and baby clothes. There are also quilts, jackets, caps, towels, dolls, jewelry, artwork (wood and ceramics), and greeting cards.

The boutique is open Monday-Friday from 10:00am to 2:45pm, and Tuesday evening from 5:00pm to 7:00pm at Creekside Community Center (9801 Penn Ave S, Bloomington).



The Holidays at Schneider Theater

Don't miss some amazing local performances this month at the Bloomington Schneider Theater (1800 W. Old Shakopee Road):

The Continental Ballet Company will perform The Nutcracker from December 2-10. Ventures into the land of the Sugar Plumb Fairy in this timeless tale told as a ballet. Prices for Adults is \$25, Seniors and Students are \$19, and children 13 and under are \$13. Tickets are available at <http://www.continentalballet.com/purchase-tickets/>

The Bloomington Chorale will be hosting "Holidays with the Masters" on Friday, December 15 at 7:30pm and Saturday, December 16 at 4:00pm. Come witness the music of Bach, Handel, Mendelssohn and Vivaldi along with many Holiday favorites. Prices for Adults are \$16 and for Seniors and Students the price is \$12. Tickets are available at https://tix5.centerstageticketing.com/sites/bloomington/showdates.php?s_id=849



Music at Normandale College



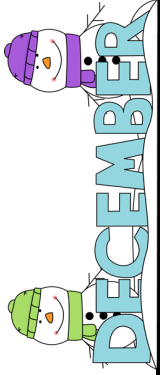
Sounds of the Season

Support our local community college while enjoying one of these free concerts to ring in the holidays.

Jazz Combo: Monday, December 4 @ 7:30pm
Lorenz Auditorium, Fine Arts Building
Normandale Community College
9700 France Ave S, Bloomington

Concert Band & Jazz Ensemble: December 7 @ 7:30pm
Lorenz Auditorium, Fine Arts Building
Normandale Community College
9700 France Ave S, Bloomington

Concert Choir & Vocal Ensemble: December 8 @ 7:30pm
Church of Saint William
6120 5th Street NE, Fridley



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 10:00am Hanging of the Greens
3 8:45am Handbells Rehearsal 8:45am Education 9:30am Fellowship 10:00am Worship/Communion 11:00am Confirmation	4	5 6:30pm Caregivers Support Group	6 6:15pm Sunrise Rehearsal 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	7	8	9
10 8:45am Handbells Rehearsal 8:45am Education 9:30am Fellowship 10:00am Worship 11:15am Congregational Care	11	12	13 6:15pm Sunrise Rehearsal 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	14	15	16
17 8:45am Handbells Rehearsal 8:45am Education 9:30am Fellowship 10:00am Worship/Choir Cantata	18	19	20 6:15pm Sunrise Rehearsal 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	21	22	23
24 March to the Manger 8:45am Handbells Rehearsal 8:45am Dress Rehearsal for Christmas Program 9:30am Fellowship 10:00am Worship/ Children's Christmas Program 4:30pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship	25 Christmas Day	26	27 6:15pm Sunrise Rehearsal 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	28	29	30
31 8:45am Handbells Rehearsal 8:45am NO Education 9:30am Fellowship 10:00am Worship						

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 (cell phone for emergencies 651-329-7878)
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