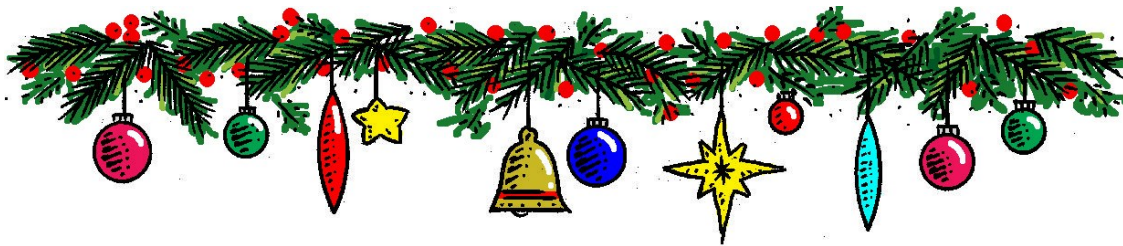


THE PORTLIGHT

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



2020 Online Holiday Bazaar

Extended thru

December 20 at 6:00 pm

Here is the link to shop at & to share with your friends:
<https://paumc-holiday-bazaar.company.site/>

*New items have been added;
and wonderful handcrafted items
and gift baskets are still available.*



December 2020

Our Mission

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

Our Vision

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

The **P**ORT
A safe harbor along life's journey.

Dear Friends,

If you're not accustomed to getting a physical copy of the Portlight Newsletter mailed to you every month, you might be wondering why you are receiving one now.

» Read all
ABOUT «
» it!

We've done a recent audit on our email system. You may not know that we manage two email systems. First is the office records where we maintain physical and email addresses, telephone number, and membership records such as worship attendance and committee roles. Second is a separate email system designed for mass emailing. This system is required due to some communication laws designed to protect consumers against unwanted spam emails. This system is a subscription-based system which allows you to opt out of all future emails whenever you want.

The problem is that our two systems do not talk to one another. So when you update your email address, both systems must be updated in order for you to continue to receive all communications from The PORT.

I mentioned that the second system is a subscription-based system. What that means is that we cannot simply add new email addresses to it...we can only send you an invitation - and then YOU must accept the invitation in order to receive the newsletter.

Needless to say, over time there is a significant discrepancy between the two systems. For example, we have 136 email addresses of our members and active friends in our primary database; and yet only 105 people have subscribed to our monthly newsletter sent through the second system (the mass email system). To make the discrepancy even greater, of the 105 email addresses in the mass email database, 24 are of former members or long-ago visitors. That means over 50 of our current members and active friends ARE NOT getting the monthly newsletter.

We aim to rectify that...and need your help to do so!

We would love to close the gap by getting more of our current members and friends subscribed to our mass

email system. To accomplish this, Kathryn in the church office will be emailing invitations through our mass email system to those of you who are not currently on that mass email distribution list. The email will come from "News from The PORT List Owner" and it will say "You've been invited to Subscribe to 'News From The PORT.'" There will be a green box to click on that says "Subscribe to, News From The PORT." Clicking on that will take you to one other screen where you can type in your first and last name, then click on the green "Subscribe" box. After doing this, you will get future Portlight Newsletters by email, along with a few other time-sensitive reminders.

We promise we will not flood your in-box through this mass email system. You will receive the monthly newsletter along with any other urgent emails (like if worship is canceled due to weather...a rather rare occurrence). During the pandemic, while in-person worship is suspended, you will also begin to receive your weekly "Worship While Away" email through this mass email system instead of through Pastor Carol's email address.

Ministry has always placed a value on relationships. While we are physically distanced and not seeing one another as frequently as we would like, written communication through email and the postal service is absolutely critical in helping you remain aware of what's going on at The PORT. And I have always tried very hard to help raise your awareness as to what is going on with your church. It was actually quite sad for me to learn that so many in our congregation have not been receiving the communications we work so hard to share.

But now we have a plan to improve on this. So, please watch for an email from "News from The PORT List Owner" and then follow the instructions to subscribe. If you're already getting the Portlight by email, you won't get another invitation - that's because you're already set up.

Thank you for your help with this so that we can start off the new year (yes...the new year is *almost here!!!*) with as many people as possible getting timely news from The PORT.

Valuing communication & connectedness,

Pastor Carol



Re-Gathering Plan for Churches



On Thursday, Nov. 19, Bishop Bruce R. Ough turned the dial on the Minnesota Conference's [Phased Re-Gathering Plan for Churches](#) from orange to red. Below is a letter to Minnesota United Methodists explaining the reason for the change:

Dear Minnesota United Methodists,

I am alarmed and frightened. The coronavirus pandemic is out of control in Minnesota and most of the country. Our hospitals are overwhelmed. Our front-line health care workers are exhausted. The Minnesota Department of Health told faith leaders in their most recent

call that when you gather with others outside your home, you are not just at risk for exposure, you can *expect* to be exposed to COVID-19. That is how rampant the community spread currently is across our state.

As you might know, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz on Wednesday [announced a four-week shutdown](#) of bars, restaurants, entertainment venues, and fitness clubs, starting Friday, Nov. 20. Weddings and funerals are permitted, but wedding receptions and post-funeral gatherings of any size are not.

Although in-person worship is still permitted, it is strongly discouraged by health officials and thus we are turning the dial on our [Phased Re-Gathering Plan](#) back to red for the foreseeable future. I ask that all churches return to virtual worship if you have not already done so, that all clergy and staff work from home, and that in-person activities in our buildings be limited to pre-schools, daycares, and emergency relief activities.

I urge you in your personal life and activities to re-double your efforts to keep people safe and help suppress the community spread of this terrible disease. Wear a mask. Stay home. Do not gather for Thanksgiving beyond your immediate household. There is no room for delay. Now is the time to act. Now is the time to set aside our personal and political preferences for the common good. Now is the time to lead the way.

The Minnesota Department of Health is reporting increasing numbers of new cases daily. Here are some sobering statistics for our state:

- In May, we were averaging 800 new cases a day. Recently we have been seeing more than 7,000.
- It took us 29 weeks to reach 100,000 cases, six weeks to reach 200,000, and will likely take less than three weeks to get to 300,000. We are in a snowball.
- There are cases in every county in Minnesota and we are averaging a 30 percent positivity rate across the state. That means in a group of 10 people, three are likely to have COVID-19. A 30 percent or higher rate of community spread is considered high-risk.
- In just two days, on Monday and Tuesday of this week, nearly 200 persons were admitted to hospitals statewide due to COVID-19. Our hospitals are reaching maximum capacity, and our healthcare shortage is growing due to staff persons being out sick after contracting the virus.



The next six to 12 weeks will be critical, according to Dr. Michael Osterholm, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota and one of the nation's leading infectious disease experts.

Group and family gatherings have been the most significant source of the spread of COVID-19 in recent weeks. We have the power to help change the trajectory of the pandemic in Minnesota. Doing no harm, acting for the common good, and protecting the most vulnerable among us is how we love our neighbors. We can give rise to the light in the midst of the darkness of this disease. *(continued on next page)*

Conference-wide News Related to COVID-19, *continued from p. 3*

So, I am making a difficult ask. Advent and Christmas is a season when we most want to gather, but this year, we need to be a light to others to by continuing to worship at home and online, and limiting our personal activities to what is absolutely essential.

We can do this hard thing. We can do it because we do not rely on our own strength and capacities. We rely on the promise made real in the incarnation: God is with us. The birth of the Christ child we celebrate this season proclaims that. So now we live it.

Thank you for all the ways you are continuing to be creative in ministry and faithful to our call to heal a broken world!

Bishop Bruce R. Ough
Resident Bishop
Dakotas-Minnesota Area of The United Methodist Church

Spiritual Growth

Photos of Angel Decorations Requested

Bring a little bit of home into online worship! Pastor Carol is requesting pictures from you of any angel ornaments or angel decorations you have at home. Email them to her at carol.zaagsma@paumc.org and then watch online worship throughout December to see when your photo appears!

Youth Group News

Dec. 13 - 6:00 pm Youth Group Virtual Check-In
Meeting ID: 840 1772 9284 Passcode: 230805
(Watch email that weekend for instructions to join by telephone and a link to access via web browser)

Mission Outreach



Simpson Shelter Donation Drive

During December, the Mission Outreach Ministry Team will be accepting donations of new Hats, Gloves, Mittens, Scarves and Socks for Simpson Shelter. During the cold months of winter these items are especially need by shelter guests.

Please consider picking up an item or two (especially needed are items rated for very cold weather since most of the recipients spend many hours outside) and bring them by The PORT. Items can be dropped off at church during office hours or at our curbside drop off event on Saturday, December 19 from 10:00-11:00 am. Please contact Linda Schesso at (952) 445-2240 or schesso77@yahoo.com with any questions.

Give a Little Gift Recap

November's Mission Outreach project was to collect donations for Walker Methodist Health Center's Give a Little Gift program. Colorful socks, slippers, scarves, and lap afghans; challenging word search and Sudoku puzzle books; unique jewelry; hand cream and pocket tissues galore; and a great assortment of candies and cookies will go a long ways toward Walker Health Center's goal to give every resident a gift bag filled with items individually selected for them by staff who work closely with them. Thank you for your generosity!



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

04 - Frederick Wilson-Bahun

10 - Russell Cox

18 - Karen Groth

- Linda Schesso

24 - Lori Moreland

- Mary Murphy

30 - Mary Rathbun

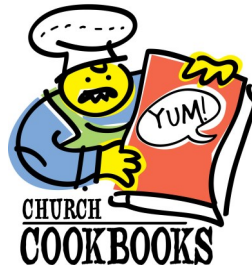


From the Mailbox - Wanted: PAUMC Cookbooks from 1960's-1990's

I'm looking for any extra PAUMC cookbooks from the 60's through the 90's for gifts.

If you have any unused or extra copies you'd be willing to part with, would you please let me know? Willing to purchase. Thank you!

Kathy Swenson
(612) 209-4559



Caregivers Support Group Meeting

The Caregivers Support Group will be meeting via Zoom on December 10 from 6:30-8:00 pm. Contact Linda Schesso (schesso77@yahoo.com) if you'd like the meeting reminder email with the login details.

Save the Date - Virtual BINGO!

The Congregational Care Team will host BINGO via Zoom on January 9 from 2:00-3:15 pm. Mark your calendar now; and watch the January Portlight for more information.

Virtual Scavenger Hunt

Sunday, December 6, 2020

10:45-11:45 (after online worship)

Join in for some fun as the Congregational Care Team with Kathy Soucy hosts this activity that will have us all up and about searching for scavenger hunt items in our homes and bringing them back to show on the videoconference.

Zoom Meeting ID: 842 7634 6005 Passcode: 040906
(the link will also be included with your worship email that morning)

Finance

2021 Stewardship Drive

Annual pledge letters were mailed out just before Thanksgiving. Please return your completed 2021 pledge card to the church office soon so that our Church Council can finalize the 2021 budget. Thank you for your commitment to support The PORT's ministries in the coming year.

March to the Manger

The 2020 March to the Manger Christmas offering mailing will be prepared soon. Please consider a special Christmas donation to close out the calendar year. Contributions may be dropped off during office hours (T-W-TH 9:00-1:00) or mailed to the church office. Thank you for your generosity during the holidays.

Gift Card Fundraiser


Christmas Gift Card Orders - Due Sunday, Dec. 6 at 5:00 pm

It's short notice, but we're going to place an order for gift cards through the gift card fundraiser. This is a great way to do some of your Christmas shopping while also supporting The PORT (it works by you paying face value for the gift cards you order, and then PAUMC receives a percentage of the sale as the fundraiser). To participate, follow the instructions below:

- 1) Go to shopwithscrip.com to check for **card denomination availability** for the cards you want.
- 2) Send your order by mail, email or phone to Ellen Smith (1310 East 99th Street, Bloomington, MN 55425/ dsmith1482@aol.com/ 952-884-8609). Use the order form below. All orders need all of this information!
- 3) The gift card order will be placed at **5:00PM on December 6**. No Exceptions.
- 4) You will be notified when the cards have arrived and you can make arrangements to pick them up and pay for your order (NOTE: payment may be made when picking up your order...this is an exception being made to the usual process written on the form due to the pandemic and the short turnaround time for placing orders).

<u>PRE-PAID GIFT CARD ORDER FORM</u>	Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #d3d3d3;"> <th style="padding: 5px;">RETAILER</th> <th style="padding: 5px;">\$ VALUE</th> <th style="padding: 5px;">QTY</th> <th style="padding: 5px;">AMOUNT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr style="background-color: #d3d3d3;"><td colspan="3">TOTAL</td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	RETAILER	\$ VALUE	QTY	AMOUNT																																									TOTAL				<p style="font-size: small;">Please drop order form along with <u>check payable to PAUMC</u> in the TREASURER mailbox, or the Church Office.</p> <p style="font-size: small;">For questions please contact: • Ellen Smith: 952-884-8609 • Kathy Swenson: 612-209-4559</p> <p style="font-size: small;">***Visit this website for available gift cards: https://shop.shopwithscrip.com/Shop/Product/Browse</p>
RETAILER	\$ VALUE	QTY	AMOUNT																																																
TOTAL																																																			

DECEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	30 7:00pm Hagerty's Small Group Videoconference	1	2 7:00pm Pastor Carol's Small Group Videoconference	3	4	5
6 10:00am Online Worship/ Communion	7	8	9 7:00pm Pastor Carol's Small Group Videoconference	10 6:30pm Caregivers Support Group Videoconference	11	12
13 10:00am Online Worship	14 6:00pm Youth Group Videoconference	15 Newsletter Deadline	16 7:00pm Pastor Carol's Small Group Videoconference	17	18	19 10-11am Gloves/Hats/ Socks Donation Dropoff to benefit Simpson Shelter
20 10:00am Online Worship 10:30 Virtual Coffee Fellowship	21 7:00pm Hagerty's Small Group Videoconference	22	23 7:00pm Pastor Carol's Small Group Videoconference	24 CHRISTMAS EVE [office closed]	25 CHRISTMAS DAY 	26
27 10:00am Online Worship	28 7:00pm Hagerty's Small Group Videoconference	29	30	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE	<p>TUNE IN FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP ONLINE @ 10:00 AM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.youtube.com/c/PortlandAvenueUnitedMethodistChurch • https://www.facebook.com/PortlandAvenueUMC/ 	

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



GIVE+
Electronic Giving Options



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE EXPEDITE

Join us for online worship on Sundays at 10:00 am
~~Sunday School (9:00 am) and Coffee Fellowship (9:30 am)~~ suspended until further notice

Staff

Rev. Carol Zaagsma (Pastor) carol.zaagsma@paumc.org (cell phone for emergencies 651-329-7878)

Kathryn Quam (Administrative Assistant) paumc@paumc.org

Open Position (Youth Director)

Peggy Larson (Music Director) peggylarson@comcast.net

Dale Miller (Accompanist) miller.daler@gmail.com

Judy Richardson-Mahre (SonRise Singers Director) jembrm@charter.net

Mary Nelson (Handbells Director) nelsonc2m@aol.com

Paul Herrmann (Custodian) 612-916-3376

Church Office E-mail: PAUMC@paumc.org PAUMC Website: www.paumc.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PortlandAvenueUMC/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/c/PortlandAvenueUnitedMethodistChurch>