

THE PORTLIGHT

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



Sunday, December 22, 2019

- * Children's Christmas Program at 10:00 am
- * March to the Manger special offering
- * Youth Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser following worship (free-will offering)

Tuesday, December 24, 2019

- * Christmas Eve worship with Candlelight at 4:30 pm. All ages are welcome.

Christmas @ The PORT

December 2019

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*

“Happy Thanksgiving!” “Merry Christmas!” “Happy New Year!” It is this time of year in particular, with the holidays upon us, that the expectation to be happy and joyful seems present at every turn.

But for those who have recently lost a loved one, the holidays seem much more like something to survive than to enjoy. As Nancy Guthrie once wrote, “The traditions and events that can add so much joy and meaning to the season are punctuated with painful reminders of the person we love who is not here to share in it. Many have wished they could find a quiet place to hide until January 2.”

Some might describe such a time as a “dark night of the soul;” a phrase that comes from a poem by St. John of the Cross in the 1500’s. And I would tend to agree - grieving does cast a sense of darkness over life. And we have been culturally conditioned to find any sort of quick fix to rectify the darkness in our lives - you need only count the number of nightlights in your house to see evidence of this.

I recently began reading Barbara Brown Taylor’s book *Learning to Walk in the Dark*. In it, she wonders what her relationship with darkness might be like if every time as a child when she called out of fear for her parents - fear of monsters under the bed or witches in the closet - if every time instead of them saying, “There are no monsters under your bed,” or “There are no witches in your closet,” they had asked, “What color are the monsters’ eyes?” or “What are the witches planning to do to you?” She reflects on how the later might have helped her learn to become more curious about what the darkness inside of her was dishing up; and she might have learned to look more deeply at it instead of looking away. Alas, most of us are conditioned to seek a quick fix to replace darkness with light.

But in her book, Taylor invites us to take a deeper look at the darkness of our lives. She writes, “I have learned things in the dark that I could never have learned in the light, things that have saved my life over and over again, so that there is really only one logical conclusion. I need darkness as much as I need light.”

One thing we must do to engage with the darkness, she suggests, is to take a hard look at the way we divide our perspective into opposed pairs: such as good/evil,

church/world, spirit/flesh, sacred/profane, light/dark. When you look at these pairs, it is likely you see one as “higher” or more desirable, and the other as “lower” or less appealing. If you take that a step further, Taylor points out that “the language of opposition works by placing half of reality closer to God and the other half farther away.”

When we subscribe to such oppositional thinking, we assume God is further away in our darker days. Yet this is clearly not the case. In fact, the scripture quoted at the very beginning of her book is from Isaiah 45:3 - “I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the Lord, the God of Israel, who call you by your name.”

I know that for me, I have found this to be true - that God will call you by your name...especially in your darkest days.

Taylor suggests that instead of dividing life into oppositional halves, try instead to think of these pairs existing in balance. What can light possibly mean without dark? In fact, Martin Luther King Jr. noted that “Only when it’s dark enough can you see the stars.”

So for those of you who are, perhaps like me, walking in the darkness of grieving this season, see the dark as balance to the light, and try to embrace it rather than run from it. Be open to what you might learn while it surrounds you. And trust that God has not abandoned you. To help you trust in this, I commend the first verse of the hymn “You Are Mine” to you (FWS #2218):

I will come to you in the silence,
I will lift you from all your fear.
You will hear my voice, I claim you as my choice,
Be still and know I am here.

Refrain

Do not be afraid, I am with you.
I have called you each by name.
Come and follow me, I will bring you home;
I love you and you are mine.

Learning in the dark with you,

Pastor Carol



December 2019



Dec. 1 Unassigned
 Dec. 8 Josh & Oliver
 Dec. 15 Evelyn & Janea
 Dec. 22 Katelyn & Rylie
 Dec. 29 Unassigned

Youth Group News

Dec. 8 - Afternoon movie in Burnsville was planned with Beth Cameron, but due to scheduling conflicts, will be considered for January instead. Watch your email for more information.

Dec. 22 - Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser following worship. Free-will donation. Proceeds support youth activities throughout the year and scholarships to Ultimate Challenge Camp.

DECEMBER Schedule for Sunday Volunteers

	December 1	December 8	December 15	December 22	December 29
Coffee & Treats	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Volunteer Needed	Pancake Breakfast	Cookie Smorgasbord
Greeters	Mark & Darlene Wicks	Steve & Kathy Soucy	Tim & Dianne Madsen	Harvey & Peggy Erstad	Bob & Barb Deese
Ushers	Scott Swenson, Pat Ekstrom, Mike Moreland, Laurette Lawson	Bruce Benson, Beth Cameron, Jim & Marilyn Anderson	Bruce Benson, Bob Deese, Myron & Ginny Karki	Bruce Benson, Terry Wells, Steve & Kathy Soucy	Bruce Benson, Scott Swenson, Myron & Ginny Karki
Welcomers	Volunteer Needed	Steve & Kathy Soucy	Kathy Swenson	Marilyn Anderson	Carol Emdy
Reader	Nathan Peine	Linda Dicks	Tim Hagerty	Jeff Carroll	Guy Moore
Sound	Tim Madsen	Dave Smith	Eric Richardson-Mahre	Tim Madsen	Dave Smith
Media	Nathan Peine	Tim Madsen	Nancy Hagerty	Dave Smith	Barb Andrus
Closer	Steve Knopp	Floyd Ekstrom	Steve Knopp	Tom Wellman	Steve Knopp
Counters	Dave Smith, Steve Soucy	Linda Dicks, Wayne Andersen	Linda Dicks, Steve Soucy	Dave Smith, Mike Moreland	Dave Smith, Mike Moreland
Communion Stewards	Dan & Tracy Baker	<p>A Special Thank You to Our Volunteers Serving on Christmas Eve, December 24 at 4:30pm</p> <p><u>Ushers:</u> Pat Ekstrom Steve Knopp Linda Knopp Volunteer Needed</p> <p><u>Sound:</u> Tim Madsen</p> <p><u>Media:</u> Tim Madsen</p> 			
Communion Servers	Steve & Kathy Soucy				

Mission Outreach

VEAP Donations

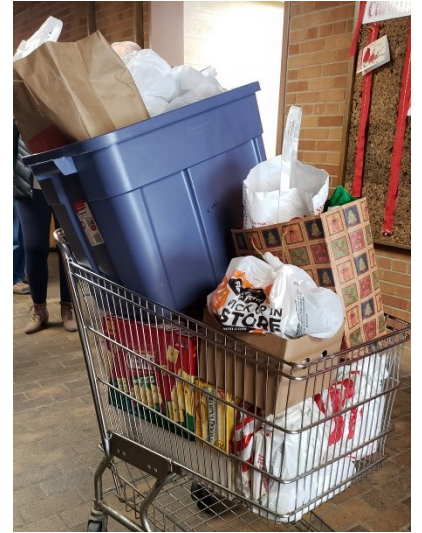
Thank you for your faithful support of our local VEAP Food Shelf this fall. Since 2008, visits by seniors to suburban emergency food programs have increased by more than 70%, so we know the need is great, even here in Bloomington.

In the last two months, we have taken over 200 pounds of donations to VEAP, 147 pounds of which came from shoppers who donated at the Holiday Bazaar.

Give a Little Gift

Thank you to all who supported the Give a Little Gift project at Walker Methodist Health Center.

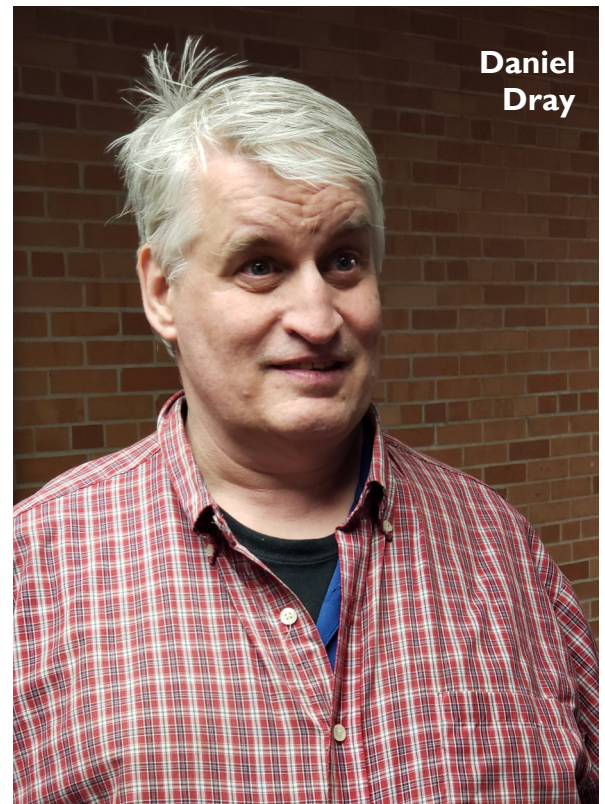
Our cart was overflowing with donations that will help share God's love and make the holidays brighter for residents who live there.



Evangelism and Church Growth

Welcome to New Members

Dorothy Baker has been attending The PORT since she was in fourth grade. She started getting more involved as a Freshman in High School when she began attending the Tuesday evening Bazaar Workshop Group. Dorothy is now a Senior at Kennedy High School, where she is active playing alto saxophone in four different bands, as well as recently serving as the stage manager for the Fall Musical, *The Little Mermaid*, and Co-President of the Improv Club. Dorothy was baptized and joined The PORT on August 11, 2019.



Daniel Dray



Dorothy Baker



Daniel Dray was born in Germany where his dad was stationed in the Air Force, and yet his family has roots in Minnesota as his Grandfather was a Methodist Minister at Joyce Methodist Church. Daniel has an Associates Degree in Electronics, and works nights at the Mall of America. Daniel is in recovery and appreciated seeing *The Big Book* on our church library shelves. Daniel joined The PORT on October 27, 2019.

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	18 - Karen Groth	30 - Mary Rathbun
04 - Frederick Wilson-Bahun	Linda Schesso	31 - Claire Perry
10 - Russ Cox	24 - Lori Moreland	
	Mary Murphy	



BINGO!

Come play BINGO with your friends from The PORT!

**December 7, 2019
1:30-3:00pm**

We will be hosting an afternoon of BINGO
and everyone is welcome!

It will be in the Fellowship Hall here
at The PORT...and it's free!

Come and participate and perhaps
win a prize or two! We have prizes for all ages.

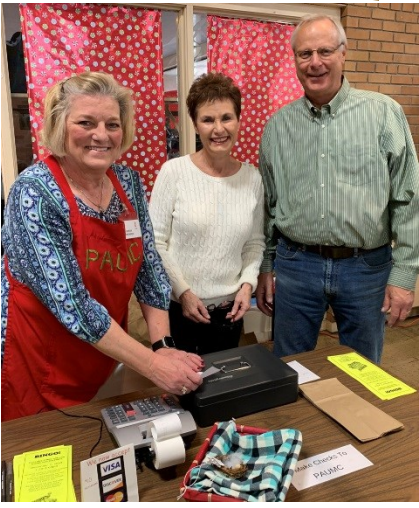


We will provide hot cider and ice water;
just bring a snack to share!
Arrive at 1:15 to get settled in
before our first game begins.

Holiday Bazaar Recap



Our 45th Annual Holiday Bazaar, held November 8-9, was another example of our congregation working hard to produce many beautiful handcrafted and home baked items for sale, package creative gift baskets for the silent auction, while also coming together to provide a welcoming atmosphere for all who attended. Thank you to all who participated and came to make this year's Bazaar a success.



Gift Card Program

We are planning one last gift card order for this year in order to receive them in time for holiday gift-giving. Please submit your order form with payment to Ellen Smith by Sunday, December 8.

March to the Manger

We will receive our special Christmas Offering, known as “March to the Manger” on Sunday, December 22 during worship at 10:00 am. Please watch your mail for your letter and special offering envelope.

Volunteer at General Conference

United Methodists from all around the world are coming to Minneapolis for General Conference 2020. Are you interested in volunteering to provide a warm welcome? Many different shifts are available from May 5 – 12, at all different times. You may sign up at www.GC2020welcome.org/volunteers/

Music at Normandale Community College



- The Jazz Combo will be in concert Monday, December 9 at 7:30 pm.
- Concert Band & Jazz Ensemble concert is Thursday, December 12 at 7:30 pm.
- Concert Choir & Vocal Ensemble concert is Friday, December 13 at 7:30 pm.

Craft and Vendor Sale

One Day Only ! Friday, December 13 from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm at Walker Methodist Health Center (3737 Bryant Ave S, Minneapolis). This sale will include many different vendors, including Sassy Towels, Scentsy, Wild Prairie TeaCups, StewArt Dezigns, and more, so shop for the holidays, birthdays, or just for yourself. All proceeds will fund ongoing maintenance for the bus used to transport Walker Methodist Health Center Residents.

Puzzle!

The word list contains the angel’s Christmas message to the shepherds. Fit those words into the crossword squares. Then write them on the correct lines below to complete Luke 2:10-11, NIV.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
e																												

be baby that today
do been this afraid
all born town Christ
for find will cloths
has good bring manger
joy Lord David people
not news great Savior
you sign lying wrapped

“ _____ . I _____
 of _____ the _____
 _____ in the _____ of _____ a _____
 _____ to _____; he is _____ the _____.” Luke 2:10-11, NIV

Answer: “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.” Luke 2:10-11, NIV.

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 worship on Sundays at 10:00 am
Sunday School (9:00 am) and Coffee Fellowship (9:30 am) September - May

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

www.facebook.com/pages/Portland-Avenue-United-Methodist-Church/109195009206962



DECEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 8:45am Handbells 9:00am NO Education 9:30am Fellowship 10:00am Worship/ Communion	2	3	4 6:15pm SonRise Rehl 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	5	6	7 1:30-3:00pm BINGO!
8 8:45am Handbells 9:00am Education 9:30am Fellowship 10:00am Worship 11:15am Cong. Care Mtg. Youth Group at the Movies postponed until January	9	10	11 6:15pm SonRise Rehl 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	12	13	14
15 8:45am Handbells 9:00am Education 9:30am Fellowship 10:00am Worship	16 Newsletter Deadline	17	18	19	20	21
22 March to the Manger 8:45am Handbells 9:00am Education 9:30am Fellowship 10:00am Worship /Children's Christmas Program 11:00am Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser for Youth	23	24 Christmas Eve 4:30pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship 31 New Year's Eve	25 Christmas Day (Office Closed)	26	27	28
29 8:45am Handbells 9:00am NO Education 9:30am Fellowship (cookie smorgasbord-bring cookies to share) 10:00am Worship	30	31 New Year's Day (Office Closed)				