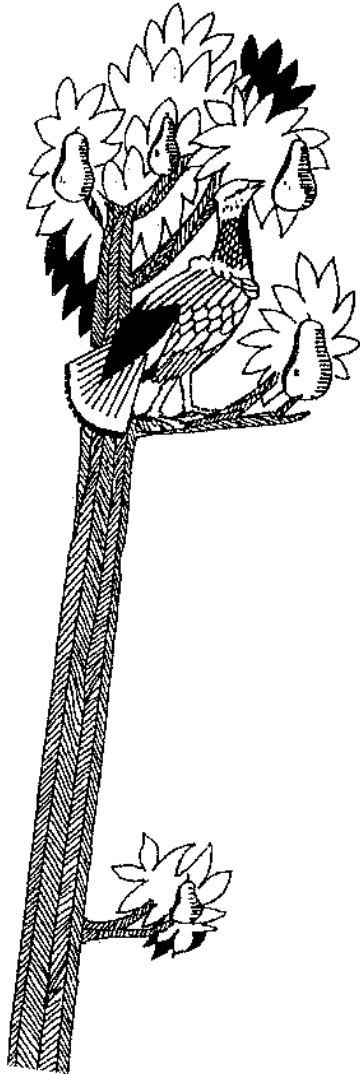


THE PORTLIGHT

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

2020 Online Holiday Bazaar

*Due to an increase in local COVID-19 cases,
we're moving online!*



Nov 13, 9am-6pm
Nov 14, 9am-3pm

*Shop and purchase items online;
then come for curbside pickup.*

- ✦ Christmas Ornaments
- ✦ Decorations
- ✦ Fruitcake
- ✦ Holiday Gifts
- ✦ Gift Baskets

Link to the "online store" will be
available at www.paumc.org and at
[https://www.facebook.com/
PortlandAvenueUMC/](https://www.facebook.com/PortlandAvenueUMC/)

November 2020

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

In October, I enjoyed some much-anticipated time away and thought you might be interested in what I was up to. First of all, I want to share the news that I got married. Linda Dicks and I met 12 years ago. We met at a country-western two-step dance. It's sort of a miracle that we met that night, and perhaps that is a story for another day. We are both grateful, and carry a sense that God had a hand in bringing us together.

Perhaps some of you reading this will be uncomfortable with such an assertion that God had something to do with us meeting. And to be sure, I've had a lot of sleepless, agonizing nights myself, trying to reconcile my faith while being part of the LGBTQ community. Again, perhaps that's a story for another day. I am grateful for God's persistence with me in the wrestling, and the ways God has continued to call me to ministry again and again and again.

If you are among those who struggle with this news, I pray that you will be open, at least for a time, to wrestling with it rather than just making up your mind in the instant it takes to read this article. I am more than willing to have an open and honest conversation with you. You may also want to read one of the books that are widely recommended, including *Is It a Choice?* by Eric Marcus, or *God and the Gay Christian* by Matthew Vines. The first book answers many common questions people have about gay and lesbian people, while the latter takes a closer look at the handful of scriptures many of us wrestle with related to this topic.

Neither one of us grew up imagining we would ever be able to get married. As you know, it wasn't even legal here in Minnesota until August 1, 2013. The Supreme Court ruling on June 26, 2015, then made it legal across the whole United States.

That was just 5 years ago. It is heart wrenching to reflect back on that time when the validity of LGBTQ relationships, and indeed the very worth of individuals in the LGBTQ community, was so publicly and vehemently debated. Let me just say that it shapes how you walk through life when others believe your own very existence is vile.

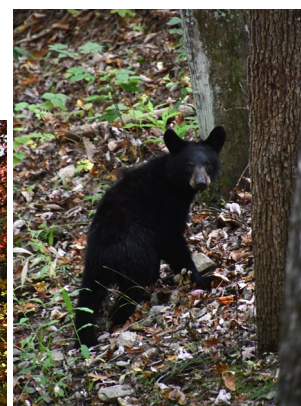
All that said, due to the pandemic, we had a very small wedding, with only our clergy person and witnesses present. We hope to celebrate more broadly at a later date. We are so grateful now to be legally married. As much of a commitment as we had made to one another over the course of the past 12 years, it is now even deeper and stronger. And we give God heartfelt thanks for that.

After the wedding, we drove to the Smoky Mountains in Tennessee. I've shared a couple of our photos below.

In every appointment interview I've had in United Methodist congregations (Saint Paul, Mankato, and here at The PORT), I have been asked how I would treat gay or lesbian persons in the congregation. Perhaps the real test is how a congregation handles hearing that their pastor is part of the LGBTQ community.

Peace be with you,

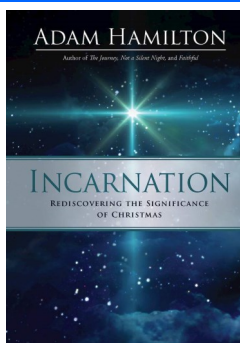
Pastor Carol



Advent Small Group Study

In the book *Incarnation: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas*, author Adam Hamilton examines the names of Christ used by the gospel writers to explore the historical and personal significance of his birth. Study this book together in one of two virtual small group studies.

Nancy Hagerty's group will meet on Monday



evenings at 7:00 pm, starting November 30; while Pastor Carol's group will meet on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm, starting December 2.

Cost for your copy of the book to read is \$14. Please contact Kathryn in the church office at (952) 888-6070 or paumc@paumc.org by end of day Wednesday, Nov. 18 to sign up.

Conference-wide News Related to COVID-19 *by Bishop Bruce R. Ough*

On Tuesday, Oct. 27, Bishop Bruce R. Ough turned the dial on the Minnesota Conference's [Phased Re-Gathering Plan for Churches](#) from yellow to orange. Below is a letter he sent to Minnesota United Methodists explaining the reason for the change:

CBS News reported the following on Saturday: "There are new signs that the nation's months long battle against the coronavirus is moving in a dangerous direction. There were more than 83,000 confirmed cases reported Friday, marking a new record high for a single day in the country. The outbreak is also more widespread. The latest surge is pushing the number of infections to more than 8.4 million and increasing the death toll past 223,000 according to Johns Hopkins University... 41 states reported an increase in average new cases. Fifteen states also showed record hospitalization, indicating more precautions are needed - fast."



Meanwhile, the Minnesota Department of Health reported these statistics and recommendations to the religious community last Tuesday:

- There have been more than 1,000 cases a day in Minnesota in recent days - representing the most widespread community spread since the start of the pandemic.
- A look at how spread has increased in Minnesota over just the past few weeks (the numbers listed are cumulative since the start of the pandemic):

	3 weeks ago	Last week
Cases associated with wedding	365	570
Outbreaks associated with wedding	41	62
Cases associated with a funeral	124	136
Outbreaks associated with a funeral	18	20
Cases associated with worship	105	121
Faith community outbreaks	18	20

- If 100 people come to in-person worship, statistically at least six are going to be infectious right now. The advice given by a state epidemiologist: Meet virtually instead of in-person.
- The current rate of community spread is 37.6 percent. (A rate of 20 percent or more signifies caution. A rate

of 30 percent or more is considered high-risk.)

- Someone asked the question: Where are we in terms of red light, yellow light, green light in terms of how we should act? The response from a state epidemiologist: Dark orange.

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 U of MN and one of the nation's leading infectious disease experts.

For all these reasons, we are turning the dial on our [phased re-gathering plan](#) back to orange. Doing no harm, acting for the common good, and protecting the most vulnerable among us is how we love our neighbor. What this means: I'm asking you to limit your in-person gatherings to 10 people or fewer while wearing masks and maintaining social distancing. Group 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 this pandemic.

Yes, the orange phase is more restrictive than what the governor's office currently allows. I understand the challenge this places on our churches, but given all the data before us, I believe this is the most prudent course of action. At a very minimum, I request you adhere to the governor's guidelines and closely watch the data in your community. If your school district is not holding in-person classes, then the church probably should not be having in-person worship either ([this link](#) always has the latest county-by-county 14-day case numbers, along with associated recommendations for school districts; it's a good tool for us to use to help guide our decision-making). We trust you to make decisions, in consultation with local officials, that will protect the vulnerable, our neighbors, and each other and still provide meaningful spiritual leadership to your community. Thank you for the creative, adaptive spirit you bring to our common work of healing a broken world in these critical days.

Remember, the church is not closed! We will continue to be creative in how we minister in these unprecedented times, and together we can make it through this pandemic. Our actions now will save lives. And isn't that the business we are ultimately in? Salvation - life for all people!

Bishop Bruce R. Ough, Resident Bishop
Dakotas-Minnesota Area of The UMC

Spiritual Growth

Worship News

Equipped with information from the MN Department of Health, the CDC, and our bishop of the Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, the PAUMC Church Council decided at our last meeting to continue the suspension of in-person worship through at least the end of 2020. Worship will remain online, so continue to watch and worship there!

Youth Group News

November 8 - 6:00 pm Videoconference.

Zoom link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89874558361?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89874558361?pwd=V05LVjFjcExvUWRuWU9XZUpkWW5HZz09)

pwd=V05LVjFjcExvUWRuWU9XZUpkWW5HZz09

or call (312) 626-6799 Meeting ID: 898 7455 8361 Passcode: 660147

November 22 - 6:00 pm Videoconference.

Zoom link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83856434492?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83856434492?pwd=Y1FjcHlncklrR3JGK1VZZkxUR3lwQT09)

pwd=Y1FjcHlncklrR3JGK1VZZkxUR3lwQT09

or call (312) 626-6799 Meeting ID: 838 5643 4492 Passcode: 321506

Mission Outreach

Bloomington Scholarship Update

In October, Russ Cox and the Mission Outreach Team extended an invitation to help fund a scholarship for a black student in Bloomington who wants to become a teacher. A problem we've heard about is that black students are hampered in their learning by not having black teachers as models for learning, so this scholarship is an effort to make a difference in that regard. The scholarship will be administered by the Education Foundation of Bloomington. Thank you to all who participated in this effort. The PORT's funding for this scholarship totaled \$2,570.

Give a Little Give Donation Drive

Walker Methodist Health Center is once again planning to provide a gift bag of goodies for each of its residents for Christmas, and we have the opportunity to help provide donated items to help them fill the bags. Here are some donation ideas:

- Socks and slippers (men's and women's)
- Pocket Kleenex, Chapstick, and lotion
- Cookies, crackers, candies, chocolate, and sugar-free candy
- Knickknacks (items for residents' rooms) and small stuffed animals
- Religious items
- Decorative scarves or winter hats, mittens & scarves
- Jewelry, women's and men's watches
- DVDs, CDs

- To contribute toward the purchase of gift cards to the Walker Auxiliary Gift Shop at Walker Health Center (each resident receives a gift card to choose an item there), make checks out to Walker Methodist Foundation with GALG in the memo.

Help bring joy to a resident this holiday season by giving new, unwrapped items for this purpose. Donations may be dropped off at PAUMC during office hours (T-W-TH from 9:00 am-1:00 pm) or during curbside dropoff on Saturday, November 21, from 10-11 am.

Financial contributions will also be accepted for those who don't wish to shop. Members of the Mission Outreach Team will then go shopping on your behalf for donations.

UMCOR Sunday - November 29

We missed United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) Sunday as a result of the early days of the pandemic, yet this ministry is too important to overlook for the year. Therefore, we will observe UMCOR Sunday (previously known as One Great Hour of Sharing) on November 29, 2020. This offering goes for UMCOR administrative costs (distribution centers, etc) in order to ensure our denomination is prepared to respond to natural disasters worldwide.

To participate, please designate your offering with UMCOR SUNDAY in the memo line, or give online at paumc.org/giving and select "Special UMC Mission Offering."

We celebrate YOU during NOVEMBER

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



This Month's Birthdays

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 03 - Joyce Faircloth | 13 - Mary Nelson |
| - Jordan Lawson | 18 - Sue Wells |
| - Carl Darnell | 22 - Todd Rasmussen |
| 06 - John Lounsbury | 27 - Mary Lou Johnson |
| 09 - Kathy Swenson | 29 - Joan Whitehead |
| - Bruce Benson | 30 - Dave Smith |
| 10 - Nathan Peine | |



Address Updates

Neil & Kay Livingston
York Gardens
3451 Parklawn Ave #306
Edina, MN 55435
(Apartment # change only)

Jeff Chamberlain
Cell (612) 423-5371
(New cell phone number)



Virtual Coffee Fellowship Sunday, November 22, 2020 10:30-11:15 am

Join your friends from church on this virtual call to see how everyone's doing! We use the Zoom platform, so if you're new to Zoom, you can watch a tutorial here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9isp3qPeQ0E>

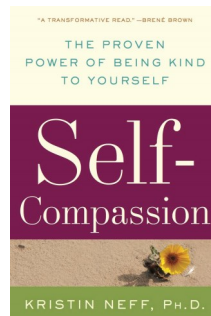
To join the Zoom Meeting via web browser:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89035298306?pwd=NXFRZjY5ejMwNXRmTXV4VGY4M1Nmdz09>

Caregivers Support Group

If you are at a point where you are offering extended care for a loved one, whether that be a spouse, child or parent, then you may find that meeting with other caregivers can be helpful and encouraging.

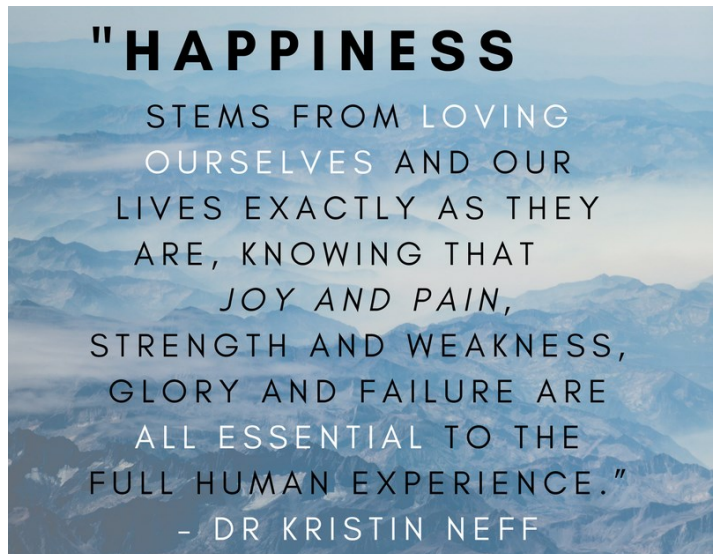
Now is the perfect time to jump into the Caregivers Support Group, as we're beginning to read a new book by Kristin Neff entitled *Self Compassion*. We plan to discuss Part 1 of the book at our next meeting, Thursday, November 19, from 6:30-8:00 pm via videoconference.

We generally begin meetings with a check-in from each person to support one another in our challenges, and then we'll spend some time discussing what we read from the book. All are welcome, so please contact Linda Schesso at schesso77@yahoo.com for more information or to be included in the meeting notice.

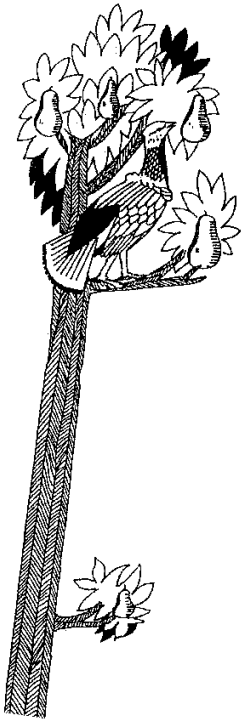


To join via the Zoom App:
Meeting ID: 890 3529 8306 Passcode: 071224

To join via telephone (rates may apply):
Call (312) 626-6799
Meeting ID: 890 3529 8306 Passcode: 071224



2020 Online Holiday Bazaar



Well friends, 2020 continues to be unpredictable, and yet, not. As workshops have been meeting to produce as many new items as possible, and some folks have been creating at home, the COVID virus just keeps ramping up.

On Friday, October 16 the state announced they would prefer that gatherings be canceled. We were very disappointed to hear the news. We had already received 12 basket donations for the Silent Auction and sent out fliers to our mailing list.

On a call with Bloomington Public Health, we were told that they didn't want to tell us to cancel, knowing how important these events are

to churches. It was recommended instead that we do something virtually, and so that is what we have decided to do. We are currently exploring website platforms for selling merchandise and should have a path forward soon.

This article is usually the one where we ask for your help with setting up, working and cleaning up after the sale. That help won't be needed this year. The small group that has done the planning thus far will handle the event, with COVID precautions in place. You can help by letting your friends know that there are still

ornaments, personalizing, gift and décor items, needlework, fruitcake and gift baskets for sale at PAUMC.

The Bazaar will still be held on Friday, Nov. 13 from 9:00 am - 6:00 pm and Saturday, Nov. 14 from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm. After people shop and pay online they will come to the church and pick up their items curbside during the posted hours for the Holiday Bazaar.

We know that a virtual sale is not optimal for everyone and we certainly want all of our members to be able to shop, so during the sale we will have a limited number of in-person shopping timeslots (2 people at a time for 30-minute timeslots). Please call Lori Livingston at (612) 240-2640 to schedule a time to come in person if you wish. Of course, face masks and physical distancing protocols will be adhered to.

Our Holiday Bazaar has always been an important outreach event for our community and this year more than others people need some joy in their lives. Our prayer is that we will be that beacon for even one person. We ask that you join us in that prayer. We will miss the Bazaar as it always has been, but it will be that way again next year.

The 2020 Holiday Bazaar Sub-Committee:

- Lynn Livingston (952) 797-2645
- Lori Livingston (612) 240-2640
- Kathy Swenson (612) 209-4559
- Barb Andrus (612) 619-5785
- Judy Richardson-Mahre (612) 202-6457



Finance/Stewardship

2021 Pledge Drive

Please know that as the pandemic wears on, ministries here at The PORT are very much needed and appreciated, even if they have transitioned to virtual meetings and fellowship opportunities, along with curbside mission outreach events. Help us continue on strong

footing into the coming year by participating in the annual pledge drive. Letters will be mailed early in November. Our finance committee asks that you prayerfully consider your commitment to the health of our congregation while returning your completed pledge card to the church office by Sunday, November 22. Thank you for your faithful giving thus far. Together we will emerge well on the other side of this pandemic.

Building Repairs

We've recently had a few things go awry in the church building. A couple of doors stopped working (one wouldn't open on your way out of the south entrance and the other had a lock that wouldn't tighten for the door to stay unlocked as you enter the north entrance); and once the boilers got turned on, we discovered a pump that needed to be replaced so that the Wesley Room and Pastor's Office would receive heat. Thank you to Steve Knopp for fixing both doors, and to Harvey Erstad with Steve Knopp for replacing the pump.

We also had our roofing company inspect our roof this fall. They noted a number of concerns, some of which involved tree branches hanging too close. Thank you to Wayne Andersen and his son Jeff, along with support from Sharon Beckler, for taking care of some of these items that were within our ability to fix.

The roofing company also noted that the fellowship

hall roof, along with the four flat roofs around the entryways, are all within five years of their life expectancy, so we are now planning for those significant replacement expenses as they are required.

Memorial Picnic Table

We have a new addition to the Memorial Garden – a picnic table purchased with memorial gifts given in memory of Pastor Carol's dad. Thank you to Dave Smith for putting it together. It's a commercial-grade steel picnic table with benches attached, and is finished with a green coating for year-round protection from the weather, so should be in good shape and enjoyed for years to come.



Bits and Pieces

Monthly Virtual Game Party November 5 at 1:00 pm

Connect with other seniors and play a variety of games including BINGO and trivia hosted by Creekside, which is a service of the City of Bloomington. This virtual event is open to anyone age 50+. To participate, contact Creekside at (952) 563-8889 or email creekside@bloomingtonmn.gov in order to receive the email invitation with the call-in details.

Meals for Families During COVID-19

There are several opportunities for food assistance during the pandemic. Here are a few:

- Bloomington School District Meals - Grab and Go breakfast and lunch meals are available to all Bloomington families with children under 18 for no cost at Kennedy High School, Door 5, Monday-Friday from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm. Meals for weekends are provided on Fridays. Students do not need to be present for parents to pick up meals.

- Free Grocery Pickup for School Families - Sheridan Story grocery boxes may be picked up Wednesdays from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm at Oak Grove Middle School (1350 W 106th St), Door 21.
- VEAP Food Shelf - Before visiting, call (952) 888-9616 for an appointment and leave a message if your call goes to the answering machine. Food is available for pick-up for residents in Bloomington, Richfield and Edina. Delivery of food is available for anyone lacking transportation.
- Good in the Hood Food Shelf - call (612) 217-4003 to inquire about receiving food. Leave a message if your call goes to the answering machine.
- Loaves and Fishes Free Meals available as follows (note all are drive-thru service at the present time):
 - Creekside Community Center (9801 Penn Ave S) Monday-Friday 5:30-6:30 pm at south door.
 - Hope Presbyterian Church (7132 Portland Ave S) Monday-Thursday 5:00-6:00 pm.
 - Woodlake Church (2120 W 76th St) Saturday & Sunday 5:30-6:30 pm.
- YMCA Meal Packs for families of 4 (7355 York Ave S) - Monday-Friday at 1:00 pm.

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>



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 ALL SAINTS DAY Daylight Saving Time Ends 10:00am Online Worship/ Communion 4:00-6:00pm Holiday Bazaar Handmade Crafts Donation Drop-off	2	3 ELECTION DAY	4	5	6	7
8 10:00am Online Worship 11:00am Mission Outreach Videoconference 6:00 pm Youth Group Videoconference	9	10 6:00pm Trustees Videoconference	11 VETERANS DAY	12	13 9:00am-6:00pm Holiday Bazaar (Online Only with Curbside Pickup)	14 9:00am-3:00pm Holiday Bazaar (Online Only with Curbside Pickup)
15 10:00am Online Worship Newsletter Deadline	16	17	18	19 6:30pm Caregivers Support Group Videoconference	20	21
22 10:00am Online Worship 10:30am Virtual Coffee Fellowship 11:15am Congregational Care Videoconference 6:00 pm Youth Group Videoconference	23	24	25	26 THANKSGIVING DAY (office closed)	27	28
29 UMCOR SUNDAY 10:00am Online Worship	30	<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/ 				