

United Methodist Church Newsletter



JULY

2020

stpaulneunitedmethodistchurch.com



Office Hours
Tuesday-Friday
9:00 a.m.—3:00 pm
754-4247

Staff
Rev. Dr. Susan Murithi

Church Secretary
Carrie Hancock

Custodian
Integrated Life Choices
Call Office

**Committee
Chairpersons:**

Admin Council
Mikaleh Esquitin

Board of Trustees
Brenda Starkey
Janet Thomsen

Finance
Evan Carlson

Staff/Parish Relations
Bob Rasmussen

Worship

Mission-Outreach
Mary Ann Rickertsen

UMM
Dave Snow
Tom Knutson

UMW

Education
Nancy Harrington

VBS
Vacant

Auditor
Larry Hurlburt

On being Faithful and being Disciples

This month marks the beginning of a journey for me and my family here at St. Paul's. It is exciting to see what God has in store for us. This beginning is however not only for the Murithi family but also for you as the St. Paul's community. We are coming together and asking both individually and corporately, what is it that God calls us to do in this season of our lives. The answers to that question may be varied, and yet all those answers converge to one overarching theme of the gospel call; "Make Disciples". As such, you and I will be inquiring as what specific area of making disciples is God calling us into.

In Matthew 28:18-20, the words of Jesus to his disciples commonly referred to as the "Great Commission" are recorded as follows,

"Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

These final words had a curious meaning to the first century disciples, just as they would in some parts of the world today. In several cultures including many African contexts, the words of a dying person are usually taken very seriously. When my dad was in his final phase of life two years ago, we all gathered around him to hear his final wishes. Dad told us many things, but one profound theme was that we are to love each other at all times. He told us that only a family bound by love can be able to withstand life's trials.

The words of Matthew 28 were not the final words Jesus uttered before he died, they were however his final wishes pertaining his earthly ministry before his ascension. He commissioned the disciples to make more disciples. As Craig Keener notes, "he asks his followers to make disciples not for themselves but for him." In other words, these disciples were never going to graduate from the discipleship school. They would forever be disciples, his disciples. They were not to start teaching their own doctrines but rather only those doctrines from their master.

Making disciples for Jesus is one of the most significant invitations given to all who love the Lord. There is no Christianity without the making of disciples. Some people answer the call of God by going to far-away lands as missionaries, yet for others it may mean going a few meters to ones' next-door neighbor to share the gospel. It was therefore not so much about the distance as it was about venturing to other areas away from one's comfort zone.

To make a disciple may also take different directions. Some share the gospel by preaching, others by teaching, others by giving their resources to further God's work, yet others do so by their actions like visiting a sick friend or sharing our possessions with the poor. Whatever it is for you, desire to move in obedience this month. Aspire to be a faithful follower of Christ and share his love with someone else. This is a part of what it means to be a disciple. So whatever your answer is to the question of God's call for your life, remember that first and foremost, we are called to be disciples who make disciples for the Lord. Have a faithful month.

Rev. Susan Murithi

¹ Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, 125.

My name is Susan Murithi. I was born and brought up in a country called Kenya, in the Eastern part of Africa. I grew up on a small farm with a close-knit community where we knew all our neighbors, their children, and their relatives. As children, we fetched water, collected firewood, and helped our families with chores after school and during holidays. We trained in hard work and diligence, and yet it was so much fun because we did it together. I grew up in a Christian family and hence started going to church as a small child. My parents, who are Methodists, named me Susan after Susanna, who was John Wesley's mother. This shaped me as I grew to love Methodism and her stand on matters of faith. The church was always exciting. We enjoyed especially the time for music as we sang and danced energetically during praise and worship. We also acted plays in church once in a while about bible stories and characters. As an oral culture, the gospel was transmitted through songs, dance, drama, stories, proverbs, and riddles.



My call to the ministry came one year after graduating from high school. I wasn't very eager at the time, but the calling was too strong I couldn't shake it off. I knew that God was calling me to something bigger, something greater than myself, but I was very scared to say yes at first. God, in His patient love, kept pursuing me until I gave in to his grand plan.

This is my sixteenth year in ministry. In this period, I have worked with both rural and town churches in Kenya. In my first appointment, I served with six churches. My next appointment was in a bigger parish with nine churches. Later I was appointed as the senior pastor of a bigger town church, which had a small young church plant. Before my appointment here at St. Paul, I served Mentor/Gypsum charge in Salina District-Kansas.

I trained for ministry at the Kenya Methodist University where I graduated with a Bachelor of theology. A few year's later I joined Drew University in New Jersey and graduated with my Master of Theological Studies. After Drew, I also taught for a little while at the Kenya Methodist University training pastors and missionaries before joining Asbury seminary in Kentucky for my PhD in Intercultural Studies, which I graduated from in May 2019.

I am married to Geoffrey Murithi Iringo, who I call Jeff. I met Jeff in church. We were both passionate for ministry and were both serving the Lord in different capacities, first as friends. We later realized that we liked each other, and the rest is history as they say. Jeff serves the Lord as a local pastor and is a trained counselor. He is pursuing his PhD in Counselor Education at Kansas State University in Manhattan, KS. We are blessed with two beautiful children. Faith and Nem, who are the greatest gift God has given us. Faith is going into 10th grade and loves band, sports, and gymnastics while Nem is going to be in 6th grade and enjoys singing, acting, Girl scouts, and reading books. The two girls love serving God and are active participants during worship services.

In this appointment, I look forward to working with this community as we serve our neighbors and God according to our calling. I hope that we actively seek to be kingdom people that have Jesus at the center of their lives. I envision a community that is passionate about making disciples for Jesus Christ, and that lives according to God's kingdom ethos. I visualize a time when all people in this community are faithful to what God calls us to be, keen to explore an adventure in Christ, and be joyful to partner with God in his agenda of redeeming the world.

We are so glad to be part of this community. Thank you for welcoming us to your church. We are excited to see what God has in store for all of us as the St. Paul's community. I hope to meet you all and interact further both in church and in the neighborhood. Stay safe and may God protect you from this Pandemic that we are all experiencing. You may contact me at my conference email smurithi@greatplainsumc.org

MAY Attendance

May 3rd:	101 views/FB
May 10th:	65 views/FB
May 17th:	170 views/FB
May 24th:	203 views/FB
May 31st:	117 views/FB

MAY Offering Totals

May 3rd:	\$3,403
May 10th:	\$950
May 17th:	\$661
May 24th:	\$442
May 31st:	\$2,747

GCA Days 2020

GCA Days will be July 11th-12th this year. It will include a Bike, Walkers, and Pet Parade, along with the yearly Car Show. There will also be a Tractor Show, Sand Volleyball, Soft ball, Food and Retail Vendors, and Sidewalk Sales on Saturday. And don't forget the Fireworks display at dusk at the City Park (on the 11th)! On Sunday there will be a 3-man Golf Scramble starting at 10 am.



Prairie Rivers District Basic Lay Servant Training– via Zoom

Lay Servant Ministries include teaching, leading, guiding, and reaching out to others to demonstrate and proclaim the love of God in Jesus Christ.

Basic Course – Participants Course Book: Lay Servant Ministries Basic Course – ISBN# 9780881776263, By Sandy Jackson with Brian Jackson
The Basic Course encourages people to recognize and use their spiritual gifts for work in the church, helping each congregation to become an outpost for mission and transformation. Sessions guide participants through thoughtful reflection on the areas of leading, caring, communicating and spreading the love of Jesus Christ into the world.

Basic Course Participants, Order Your Own Books through
Cokesbury.com (telephone 800-672-1789) or
UpperRoom.org (telephone 800-972-0433)

You must have your books in order to attend the class.



Location: via Zoom

Time/Date: Monday July 27th through Thursday July 30th, 2020

From: 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Register by July 17th

Please honor this registration deadline to allow time for you to order, receive, and read your books.

If you have any questions, please contact Jeanie Leeper, PRDD Lay Servant Ministries Committee through email jleeper@greatplainsumc.org or 308 380 7223. Or Mary Plock PRD Secretary Lay Servant Ministries Committee at mplock50@gmail.com or 402 366 5473.
Any denomination may attend this training; however, you must be a member of the United Methodist Church to be consecrated as a Lay Servant.

The Lord's Prayer

During this time of no in-person worship Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr, presiding bishop of the Great Plains Conference, has asked for all Great Plains United Methodist to pray the Lord's Prayer at noon every day until all gathering restrictions are lifted. "This act of solidarity," he states, "will keep us prayerfully connected. It takes less than 30 seconds to pray the Lord's Prayer, but doing so will unite us with Christ, with each other, and it will change the world."

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Move In Day a Success!

A big THANK YOU to all that came to help Pastor Susan and her family move into the parsonage on June 23rd. Now the fun part—the unpacking!



Yet Another Thank You!

The Trustees would like to thank everyone for their assistance in getting the parsonage ready for Pastor Susan and her family. Whether the donations were financial for things like rock, flowers, lights, mailbox, cabinet pulls or for their muscles for the flower beds, painting or cleaning - it was ALL greatly appreciated!! A special thanks to: Doug and Darla Voigt, Jami, Cash and Oakley Wemhoff, Rusty and Abbie Fuller, Marde Voigt, Luke Porter, Terry Heaps, Don Lukasiewicz, Coy Ruzicka, Daryl and Molly Teter, Mark Starkey, Carol Phillips, Charlene Craig, and Connie. Snow. If we left anyone out, it was not intentional - we just weren't there every day to keep track!!!!

Janet and Brenda, Trustees Co-chairpersons



July 3	Jared Rasmussen	July 20	Toni Bentz
July 12	Anna Gebhardt	July 22	Rebecca Bentz
	Theda Van Horn		Landon Vogel
July 14	Mark Feeney	July 23	Mike Phillips
	Bowen Rudolf	July 27	Tracie Dearmont
July 18	Stacie Swanson	July 29	Jaedon Cole-Lopez
July 19	Dylan Krauss	July 31	Jordan Coslor



July 6	Kent and Pam Payne
July 12	Dave and Nancy Harrington
July 14	Buzz and LuAnn Todd
July 18	Kent and Machell Naylor
July 24	Vincent and Emily Christensen
July 27	Loren and Heather Pearson

Just a note:

In-person worship has begun as of June 21st. Safety and social distancing precautions will be in place. Please see Re-entry document on pages 7-8 of this newsletter for more details. Also see the Safety video that has been posted onto the church’s Facebook page for reference.

All other Sunday school classes, Youth Group meetings, Bible studies, UMW and UMM meetings are suspended until further notice. This includes any church or community related events that may have been previously scheduled with the church. We will keep you informed of any changes.

*Please watch services on-line on Facebook under *United Methodist Church in St. Paul, Nebraska*. These services are now a live-streamed service! If you can’t watch on Sunday Morning, you can always watch any-time under the “videos” section. We encourage you all to do so!

The **Food Pantry** here in St. Paul is always looking for food donations. Please help us stock the shelves. Any food or paper item is accepted but these items are in high demand every month.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Jelly | Syrup |
| Pancake Mix | Dish Soap |
| Cake or Brownie Mixes | Laundry Soap |
| Puddings | Pie Fillings |
| Jello | Ketchup |
| Toilet Tissue | Cereal |
| Mustard | Fruit |

Food Pantry hours

Saturday 9:00-11:00 am	Tuesday 4:00-6:00 pm
----------------------------------	--------------------------------

Beginning in 2018, February will be the month for United Methodist Church to donate to the Food Pantry.

Food Pantry

The United Methodist Church is responsible for operating the Food Pantry every third Saturday from 9-11 am. If you could volunteer to help any one of these Saturdays, it would be greatly appreciated. **July 18th** is our next work date. Precautions are taken to insure the health and protection of both the worker and the consumer.

Thank you, Theda Van Horn

Thank you!!!

Dear Church Family,

Trudy and I want to express our gratitude for the love you expressed during the “drive good-bye.” We are also grateful for the numerous cards and gifts you graciously gave. Many hours were spent during the first few days of our time away reading, wiping tears from our eyes and reminiscing about the time spent with you. You will always have a special place in my heart, and I will forever cherish the memory of our time together. With heart felt gratitude I wish you the best in your continued ministry.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Russ



The **Goodwill** trailer will be at the City Lot at 6th and Grand Street in St. Paul from July 24th through July 29th (or until the trailer is full).

Please consider donating your gently used items to help support individuals with disabilities and barriers to help improve their quality life.

For questions, please contact Goodwill Industries of Greater Nebraska, Inc. at (308) 384-7896.



United Methodist Church Prayer Chain

The purpose of the prayer chain is to offer special prayers for individuals in critical need. The chain cannot be activated without the permission of the family in need. Call prayer requests to the church office 754-4247. The prayer request will be called to the first person on these lists. Each caller then calls the next person on the list. If that person is unavailable, a call should be placed to the following name and contact made with the first party later in the day. Last name on list does not call anyone. We are in need of more people joining the prayer chain. Praying for each other is an important ministry that we can do for our church family. If you would be interested in becoming part of this mission, please contact the church office.

Marilyn Wall	754-5100	Marlene Kremlacek	754-4876	Jackie Cook	754-9115
Deb Wells	754-5620	Martha Voigt	754-4666	Charlene Craig	754-5503
Nancy Harrington	754-5136	Rose Ross	754-4993	Mary Ann Rickertsen	754-4038
Theda Van Horn	754-4541	Lory Thomsen	754-4286	DeEtte Lukasiewicz	750-0246
Cleo Edwards	754-4853	Charlotte Rasmussen	308-863-2281	Brenda Starkey	750-7967
Ashley Meyer	308-627-2808	Vanice Bahensky	754-7873	LuAnn Todd	308-380-5022
				Carol Tjernagel	750-2830
				Dorothy Jorgensen	754-4126

United Methodist Church St Paul NE
COVID-19 Re-Entry Policy
(Updated) May 21, 2020

This document is for the purpose of setting forth general guidelines for resuming in-person worship services and other in-house ministries for the United Methodist Church located in St Paul, NE.

These guidelines are set forth by recommendations and guidelines of the Nebraska Directed Health Measures (DHM), the Great Plains Conference of the United Methodist Church (GP UMC) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

These guidelines are just steps that the church can take to ensure the health and safety of all members and visitors and are subject to periodic review, revision and change as the COVID-19 pandemic situation changes and evolves. These guidelines will be reviewed by an Ad Hoc group established from members of the church, hereon known as the Safety Team and will report to the Church Council at least monthly and updated as needed in consultation with the Church Council.

The goal of these guidelines is to provide, as safe and as healthy as possible, a way for the church to resume its ministries and in-person worship. The safety and the health of those coming to the church for gatherings, worship and other ministries, will take priority. These guidelines, when strictly followed and enacted, will help reduce the church's liability in the event anyone becomes infected.

Re-Entry to in-person worship.

The St Paul, NE. UMC will remain online through the end of May with a re-entry date following the established phases of re-entry below. These listed phases are subject to change as deemed necessary by the Safety Team.

Information about when in-person worship will resume will need to be disseminated through email, Facebook, website and by word of mouth. Encouragement is given to those who are 60 and above and in vulnerable groups to continue to worship online.

Guidelines for in-person worship to be considered and/or followed as determined as the COVID-19 pandemic continues and changes:

1. All persons coming to worship must wear a mask.
2. Individuals and family groups must maintain a six-foot distance between other individuals and family groups.
3. No Passing of the Peace/Time of Greeting with a hug or handshake can take place during, before or after worship.
4. No offering plates will be distributed by ushers and passed among the congregants. Instead an offering plate will be located just inside the main entrance (double doors) on a table for folks to place their offering in as they enter worship.
5. Communion servers will need to wear gloves and masks. Gloved and masked ushers will lead congregants row by row to come forward to receive the elements; people will need to maintain a 6 foot distance as they come forward in a single line; servers will hand a piece of bread to the congregants being sure not to touch hands; juice will be served in small individual cups by the communion server and handed to the congregants, being sure not to touch hands.

Measures to be taken for safety and over all better health of all.

1. A Safety Team has been developed from church members – two of which are health care workers. The Safety Team will look into implementation of a cleaning team responsible for cleaning and disinfecting/sanitizing all surfaces after a worship service that have or have had the potential to be touched using a product known for killing the coronavirus. This list of surfaces include but are not limited to all entrance doors, door handles, grab bars, pews, offering plates, communion serving altar ware, microphones used and/or held, bathroom doorknobs and surfaces, tables and chairs in the fellowship hall if used. Please note: It is virtually impossible to sanitize pew cushions or padded chairs adequately, so cushions should be removed. The Safety Team will also need to a.) determine how many persons can be seated with a minimum of 6 feet between persons (side to side and front to back). b.) Determine how many services the church will need to have to accommodate everyone. c.) Determine overflow space in the fellowship hall for persons to view and hear the service maintaining a six-foot distance between individuals and family groups.
2. All pew Bibles, hymnals, prayer books, paper, and pencils including pew pads, if possible, shall be removed from the sanctuary. With the use of monitors/screens in the sanctuary, no bulletins will be printed.
3. Attendance will be recorded by the Ushers. No passing of the registration pads. Ushers will count and record worship attendance and will be encouraged to get the name and information from a visitor.
4. No singing.
5. Suspend use of the nursery because of the difficulty of sanitizing all surfaces and items.
6. Access to other areas of the church, other than the Sanctuary and closest bathrooms, will be restricted. If possible, prop doors open to avoid unnecessary contact with door handles.

Cont'd onto next page.....

....Cont'd from previous page

7. Entrance will be limited to the main front doors only. The entrance doors will need to be either propped open, or one Greeter wearing gloves and mask to open the door for each arriving congregant. Tables will be set up to guide flow into the main sanctuary doors. People will be asked to exit the building directly from the sanctuary main doors as directed by an Usher dismissing row by row, allowing for 10 seconds between people. Family groups can exit together. Ushers/Greeters will open and hold open and/or prop open doors for persons to exit. No congregating in the foyer, hallways, or fellowship hall before or after worship. No coffee time/fellowship time before and after worship will be allowed.

Responsibility of the church.

1. Provide gloves, masks, and hand sanitizer for workers and volunteers.
2. Require workers and volunteers to use hand sanitizer or wash their hands often.
3. Remind workers and volunteers to avoid touching their eyes, nose or mouth and to cover coughing and sneezing with a Kleenex which is subsequently thrown away.
4. Require workers and volunteers to remain at least 6 feet away from each other and congregants.
5. Provide proper disposable gloves to workers and volunteers for cleaning and disinfecting surfaces.
If reusable gloves are used for cleaning, they should be used for cleaning purposes only and used by the same person only.
6. Do not allow persons to bring in outside food or share food, dishes or utensils.
7. Take extra precaution assigning duties for persons at higher risk.
8. Advise any at risk person to stay home.

Phases for implementation of a re-entry plan.

These phases of re-entry are dependent upon DHM and the CDC guidelines at the time of implementation and the continued risk threat of Howard/Hall Co.

Phase 1.

June 1, 2020

1. Resume regular office hours. Visitors to the office must wear a mask.
2. All visitors to the office will need to sign a sign-in sheet by the entrance door to keep record of who came to the office. Signage placed in the foyer and hallways reminding persons to maintain a six-foot distance between themselves and others.

Phase 2.

June 21, 2020

1. Resume in-person worship following the guidelines set forth above. Highly encourage vulnerable populations to continue worshipping on-line and add signage to the door stating persons are welcome to participate in worship but do so at their own risk of contracting COVID-19.
2. Resume in-person meetings if this is determined to be a better option than continuing Zoom meetings. Zoom should be offered as an alternative for those who are not comfortable with gathering. No more than 10 people should gather together, and the six-foot distance rule should be followed.
3. Resume weddings and funerals following the guidelines set forth above. Highly encourage vulnerable populations to participate on-line.

Phase 3.

Date TBD (late summer/early fall)

1. Ease restrictions listed above on in-person worship, fellowship times and in-house gatherings.
2. Resume choir and congregational singing during worship.
3. Resume Sunday school, Bible studies, Youth Group.
4. Allow the church to be used by outside groups following the guidelines set at that time.

Phase 4.

Date TBD

1. Resume all ministries, swing wide the doors and celebrate God's goodness.



We are starting a new prayer request list. If you would like your name added to this list, please let the church office know.

Thank you



Note: We can only publish prayer concerns with the permission of the people involved. Also, Pastor Russ often does not find out about hospitalizations. HIPPA regulations do not allow the hospital to call unless they are requested to do so. Please give him a call (Church 754-4247). if you or someone you know is in the hospital or desires a call. Thank you for your help.

Fellowship, Adult Bible Study, Children's Sunday School, Youth Group or Come and Go coffee time have been canceled until further notice.

Sunday

Worship time 10:00 a.m.

Fellowship 9:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Adult Bible Study
Sunday morning 9:00 am

Children's Education
Sunday School 11:00 am.
*New time –after Worship

Youth Group
Wednesday evenings 6:30 pm during school year

Thursday

Come 'n Go Coffee 10:00-11:00 a.m.



CIRCLE MEETINGS

No Circle Meetings this month - JULY

Circle meetings have been canceled until further notice



Epworth Village Needs:

Monetary gifts
Gift Cards to Walmart, Walgreens
Bosselman's or Casey's gas purchase cards
Menard's gift cards for maintenance needs
Reams of plain white copy paper
Antibacterial soap, hand pump or refillables
Alcohol-free hand sanitizer
Hand lotion-unscented
Generic hygiene products-hair products, body wash, feminine hygiene products
Infant-toddler hygiene products
Infant-toddler baby wipes and disposable diapers
Paper towels, toilet tissue, napkins
Medium laundry baskets
Large duffel bags for foster care belongings
Basic cleaning supplies for a home
Letter/brochure folding machine
Manila folders and label stickers

MISSION STATEMENT

'Making and Nurturing Disciples'

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF ST. PAUL



United Methodist Church
1320 Baxter Street
St. Paul, NE 68873
308-754-4247
stpaulneumc@gmail.com

JULY

