

Office hours
Tues-Fri
9am –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
Darwin Lee
Jared Rasmussen

Finance
Dave Harrington

Staff/Parish Relations
Bob Rasmussen

Worship
Darla Voigt

Mission-Outreach
Mary Ann Rickertsen

UMM
Tom Knutson

UWF
Charlene Craig
Carol Phillips

Education
Nancy Harrington

Auditor
Larry Hurlburt

United Methodist Church Newsletter



FEBRUARY

2023



stpaulneunitedmethodistchurch.com

February 2023 Newsletter- The month of Cleansing

February comes from the Latin word februa, which means “to cleanse.” The month was named after the Roman feast Februalia, which was a month-long festival of purification and atonement that took place around the month of February. It is therefore fitting that Ash Wednesday falls into the month of February this year. So, on February the 22nd, we will gather in the evening at 6:30 pm to worship and to come honestly to God in repentance. All those towering walls that would obscure our real self will be let down. We will invite the Holy Spirit to purge our souls and make us whole.

The notion of Ash Wednesday can be found in the words of Prophet Joel where he says, “Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.” ¹³ Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity. ¹⁴ Who knows? He may turn and relent and leave behind a blessing...”. God invites his people to examine their hearts and return to him with sincerity.

On Ash Wednesday we are marked on our foreheads with ashes and the pastor utters the words, “you are dust and to dust you will return”. This phrase comes from God’s response to Adam (Genesis 3:19) when he sinned. God reminded Adam of the effects of what he had done. He had to die and return to dust. It was devastating, especially because Adam specifically, and humans in general had no ability to rescue themselves from this imminent death, only God could do that for them. Lent then is a time when human beings acknowledge this fact. It is when believers say; we realize our error, we are turning back to God in repentance. We turn around from the direction we were going to a godward direction from now henceforth.

Ash Wednesday will also usher the beginning of the lent season where we will be walking through the spiritual disciplines and challenge ourselves to practice them as we draw closer to God. Disciplines such as fasting, solitude, repentance, helping the poor, forgiveness, and Bible reading. We will remind ourselves that without God at work in our lives we are not good people, and we are prone to anger, wrath, malice, slander, selfishness, pride, and other God-dishonoring behaviors. N. T Wright reminds us that “Lent is a time for discipline, for confession, for honesty, not because God is mean or fault-finding or finger-pointing but because he wants us to know the joy of being cleaned out, ready for all the good things he now has in store.” It is like getting ready for a big event. We clean up, we exfoliate, we get a haircut, or a nice hair do. We get ready. Lent is a getting ready for the big celebration at Easter.

Our Lent study this year will be done in-person on Wednesday evenings from 6.30-7.30 PM. It is titled Jesus in the Wild: Lessons on calling for Life in the World. Make sure to register yourself so we can get the needed books to facilitate the study. I can’t wait to get into the challenge of drawing closer to God, getting all cleaned up, and being made ready to celebrate the greatest victory in life at Easter. Happy cleansing month!

FEBRUARY

1st	Prayer Group 11am Youth group 6:15pm Young Family's Group 6:30pm Choir 7:30pm	15th	Prayer Group 11am Youth group 6:15pm Choir 7:30pm
5th	Adult Sunday School 9am Worship 10am Children's Sunday School— after worship	18th	UMC helps at Food Pantry 9-11am
7th	Bible Study with Ursula 1pm	19th	Adult Sunday School 9am Worship 10am Children's Sunday School— after worship
8th	Soup Supper at UMC— 5-7pm Choir 7:30pm	22nd	Youth Group meal: 6:00pm Ash Wednesday— Worship at 6:30pm Choir 7:30pm
12th	Adult Sunday School 9am Worship 10am Children's Sunday School— after worship	26th	Adult Sunday School 9am Worship 10am Meeting directly following service— Members VOTE Children's Sunday School— after worship
14th	UWF meeting 1:30pm	27th	Ministerial Association presents talk on Cyber Security here at UMC— FREE event meal @5:30 and 6pm presentation

January Attendance

January 1st:	37 In-person 124 Views/FB
January 8th:	68 In-person 109 Views/FB
January 15th:	60 In-person 127 views/FB
January 22nd:	65 In-person 130 views/FB
January 29th:	42 In-person 137 views/FB

January Offering Totals

January 1st:	\$3,210
January 8th:	\$1,392
January 15th:	\$4,491
January 22nd:	\$2,865
January 29th:	\$703



Soup Supper & Bake Sale

United Methodist Church

1320 Baxter Street

St. Paul, Nebraska 68873

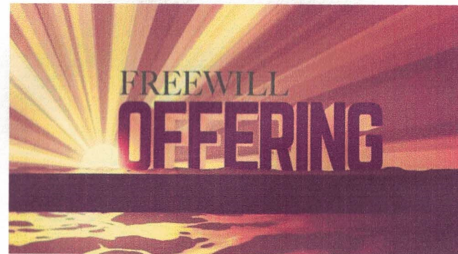
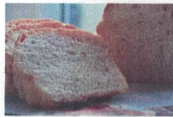
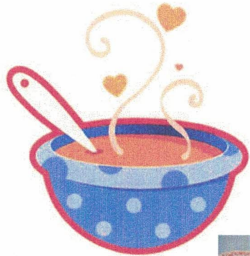


Take out orders
available!

Call: 308-754-4247

Wednesday – February 8, 2023

5:00 – 7:00 pm



Come and Join Us



Bake Sale proceeds go to
Epworth Village



2022 Christmas Program

The children's Christmas program was held on Dec. 18th during worship service.

Some of the older youth from church helped out tremendously with this
program, including Lily Sazama as Santa.

Wonderful job done by the kids and youth leaders!





Feb 1	Robyn Rasmussen	Feb 15	Mark Starkey
Feb 2	Logan Berggren	Feb 17	Rose Ross
Feb 2	Addie Ruzicka	Feb 19	Doug Voigt
Feb 11	Marlene Kremlacek	Feb 27	James Hansen
Feb 13	Ryan Rasmussen		

Happy Anniversary

Feb. 4	Paul & Toni Bentz
Feb. 25	Russell & Becky Schwenk

Attention all members of St. Paul United Methodist Church:

A meeting has been set on Sunday, February 26th, 2023 directly following worship service in which a very important vote will be done.

This is in regards to the current situation within UMC regarding the issues of human sexuality.

This vote will be done by registered UMC members present on this day.

Please feel free to look at these two websites for more information:

<https://www.greatplainsumc.org>

<https://globalmethodist.org>



February is FOOD PANTRY Month for UMC!



Please bring in food, paper items, etc. into the church the month of February for the Howard Greeley Food Pantry. Please see list below for ideas on what you can donate. We appreciate your generosity!

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. **February 18th** is the next work date. Precautions are taken to insure the health and protection of both the worker and the consumer.

Thank you, Theda Van Horn



Food Pantry hours

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

February is the month for United Methodist Church to donate to the Food Pantry.

Food Pantry

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.

Hamburger Helper	Pudding
Brownie mixes	Jello
Cookies	Canned fruit- any kind
Bar Soap	Cereal
Pork and Beans	Frosting
Crackers(Salad & Soup)	Dish Soap
Laundry Soap	Shampoo/Conditioner
Paper Towels	Toilet Tissue
Flour	Ketchup/Mustard
Juice-any kind	Pie Crusts
Mayo	Pancake Mix/Syrup
Spaghetti Sauce	Toothbrushes/Toothpaste
Salad Dressings(Ranch/Dorothy Lynch)	

Recent Baptisms

The church has been busy with baptisms in the past few months!
Glory to God!

Pictured at right:

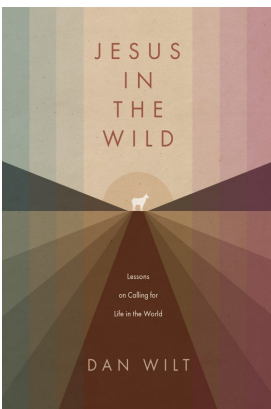
Pastor Susan Murithi baptizing Tatum Jo Syring on Dec. 18th as parents Levi Syring and Rebecca Bentz look on.



Pictured at left:

Rusty and Abby Fuller with Dash Fuller. Dash was baptized by Pastor Susan on Jan. 8th, 2023 (in center of photo). They are pictured here along with their family and sponsors.

LENT STUDY



This year's Lenten Study will begin on Wednesday, March 1st. It will be held here at the church from 6:30-7:30pm and will be led by Pastor Susan. This study will be based on a book, *Jesus in the Wild* by Dan Wilt. In *Jesus in the Wild* you'll take a forty-day journey into the heart of one of the most unusual, and often most misunderstood, stories in the Gospel accounts. In this encounter, following his baptism in the Jordan and before the inauguration of his ministry, Jesus is alone with the adversary—the one whose works he had come to destroy (1 John 3:8). He faces three tests, or “temptations”—all aimed at unseating him from his identity, his belovedness, and his purpose as the Son of God.

There is a sign up sheet in the Narthex if interested in joining this study.

Please sign up or let the church office know so that a book can be ordered for you.

United Women of Faith

United Women of Faith met January 10th, 2023 at the church. Charlene Craig opened the meeting. Mary Ann Rickertsen gave the devotions on ways we can improve our relationship with God closing with prayer.

Everyone repeated the UWF purpose.

Mary Ann Rickertsen read the minutes of the November meeting. They were approved as read.

The treasurers report showed a balance of \$866.13.

Mary Ann Rickertsen made a motion to approve the end of year donations discussed earlier. Theda Van Horn seconded. Carried. Thank yous from Howard/Greely County Food Pantry, Hope Harbor and Salvation Army were read.

Old Business: Assure Fundraiser project was a success and raised \$1166.00. Darla Voigt made a motion to change the name of our unit from United Methodist Women to United Women of Faith. Dorthea Fairbanks seconded. Carried. Darla Voigt thanked everyone that helped put the Christmas decorations up and take them down. Carol Phillips thanked everyone that helped with the Christmas Cheer project. All Faiths Christmas luncheon had 89 people attending. Darla Voigt reported that the landscape project is on hold until better weather.

New Business: The Officers report has been sent to the district. A suggestion was given for a report on Midwest Mission DC. Dorthea Fairbanks will be attending in May. World Day of Prayer will be March 3rd at Christ Lutheran Church. Prairie Rivers District spring meeting will be April 1st at Grand Island Trinity Methodist Church. Next meeting will be February 14th at 1:30. Lesson: Darla Voigt, Devotions: Theda Van Horn, Lunch: Mary Ann Rickertsen. Meeting Adjourned.

Charlene Craig gave the lesson Overcoming our Fears. Sharing our diverse gifts to answer God's calling.

Lunch was served by Ursula Sorlie.

-UWF Secretary



United Women in Faith (UMW)

The next meeting of the UWF will be on

February 14th at

1:30 pm in the church
fellowship hall.

All ladies are welcome!



Assure Baby Shower

On November 13th the ladies of UWF had a 'baby shower' for the Assure Women's Center in Omaha, NE.

In addition to the numerous items such as diapers, wipes, and a highchair, many hand-made items were donated including blankets and hats. An offering of \$1166 was given also. Following service they had cake and refreshments. Special thank you to DeEtte Lukasiewicz and the ladies of UWF for pulling this all together!



Picture of Pastor Susan blessing the donated items during worship service given to Assure

A Joyous Christmas Luncheon

On Wednesday, December 7, 2022, 89 people attended a joyous All Faiths Christmas Luncheon hosted by UWF and the Methodist Church. Everyone enjoyed good visiting, seeing familiar faces from other churches, a delicious lunch and several door prizes.

The day's highlight was musical performances by two groups:

Our four high school choir members (Lily Sazama, Audrey Anderson, Addie Ruzicka, Addie Brown), sang Christmas carols and

Audrey sang a solo titled "Greensleeves" which she played on the keyboard.

Our own Pastor Susan Murithi and family consisting of husband Pastor Geoffrey and daughters Faith and Neema explained some of their favorite Christmas customs from Kenya.

Pastor Susan shared that Christmas is special because all the extended family gather together in one large home for a few days to help prepare the Christmas meal which includes goat meat. They concluded by singing in harmony a beautiful rendition of "O Holy Night"; a wonderful reminder of the true meaning of Christmas.

Luncheon guests were in awe of the musical performances and left with a sense of peace, joy and gratitude.

Many thanks and much appreciation to: our musical performers, van driver for the high school group - Tracy Anderson, our UWF members who planned/organized and cleaned, and to members of other St. Paul churches who provided food and helped with clean-up.

What great cooperation!

The 2023 All Faiths Luncheon will be hosted by Christ Lutheran Church.



Pictured above:
Murithi family performing
"O Holy Night".



Pictured above:
Quartet from UMC's Youth Group - Addie Ruzicka, Audrey Anderson, Addie Brown, and Lily Sazama

Sunday

Worship time 10:00 a.m.

Adult Bible Study

Sunday morning 9:00 am

Children's Education

Sunday School 11:00 am.

-after Worship
during the school year



United Methodist Church of St. Paul

MISSION STATEMENT

'Making and Nurturing Disciples'

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. We are in need of more people joining the prayer chain. All you have to do is pray for someone as the requests are made. **Please consider this request to help.**

Marilyn Wall	754-5100	Martha Voigt	754-4666	Jackie Cook	754-9115
Deb Wells	754-5620	Darla Voigt	750-1401	Charlene Craig	754-5503
Nancy Harrington	750-0279	Rose Ross	754-4993	Mary Ann Rickertsen	754-4038
Theda Van Horn	754-4541	Cherri & Scott Klinginsmith	750-0615	DeEtte Lukasiewicz	750-0246
Cleo Edwards	754-4853	Charlotte Rasmussen	308-863-2281	Brenda Starkey	750-7967
Nancy Rudolf OR Mike McCarthy	750-2117-Nancy (775)-830-9521 -Mike	Vanice Bahensky	754-7873	Lory Thomsen	754-4286
Ashley Meyer	308-627-2808				



Ash Wednesday service

will be February 22nd at 6:30pm here at the church.

Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent, a time when many Christians prepare for Easter by observing a period of fasting, repentance, moderation and spiritual discipline. Through the service of ashes on the first day of Lent, we come before God recognizing our humanity, repenting of our sin, and remembering who we are and who we can be. (umc.org)

Please join us!

The Howard/Greeley County Ministerial Association

Presents

The Family Enrichment Series

Tech 101: How to stay safe online

February 27, 2023 @ 6 pm

St. Paul United Methodist Church

1320 Baxter St. - St. Paul, NE

1 in 3 youth have experienced cyberbullying and 8 in 10 have experienced some form of online exploitation or harassment.

Identity Theft is the #1 fraud crime according to the FTC (Fair Trade Commission) accounting for \$5.8 B in loss and 1.4 M cases of consumer fraud in 2021.

Come learn how to keep you and your kids safe online

Our Presenters:

Ellie Pearson—Smart GEN Society—Smart Gen Society's mission is empowering smart choices in a digital world, and they do this primarily by providing preventative education to students, parents, and caregivers. Ellie is the Research and Policy Manager at Smart Gen. She received a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Montana State University. <https://www.smartgensociety.org/>

Dr. Chance Bell— is an assistant professor of Family Science at UNK; Certified Family Life Educator, and Marriage and Family Therapist. His focus is on enhancing awareness of how digital and social media influences intimate and familial relationships. He earned degrees from Brigham Young University - Idaho (B.A.), Gonzaga University (M.A.) and Florida State University (Ph.D.), and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Boston University's Albert and Jessie Danielsen Institute.

This is a **FREE** event! Meal @ 5:30pm w/drinks & snacks also provided.

If you have any questions please contact Pastor Eric Townsend

ERIC@STPAULGRACE.ORG - (402) 699-6064

HGCM



St. Paul
CARE Team



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

FEBRUARY

