

United Methodist Church

December

2025

stpaulneunitedmethodistchurch.com



Office hours
Tues-Thurs
9am –3:00 pm
754-4247

Staff

Rev. Nicole
Schwartz-Eck

Church Secretary
Carrie Hancock

Custodian
Integrated Life Choices
Call Church Office

Committee **Chairpersons:**

Admin Council
Bob Rasmussen

Board of Trustees
Doug Voigt

Finance
Dave Harrington

Staff/Parish Relations
Tom Knutson

Worship
Darla Voigt

Mission-Outreach
Mary Ann Rickertsen

UMM
Jeremiah Eck

UWF
Deb Wells

Education
Nancy Harrington

There is much to look forward to at St. Paul UMC this Advent season! In worship, our sermon series, "The Cast of Christmas," will explore the roles the prophets, angels, shepherds, Anna & Simeon, the magi, and even us, play in the unfolding of God's story in the birth of Jesus Christ and how it fits with how we prepare and celebrate Christmas now and continues through Epiphany.

On Sunday, December 7th, we will host our interactive and intergenerational Christmas program during worship. Every child in attendance—whether they join us regularly, are visiting for the first time, or fall somewhere in between—will have the opportunity to participate in a costume or role. It will be a fun morning as we celebrate the nativity together.

In addition to our Sunday services, we have several special worship opportunities:

* **Blue Christmas Service:** On Sunday, December 21st, we will hold a contemplative Blue Christmas Service. Traditionally known as "Longest Night" services, these gatherings offer healing, hope, and reflection for those experiencing grief, loneliness, and hardship during the holiday season. It's a space to bring your stress, grief, or busyness before God and worship. Many churches, like ours, will hold these services on the winter solstice, which is the longest night of the year.

* **Candlelight Christmas Eve Service:** Our Candlelight Christmas Eve service will take place on Wednesday, December 24th, at 5:30 p.m. Advent is also a time to embody Christ's love through service. Here are some ways to get involved:

* **Christmas Cheer Program:** Our church is actively participating in Christmas Cheer, with tags for families available at church and other community locations. I am deeply thankful for the way our congregation supports this incredible program.

* **Serving at the Food Pantry:** On Saturday, December 20th, from 9 to 11 a.m., we will serve at the Food Pantry.

* **Care Facility Candlelight Services:** On Sunday, December 21st, we will lead Candlelight Christmas Services at local care facilities. These services will take place at Brookfield at 1:30 p.m. and Matelyn at 2:30 p.m., ending with the lighting of candles and singing Silent Night. Please join me in sharing this meaningful time of worship with the residents.

I hope you will embrace the opportunities to worship, serve, and reflect this Advent season. I also invite all of you to join me for a time of fellowship and food at the parsonage. Our family would like to welcome you for a Christmas Open House on December 6th from 2-4. Everyone is welcome!

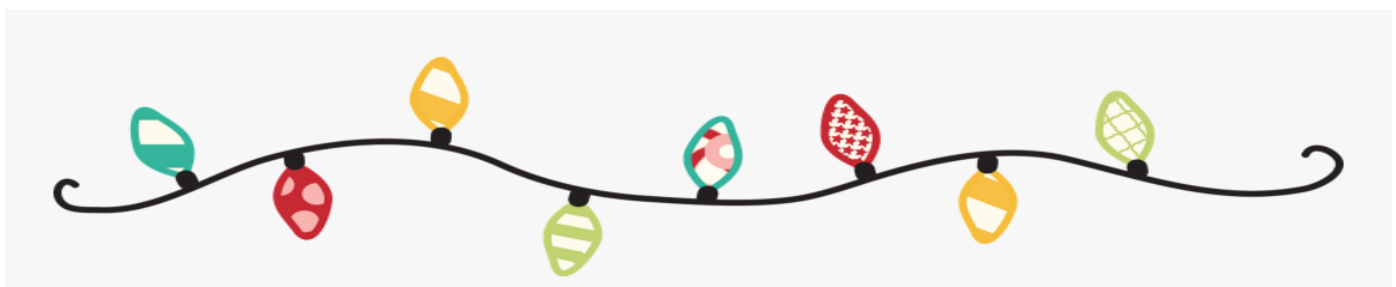
Blessings, Pastor Nicole



December



3rd	Youth Group 6:30 pm Finance meeting 7:30pm	18th	Community Office Hours– Bedhead 8am-11am
4th	Community Office Hours– Bedhead 8am-11am	19th	Christmas Cheer distribution day 11am-1pm
6th	Christmas Open House at Pastor Nicole’s house– 2-4pm	20th	UMC helps at Food Pantry 9-11am
7th	Adult Sunday School 9 am Worship 10 am Intergenerational Christmas program during Worship Communion	21st	Adult Sunday School 9 am Worship 10 am Children’s Church during Worship Nursing Home services: Brookefield 1:30pm Matelyn 2:30pm Longest Night/Blue Christmas Service 5:30pm
10th	Prayer Group 11am Youth Group 6:30 pm	24th	Christmas Eve Service 5:30pm
11th	Community Office Hours– Bedhead 8am-11am Christmas Cheer gifts due to church	25th	Christmas Day
14th	Adult Sunday School 9 am Worship 10 am Children’s Church during Worship	28th	Adult Sunday School 9 am Worship 10 am Children’s Church during Worship
16th	UWF meeting 1:30pm	31st	New Year’s Eve
17th	Youth Group 6:30 pm (Last of the Year!)		



A Note From Our Finance Chair:

Most of you have received a letter from me sharing information concerning the financial condition of our church. As mentioned in the letter, our giving has surpassed the previous years giving and a big thank you goes out to everyone of you for that. Once again we have had several unexpected expenses that always seem to put financial pressure on our church and for this reason a special fall offering was requested by me to meet our year-end obligations and to also better prepare our church for the upcoming year. Many of you responded immediately to this need and I wanted to thank you for your quick response. Others of us need to plan ahead to be able to help out the financial needs of our church, and this is very understandable. The form that was included with the mailing was designed to allow you to let us know any ways that you might be able to help our church out. Please return the form with any plans as soon as you can so that the financial committee can make plans for not only this year but for next year. If by chance we missed getting the information to you, please call the church office and Carrie will be glad to get it mailed out to you as soon as possible. As always, thank you for your continued support of our church.

Dave Harrington
308-750-5310



Hey Kids!

Now your bulletin unlocks online FUN at home.

Children's Worship Bulletins@HOME!

The **SECRET CODE** found on the front of the Children's Worship Bulletin unlocks online games that reinforce the week's message.

Step 1: Take your bulletin with a secret code home.

Step 2: Go to Games.ChildrensBulletins.com (ask an adult first ☺)

Step 3: Enter your Secret Code.

Step 4: Choose a game and PLAY!

Your children's bulletin unlocks ONLINE FUN at home.

We're excited to announce a **NEW feature** of *Children's Worship Bulletins* that will have children lining up to get their bulletin this Sunday! They'll be looking forward to the secret code on the front of the bulletin that unlocks hours of fun learning at home.

This secret code is unique to our church and allows **SAFE** and secure access to online games that reinforce the message for the week.

Children's Worship Bulletins@HOME!



Dec 2	Lory Thomsen	Dec 14	Charlene Craig
Dec 3	Don Lukasiewicz	Dec 16	Dave Harrington
Dec 4	Ursula Sorlie	Dec 19	Susan Ross
Dec 5	Brenda Starkey	Dec 22	Dawson Fox
Dec 10	Carrie Thomas	Dec 24	Jeremiah Eck
Dec 11	Damon Poss	Dec 24	Vincent Christensen
Dec 11	Zach Rasmussen	Dec 29	Deb Wells
Dec 13	Jazmyne Spilinek	Dec 30	Susan Hartley
Dec 14	Layla Thompson		



Dec 14	Mike & Liz Rawlings
Dec 21	Mark & Angela Feeney
Dec 27	Chris & Ashley Meyer
Dec 28	Arlan & Kori Johnson

United Methodist Church of St. Paul
MISSION STATEMENT
'Making and Nurturing Disciples'



Confirmation

Do you have youth that are ready for confirmation? I am working to plan Confirmation for the Winter/Spring of 2026. At least 4 students enhances the Confirmation experience, though it can be done with fewer.

Confirmation is an opportunity for youth to gather with their peers, adult leaders, and their pastor and learn about their faith. On Confirmation Sunday, those who have not previously been baptized will be baptized. Those who have previously been baptized will also make a public acceptance of their faith by answering the same questions for themselves that their parents answered at their baptism.

They will all take the same vows of membership in the United Methodist Church and the local congregation that all who join are asked.

Confirmation typically takes place at or around 6th grade, but according to denominational guidelines, readiness for confirmation is “not so much about a chronological age, but rather about one’s readiness to assume the vows of professing membership.” So, if you have a youth that, as a parent, you believe is ready for confirmation, let Pastor Nicole know and/or sign them up at the following link:

<https://fs30.formsite.com/pastornicschwartz/PFUMCCConfirmation26/index>

November Attendance

November 2nd:	60 In-person 34 Views/YouTube
November 9th:	49 In-person 16 Views/YouTube
November 16th:	50 In-person 19 Views/YouTube
November 23rd	32 In-person 54 Views/YouTube
November 30th	37 In-person 23 Views/YouTube

November Offering Totals

November 2nd:	\$2,871
November 9th:	\$3,474
November 16th:	\$2,565
November 23rd:	\$2,354
November 30th:	Not yet deposited



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	750-4319	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 Pearson	308-219-0060
Theda Van Horn	754-4541	Cherri & Scott Klinginsmith	750-0615	Brenda Starkey	750-7967
Cleo Edwards	754-4853	Charlotte Rasmussen	308-968-3375	Becky Schwenk	750-4590
Nancy OR Mike McCarthy	750-2117-Nancy (775)-830-9521 -Mike	Susan Hartley	(641)-485-7349	Lory Thomsen	754-4286
Sheila Studley	750-6973	Robyn Dvoracek	754-8468		

Christmas Cheer Update



A month ago, in our first article, it seemed like Christmas and Christmas Cheer Distribution Day were a long ways away. And now, here we are, less than a month away. Our committee has been busy getting things organized for the 21 families.



including 53 children. The gift tags were made available to our members on November 23rd. They probably are all taken by the time of this article but there are other ways you can help. We are still taking monetary donations, either here at the church or at Citizens Bank. Also we can still use some stocking hats, mittens, gloves and socks. We try to make sure each family member receives these items. We need all sizes, particularly the larger sizes for teenage boys and adult men.

Thank you for all you have done to make this a Merry Christmas for those that have less than us. Merry Christmas and God's Blessings to you!

-Christmas Cheer Committee



Did you know.....

The UWF is still collecting
Best Choice
brand labels (bar codes)?

These are sent in for reimbursement after a certain amount has been reached. This helps the UWF in their ministry throughout the year. Please consider cutting out and donating labels for this cause. There is a basket in the Narthex of the church to place these.

The UWF ladies thank you!

Prayer Group

Our prayer group meets twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday at 11am to pray over the prayer requests from Sunday, the teacher prayer list, and other prayer requests we receive. We may use different prayer practices as we do this. We would love to have you join us!

United Women of Faith

Meeting minutes
November 18th, 2025

The meeting was called to order by Deb Wells at 1:30 pm. Those in attendance were Deb, Charlene, Carol, Pam, Darla, Theda, Mary Ann and daughter, Cheryl, Pastor Nicole, Jackie, Ursula and Dorthea.

Prayer by Charlene.

Prayer concerns: Snows, Ryker, Shelly, Charlene's sister Ruby, Pastor's Uncle Mark and all those dealing with health, financial and other issues of concern.

The Purpose was recited by all.

Minutes of the previous October meeting read and approved.

Treasurer's Report by Jackie –Previous balance \$1,119.12, Current balance \$927.12.
\$250.00 check sent to Epworth Village.

Motion made by Charlene to donate \$150.00 to Christmas Cheer Fund. Seconded by Ursula and approved by all. Jackie is working on the Financial report and Dedicated light for Marian Odabasi.

Correspondence: 2 more cards have been sent and one will be sent to the Snows.

Old business: All Faith Christmas Luncheon Dec. 3rd @ 12:00pm at the Catholic Church, 2 people will help set up and 2 people will help clean up from UWF. Darla states the price for ham is \$4.69 per lb. at the St. Paul Market. Will plan to buy for 100 attendees.

New business: none

Pastor Nicole shares that it is the start of Advent. She and family will be hosting a Christmas Open House Dec. 6th from 2-4pm for the congregation. Christmas Eve service is at 5:30pm. *Once Upon a Manger:* Kids Christmas Play on Dec. 7th.

The Thank Offering and Food Pantry donations were blessed.

Today's Lesson given by Charlene– the meaning and the purpose of Chrismons. The fixing of the broken and faded Chrismons was done.

Lunch was served by Ursula.

Next meeting is December 16th at 1:30pm with Devotions by Charlene, There will be a Christmas trivia and a Lunch with members bringing whatever delicious food they wish.

Respectfully submitted,
Ursula Sorlie



United Women in Faith (UMW)

The next meeting of the
UWF will be on
December 16th at 1:30pm.
All ladies are welcome!



A Note from United Women of Faith:

Dear Church Family,

We want to take a moment to express our heartfelt thanks to each of you who faithfully serve during funeral meals. Whether it is preparing salads and desserts, serving families and guests, or staying to help with the cleanup, your kindness shines in these acts of love. Your willingness to step in when called brings comfort and peace to grieving families and is a true testimony of Christ's compassion at work.

If you are willing to serve in some way and haven't recently updated your contact information, please be sure to share your current phone number with Carrie in the church office. This helps us reach you quickly when needs arise.



With gratitude,
United Women of Faith Workgroup

Teacher's Prayers

At St. Paul United Methodist Church, we have made a commitment to our local schools.

As we have done in the past, we will start our weekly prayers for the teachers and school staff for the school year.

If you know of teachers from our congregation that teach at other districts or substitute teachers that would not be listed on the St. Paul district website, please let Pastor Nicole or the church office know so we can add them to our teacher prayers. Thank You!

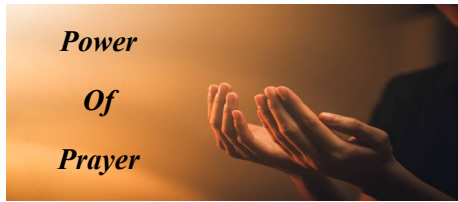
Each Sunday, we will begin praying for the following teachers:

Dec 7- Kim Schulte, Adam Patrick, Terri Townsend, Ryan Camden, Nancy Harrington, Marcia Kauk, Deb Wells, Mitzi Randall

Dec 14 – Jason Meinecke, Dan Scheer, Adam Rensch, Marty Mrkvicka, Curt Dubas, Philip Thede



Churches Praying for Churches



Every year each church receives a list of UMC churches to pray over each week. Please join us in lifting these churches up in prayer this month.

Dec 7th— Superior First

Dec 14th— York First

Dec 21st— All our Pastors

Dec 28th— All our Churches

Sunday



Worship time
10:00 a.m.

Adult Bible Study

Sunday morning 9:00 am

Children's Education

Children's Church
-during Worship service



FOOD PANTRY



Please consider donating items for the Howard Greeley 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.

Fresh Meats	Pork & Beans
Brownie mixes	Pudding
Jelly	Syrup
Cookies	Shampoo/Conditioner
Cereal	Spaghetti sauce
Crackers (Salad & Soup)	Toilet paper
Dish soap	Toothpaste
Flour	Canned fruit
Hamburger Helper	Salad Dressing- (Ranch, Dorothy Lynch)
Jello	Frosting/Cake Mixes
Ketchup/Mustard	Mayo
Laundry soap-small bottles	Pancake mix

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.

December 20th 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	Tuesday
9:00-11:00 am	4:00-6:00 pm

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



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

