



# THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL

December 2018

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## Ponderings From The Pastor

### ad·vent

/ 'ad·vent/ ◀

*noun*

the arrival of a notable person, thing, or event.  
"the advent of television"

*synonyms:* arrival, appearance, emergence, materialization, occurrence, dawn, birth, rise, development; approach, coming  
"the advent of a new school year"

- the first season of the Christian church year, leading up to Christmas and including the four preceding Sundays.  
noun: **Advent**

- **CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY**  
the coming or second coming of Christ.  
noun: **Advent**

### ARE YOU READY?



IF YOU LOOK UP the word "*advent*" online or in a print dictionary, you will find something like that above. Note the several synonyms for *advent*, especially "dawn"... "rise"... "birth"... "approach"... "emergence."

These are all very fitting themes for our church right now!...and not just because we are entering the annual season of Advent on the church calendar (see the second definition above). As that special season arrives for Christians around the world this year, here at St. Paul UCC we're preparing for *another* kind of advent, too...one more in line with the third definition above (the one under "Christian Theology"), where it says "the coming or second coming of Jesus." I am speaking of course about NEW BEGINNINGS. Follow me here as I ponder...

ON THE CALENDAR, the season of **Advent** ends at midnight on December 24. That's when the season of **Christmas** begins, which lasts until January 6, which is the day ("feast") of **Epiphany** and starts a season of the same name. Epiphany then lasts until Ash Wednesday (the first day of Lent—March 6 in 2019). Think about the meanings and the progression of these seasons, and how they build upon one another. They are not part of the Christian "liturgical" calendar just by accident, nor is the annually-consistent order of their appearing!...

- **ADVENT** is a season of waiting and preparing, of getting ready and priming ourselves for what is coming; it is a time of growing anticipation and expectation...it is a "pregnant" time;
- **CHRISTMAS** is the next step, the season of receiving, acknowledging, and giving thanks for what—WHO—has finally arrived...the birth, the emergence, the dawn—the nativity—of Jesus;
- Finally, **EPIPHANY** is the season when we remember and celebrate *HOW* that birth, that emergence, that dawn was *made known* to the whole world. Remember, for years *no one* knew who the son of Mary and Joseph was except a prophet or two, a few shepherds, and maybe some wise guys from Persia!

(See Next Page)

For an electronic  
version of  
**THE EPISTLE**,  
please visit our  
website at:  
[www.stpaulnch.com](http://www.stpaulnch.com)

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### *Worship Opportunities* Sundays:

**9:50 AM** Traditional  
Worship in Sanctuary  
Sunday School

## Ponderings From The Pastor (continued)

Advent-Christmas-Epiphany, though they are *separate* seasons, really *aren't*. They are one thing, one inter-related story, revealed and developed and celebrated in stages. It is an *unfolding*, which begins in excitement and hope (and a lot of uncertainty), proceeds through struggle, trial, and labor pain, then finally emerges in brilliant light, the voice of God, the descent of the Holy Spirit...and the birth of transforming reality/Holy Love which is still at work, still challenging, still giving birth!

So what does all this have to do with NEW BEGINNINGS? And why is this "advent" different? It's because NEW BEGINNINGS *as a process so closely parallels* this mystical, marvelous story, which we think we know so well!

There is the waiting and the anticipation, the uncertainty (including a long period of deciding whether to even undertake the process)...then there was the initial "annunciation" (announcement) and first tentative steps...then the preparation and priming (training our leaders and equipping ourselves for a spiritual task/journey)...then the "journey to Bethlehem" itself (our kick-off and the house groups which begin in January). This will be followed by the "nativity scene"—when we "give birth" (not without the incumbent labor pains) to NEW LIFE...a new God-inspired trajectory and ministry focus—a new PURPOSE and MISSION—which we can't yet see, which may seem and sound scary and be hard to handle (like a new fussy baby)...for which we **HAVE TO TRUST GOD** to bring into being. And as this new thing is born, it may come (most likely *will* come) to the least, the marginal, the "nobodies"...to the outsider, to strangers, to unexpected people—like shepherds, innkeepers, and "foreigners" (like the Magi).

Therefore, as Advent approaches, and as SPUCC's special "advent season" of NEW BEGINNINGS ramps up, here is an Advent question for all of us...

**ARE YOU READY?...**

- Ready to TRUST GOD in a whole new way...perhaps even like *never* before?
- Ready to LET GO of the past...at least enough to MAKE ROOM for the future?
- Ready to SEE and WONDER at things you may have never seen before (like shepherds seeing choirs of singing angels, and baby kings in feed troughs)?
- Ready to GO TO NEW DESTINATIONS you've never been to, and not sure how you will get there when we start out (like Mary and Joseph on their way to Bethlehem, and then to Egypt)?
- Ready to HEAR God's PROFOUND and CHALLENGING aspirations for transforming a self-centered world in love—and to be made a living, integral part/player in those aspirations (like Elizabeth and Mary)?
- Ready to stop saying "NO!" and "We've NEVER done it that way before!" (like King Herod and all the people who were afraid alongside of him, fearful of what God was doing)?
- Ready to give up preconceived notions and prejudices, and to dream (like Zechariah and Joseph)?

**ARE YOU READY** to take your place and do your part in discerning St. Paul's destiny? We need *everyone* who is able to pray, to attend the necessary gatherings, to PRAY, to participate in the house group meetings, to PRAY, to study scripture together and to talk freely and openly about what our reality is NOW...and be willing to dream about what God can and will do to help us give birth to a NEW REALITY, and a vital future. And did I mention...to PRAY?

**ARE YOU READY** for some new nativity action?

**ARE YOU READY** for a miraculous, unexpected, and unlikely new "birth," for an emerging "dawn" of God's impractical, unpredictable, untamable, irrational, incarnational LOVE...through YOU and through St. Paul UCC?

I don't know about you...but as scary as it might be, I am MORE than ready. I want to be able, SOON, to join my voice with choirs of praising angels, and marvel with my eyes at wondrous sights with lowly shepherds and majestic leaders, and cry out with hopes met beyond wildest dreams like old prophets in the Temple, and to ponder in my heart, like Mary, all the wondrous power and compassion of God!!...and what they can and will do!!...

..... **WHEN WE ARE READY.**

*All Peace And Love!*  
*Pastor Barry*

# *In Loving Memory*

## GIFTS TO THE CHURCH

**In Memory of Mike Mathauer**

Ellie Reed

**IN Memory of Howard Heineke**

Robert & Kathryn Mackintosh

Elaine Sloan

## News and Updates Council News

The next Council meeting is Monday,  
January 21, 2019 7:00 PM.

We have many things going on in the church at this time. We are always striving to make St. Paul a place you can definitely call YOUR church HOME, If you find that you have questions or concerns in a particular area of the building or within a committee, please be sure to talk with the chairman of the committee with your question or concern. Here is the list of all members of the Church Council.

President - Judith Lewis-Combs - 729-3152  
Secretary - Nancy Klusmeier - 923-1369  
Treasurer - Anne Zimmer - 513-260-0573  
Nurture Team - Linda Woods - 513-289-5335  
Welcome Team - Diane Banker - 522-3318  
Endowment - Jan Apro - 931-2417

Vice President - Jan Apro - 931-2417  
Finance - Donna Hodson - 904-333-9422  
Care Team - Margie Fassnacht - 574-0354  
Facilities - Rick Davis - 574-8345  
Worship Team - Vicki Ritz - 741-7868  
Sr. Minister - 513-317-8146

Office Administrator - Office - Anne Zimmer - 931-2205

### JANUARY EPISTLE DEADLINE

The Epistle deadline for the January edition is Wednesday, December 19, 2018. Please submit the information either by email to Anne or drop it in the Epistle box in the main office. There is also a folder in the blue mailbox outside the office.



### PLEASE HELP US with LIGHTS AND DOORS

On several occurrences lately, we have found an outside door unlocked. Please be sure to check doors before you leave, especially if you are the last one out.

Please do your diligence to make sure that the lights are off in the building when you leave.



### **HELPING SUPPORT ANGEL TREE LOCAL NURSING HOME**

As we enter the Christmas season this year, St. Paul is blessed to have the opportunity to work with a local nursing home, CareCore at Lakeridge, supporting their Angel Tree project. The Angel Tree project helps assure that each resident at the nursing home has a few much needed gift items under the Christmas Tree at their annual Christmas Party. Each resident has a "wish list" of 4-6 items that include things like pull on pants, shirts, socks with non-slip grips, slippers, magazines, etc. It is not necessary to purchase all items on the list.

Several teams on our church council and groups within the church have signed up to sponsor a resident's list. If you or your family would like to help with this project, please contact Linda Woods at 513-289-5335 for more information.

All items for the wish lists must be delivered to St. Paul by Sunday, December 16 so that we can get them delivered to the nursing home by December 18th.

Thank you and many blessings for your support of this project during the season of giving.

Linda Woods  
Nurture Team  
Chairman



### **HOMEMADE BAKED GOODS NEEDED**

The Welcome Team is reaching out to the community this year for Christmas. Diane and her team are putting together Cookie Platters to take to the teachers and staff of NCH Schools, The NCH Maintenance Department, the NCH Police Department, and the NCH Fire Department.



Would you please help provide homemade cookies so that they can fill the platters with some baked goodies? We would like to have them here at the church no later than Sunday, December 16th. The team will be assembling the platters for delivery early that week.

If you have any questions, please contact Diane Banker, Welcome Team Chairman, 513-522-3318.

### **SCHOOL UNIFORM PROJECT**

We are once again trying to provide uniforms for NCH Elementary School. If you are able please mark your donation as 'Uniform Project'. You can also use one of the blue pew envelopes that are for special mission projects. Place in the collection plate and it will be sure to be recorded properly.

Thank you,  
Lynn Kluesener



## Samaritan Purse ("Shoe Box") Project

The Shoe Box Team assembled 37 Shoe Boxes for Samaritan's Purse. Thank you to all who donated items for the boxes and also for those who donated money to help ship those boxes out.

The boxes have been taken to our drop off place and they will be shipped to North Carolina and then distributed from there to children around the world for Christmas.

Once again, we appreciate everyone's participation in this project!

Linda Woods,  
Nurture Team Chairman



## SHOE FUND

Many thanks to all those who brought in their empty aluminum cans and for donations to help purchase shoes for the children of NCH Elementary School.

Happy to report that Black Friday sales were a huge savings to us as we purchased 56 pairs of shoes, socks and underwear for the school for the children when they are in need.







## ST. PAUL YOUTH

The SPY would like to thank all who helped with the letters to Santa. We also want to thank the members of St. Paul for buying up our goodies at our bake sale on November 25<sup>th</sup>.

We hope everyone joins us for coffee hour on December 23<sup>rd</sup> so we can show our appreciation to our church family.

Christmas Play Rehearsals will be on December 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> during church and the play will be on December 16<sup>th</sup> during the service. If your child would like to be part of our play please contact Pastor Joan 470-2321 or call the church office 931-2205.



The Sunday School Christmas Party will be on Sunday, December 30<sup>th</sup> during the service. Games, prizes, and goodies will be served.





*Introducing Pastor Barry's...*

## **\*TRANSFORMATION CHALLENGE!\***

**TAKE A LOOK AT THIS PICTURE!** This is my son (Stephen) and I in June 2011. We are in the Seattle airport, on our way to Alaska, for a once-in-a-lifetime trip (celebrating his high school graduation—what a trip it was, ask me about it sometime!). In preparation for this trip, I had taken part in a months-long, medically-monitored VLCD (very low calorie diet) weight loss plan...and I had dropped over 80 pounds! It was without doubt one of the greatest physical transformations I have ever experienced, before or since!



**IT'S TIME FOR TRANSFORMATION AGAIN!** I am much in need of "getting off a few (or more!) pounds" again (should never have let them creep back on in the first place!). So...as our CHURCH enters into the **New Beginnings** process, I want to issue a **CHALLENGE**, in solidarity with New Beginnings' spirit of transformation...AND perhaps raise some money for a good cause! I am aiming to **LOSE AT LEAST 50 POUNDS BY EASTER** (April 21, 2019)—through regular diet and exercise, if possible—and I am challenging the congregation to JOIN ME in this transformation! **There are THREE WAYS you can take part...**

1) **JOIN ME IN A PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION OF YOUR OWN!** – losing weight, getting back into better shape, starting some kind of new healthy hobby—whatever! ANYTHING that helps you feel better physically and/or emotionally.

2) **TAKE UP A NEW SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE** – the New Beginnings process will be a PROFOUNDLY spiritual process, and we need to bathe the church and one another in prayer for the next few months. So, engage in spiritual transformation—for yourself AND for the church—by starting a new spiritual discipline (daily devotions, meditation, journaling, Bible reading, etc.). If you want some help/advice or have questions about what to try, **JUST LET ME KNOW!**

3) **SPONSOR ME!** I will have some sponsor forms available by the First Sunday in Advent (December 2—the day of our New Beginnings Kick-Off)...you can sponsor me any amount you want—PER POUND—and the money raised will go to a new project that supports our own Café **AND PROVIDES FREE COFFEE for our TROOPS** overseas: it's called **HOLY JOE'S CAFÉ**. Started in 2006 by **First Congregational UCC** in Wallingford, Connecticut, Holy Joe's Café now serves thousands of free cups of coffee every day to our troops in 70 countries throughout the world...and helps U.S. Military Chaplains offer a "café" where troops can gather, talk, and relax in stressful environments. With your sponsor donations I will buy **HOLY JOE'S coffee** for our church Café, and it will help send coffee and caring to our troops! WATCH FOR MORE DETAILS, and for the sponsor forms. **(CHECK OUT [www.holyjoes.org](http://www.holyjoes.org) for more info).**

## **ARE YOU UP FOR A CHALLENGE?? YEAH!!**

## SCOUTING NEWS

The Pack, Troop and Crew will be going Christmas Caroling The middle of the month to a local Nursing Care Facility.

After, they will come back to church to hold their own holiday gatherings with a small gift exchange with a scouting twist. All items must be scouting related.

The Troop is thinking of holding a court of Honor, just not sure at this time yet as to the date.

We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and to enjoy your holiday season with your families and friends.



## NURSERY SCHOOL

Karen Rieman  
and Staff

Every year at this time, a strange thing occurs. Instead of good behavior in case Santa's watching, often our children act out, whine, pout, etc. We just can't understand why.

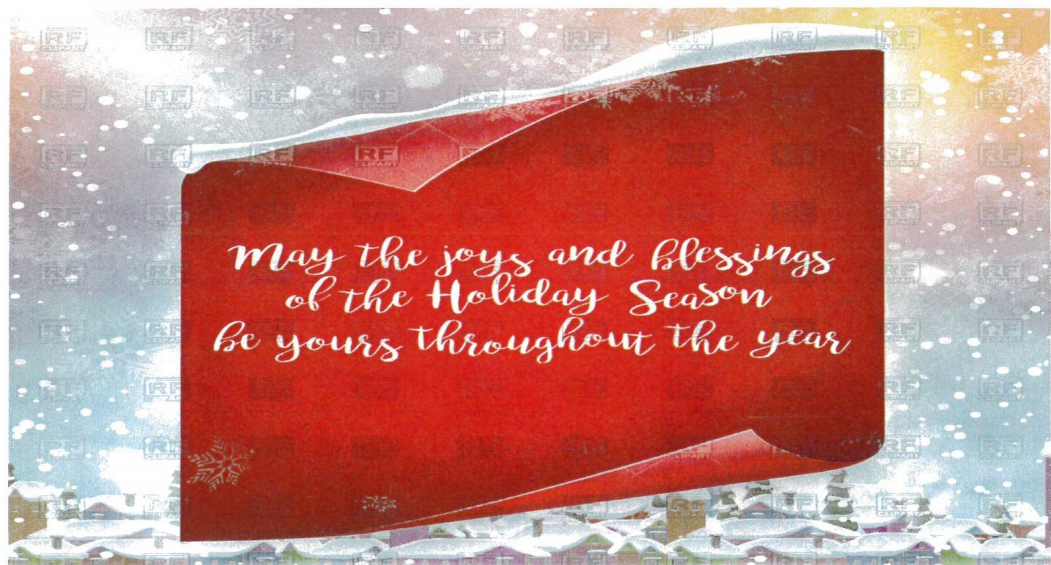
Think about it. We adults get busier – shopping, baking, wrapping, going to parties, etc. The children are left home with Dad, or Grandma, or sitters. We won't tell them what's in the bag. When baking we want them out of the way. Even pets act out with all the commotion that the holidays bring.

How can we make things better? By giving our children the thing they want most – our time and attention. Let them shop for Grandma with you. Pick two choices and let your child decide which one to get. Let your child earn money doing a few chores and go shopping at the dollar store to buy gifts for special people. Let them wrap it (or at least help). When baking cookies, set aside enough dough to let them help you with one cookie sheet's worth. They can give the cookies as a gift, or share them with the family.

In case you haven't noticed, this also teaches them to think of others, not just me, me, me. We tell the children Santa can't take the toys to poor children, because he has to take their clothes and food that they desperately need. If we clean out our toys and give some away, we're helping Santa!

We rotate toys at school every three weeks, so the children don't get bored. This is good to do at home, too. Certain things (board games, etc.) need a lot of adult supervision or even participation. Save those to pull out on a rainy day. If they receive a gift they're just not into yet, put it up and when the time is right you can get it out again.

We really try to stress giving to others rather than "What do you want?" After all, Christmas is about God sending to Earth the greatest gift of all – his son Jesus. Have a blessed holiday season!







12/3	Joshua Jensen	12/16	Herman Schleuter	12/27	Arthur Blum
12/6	Melissa Holmes	12/17	Charlotte McCauley		Maribeth Jensen
	Debra Nungester	12/18	Janet Lerch	12/29	Lois Bates
12/7	Daniel Lommer		Renee Smith		Geoffrey Blum
12/9	Sara McIlhaney	12/20	Cheryl Bartholomew		Louise Pitcher
12/11	Steve Rogers	12/21	Isabel Kelsey	12/30	Vickie Bryant
	Trecy Webb	12/23	Terry DuPriest		Brian Tobergta
12/14	Lynda Stagman	12/26	Jesse McIlhaney	12/31	Bradley Robinson
12/15	Carol Jensen				Matthew Yung



1/3	Sharon Wagner	1/17	Joseph Allen	1/28	Kaleb Lewis
1/7	James Mueller	1/18	Roy Push	1/29	Amber King
1/10	Billy Page	1/25	Rick Davis	1/30	Paul Kluesener
1/11	Nola Apro	1/26	Helen Mason	1/30	Riley Overholts
1/12	Deena Robinson	1/26	Charles Rogge	1/31	Katherine Reed
1/15	Mary Heineke				

*Please Continue to Remember in Prayer:*

Our servicemen and women  
Peggy Adams  
Chad Willcocks  
Melody Hoff  
Kathy Aker  
Ginny DuPriest  
Debbie DuPriest  
Erma Amrein  
John Allen  
Gay Steinhauer  
Alice Graber  
Don Beresford  
Tony Mancini  
Helen Mason  
Jessica Obert

Gay D. Smith  
Rev. Virginia Duffy  
Ruth Meissner  
Barbara Williamson  
Skip Zimmer  
Mike Chalfin  
Elaine Sloan  
Nancy Lanza  
Barb Walbrun  
James Stokes  
Tommy Moorehead  
Howard Seaman  
Lindsay Pitcher  
June Ward  
Kim Caudell

Paul Maus  
Mike Cornish  
Clara Kemplin  
Rhonda Lahmann  
Joann Ernst  
Owen Erickson  
Nancy Basil  
Kellie Whitaker  
The Heineke Family  
Marlene Sheward  
Albert Mueller  
Derek Nuckols  
Justin Nuckols  
Will Maier  
The Seesing Family

Please keep the office informed on the status of those you have placed on the prayer list.

*Please Continue to Remember in Prayer our HomeBound:*

Geraldine Cooper  
Mary Lou Heiden  
Albert Mueller  
Dolores Ungerbuehler

Bob Dickman  
Mary Heineke  
Dot Sunnenberg  
Sharon Wagner

Marian Faller  
Charlotte McCauley  
Anne Timme  
Lucille Walters

*If you would like to add  
someone to the prayer  
list, please call the office.*



# December 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Standing Dates: Mondays: Crafty Critters - 10 AM Scouts: 6:30 - 9:00 PM Tuesday: Community Dinner 5:00 PM weekly Fridays/Saturdays: AA Meeting 8 PM						1
<div>  </div>						
2 1st Sunday of Advent Communion Hanging of the Greens  New Beginning PotLuck	3	4	5 NS Dine Italianette  Anne Scout Mtg 7:00 PM	6 Book Group Meeting Jesus Final Session 7 PM	7	8
9 2nd Sunday of Advent	10	11	12 Brownie Mtg. 6:30 pm	13	14	15 NS Cleaning Day  
16 3rd Sunday of Advent  Children's Christmas Play	17 Council Christmas Dinner 6:30 PM	18 NS 3's Party Christmas NS Pre K Show Chapel 11:15 AM	19 NS 4's & Pre K Christmas Party  EPISTLE ARTICLES DUE	20 NS No School	21	22
23 4th Sunday Of Advent  Sunday School Christmas Party 30	24 No School Christmas Eve 4:30 PM Music 5 PM Service New Year's Eve 1/2 day office 31	25 Christmas Day Office is Closed	26 Office is Closed	27	28	29

St. Paul United Church of Christ  
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9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Thursday - Friday

Nursery School Staff: Karen A. Rieinan, Director  
Susan Ehrhardt, Amy Miller, Angela Oaks, Jenny Birdsong,  
and Jessica Whittis.

Church Staff:  
Rev. Barry Bordenkircher, Sr. Minister  
Joan Allen, Lay Minister  
Rick Tallarigo, Organist/Interim Music  
Director  
Anne Zimmer, Office Administrator  
Jim Maybury, Sexton  
Anne Zimmer, Treasurer

Parish Nurses: Vicki Celenza, R.N.,  
Coordinator  
Roxanne Reed, R.N.