



# THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL

January 2019

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For an electronic  
version of  
THE EPISTLE,  
please visit our  
website at:  
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## Worship Opportunities

### Sundays:

9:50 AM Traditional  
Worship in Sanctuary  
Sunday School

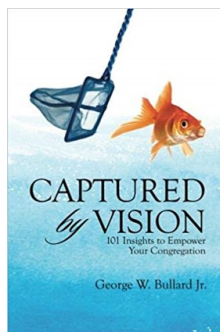
## Ponderings From The Pastor

### BRASS TACKS

**"It's time to get down to brass tacks!"** You've surely heard this saying before. I know I have heard it and used it many times. The origin of the saying is obscure and is disputed, but it seems to have originated in the late 1800's. Its meaning though is pretty clear! Getting down to brass tacks means: dealing with the essentials; to come to the point. For example, "Stop delaying and get down to brass tacks," or "We really need to get down to bedrock," or "They have a way of getting down to the nitty gritty."



**Friends, it is BRASS TACKS time at St. Paul UCC!** Starting on January 13, we will engage in four consecutive weeks of our *New Beginnings house meetings*, and all those who attend those small group meetings will begin (starting at the second meeting) to see and interpret together our **New Beginnings Assessment Report**.



This report is **SIXTY-FIVE** pages long (including the Appendixes at the end), and is chock-full of information and data (charts numbers, graphs, etc.). It covers in great detail the current situation of our church, our relationship to one another, to our surrounding community, who lives around us and what they are like, and what some of their crucial needs may be. It also offers several "future stories" (options for the future direction/destiny of St. Paul UCC) for us to ponder together. Used properly, the *Assessment Report* can and will serve as a launchpad (and beginning roadmap) for a long, vital, healthy, renewed lifecycle for SPUCC.

Make no mistake: this is a **crucial** time and a **totally-necessary** process for our church. It is a time and a process I have been trying to guide us to for the better part of three years! It is time for St. Paul UCC to **find and follow a NEW VISION!**

Therefore, I want to offer some key insights about churches and vision, and ask you to please **take these insights to heart** as you attend the house meetings. These insights come from George Bullard (just for reference, Bullard is to the field of church renewal and church vision what Washington or Jefferson were to the founding of our nation!). I offer them here pretty much verbatim and without much comment, from Bullard's powerful work Captured By Vision...

### WE BEGIN WITH DEFINING WHAT CONGREGATIONAL VISION IS (and Isn't):

- Vision is the current understanding of the spiritual and strategic journey of God for a congregation over the next seven years or longer. **Vision empowers the future.** It is about the **pulling of God** rather than the pushing of humankind. It fuels the forward progress of congregations. It takes congregations **beyond the current horizon** to places they cannot yet see, and may not ever reach.
- Congregational Vision is a **grace gift of God** we discern--Vision is not an organizational statement; it is not the pastor pushing the congregation forward. It is allowing the congregation to be pulled forward by God. Vision is **a movement of God that is memorable** rather than a statement of humankind that is memorized.

## Ponderings From The Pastor (continued)

- Vision is not something we earn, or an exercise we complete. The processes around vision (e.g., New Beginnings) do have a purpose. They help us discern strategies and tactics for living into our vision. They themselves are not the vision, nor do the exercises reveal true vision.
- ***Ultimately vision captures our spiritual imagination. The focus should be on congregations as spiritual organisms.***
- Vision is about ***walking by faith in God rather than by what is in plain sight.*** It is to walk by ***faith in God's sight***, or what ***God can see that we cannot yet see***, or what God understands that we do not yet understand. Walking by faith is seeing God's empowering vision ***with our full heart, soul, mind and strength.*** It is about the ability to see Jesus in the eyes of the hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick and imprisoned. ***Without the sight that faith gives us, we are unlikely to be captured by God's empowering vision.***
- Vision is a body and soul experience, ***not a mind game.*** If we can see our future with our eyes it is not God's empowering vision. Vision is seen with spiritual imagination. ***I.e. it comes prayerfully!***

SOME KEY INSIGHTS ABOUT CONGREGATIONAL VISION

- FIRST, it (a congregational vision) is not about God blessing your vision, it is about God's empowering vision being a ***blessing to your congregation*** and its involvement in God's mission.
- SECOND, ***only God's empowering vision will be sufficient for your congregation.*** The vision of the pastor, a staff person, a long-term member, a new member, the governance leaders, the ministry leaders, or the people with the greatest passion about the future of the congregation is insufficient. ***Only God's empowering vision will suffice.*** (Another corollary: those who yell/complain the most and the loudest are ***missing the point*** and cause ***unnecessary conflict!***).
- THIRD, the specific vision God has for your congregation for the next stage of its life is not defined by the overarching mission of any Christian congregation. ***Vision is specific, timely, and contextual to your congregation.***
- FOURTH, vision is not about temporal things like numbers and growth. These may be the ***result*** of living into God's empowering vision. Vision is more about ***being in the center of God's will for your congregation.***

OTHER KEY NOTIONS

- ***God's Empowering Vision for Congregations is Not About YOU*** – for congregations captured by God's empowering vision it is all about God rather than about the congregation. It is not about “me” where “me” is the congregation—or any single individual member!
- Vision is not about having the same vision as the congregation down the street.
- Vision is ***not about unanimous congregational support*** for God's empowering vision.
- Vision is not about a journey with an end where congregations can declare they are finished.
- Even if only a ***small percentage*** of leaders in your congregation are visionaries, ***God still has a perfect vision for you.*** Having vision does not depend on many visionaries being present in your congregation. We know from decades of work that if at least ***SEVEN PERCENT*** of the active, attending congregation is captured by God's empowering vision for the congregation there is a greater chance vision will be embraced by the congregation.
- ***With God as Our Source, Congregational Vision is More Than Numbers*** – let's be certain about vision. ***It is not easy.*** The clear majority of pastors, staff persons, and lay leaders have a difficult time understanding vision. ***It is not second nature to them.*** They (WE) are captured by societal (“worldly”) measure of success. Their (OUR) vision may be something they can see, whereas God's empowering vision is unseen and we arrive at it by faith. Leaders approach vision as if a church is an organization, a sports team, or their country. It is about winning. It is about reaching tangible goals in the short-term. They cannot separate the success they see in the world around them from the success ***only God can offer.***
- Vision is not a passing fantasy or a fleeting passion. ***It is a long-term view of God's calling*** on a congregation. ***Vision is not about quick results.*** Its fulfillment does not have to be fast...Vision is about ***changed behavior*** that develops over years, and becomes hardwired in the Christ-centered, faith-based culture of the congregation. It is about being part of a congregation that is on a long-distance journey with which people desire to be connected.
- God offers ***transformative*** vision. Too often our possessions, deference to other people, and pride ***blind us*** as we are only open to transactional vision. To be captured by God's empowering vision is a paradigm shift. When such a shift occurs then ***everything goes back to zero.*** The transformative vision God offers congregations requires the re-evaluation of everything congregations do in light of the new vision (This is the task of New Beginnings!).

## Ponderings From The Pastor (continued)

I could go on...the above insights are from only **the first two chapters** of Captured By Vision (which has ten chapters and then some!). But, I hope you are seeing that VISION is not a human product, and cannot be discerned merely by human means and through human minds. VISION is a **revelation from God**...a transformative, life-changing (church-changing) revelation, just like we read about in the Bible! Visions are incarnate in the heart/soul as much, or more, than the mind!

This does not, of course, diminish or negate YOUR participation in New Beginnings. We need everyone to participate...because here's another key thing about VISION: even though one person's opinions and ideas can never constitute a vision, **VISIONS COME THROUGH INDIVIDUALS** who are working/praying together.

Imagine this: at the end of our house group sessions, we discover that **very similar and inspired dreams, images, and heart-tugging impressions** have surfaced in a number of people, in several different groups...in different ways...imagine an emerging **consensus** around a **particular** "future story." That's would be a **real clue** that the Holy Spirit is speaking!

So let us go forth into the season of EPIPHANY as a dreaming, seeking people! Remember what "epiphany" means? According to Merriam-Webster, it is "a usually sudden manifestation or perception of the essential nature or meaning of something." Epiphany is the perfect time for a vision quest! It is the perfect time for New Beginnings!

Here is a prayer from George Bullard (we'll see more of these), which I commend to you, as **you** prepare to attend a house group...and as prepare your heart for some Spirit work!

And if you are not yet signed up for a house group...WHY NOT??

### A PRAYER FOR (Y)OUR CONGREGATION

*God of grace and God of glory, may we clearly see You as the source of vision. May we engage in deep and meaningful dialogue and prayer to discern Your vision for our congregation. May we clearly understand vision is not about asking You to bless our vision, but asking that we may be a blessing to You as we live into Your vision for our congregation. May we resist attempts to allow the vision of humankind to blur Your vision for us. For Your glory we yearn. Amen.*

*All Peace, Love, and Epiphany Blessings!*

*Pastor Barry*

## In Loving Memory

## GIFTS TO THE CHURCH

In Memory of Grace Lienhart

Karen & Matt Chalfin

In Memory of Dolores Molter

Carol Molter

In Memory of Jean Schmadel

Donna Schmadel

Elaine Payne Scholarship  
In Memory of  
John Payne  
Howard Heinke

Cindy Sheets

# News and Updates Council News

The next Council meeting is Monday,  
February 18, 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

## FEBRUARY EPISTLE DEADLINE

The Epistle deadline for the January edition is Wednesday, January 23, 2019. 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.

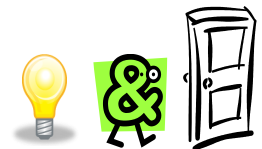


## PLEASE HELP US with LIGHTS AND DOORS

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.

Thank you



FACEBOOK PAGE

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Paul-United-Church-of-Christ-NCH/451020504934791>.

# Thank you!

Merry Christmas!  
St Paul Parishioners

We at NCH City  
Schools thank you for  
the wonderful gift  
of "Treats"! We  
were glad we didn't  
have to share with  
other locations!

We have some  
left amazingly and  
will use them for

a dessert at our  
Christmas party!

So grateful &  
thankful that  
you thought of us!

once again "Merry  
Christmas" and  
"Thank you" from  
the NCH Schools





## THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT TO PROVIDE ANGEL TREE LOCAL NURSING HOME

This is the tree after all the gifts from St. Paul were placed for the residents.

Many thank to everyone who donated gifts in support of the Angel Tree project at CareCore at Lakeridge. The staff and residents were so appreciative of your kindness and generosity during the Christmas season.

Thank you all!

Linda Woods  
Nurture Team  
Chairman



## FROM THE ST. PAUL WELCOME TEAM

There aren't enough words to express how grateful we are for the response we got on our request for baked goods. We were able to go above and beyond on the number of trays we made. We delivered two trays each to the Elementary, Middle and High Schools. Single trays were given to Central office, Police Department, Fire Department, Maintenance Department and the City Administration Office, and two trays to the Veterans Home in Mt. Healthy. We also gave a tray to our Nursery School staff, put a tray in the church office and took a tray to the council Christmas Dinner. We also made a tray for Virginia Duffy and still had a few cookies to put out for coffee hour. Together WE were able to wish many of our neighbors a Merry Christmas and together WE can survive. Thanks to all our bakers and a Merry Christmas to all our St. Paul family.



## SHOE FUND

It pays to shop "Black Friday". Thanks to all who saved their cans and who made donations to the Shoe Fund.

I was able to buy 56 pairs of shoes, some socks, and 40 pair of boys underwear. The nurse at the Elementary school was very happy and I got big hugs for you and and me.

Keep up the good work of bringing in your cans thru all the year. Looking forward to 2019 to keep the shoe fund going.

This is truly a good mission.

Dot Kahle



### ZWOSTER SCHOLARSHIP

Zwoster Scholarship applications and criteria are on the kiosk table in the Narthex.

Applications are due in the office no later than Wednesday, May 1.

Any questions, please contact Sandy Blevins, 513-851-8808.



### CONGRATULATIONS TO ST. PAUL NURSERY SCHOOL

Our Nursery School had its yearly state Inspection on Friday, November 16th. We passed with flying colors. The inspector stated that this was the nicest Nursery School that she had ever inspected. She commented how clean our classrooms are, what a great teaching staff we have and complimented Karen for doing an excellent job as a director.

We are so fortunate that volunteers are in the classrooms daily and they do an excellent job of keeping the tables, and chairs washed after each class. The volunteers also vacuum after each session so the rooms are clean and ready for the next day.

The inspector was also impressed that our Pre K teacher, Sue Ehrhardt, has published a book. Her book is a complete program for Pre K children. All lessons, materials, and everything you need to know about teaching this age child is included. It can be purchased on Amazon.





ST. PAUL YOUTH







Pastor Barry's  
#6 **TRANSFORMATION**  
**CHALLENGE!**



**LAST MONTH**, in conjunction with our church's "New Beginnings" journey, I issued a personal CHALLENGE to anyone in the church who wants or need some "individual transformation!!" As the new years dawns, do you want or need to...

- Lose some weight?
- Quit smoking? (or another unhealthy, annoying habit?)
- Start a new exercise program?
- Adopt some new kinds of prayer, do more regular Bible study, start a new spiritual discipline?
- Try ANYTHING that helps you feel better physically and/or emotionally!?

Then **join me** in the new year with a personal "**Transformation Challenge!**" My own individual *physical* goal is to lose 50 pounds by Easter (or the end of April at least!)...to get back to where I was a few years ago! And as part of this effort, I am asking for **SPONSORS**, to benefit a good cause! ([see below](#)). I will also be undertaking renewed *spiritual* discipline in the form of meditation and regular centering prayer (including jump-starting our church Meditation Group, as soon as the New Beginnings house group schedule is firmly set!). If you are up for a challenge, here 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 a new healthy habit—whatever! And give me **feedback** about the journey! ([see "star" below](#))



**2) TAKE UP A NEW SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE** –New Beginnings 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 some 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 or have questions about what to try, **just let me know!** ([see "star" below](#))

**3) SPONSOR ME!** Using the special **SPONSOR FORMS** located in the **CAFÉ** (look for the **BIG BLUE BOX**)—you can sponsor me any amount you want, or PER POUND—for my weight loss effort; and the money raised will go to **HOLY JOE'S CAFÉ**. ([see below](#))

**HOLY JOE'S CAFÉ** – Holy Joe's is a UCC-originated mission effort which **PROVIDES FREE COFFEE for our TROOPS overseas!** 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 provide a "café" –a **safe and friendly place**—where troops can gather, talk, relax, and just hang out in stressful environments. **With your sponsor donations** I will buy **HOLY JOE'S COFFEE** for our church Café and pass along direct donations...all which will help send coffee and caring to our troops! **WATCH FOR MORE DETAILS**, and get your **SPONSOR FORM** in the Café! Also be sure to check out [www.holyjoes.org](http://www.holyjoes.org) for more info on this cool project! You'll be amazed!



## SCOUTING NEWS



The Pack, Troop and Crew will start meeting again on Jan.7. They will begin very soon working on their Pinewood Derby Cars for the Big Race in February.

The Troop is busy working on a new camping and outing schedule. The boys are also finishing up rank requirements. At the end of December, they held new elections for Senior Patrol Leader and Patrol Leader. At the present time, we have one of our Scouts at the beginning stages of putting his Eagle project together. We are so excited for him.

The Crew is starting off the new year by going Curling. It should be really interesting and fun. Happy New Year Everyone! PS. I learned how to be Superwoman!



## NURSERY SCHOOL

### Happy New Year!

Hope 2019 brings lots of blessings your way! The cold air is here, but hoped the holidays warmed your heart.

I see the church is starting New Beginnings in January. The Nursery School will be starting something new for 2019-2020 school year.

The Nursery School has been a co-op preschool for the last 46 years, but starting in September the preschool will no longer be able to be a co-op preschool. We will be having teacher Assistants in all the classrooms. The state regulations have made changes to our license, so therefore we are unable to be a co-op preschool.

It's now time to register for preschool for the fall of 2019. If you know of anyone who has a preschooler; please pass on the information that we are registering for fall classes. Open House and registration is Thursday, January 24th at 6:00 to 7:30 PM. We are also having a Pre-K information night on Tuesday, January 22nd at 6:30 PM.

Karen Rieman  
and Staff



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		



2/2 Faye Blum	2/11 Elizabeth Fields	2/20 Sandy Schneeman
Eileen Church	Robert Nungester	2/23 Barry Bordenkircher
Carol Schroer	2/12 Erma Amrein	2/25 Dotty Sunnenberg
2/4 Geraldine Cooper	2/14 Bonnie Rogers	2/28 Luke Jensen
2/6 Vicki Celenza	Patricia Sutton	2/29 Christy Sypers
Lois Manifold	2/15 Kim Ferry	
2/9 Mandi Cornish	Wm. Patrick Lewis	



*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  
Brian Criswell  
Bodde Scudder  
The Rogers 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.*



# January 2019

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 HAPPY NEW YEAR  OFFICE CLOSED	2 OFFICE CLOSED	3 Nursery School Resumes	4	5
6 EPIPHANY Communion	7	8	9	10	11 Confirmation Meeting Mentors/Parent 7 PM	12
13 House Mtg 12—1:30 PM Church	14 House Mtg 1-2:30 PM	15 House Mtg 7—8:30 PM	16 Exec Team Mtg 5:00 PM  House Mtg 10-11:30 AM 7- 8:30 PM	17 Staff Mtg 8 AM  Cluster 2 Mtg  House Mtg 7-8:30 PM	18	19 Confirmation Class Bowling Event
20 House Mtg 12—1:30 PM Church	21 House Mtg 1-2:30 PM  NS. No School Nurture 5:30PM  Council Mtg. 7 PM	22 House Mtg 7—8:30 PM  Pre-K Info Night 6:30 PM	23 EPISTLE ARTICLES DUE  House Mtg 10-11:30 AM 7- 8:30 PM	24 House Mtg 7-8:30 PM  NS Open House 6:30 - 7:30 PM	25	26
27 House Mtg 12—1:30 PM Church  Congregational Mtg Budget	28 House Mtg 1-2:30 PM	29 House Mtg 7—8:30 PM	30 House Mtg 10-11:30 AM 7- 8:30 PM	31 House Mtg 7-8:30 PM  Davis Wedding Rehearsal 6 PM	FH = Fellowship Hall NS = Nursery School	

St. Paul United Church of Christ  
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St. Paul United Church of Christ  
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Office Hours 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Monday - Wednesday  
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Thursday - Friday

Nursery School Staff: Karen A. Riemann, 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.

