



THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL

February 2020

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For an electronic version of THE EPISTLE, please visit our website at:
www.stpaulnch.com

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Worship Opportunities

Sundays:

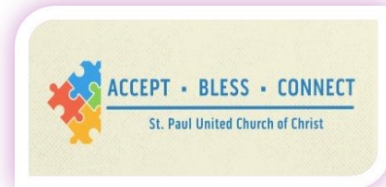
9:50 AM Traditional
Worship in Sanctuary
Sunday School

NATURAL DISCIPLES?

WE BEGIN THIS NEW YEAR with an attempt at practicing true, authentic religion.

And so what is “true religion” you ask? At its most basic level, all true, authentic religion is what moves us outside ourselves (and our own egos) and connects us with God and with others. Considering the root word for “religion,” Father Richard Rohr (in his classic Immortal Diamond) puts it this way:

Re-ligio (“rebinding, re-ligamenting”) is not doing its job if it only reminds you of your distance, your unworthiness, your sinfulness, and your inadequacy before God’s greatness. Whenever religion actually increases the gap, it becomes antireligion instead. I am afraid we have lots of antireligion in all denominations.



Rebinding. Re-ligamenting. Reconnecting. For several reasons, churches always seem to forget this basic purpose, this core reality. Is this because following Jesus- being a disciple—just does not come naturally to us?...

* “Following Jesus does not come naturally to us. It must be learned through a constant process of visioning, listening, communicating, and practicing. This is why the act of worship is so important. Our worship services are classrooms in which we receive a vision of God’s Reign, in which we learn the words, actions, and attitudes of Christ, and in which we develop the habits that shape our lives according to Jesus’ way. When we allow the habits of our worship to become the habits of our lives, we become true followers of Christ, and we enter into the abundant life that he promised.”

We need to develop better habits, and find more abundant life! Please take some time to look up and **First John 4.20-21**; then ponder those verses for a few moments. They are very important verses for our church right now. We are in a stressful time—and the stress is taking its toll on our relationships...as stress always does.

Of course, some of this is unavoidable. We’ve spent over a year now in the *New Beginnings* process: we have discerned a new spiritual DNA for our church, and we have a “future story” (*VISION*) which we must work hard to live into. We have taken several key votes to begin some new initiatives, including: welcoming Head Start to SPUCC, and approving a new digital sign—which has been ordered and is on the way!

All this naturally means change...and change is always stressful. It is stressful to think about, it is stressful to plan for...and then, even when you have planned for it and are expecting it, it is still even more stressful when you actually start to feel it.

Ponderings From The Pastor (continued)

And, we most certainly are feeling it.

Furthermore, exacerbating this normal and natural stress of change is the history here at St. Paul UCC of several major traumas, several historical (and ongoing) stressful relationships...and many strong personalities. To be sure, this church is not unique in suffering from stress and trauma, in dealing with a number of unsettled relationships, in dealing with inevitable clashes between strong leaders, and in general a sense of shifting ground and anxiety. But though we are not unique in the tensions and pressures we face, we must deal with them in a way specific to our congregation's "personality" and to the "season" in which we find ourselves. What better time to ponder all this and resolve to make significant positive change than at the start this still young new year!?

With that in mind, we find the writer of First John powerfully reminding us about a crucial reality: **the way we treat one another is the most important consideration in our Christian life**. It is more important than anything else! It is more important than our theology, more important than any project (small or large, old or new), more important than how/what we think and our opinions, more important than church by-laws and procedures, more important than any new or continuing jobs/tasks one might be undertaking in the church...indeed nothing is more important in congregational life as a whole—or your individual life as a Christ follower—than how we treat each other. St. Paul, our church's namesake, puts it this way: ***"Everything should be done in love"*** (1 Cor. 16.14).

In order to strengthen our resolve to handle our stress more effectively, we are beginning this year (Jan-Feb) with a new group study and devotional time (it is for the WHOLE congregation). This daily devotional is called ***"Learning to Belong."***

Of course, I cannot compel all our members to take part in anything! I can only ask and encourage. We must choose to participate, just as we must choose how to live together in community; indeed, this is a major theme of ***Learning to Belong***. One of the most astounding and eye-opening teachings from week one of the study says this: ***"We do not become a community once we have found healing: we are healed when we choose to be in community."*** At least in part, this means that our gathering as a worshipping community, done with purpose and proper perspective, makes all of us better, more whole, more healthy, and more spiritually mature. And if course, the opposite is true as well....

If you have chosen not to participate in ***Learning to Belong***, or just did not get the book ordered in time, it is not too late! (call me or the church office if you need help getting a copy of the book). I still encourage you to go ahead and take on this 4-week daily devotional study for yourself. Use at your own pace, but by all means, use it. The more of us who are working together and learning together prayerfully, the more we can all look forward to a new year of greater, stronger Christian community at SPUCC. Together we must faithfully follow the biblical injunctions to love one another and treat one another with compassion, tolerance, and respect. Our future demands it. The community around us needs it. And our calling as disciples compels it.

Happy 2020!

Pastor Barry

* From Learning to Belong, Rev. John van de Laar. Capetown: Sacredise Publishing, © 2012.

In Loving Memory

In Memory of Mike Cornish

Carol & Mike Chalfin
Linda Woods

In Memory of Herman Schleuter

Carol & Mike Chalfin

In Memory of Marion Zeinner

Greg Zeinner

In Memory of Al & Dolores Molter

Carol Molter
Karen Molter
Stephen Graham

GIFTS TO THE CHURCH

In Memory of Gerri Cooper

Jane & Wayne Schleutker

In Memory of Grace Lienhart

Karen & Matt Chalfin

In Memory of Willard Maier

Alice Blum Jane & Wayne Schleutker

In Memory of Helen Mason

Jane & Wayne Schleutker

In Memory of Chris Hoeweler

Carol & Mike Chalfin
Lois & Dick Manifold
Bonnie & Steve Rogers
Linda Woods

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.



MARCH EPISTLE DEADLINE

The Epistle deadline for the March edition is Wednesday, February 19, 2020. 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.



ZWOSTER SCHOLARSHIP

It's time once again for high school graduates or college students, to apply for the Zwoster Scholarship. This scholarship is available to young adults that are directly related to the members of St. Paul UCC. The criteria and the application are available. The application is due in the office by Friday, May 1, 2020.

Applications are available on the kiosk table in the Narthex, or contact the office for one to be emailed.

For any questions, please contact Sandy Blevins.



WORK ORDERS

If you have a special project that you need the help of Jim or Anne, or something that needs to be taken care of, please fill out a WORK ORDER. These are located on the kiosk table in the Narthex.

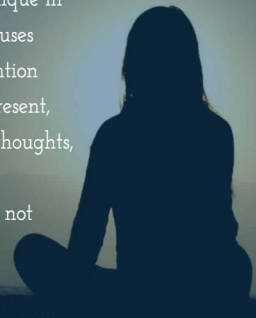
They should be turned in to the office. If you need something by a specific date, please be sure to give them enough time to complete what is needed. They will be sure to work it into their schedule in as timely a manner as possible.

Coming In March: *Mindful MONDAYS*

Join Pastor Barry for the weekly Monday practice of meditation, mindfulness, and other "forms" of contemplative prayer, beginning on **MARCH 2** at 12: 30 PM (in the Sanctuary). **All are welcome**, whether you are new to meditation, or an old hand! Come and experience, quiet, short teachings about the contemplative life, and (hopefully) the founding of a new or renewed daily practice for growing your spirit in depth and breadth!

MINDFULNESS

noun. A technique in which one focuses one's full attention only on the present, experiencing thoughts, feelings, and sensations but not judging them



ALSO COMING IN MARCH: SONKA LEGACY TEAM

On Wednesday's during Lent (beginning March 4), St. Paul will be starting to work with the brand new **Legacy Team** from the Southwest Ohio-Northern Kentucky Association, (SONKA). We'll meet every Wednesday in Lent at 7:00 PM in the Sanctuary. These gatherings will be for everyone, the whole congregation, who is interested in the next phase on developing our New Beginning Future Story. We need good participation, so plan on coming to learn and contribute to our Future Story! Watch for more details!

FACEBOOK PAGE

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



Will We Answer The Awesome Call?

By Rev. Carl Robinson

SONKA Designated Association Minister

I sometimes wonder if SONKA, the Heartland Conference (formerly the Ohio Conference), or even the United Church of Christ, is up to the challenge of repairing centuries of self-serving theology and replacing it with a theology that more faithfully reflects the calling of Jesus Christ. Can we manage the massive challenge? Will we answer the awesome call?

Let's back up a moment. Perhaps there are those who do not take it for granted, as I obviously do, that we are called in the Church to engage wholeheartedly in the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ. That ministry, to me, is more important than historic buildings, full pews, overflowing coffers. It is more than holding sacred the organizational configurations, institutional claims, or social advantages of the far and recent past. There may be those who hold these things as holy, as representative of divinity, as a link to the realm of the spiritual.

We must acknowledge that there exists among us, perhaps even as the majority of those with whom we share membership in local churches, those who honor form over function, those who see the shape, protocols, and patterns of church inner workings, as of prime importance to the calling to which the Church of Jesus Christ is called.

The crisis of today's Church has nothing to do with numbers or dollars. It has nothing to do with decades of sharp decline and loss of cultural hegemony. **It is, instead, a crisis of vision and purpose.** It is a loss of focus, where we spend our time and spiritual energy honoring the tools and trappings of ministry, while ignoring the purpose for which we have created those tools and trappings.

Jesus Christ calls us to be in allegiance with the suffering and the poor, the excluded and the rejected, the poor and the lame, the demon-possessed and the sick, the widow and the orphan, the despised, the cajoled, the blamed, the scapegoats, the refugees, the lost, and the "other." We are called to fight for their justice, peace, and equality. We are called to shape the world as a reflection of God's grace and love, exhibited most clearly in Jesus Christ. If we are not doing this work, then we are not the Church of Jesus Christ.

Are we up to the tremendous challenge of altering theological vision and redirecting spiritual energies? Can we manage the daunting call of representing Christ Jesus in and through the Church that bears his name?

We are facing the challenge and managing the call throughout SONKA. While not quite perfect, we are struggling together to focus our spiritual energies and spend our time doing that which represents the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ. We are changing. We are moving. We are progressing. I am thankful for your ministry and your service.

[I am reprinting this blog from Carl Robinson because a) it is timely, b) it is relevant for our church in its own "vision" seeking and "future story living", and c) he is right on the money! – Pastor Barry]

Dine N' Donate

Wednesday, February 19, 2020

11:00 AM – 8:00 PM

North College Hill Skyline



(1705 W. Galbraith Rd)

Dine In/Carry Out/Drive Thru

ST. PAUL NURSERY SCHOOL

10% OF THE PROCEEDS WILL BE DONATED BACK TO ST. PAUL NURSERY SCHOOL

Must show flyer when ordering!

LOOKING FOR A PRESCHOOL FOR YOUR CHILD? ST. PAUL NURSERY SCHOOL



IS NOW REGISTERING FOR
THE FALL 2020 CLASSES

- *Preschool for 3, 4 & 5 year olds*
- *Degreed Teachers*
- *Secured Building*
- *Peanut – Free Classrooms*
- *Spacious Classrooms*



CALL 931-9062

6997 HAMILTON AVENUE, CINCINNATI, OHIO 45231



You can also visit us on our website at
www.stpaulnurseryschool.com

SCOUTING NEWS

The Cubbies have been busy building their Pinewood Derby Cars. Race night will be Monday, February 17th.



Troop 150, Scouts BSA 150, and Crew 150 have been busy planning a recruitment night on Monday, Feb 10th. They are planning a meeting to introduce new youth to the Scouting programs. They will be providing a skills instruction on lashings and then they will be building a triangular shape (a chariot) with their lashings. Someone will sit on that that chariot and they will have races.

If you have a child, kindergarten through 5th grade, they are Cub Scout age. Troop, girl or boy, is 6th grade up to age 18 years old. Venture Crew, boy or girl, is 8th grade up to age 21. If you have a family member, or a youth that might be interested, our recruitment night is Monday, February 10th, 7 pm—8:30 pm. If anyone is interested, they can join at any time. We are always looking for new scouts for our programs.

Nursery School

St. Paul Nursery School is taking registrations for the upcoming school year, 2020 - 2021.

Please continue to spread the word about our school. They can contact Mrs. Rieman at 931-9062 to set up a tour of the school.

Please help to support our upcoming Dine to Donate that will be held at Skyline on Galbraith Rd, in NCH. It will be on Feb 19th. You can dine in or carry out anytime from 11 am - 8 pm. The flyer on the previous page needs to be shown when ordering.

Thanks so much!

Karen Rieman and Staff





February

2/2 Eileen Church
Carol Schroer
2/6 Vicki Celenza
Lois Manifold
2/9 Mandi Cornish

2/11 Robert Nungester
2/12 Erma Amrein
2/14 Bonnie Rogers
Patricia Sutton
2/15 Kim Ferry

2/15 Wm. Patrick Ferry
2/20 Sandy Schneeman
2/23 Barry Bordenkircher
2/25 Dotty Sunnenberg
2/29 Christy Spyers

MARCH

3/1 Doris Dunn
3/3 Donna Hodson
3/4 Robert Jensen
3/7 Gay Steinhauer

3/8 Sharon Frazier
Venessa Mittler
Anne Zimmer
3/9 Elaine Sloan
3/10 Brody Overholts

3/11 Karen Chalfin
3/15 William Reed
3/19 Jann Apro
3/20 Cheryl Davis
3/25 Nathan Bierkan
3/26 Adele Werden



4/3 Elmer Seesing
4/7 Matthew Chalfin
4/8 Marlene Sheward
4/9 Owen Chalfin
4/10 Virginia Duffy

4/11 Diane Banker
4/14 Raymond Bates
Carolyn Dykes
4/15 Sue Erickson
4/17 Carol Chalfin
4/18 Sandy Blevins

4/20 Trudy Jester
4/23 Jenna Mangold
4/26 Addison Mangold
4/30 Dorothy Dumford

Please Continue to Remember in Prayer:

Our servicemen and women	Clara Kemplin	Barb Bruewer
Peggy Adams	Rhonda Lahmann	Barb Brewer
Chad Willcocks	Joann Ernst	Kostas Vasiliou
Kathy Aker	Owen Erickson	Harper Manning
John Allen	Marlene Sheward	Scott Ober
Alice Graber	Justin Nuckols	Jennifer Nibouar
Don Beresford	Bodde Scudder	Deborah Ehler
Tony Mancini	Bob Harbaum	Larry Estes
Gay D. Smith	Greg Rice	Cathy Criswell
Rev. Virginia Duffy	Barb Nuckols	Paul Kluesener
Barbara Williamson	Norma Carrier	Lin Theders
Elaine Sloan	Melitta Marx	Deborah Byndon
Nancy Lanza	Jesse McIlhaney	Rebecca Horning
Barb Walbrun	Ann Way	The Cornish Family
James Stokes	Roy Push	Mike Lennett
Tommy Moorehead	Carol Schroer	Skip Zimmer
Howard Seaman	Stan Wernz	Paul Nuckols
Lindsay Pitcher	Charleigh Waltz and parents	The Hoeweler Family
June Ward	Richard Boyce	Pam Windish
Kim Caudell		

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:

Bob Dickman	Doris Dunn	Mary Heineke
Charlotte McCauley	Ruth Meissner	Albert Mueller
Gay Steinhauer	Dot Sunnenberg	Anne Timme
Dolores Ungerbuehler	Sharon Wagner	

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



February 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 Communion Scout Sunday 	3 AARP - Tax Preparation Scouts 6:30 pm	4 Learning to Belong 10:30 am - Café Dinner 5:00 pm	5 Brownie Meeting 6:30 pm Scout Rm. Learning to Belong 7 pm - Café	6	7 AA - 8 PM	8 AA - 8 PM
9	10 AARP - Tax Preparation Scouts 6:30 pm	11 NS 3's Valentine Celebration Learning to Belong 10:30 am - Café Dinner 5:00 pm	12 Executive Meeting 5:30 pm - Library Learning to Belong 7:30 pm - Café	13 NS Pre-K Valentine Celebration Women's Book Club 7 pm - Café	14 NS 4's Valentine Celebration Happy Valentine's Day  AA - 8 PM	15 AA - 8 PM
16	17 AARP - Tax Preparation Council Mtg 7 pm Library Scouts 6:30 pm	18 Learning to Belong 10:30 am- Café Dinner 5:00 pm	19 Epistle Articles Due Brownie Meeting 6:30 pm Scout Rm. Learning to Belong 7 pm - Café	20 Staff Mtg. 9 am - Library	21 AA - 8 PM	22 AA - 8 PM
23	24 AARP - Tax Preparation Nurture Mtg 5:30 pm Library Scouts 6:30 pm	25 Learning to Belong 10:30 am - Café Dinner 5:00 pm	26 Ash Wednesday Service 7 pm	27 Women's Book Club 7 pm - Café	28 AA - 8 PM	29 AA - 8 PM

St. Paul United Church of Christ
6997 Hamilton Ave.
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THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL



FreestoreFoodbank



St. Paul United Church of Christ
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Website: www.stpaulinch.com
Email: office@stpaulinch.com

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. Rieman, Director
Susan Ehrhardt, Amy Miller, Angela Oaks, Jenny Birdsong,
Samantha Weisman, and Megan Jungkunz.

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.