



St. Paul Ministries

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St. Paul, a United Methodist Church, and so much more...



Advent

is our Christian season of waiting in anticipation. What are we waiting for? As I pondered this question in light of our communal life at St. Paul United Methodist Church, I found help by reflecting on a powerful little book from the 2018 United Methodist Women Reading Program, *Trouble I've Seen* by Drew G. I. Hart.

The author reminds us to read scripture in a way that truly takes Jesus seriously by studying his life and teachings and by believing that we are actually supposed to conform our own way of life after his. The gospel is a divine intervention in history and a life-altering reality. God descended and was revealed in the birth, life, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus. The gospel is about Jesus! Our description of Jesus ought to be consistent with his revelation in scripture.

Born in Bethlehem, Jesus had a humble beginning. As we gather around the crèche to celebrate Jesus's birthday, remember who gathered at the manger over 2000 years ago. In addition to Jesus's parents, the audience was shepherds-the undesirable and despised underclass of society! The good news of God becoming flesh went first to the marginalized shepherds. It was a life-changing announcement that was going to alter everything! This was the message that brings hope to the poor, uplifts the brokenhearted, revitalizes the tired, liberates the oppressed and declares that God's kingdom has arrived.

Do we really understand what God's kingdom looks like? A quote from Dietrich Bonhoeffer in his book, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, gives us insight. "Everything we may with some good reason expect or beg of God is to be found in Jesus Christ. What we imagine a God could and should do-the God of Jesus Christ has nothing to do with all that. We must immerse ourselves again and again, for a long time and quite calmly, in Jesus's life, his sayings, actions, suffering, and dying in order to recognize what God promises and fulfills. What is certain is that we may always live aware that God is near and present with us and that this life is an utterly new life for us; that there is nothing that is impossible for us anymore because there is nothing that is impossible for God; that no earthly power can touch us without God's will, and that danger and urgent need can only drive us closer to God."

The danger of heroin and fentanyl and the urgent need for food, clothing, transportation and health care in East Dayton present opportunities to draw us closer to God by following Jesus Christ's example on a daily basis. We, the church, must allow the resurrected Jesus to be present with us, inspiring us toward risky and controversial love, even when society tells us that the recipients of our love are not worthy. St. Paul must be an alternative community that demonstrates to the world that truly loving all God's people-especially those we have been told don't matter-is possible.

I believe that our St. Paul community is the church of not for the poor and oppressed. We know we must live differently. We must be transformed. Right now, God's justice is needed! Has the church lost sight of the reality that Jesus began a subversive and revolutionary movement in the midst of a troubled world? What are we waiting for? Come join us and walk with us and work with us to make the kingdom of God real and visible at the corner of 4th Street and Huffman Ave!

Boldly, Joan Johnson





Dear Friends:

You are cordially invited to attend our annual Christmas Celebration

— Las Posadas —

Saturday, December 16, 2017 at 7 p.m.

to be held in the Sanctuary of
St. Paul United Methodist Church
101 Huffman Avenue, Dayton, Ohio 45403

After the service, please join us in the activity hall for dinner, followed by breaking of the piñatas.

Please bring a covered dish or dessert to share, if possible.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Tuesday Lunches

- December 5 St. Paul Community
- December 12 Germantown UMC
- December 19 Concord UMC
- December 26 NO LUNCH

Saturday Breakfasts

- December 2 Belmont UMC
- December 9 Aley UMC
- December 16 Normandy UMC
- December 23 Belmont UMC Youth
- December 30 St. Charles Catholic Church

Sunday Morning Worship Attendance

- 10/01/17 - 30 11/05/17 - 28
- 10/08/17 - 24 11/12/17 - 29
- 10/15/17 - 24 11/19/17 - 34
- 10/22/17 - 24 11/26/17 - 27
- 10/29/17 - 22

CHURCH SCHEDULE

- December 8 YPC Christmas on Campus at UD
- December 9 Parents' Christmas Shop [by invitation]
- December 10 Last day to order poinsettias
- December 11 Children's Santa Shop [by invitation]
 Christmas Carol Sing-a-long with
 Michael Garison 6:30pm
- December 16 Normandy's Breakfast with Santa [by invitation]
 Las Posadas - 7 p.m.
- December 18 Last day for YPC Seniors
- December 19 Last day for YPC Juniors
- December 22 Church Closed
- December 24 Morning Worship @10am
 Christmas Eve Love Feast 5:30 – 6:30pm
 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7pm

***December 25 – 29, 2017 and January 1, 2018, Church is closed**

Pantry needs:

- Canned beans or dry beans (all kinds) • Canned vegetables (EXCEPT green beans)
- Toilet paper/feminine products • Jelly • Cereal • Hot chocolate • Boxed potatoes •