

St. Paul's Happenings

A Publication of St. Paul's United Church of Christ, Manheim



December 2023/January 2024

Making a Difference Through the Love of Christ – to Know God, Love God & Serve God

Fear Not

By Karen Brandt, Council President

One of the things that puts me in the Christmas spirit is watching *A Charlie Brown Christmas*. The thing I like the most from Charlie Brown's Christmas is when Linus gives his speech on what is the meaning of Christmas. So, I decided to see if anyone has done a reflection on Linus. I came across an article from Jason Soroski, which I found [online](#). He is writing about Linus's speech and that right in the middle of the speech Linus drops the blanket. I've never noticed that before. Jason writes:

Charlie Brown is best known for his uniquely striped shirt, and Linus is most associated with his ever-present security blanket. Throughout the story of Peanuts, Lucy, Snoopy, Sally and others all work to no avail to separate Linus from his blanket. And even though his security blanket remains a major source of ridicule for the otherwise mature and thoughtful Linus, he simply refuses to give it up. Until this moment. When he simply drops it.

In that climactic scene when Linus shares "what Christmas is all about," he drops his security blanket, and I am now convinced that this is intentional. Most telling is the specific moment he drops it: when he utters the words, "fear not". Looking at it now, it is pretty clear what Charles Schultz was saying, and it's so simple, it's brilliant.

The birth of Jesus separates us from our fears.

The birth of Jesus frees us from the habits we are unable (or unwilling) to break ourselves.

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Fear Not Continued

The birth of Jesus allows us to simply drop the false security we have been grasping so tightly, and learn to trust and cling to Him instead.

This world can be a scary place, and most of us find ourselves grasping to something temporal for security, whatever that thing may be. Essentially, ours is a world in which it is very difficult for us to "fear not." But in the midst of fear and insecurity, this simple cartoon image from 1965 continues to live on as an inspiration for us to seek true peace and true security in the one place it has always been and can always still be found.

For me this Christmas classic just got even better. I hope this gives you more insight and inspiration as it has done for me. May this Christmas season and New Year bring you joy and peace knowing that in Christ we have nothing to fear.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,

Karen Brandt, Council President

*Fear not.
for behold I bring you good
tidings of great joy which shall be
to all people. - Luke 2:10*

December/January Scripture Readings

Sunday, December 3 – Advent 1: Isaiah 64:1-9/Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19/
1 Corinthians 1:3-9/St. Mark 13:24-37

Sunday, December 10 – Advent 2: Isaiah 40:1-11/Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13/2 Peter
3:8-15/St. Mark 1:1-8

Sunday, December 17 – Advent 3: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11/Psalm 126/
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24/St. John 1:6-8, 19-28

Sunday, December 24 AM – Advent 4: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16/St. Luke 1:46-55/
Romans 16:25-27/St. Luke 1:26-38

Sunday, December 31 – Christmas 1: Isaiah 61:10-62:3/Psalm 148/Galatians
4:4-7/St. Luke 2:22-40

Sunday, January 7 – Baptism of Our Lord: Genesis 1:1-5/Psalm 29/Acts 19:1-7/
St. Mark 1:4-11

Sunday, January 14 – Epiphany 2: 1 Samuel 3:1-20/Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18/
1 Corinthians 6:12-20/St. John 1:43-51

Sunday, January 21 – Epiphany 3: Jonah 3:1-5, 10/Psalm 62:5-12/1 Corinthians
7:29-31/St. Mark 1:14-20

Sunday, January 28 – Epiphany 4: Deuteronomy 18:15-20/Psalm 111/
1 Corinthians 8:1-13/St. Mark 1:21-28



Advent Begins

Observing Advent is a meaningful, adventurous way to prepare for Christmas. Buy or make an Advent wreath and use candles of your choice: four blue, four purple, or three blue or purple and one pink. If you have a fifth spot, add one white Christ candle.

During meals or devotions, light only one candle the first week. Add another for each new week (the pink candle traditionally marks the third week), concluding with the white candle (if you have one) on Christmas. The increasing light reminds us we're getting closer to celebrating Christ's light coming into the world.

Holy Communion

- ◆ The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be celebrated weekly on Sundays in December and January.
- ◆ A Communion Service will be held at Pleasant View Retirement Community on **Wednesday, December 20 and Wednesday, January 17, both @ 1:30 pm in Hoffer Auditorium.**

Advent & Christmas @ St. Paul's UCC

Decorating Party

Nothing gets you in the mood for the Advent/Christmas Season like preparing the church for the season! Come out on Friday, December 1 @ 5pm, enjoy a meal with friends and then, let the decorating begin!

Christmas Creches

Families are invited to bring their creche to share in decorating the Sanctuary windowsills. Pick any windowsill anytime after the November 26 9:30 am worship service. The creches may stay until Epiphany which is celebrated on January 6.

Santa Breakfast & Giveaway

St. Paul's will once again host the FREE Breakfast with Santa on Saturday, December 2 from 9-10 am.

Come and enjoy a warm pancake and sausage breakfast – takeouts are also available. Santa will be here for photo ops and each child will receive a free goody bag! There will also be a craft and game to play as well as our Christmas Giveaway for those children who are in need of a hat, scarves, gloves and school supplies. (Last year, over 80 sets of hats, scarves and gloves were made by our ladies in Women's Fellowship – thank you!!!!)

Bell Ringers Needed

Come see us as we Ring the Salvation Army Bell @ Longenecker's True Value on Tuesday, December 14 from noon-8 pm. Money raised stays in the Manheim Community to help those most in need with food, housing, utility assistance and other basic needs.

Gift Card Orders

Don't worry about your Christmas shopping this year! St. Paul's Mission Team will make your life easier by offering gift cards for sale. Your favorite gift cards can be purchased beginning November 26 through December 10. Cabela's, Dunkin Donuts, Starbucks, Red Lobster are just a few of the options available. Order one week and have your cards the next! Pick up your order form on the table outside the church office and return to Karen Brandt (717.341.1517/ kcbwno38@ptd.net) with payment to place your order. Proceeds benefit the Mission Team.

December 31 Worship & Dinner

Celebrate the New Year with worship @ 11 am on Sunday, December 31 followed by a Pork & Sauerkraut Dinner @ noon. Sign up on the table outside the Sanctuary to bring your favorite side dish or dessert! Let's start the New Year together!



Christmas Eve Worship Services for Sunday, December 24



Come home to St. Paul's to celebrate the birth of Jesus!

On **December 24 @ 9:30 am**, we'll celebrate Holy Communion and focus more on the 4th Sunday of Advent which features the annunciation or the angel's visit to Mary. Nursery care will be available.

Christmas Eve Worship with Candlelighting will be held @ 7 & 11 pm on Sunday, December 24. The nursery will be available as a "crying room" for parents - the service is livestreamed into the nursery. Both evening services will feature the lessons from Isaiah 9, Titus 2 and St. Luke 2:1-20 and carols heralding the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Women's Fellowship

Thank you to each and every one of you who participated in the planning, preparing, baking, serving, greeting, and handing out over 150 free turkey dinners in November! The recipients were pleased and thankful for what they felt was most generous. It was truly a labor of love.

In addition, we appreciate your supporting the Thanksgiving Pie Sale. We sold 20 pies and thanks to Jerry Weller, Erica Hoffman, and Bridget Irons for the preparation and baking. By the time you get this newsletter, they will have been consumed! Our thanks to those who saw that you got them in time for Thanksgiving.

Thank you to those of you who decorated a windowsill in the Sanctuary for the Thanksgiving season. We look forward to seeing the windowsills as you prepare them for the Advent/Christmas season as well, which is right around the corner!

Our final meeting for 2023 was held in Fellowship Hall on Thursday, November 30 @ 1:30 pm. At that meeting, we were 'busy beavers' packing the goody bags for the Breakfast with Santa on December 2. Thanks everyone for a great time serving our Lord together!



We also made decisions for our Christmas Giving and do our other end of year planning, as well as enjoy and have fellowship with one another.

We will not meet again until March or April, depending on the weather. Please plan to attend.

As always, please remember our homebound members. At this time of year, these St. Paul's Warriors especially need our caring, cards, thoughts and prayers. A list of homebound members can be found posted on the 2nd floor bulletin board right off the elevator.

In His Love,
June Y. Smith & Dottie Drumheller



Women's Retreat



The St. Paul's UCC Women's Retreat is back and scheduled for March 2024!

The Retreat, scheduled for Friday, March 8 to Sunday, March 10, will be held at Hartman Lodge (formerly Michaux Lodge) at Hartman Center Campground.

The focus for this retreat will be about Finding Joy and will include time for Prayer and Devotions, Crafts, Outdoor Activities as weather allows, Food, and Fun throughout the weekend.

The cost for lodging at the retreat is \$135 for the weekend per person. Closer to the time, we'll meet together and discuss food and program options.

If you are interested, please contact Dani Fair at 717.664.4332 or by email at danif2710@gmail.com.

Payment is due before January 1, 2024.

Inclement Weather Information

In case of inclement weather, be sure to call the church office at 717.665.2447 (after 8 am on Sundays) for service or event changes or cancelations.

Postings will be on WGAI, WGAL.com, and our website, www.stpaulsuccmanheim.org.

Sermons and bulletins will always be available on the website.



Missions

The December Mission of the Month is Teen Central.

Teen Central provides Manheim Central kids a safe and attractive youth facility with volunteers and staff oversight. Christian volunteers engage the students as mentors and positive role models. And there are many social events, like Fall Fest, that foster positive relationships and healthy behavior. All this while learning life skills and having spiritual input. Please use your December special envelope to support Teen Central. For more information, go to www.teencentralmanheim.org.

The January Mission of the Month is UCC Homes. UCC Homes has been providing gracious retirement living in the south central PA area since 1965. A full continuum of care is available for people of all faiths and life experiences. UCC Homes is a non-profit organization that focuses on creating a comfortable, caring and productive lifestyle for their residents. Please use your January special envelopes to support UCC Homes.

Food Pantry Update

The Manheim Central Food Pantry, located at 334 West Gramby Street in Manheim, is available for assistance to anyone living in the Manheim Central School District. Registered clients receive food and personal care items once each month based on family size.

In October, 182 total households were served with 529 individuals served. New Households totaled 24 with 77 new individuals.

If you need food assistance, please call Ruth Ellen Brown, Client Coordinator at 717.664.1097. She



is available to take calls on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9 am-2 pm. You must register first, using a valid photo ID. The Food Pantry is open on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th Mondays and Thursdays of each month from 11 am-1 pm and the 3rd Thursday evening from 5-7 pm.

Items needed for the Food Pantry include:

- Boxed Rice (no bags)
- Applesauce
- Canned Potatoes
- Canned Pasta (i.e. Ravioli)
- Spam
- Dry Pasta
- Rice/Pasta Sides
- Soup
- Diapers
- Plastic & Resusable Grocery Bags

Please drop your donations off on first floor near the kitchen - please use the shopping basket for your donations. Any items donated through the church will be taken to the pantry.



FREE Breakfast

The next FREE Community Breakfast will be held on Saturday, December 2 with the Santa Breakfast from 9-10 am in Fellowship Hall. That breakfast will feature pancakes with sausage.

The January breakfast will be held on Saturday, January 20 from 8:30-10 am with the menu to be determined.

For more information about the breakfast or to serve at the breakfast, please contact Sandy Bareford at 717.341.5931 or at sandybareford@gmail.com.



Bible Study

In mid January, we will begin "Praising God through Prayer and Worship" a study by Kay Arthur and Pete DeLacy, of the psalms on Wednesday nights starting @ 6:30 pm. All are welcome!

Book Club

Book Club will be held next on Monday, February 5, 2024 in Fellowship Hall. *Here I Stand, a Life of Martin Luther* by Roland H. Bainton will be the focus of our discussion. Books are now available. Pick up yours on the table outside the church office today!

Council Highlights

Church Council met on Tuesday, November 21, 2023 @ 6 pm. Please note these highlights are shared before the minutes are approved by council at their next meeting, when corrections to details may occur.

Endowment/Memorial Report: The Endowment Fund is down \$14,000 year to date – hopefully November will be better re: stock market activity.

Treasurer's Report:

Benevolence: \$980 was received for the October Mission of the Month, Church World Services' Blanket Appeal and \$280 so far was received for Manheim Central Backpack Program in October.

Operating: Current expense income was up in October. Pam Herman created event reports with a cost analysis for events held for better accountability.

Capital: Improvements on the rear rental property porch are needed. There are sewer and cistern issues as well.

Plate Cash Giving is down \$14,000 from last year in total giving.

Pastor's Report: Communion services @ Pleasant View included 12 members who are residents and as many as 4 others.

Committee Reports:

Property Board has 2 ac units that will be placed on Facebook Marketplace to sell. A church member requested to have the one unit and because of their donated time making improvements on the church property, council agreed to donate that unit as a gift to him. Council also approved work on removal of the 2 trees and stumps at the front of the property to prepare for the window work in the spring of 2024.

Old Business: Carolyn Peters has agreed to join council in March 2024.

New Business: A new trash removal service company was approved by council. The 2024 budget was approved to go to the congregation in December.

Next meeting date is Tuesday, December 19, 2023 @ 7 pm with Spiritual Council meeting @ 6:30 pm.

Council packets are posted on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall, in the 2nd floor hallway and in the church office. If you would like a copy of the minutes to review, please contact the church office at 717.665.2447.



From the Church Office

Pastoral Care: If you or a member you know is hospitalized or are in crisis, please notify the church office at 717.665.2447 during weekday hours, or for **emergency** weekends, please call the church and leave a message. Messages are monitored daily and your call will be returned shortly.

Address/Email/Phone

Changes: Please contact the church office at 717.665.2447 if your address, email address, phone number or family situation changes so that we can keep our records most up to date. Please note that now you can update your information directly through Instant Church Directory – call the church office to learn more.

Giving Changes: If you would like to receive giving envelopes, would like to change to direct withdrawal giving and no longer need envelopes, or would no longer like to receive envelopes, please contact the church office at 717.665.2447.

Thank you & have a Blessed Christmas & New Year!

2024 Budget Info



Budget Info



The proposed 2024 budget was presented to Church Council and approved on November 21. As a result, a **Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, December 17, 2023** following worship for congregational approval.

New 2024 Giving Envelopes will be here on December 3! If you would like to receive envelopes or wish to change to direct withdrawals, please let us know!

Annual Report Information is due to the Church Office by Friday, January 5, 2024.

And finally, thank you for your continued support to St. Pauls UCC!

December 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 5:00pm Decorating Party	2 9:00am Santa Breakfast 
3 Advent 1 9:30am One Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour	4 7:00pm Property Board	5	6 6:30pm Bible Study 7:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	7 5:30pm Simply Yoga 7:00pm Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm AA Meeting @ Zion Lutheran	8	9
10 Advent 2 9:30am One Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour	11	12	13 6:30pm Bible Study	14 5:30pm Simply Yoga 7:00pm Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm AA Meeting @ Zion Lutheran	15	16
17 Advent 3 9:30am One Worship 10:30am Congregational Budget Meeting	18	19 6:15pm Spiritual Council 7:00pm Church Council	20 1:30pm Pleasant View Communion 6:30pm Bible Study 7:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	21 5:30pm Simply Yoga 7:00pm AA Meeting @ Zion Lutheran 7:00pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	22	23
24 Advent 4 Christmas Eve 9:30am One Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour 7:00pm Christmas Eve Worship 11:00pm Christmas Eve Worship	25 Christmas Day - Office Closed 	26	27	28 5:30pm Simply Yoga 7:00pm AA Meeting @ Zion Lutheran 7:00pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	29	30
31 Christmas 1 11:00am One Worship 12:00pm New Years Pork & Sauerkraut Dinner						

January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Happy New Year! Office Closed 	2	3 6:30pm Bible Study	4 5:30pm Simply Yoga 7:00pm Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm AA Meeting @ Zion Lutheran	5 Deadline for Annual Report Info to Church Office	6
7 Baptism of Our Lord 9:30am One Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour	8	9 6:00pm Manheim Women's Club	10 6:30pm Bible Study	11 7:00pm AA Meeting @ Zion Lutheran 7:00pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	12	13
14 Epiphany2 9:30am One Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour	15 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	16 6:15pm Spiritual Council 7:00pm Church Council	17 6:30pm Pleasant View Communion 6:30pm Bible Study	18 7:00pm AA Meeting @ Zion Lutheran 7:00pm Bell Choir Rehearsal	19	20 8:30am FREE Community Breakfast
21 Epiphany3 9:30am One Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour	22	23	24 6:30pm Bible Study	25 7:00pm Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm AA Meeting @ Zion Lutheran	26	27
28 Epiphany4 9:30am One Worship 10:30am Annual Congregational Meeting	29	30	31 6:30pm Bible Study			

WINTER

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Blessings to all those
celebrating a Winter
Birthday or
Anniversary!

Worship Attendance

10/29 – 136

11/5 – 97

11/12 – 102

11/19 – 94

11/22 – 52

11/26 – 86

Attendance = in person & online

Christian Symbols



ROSE — This flower, often shown as stylized artwork, is a symbol for Advent, the promise of the Messiah and Jesus' nativity. A white rose represents the Virgin Mary, and a red rose stands for martyrs. A wreath of roses symbolizes heavenly joy.



Requests for Prayer

For prayer requests, please contact Joan Hess at 717.665.4705. Our homebound members will remain on the list permanently as a reminder to keep these individuals wrapped in prayer and to remember them with cards, phone calls, and visits.

Susan Gates

Nancy Gobble

Bev Hockenberry

Jere Hoffman

Kenneth Hontz

Jim & Mary Long

Maybelle Martin

Jane Moyle

Glen & Delores Mumma

Terry Myers

Andre Ressler

Michael Shelley

Julia Shreiner

Eric Smeltz

Linda Coe*

Charles Lukeski*

Rachel Martin*

Richard Moyle & Linda Shoemaker

Burt Savitz

Bob & Joanna Schreiber

Phyllis Smeltz

Menno Stoner

Bible2School Kids

Teen Central Kids

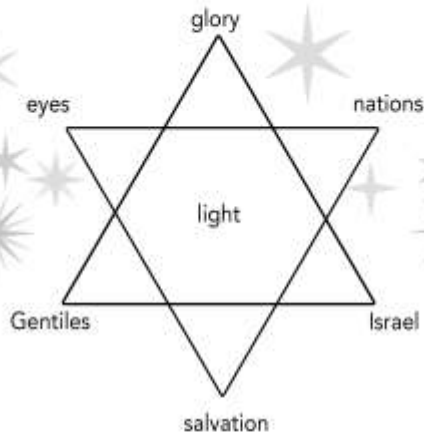
In the Military: Jessie Dutt



SIMEON'S SIGHT

When Joseph and Mary brought baby Jesus to the temple, they heard a special prophecy from Simeon.

Directions: Using the star key, write the words in the correct spaces to complete Luke 2:30-32, NIV.



"For my _____ have seen your _____, which you have prepared
in the sight of all _____: a _____ for revelation to the
_____, and the _____ of your people _____."

Luke 2:30-32, NIV

Answers: eyes, salvation, nations, light, Gentiles, glory, Israel



NEW YEAR'S NOISE-MAKERS

Ring in the New Year with these fun noisemakers!



What you need:

- Wooden craft sticks
- Metallic paint (gold and silver)
- Paint brushes
- Jingle bells (gold and silver)
- Hot glue gun
- Metallic ribbon
- Scissors
- Adult help

What you do:

1. Paint half the sticks gold and half silver. Let dry.
2. Glue three bells to each stick.
3. Cut a six-inch piece of ribbon for each stick. Tie a bow and glue it to the noisemaker. Celebrate!



Souper Bowl Collection - Let's Keep Feeding the 5,000



In Matthew 13, we learn how Jesus was able to feed the 5,000 with 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish. What a great miracle! Jesus' miracle to feed the 5,000 continues to this day as many have been fed by the church at large through food banks, food collections, and free meals.

In January 2023, St. Paul's & Zion Lutheran in Manheim competed to see which church could collect the most soup cans for Souper Bowl Sunday and St. Paul's collected over 400 cans of soup to feed those in need in Manheim.

This year, the challenge is even bigger – all the churches that participate in the Manheim Ministerium will join together with a goal to collect over

5,000 cans of soup to benefit the Manheim Central Food Pantry. We need your help to make collecting 5,000 cans a reality. The Souper Bowl soup collection will begin in mid-January, so start collecting your soups to donate now. All soup cans will be accepted, except tomato soup as the food pantry already has a large stock of tomato soup. Together, with your help we can make a difference through the love of Christ to feed 5,000 right here in Manheim!

Thank You Note

Dear St. Paul's Family: Thank you for remembering me with cards and well wishes for my 99th birthday. It was a special day! – Evelyn Dutt

Communication Deadlines

St. Paul's Happenings is printed monthly except for the July/August and the December/January combined issues. The deadline to submit articles is the 3rd Sunday of the month before publication. **The February 2024 Issue deadline is Sunday, January 21, 2024.** Bulletin announcements are due to the church office by Wednesday mornings @ 8 am. Thank you for respecting the deadlines and making our newsletter a great read for all!



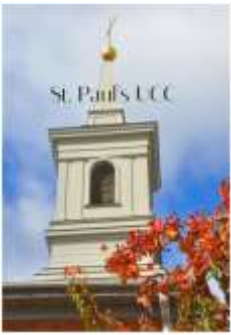
St. Paul's Staff & Leaders

Staff:

Pastor – The Rev. Bill Long
Church Administrator – Pam Herman
Organist – June Smith
Chancel Choir Director – John Degler
Bell Choir Director – Jim Hoffman
Praise Team Coordinator – Steve Smith
Custodian – Mark Lowe
Kitchen Managers – Sandy Bareford & Jerry Weller

Council:

Ministers – All Church Members
Karen Brandt – President
Lynn Brewer
Rick Conley – Vice President
Ron Forry – Assistant Treasurer
Mike Givler - Secretary
David Ludwig
Gretchen Miller – Treasurer
Non-voting Ex-Officio Member by Position:
The Rev. Bill Long, Pastor



St. Paul's United Church of Christ

50 N. Main Street, P. O. Box 129

Manheim, PA 17545

Phone: 717.665.2447

www.StPaulsuccManheim.org

“BLESS US, LORD,

this Christmas, with quietness of
mind; teach us to be patient and
always to be kind.”

—Helen Steiner Rice