



ST. PAUL'S
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

THE EPISTLE

DECEMBER 2015

A STORY OF HOPE



Advent is a season of preparation for the Coming of Christ into the world. During the four weeks preceding Christmas, we prepare for the celebration of the birth of Jesus and Christ's anticipated coming again in the fullness of time. The word "Advent" comes from the Latin *adventus*, which translates to "coming." Traditionally, Advent was a penitential season similar to Lent. Today, most Christians observe this season with anticipation, hope, and ultimately joy as we prepare for Christmas. But not all of us experience this season in the same way.

We can enter into this season like children with the expectation of something mysterious and beautiful happening again, or we can also enter into it with a measure of "adult" anxiety. I see that in my house: my wife, Kathryn gets all kinds of excited and gets "out of control" with all the baking, decorating, and Christmas music blaring. Me? I am quite the other way: anxious because there is so much to do, so little time left, so much need, such high expectations!

Let me suggest that both of those approaches are appropriate in their own way. It IS a time of great beauty and expectation; it is also a time we may not feel ready for. May-

be we are anxious, still mourning a loss, struggling mightily with some challenge or obstacle. It is okay to feel either way. I invite you to an Advent for the child in all of us, and for the "grown-up" in us as well. During this season, we have the opportunity to honor traditions and to find renewed inspiration.

Last year during Advent we looked at traditions from around the world. Some of these were heartwarming, and others were foreign. This year, we will look at the first chapters in each of the four Gospels, reflecting on these familiar (to some) stories in new ways. We will light the candles of our Advent wreath each Sunday, representing Hope, Peace, Joy and Love, and on Christmas Eve we will light the Christ Candle. We will sing the hymns and carols we've come to know and love, and we'll have opportunities to learn new songs and new liturgical practices. We have some wonderful programs and ministry plans for all God's Children. Wherever this season finds you, may you find it a holy one where we might catch a glimpse of the Christ who comes again into our lives.

The Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love of Christ be yours this Advent.

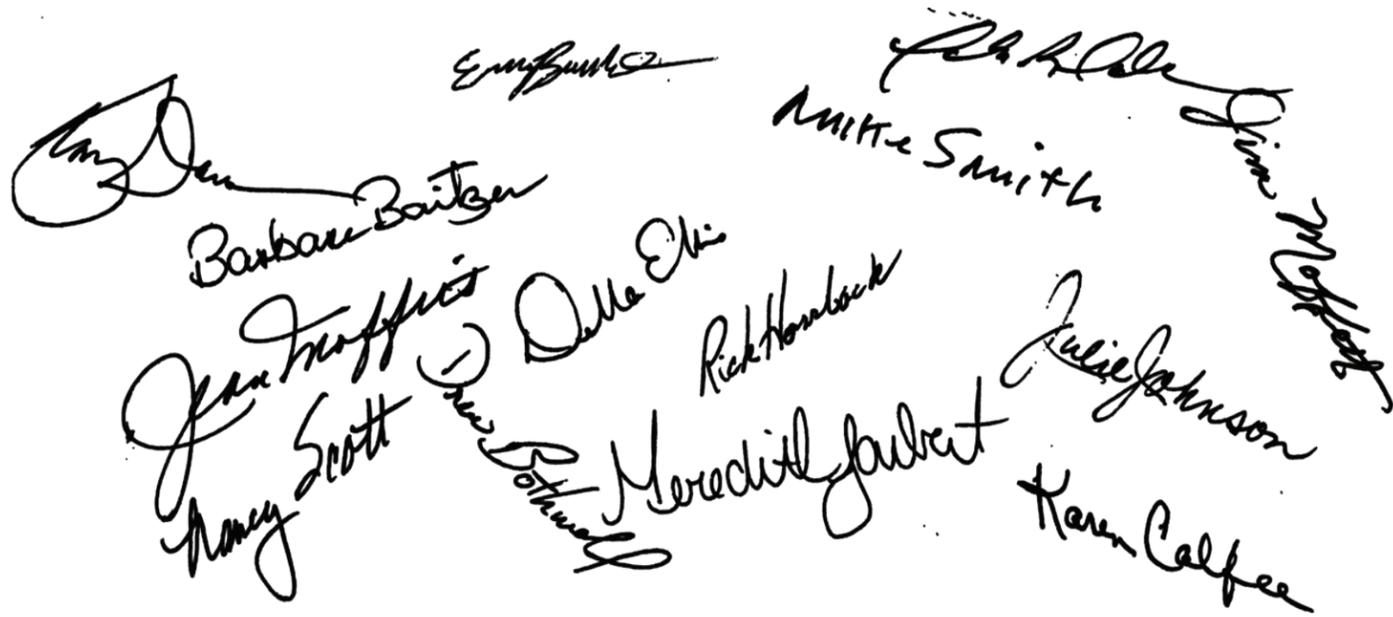
-Pastor Tony

"We are called to be a community of generosity and love where we invite others to join us in becoming disciples of Jesus Christ for the good of the world."

INSIDE >>> HARPFUSION CONCERT | CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

AT THE GATE

Merry Christmas from all of your staff here at St. Paul's, doing our best to keep Christ in Christmas...and every other moment!


 Amy De... Barbara Baitzen
 Jean Trapp... Nancy Scott
 Della Ellis Rick Hornback
 Meredith Gilbert Julie Johnson
 Karen Calfee



Department Welcome Letter

Hello from Carrol McLaughlin and Kelly Harris. Every Saturday one of us is on our St. Paul's campus, teaching harp to the fantastic young students who form a part of the St. Paul's HarpChoir. Each child that enrolls in the program receives a harp to take home and practice on. This also allows them to play for Grandparents, at schools and volunteer environments such as hospitals and Kairos Outside. A myriad of wonderful opportunities open up for these harpists and allow them to feel spectacular about themselves and their gifts. In the program, we provide all the music the harpists study, and much of it is original music written by Carrol. In 2014, a method book was published, "I am Wonderful!" which is a compilation of the music written for the St. Paul's students with the addition of original compositions written by the students themselves. In addition to learning to play harp and performing in regular concerts and services throughout the year, harp students study how to present themselves in front of the public, how to speak with authority and confidence from the stage, and how to incorporate discipline and commitment to all their activities.

Contact Information

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UPCOMING IN WORSHIP



December 6th- "I Believe, Even When..."
Part 2: I Believe in the Sun

Luke 1:26-31

When things that seem irreparable happen in our lives, how can we turn perceived doom into a belief into an opportunity for rebirth?



December 13th- "I Believe, Even When..."
Part 3: I Believe in Love

Matthew 1:18-23

Perhaps we can heed the angel's words for letting go into God's possibilities for all of our relationships.



December 20th- "I Believe, Even When..."
Part 4: "I Believe in the Promise of the Incarnation"

John 1:1-5

In this last week of Advent, our anticipation for the light is palpable. What is this growing within us?



December 24th (Christmas Eve)- "Coming Unplugged"

Luke 2:1-20

Welcome in the joy of Christ's birth at one of our four Christmas Eve services: 11:00am (Traditional), 5:00pm (Children's Nativity), 7:00pm (with Grace Multiplied), and 11:00pm (Candlelight and Communion).



December 25th- Christmas Day

10:30am Worship in the Sanctuary

11:15am Coffee and Donuts in Brummet Hall



December 27th- Boxing Day

Worship at 8:00am and 10:30am

Pack-A-Thon at 11:30am in the Life Center

PHOTO GALLERY



Hosanna Children's Choir



Halloween Daze 2015



Merv and Sandy Cannon- Veteran's Luncheon



Scott Miller- Veteran's Luncheon



October 4th Children's Sermon



Who could it be? (Halloween Daze 2015)



Trunk or Treat! (Halloween Daze 2015)



Claudia Perry and Joan Meyer



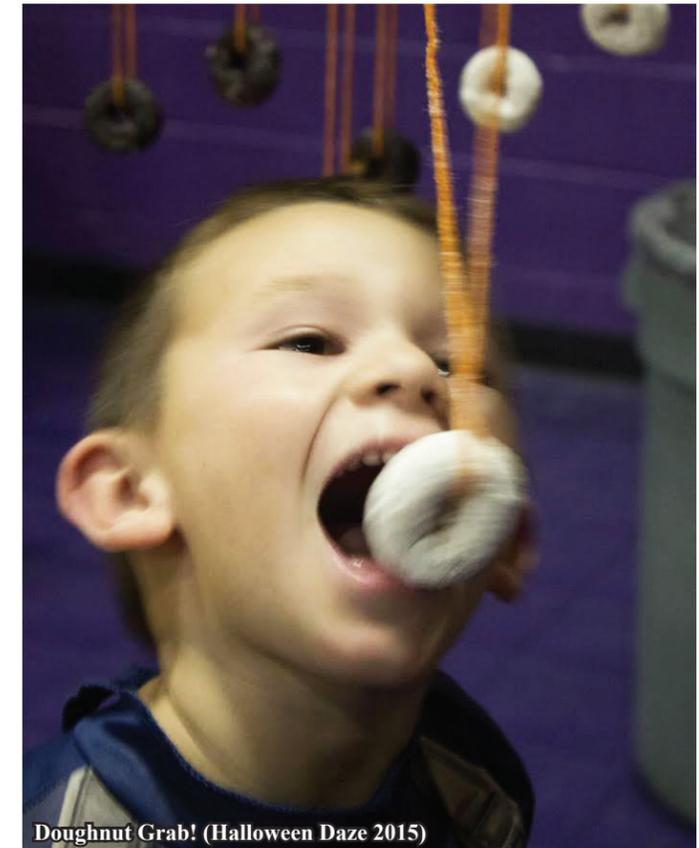
Veteran's Luncheon



Veteran's Luncheon



Davis Monthan Honor Guard (Veteran's Luncheon)



Doughnut Grab! (Halloween Daze 2015)



October 4th Children's Sermon



October 4th Children's Sermon



Rich and Susi Rubendall (Veteran's Luncheon)

ST. PAUL'S COMMUNITY MISSION

'Tis the time for giving...

What a blessed time of the year; time with family and friends, decorating our trees and homes and most importantly the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. We just finished a month of gratitude and now we have opportunities to put our gratitude into action. If you are looking for ways to give from your heart, here are several opportunities:

***** Christmas Food Boxes** - How about signing up to put together a food box to help needy families at Dietz, Henry and Robles Elementary Schools? *Contact Genita at (520)-296-7960, Cheryl at (520)-886-4804, or Janet at (520)-850-4332*

***** John Dean Town** - Stop by the John Dean Town Table during Advent on Sunday mornings and purchase handmade scarves, totes and other beautiful gift items. The items are all high quality and will make great Christmas presents. They were mostly made by St. Paul's volunteers. All money raised will be given to John Dean Town to pay for teachers' salaries and other expenses for the schools. *Contact Tommy Sanford at (520)-529-0451*

***** Upward Sports** - How about signing up to be a coach, assistant coach, referee or score keeper for the Winter Season for Upward Sports Basketball? The number of children who want to play basketball or cheerlead continues to grow and we simply need more adults. Isn't this a positive challenge to have as a community wanting to make a difference to our neighbors? *Contact Rick Hornback at (520)-909-9564*

***** Christmas Caroling** - Our Youth will be caroling on December 22 meeting at St. Paul's at 5:30 PM. Please join our youth and make a difference to others! Afterwards, we will all be meeting for hot cocoa and cookies. *Contact Drew Bothwell at (520)-971-3815*

***** Children's Nativity** - Mark your calendar for 5:00 PM on December 24 at St. Paul's for our Children's Nativity. All children are welcome. No practice necessary, just smiling faces. *Contact Meredith Joubert at (520)-296-6149*

***** 50,000 Meal Pack-a-Thon** - Our St. Paul's tradition on the Sunday after Christmas is to feed the hungry. This year all 50,000 meals will be donated locally given the great need in Tucson. We are looking for 42 leaders and 400 volunteers to package 50,000 meals in 1-1.5 hours. Please commit to participating as a leader, expeditor, packer, sanitation volunteer or kitchen helper. There is so much to do as we prepare for December 27. Please let us know as soon as possible if you are interested in participating. Also during Advent, you can purchase meals to honor others this Christmas. What a memorable way to say Merry Christmas to that person who has everything. *Contact Nancy Scott at (520)-204-2500*

***** Volunteers Luncheon** - January is our time to catch our breath and thank all the wonderful volunteers this past year. This luncheon is planned for January 16; please join us. *Contact Jim Mof-fett (520)-954-2884*



We pray that you will be moved to help make a difference to others this Christmas Season.

A STORY OF HOPE

One day Carrol McLaughlin received a fascinating phone call in her University of Arizona teaching studio. It was a mother, who shared with Carrol a poignant story. Her daughter, Courtney, had been diagnosed with Spinal Meningitis and had spent from age 6 to 8 in a Tucson hospital. The disease had crippled the child, who was unable to walk or feed herself. Gradually Courtney regained her strength and one day was again able to get out of bed and walk by herself. Beside the bed was her small harp, which Courtney had played before her illness.

According to her mother, Courtney went immediately to the harp and played the same piece she had played before the onset of the disease – and she played it exactly the same way. Somehow the harp music had remained with the child when all other motor skills had disappeared. Courtney became a student of Carrol's, and eventually advanced to a pedal harp.



Courtney wanted her small harp to be passed on to others, to help inspire them to believe in themselves and overcome any obstacles.

That harp was the first harp donated to St Paul's, and the St. Paul's United Methodist HarpChoir was born in February, 2006. The HarpChoir now boasts 15 harpists. Our students have achieved many honors. They perform regularly at St. Paul's and at Kairos Outside. Raelyn Kanak, one of the original students in the group, was featured on the Jerry Lewis Telethon playing her harp and inspiring thousands. On Sunday, December 13 at 11am and 5:30pm the group will join University of Arizona's HarpFusion in presenting, "A Great Day!" with joyous, inspiring music celebrating the Christmas season.

A Unique Way to Appreciate Someone Special

Again this year you will have the opportunity to remember, honor or thank someone special by purchasing Christmas poinsettia plants. The price is \$7.00 per plant; donations may, however, be in any amount. Orders must be received by Monday, December 14, to be listed in the bulletin on Sunday, December 20! If you would like to order a plant(s) please provide the following information, along with your check, by placing it in the offering plate, taking it to the church office during the week, or mailing it to St. Paul's UMC.

***** Name of person(s)**

***** Whether they are being honored, remembered, or thanked**

***** Your name(s)**

***** Your contact phone number**

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**WORSHIP
SUNDAY SERVICES**

8:00 A.M.
Traditional

9:30 A.M.
Contemporary

11:00 A.M.
Traditional



SAVE THE DATES

- **UMW Christmas Coffee - 12/1**
9:30 am; Brummet Hall
- **HarpFusion Christmas Concert - 12/13**
11:00 am, 5:00 pm; Sanctuary
- **Christmas Eve Potluck - 12/24**
12:30 pm; Life Center
- **Christmas Day Worship - 12/25**
10:30 am; Sanctuary
- **Pack-a-Thon Leader Training - 12/26**
2:00 pm; Life Center
- **50,000 Meal Pack-a-Thon - 12/27**
11:30 am; Life Center
- **Volunteers Luncheon - 1/16**
Life Center

Christmas Eve Services

- **Traditional Christmas Eve Service**
11:00 am; Sanctuary
- **Family Nativity Service**
5:00 pm; Sanctuary
- **Contemporary Christmas Eve Service**
7:00 pm; Sanctuary
- **Candlelight Service**
11:00 pm; Sanctuary

For more details on upcoming events, visit www.stpaulsumctucson.org.