

The Epistle of St. Paul's

October 2020

In This Issue

Page 1

From the Pastor's Desk

Pages 2-5

Church and Community

Page 6

Birthdays

Preaching Schedule

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

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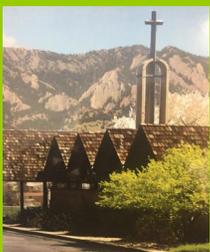
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From The Pastor's Desk...

"I met those of our society who had votes in the ensuing election and advised them: 1. To vote, without fee or reward, for the person they judged most worthy; 2. To speak no evil of the person they voted against; and 3. To take care their spirits were not sharpened against those that voted on the other side."

— John Wesley, Journal entry for October 6, 1774

As a pastor I have always tried to steer clear of political statements. I do have political beliefs and have always participated in the democratic process as a registered voter (I have only missed one election, for Sewer Board in Spartanburg, South Carolina, in 1989). Once, when living in McCamey, Texas, I even ran for school board (losing by one vote).

One of my seminary professors once remarked that two of the darkest days in the history of the church was the day when Constantine said Christianity was okay (in 311) and the day when Theodosius I made it the official religion of the empire (in 380). But as a pastor, I have frequently found myself hesitant to comment openly on the affairs of the day for fear of offending members of my parish. I know that there are differences of opinion on most, if not all, matters of public policy, even here at St. Paul's.

And yet. We find ourselves, as Christians have always lived, in a world where our faith must inform our secular beliefs and positions. We may disagree on which laws to enact, which candidate is best able to meet the needs of society, or which issues should take priority. But what we cannot do is abdicate our responsibility to engage in the work of transforming the world through our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. There is ample evidence of Christians who have used religion as a weapon, doing harm to God's creation and bringing shame to the gospel. We may feel that the church has no place in politics or that Christians should just stick to spiritual matters and leave the rough and tumble of civic affairs to "the world." But I believe that this attitude is wrong.

As an American, I am able to express opinions and participate in the system, advocating for my personal beliefs and preferences. As a pastor I am sent by the bishop to lead the church through word, order, and table. As a Christian, I am first and foremost a citizen of Christ's kingdom and thus my allegiance to his reign must take precedence over any entity here on earth.

So, as a fellow American, I ask that you participate in helping your country to achieve its highest ideals through your participation in society. As your pastor, I ask you to commit yourself to your baptismal vows. I ask you, my siblings in Christ, to pledge your full allegiance to His kingdom.

As citizens of this nation, E Pluribus Unum. As the members and friends of the St. Paul's UMC faith community, we can achieve more together than we can alone. Through Christ we can live in the realization of the kingdom of God in this life.

Every blessing, Pastor Charles

COVID-19 Update

COVID-19 continues to impact every aspect of our society. Here at St. Paul's UMC, we are using the (re)Launch plan as a roadmap of sorts to use as we continue to discern our best response to the ongoing pandemic. For the time being, and for the foreseeable future, we will continue to meet for worship, fellowship, learning, and meetings via Zoom.

Lunch Bunch will meet on Thursday, October 1, at 11:45 on the church lawn, depending on the weather. Join us for a lot of fun and good conversation.

2021 Stewardship Campaign Begins...

With fall coming on and most people's thoughts turning to changing colors and cooler days your Finance Team begins to think about next year's budget. The first step in this process is a Stewardship Campaign to determine how much income we may expect from the congregation in terms of pledges. These make up about 80% of church income. You'll see some people talking about giving at church in coming weeks and more outreach from the Finance Team. We hope to have pledges in by the end of October. Please begin to prayerfully consider how much you can pledge to support St. Paul's and the wider United Methodist Church next year.

—Bob Muckle

Mountain Sky Conference United Methodist Women Annual Meeting via Zoom

October 23, 2020: 2:00 pm - 8:30 pm

October 24, 2020: 8:30 am - 4:00 pm

Theme: Gathering at The Crossroads: Ignited in Action

You're Invited! You're invited to participate in the entire annual gathering, which includes worship, training, and fun times with your UMW Sisters. However, we understand if you cannot commit to attending everything. If that is the case, you can schedule your attendance for only the specific activities/events you find of interest. **Hope to see you there!**

Specific program information is listed on the registration form:

http://www.mtnskyumw.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/MSA-Annual-Gathering-registration_revised-8-28-20.pdf

Registration Deadline: October 20, 2020

Please mail completed registration form to Lora Fulton, Registrar, 1710 Dogwood Ct, Broomfield, Colorado 80020.

Or register online at <https://form.jotform.com/201501210605131>

Advent Kickoff—Curbside at St. Paul’s

Mark your calendars! St. Paul’s is launching into Advent with a curbside drop-off/pick-up on Monday, November 23, and Tuesday, November 24. Stay in your car. Contact free!

You can...

- Drop off donations for the Mitten Tree to give to the un-housed in Boulder. (Watch for the Mitten Tree song during worship on November 8!)
- Drop off donations for EFAA food bank
- Pick up your Advent devotional (See below!)
- Pick up a gift bag from Pastor Charles and Belinda (Including your countdown candle, see below)
- Receive a plate of Christmas cookies baked by St. Paul’s talented bakers

We can’t gather to together to “hang the greens” this year, but we can still give and receive the gifts of the season.

If you can’t stop by yourself for this curbside event, we can deliver to you. Volunteers needed for contact-free home deliveries. Contact the office.

Advent and Christmas Devotional

It’s time for the second annual Advent/Christmas devotional! This year’s theme is *The Promise of Advent: A Journey to Bethlehem and Beyond*. Pastor Charles invites us to consider our faith journey and the people, places, and events that have shaped us. Printed copies of the devotional will be available at the Advent Curbside Kickoff (see above). We will post daily devotional entries on the blog and on our Facebook page each day of Advent (November 29 – December 24) and continuing on the Twelve Days of Christmas, concluding on the Day of Epiphany (January 6).

Like last year, members and friends of St. Paul’s UMC are asked to participate in this effort. The devotional will also have entries for the **Twelve Days of Christmas** (December 25-January 5th) and **Epiphany Day** (January 6th) that will be prepared by Pastor Charles.

Deadline to be submit is October 31.

Questions to Prompt Your Thinking

What memories do you recall that speak about what the coming of the Christ child means to you? Are there gifts, given or received, that remind you of why we share with one another? What gift would you have given Jesus if you had made the journey to Bethlehem with the Magi? Is there a character in the gospel account that that you’ve seen in others in your life? What are the aromas that serve to recall Advent/Christmases past?

Write a one or two paragraph reflection. Submit it to the office by October 31, either in writing or via email.

On the first Sunday in Advent, folks will be invited to “turn on” their Advent-countdown-candles during our Zoom worship service. Everyone who picks up a gift bag from the Alkulas (see above) will receive one LED candle with a countdown to Christmas label on it and a special marker to use on the label while counting the days of Advent.

Loving God & Creating Hope & Changing Lives

Reconciling Statement Survey

Reconciling Ministries Team appreciates everyone's input and support as we ask ourselves "Should St. Paul's become a reconciling community?" The Reconciling Ministries Team has drafted a reconciling statement for the congregation to consider (below). Please review it and give us your feedback. Submit the print version below by mail (to the church office) or complete the survey online: <https://forms.gle/Zotsv3Sjaf7EPTV7> **The deadline to submit your response is October 4.**

St. Paul's Reconciling Survey

St. Paul's Reconciling Ministries Team would like your feedback on this potential statement: "St. Paul's UMC welcomes and celebrates people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions" Based on your feedback in this informal survey, we may revise the proposed statement. THIS SURVEY IS NOT A VOTE TO ADOPT THE STATEMENT.

If a vote were held today on the above statement, how would you respond? (You may check multiple.)

- "Yes" wholeheartedly!
- "Yes", but I would appreciate more information.
- "Yes", but I would appreciate more scriptural engagement.
- "No", I would never support such a statement.
- I'm not sure...
- No, because...

If you answered "I'm not sure because..." or "No, because...", please explain why.

Do you have any suggestions for revising the statement?

Any other comments:

If you would like to identify yourself, you may put your name here:

We have compiled a list of **Frequently Asked Questions** at <https://tinyurl.com/reconcilingfaq>

Church Vitality Zoominars from the Mountain Sky Conference

Register at <https://mtnsky-reg.brtaapp.com/Vitalconversations2020>

Wed. Oct. 7 - TBD

Wed. Oct. 14 - Sharing Ministry in Covid-19 Era

Wed. Oct. 21 - TBD

Wed. Oct. 28 - Rethinking Outreach for Digital Ministry

Wed. Nov. 4 - Everyday Inclusion with ready-to-use videos

9 Simple Things You Can Do to Help Protect the Earth

1. Put on a sweater. Remember, when you turn up the heat in wintertime, your furnace is probably burning fossil fuels. A sweater or a nice warm robe will keep you even warmer and will help conserve resources and reduce climate change.
2. Put one foot in front of the other. One hundred years ago, 99.9% of people got by without cars. They took the train. They lived near their workplaces. And they walked. Using fuel-efficient cars is important, but we can save even more fuel by simply driving less.
3. Go for seconds. Recycling doesn't mean only separating your cans and bottles. It can mean using things a second (or a third) time. For example, that padded envelope you got in the mail? Instead of throwing it away, scratch out the address, tear off the stamps, and use it again.
4. Watch your waste. Items you may be throwing away can contaminate the soil and water for thousands or millions of years. Your community probably has special disposal procedures for things like used oil and batteries. Ink cartridges can probably be recycled where you bought them. And many of the new superefficient lightbulbs contain mercury, so proper disposal is crucial. Check with the store where you buy them.
5. Paper nor plastic. Take your bags with you. By taking reusable bags to the grocery store, you can cut down on the 350 bags the average American uses each year and reduce needless deaths of marine life caused by plastic bags that end up in streams, rivers, and oceans.
6. BYOB. Last year, Americans went through about 50 billion plastic water bottles. Fill up a reusable water bottle at home and take it with you. Don't like the taste of your tap water? Buy a filter! (Remember, much of the bottled water sold today is filtered tap water anyway.)
7. Flip 'em off. In much of America, we can't even see the stars anymore, due in part to all the electric lights. Keep the light on in the room you're in but keep the rest of your house dark. You'll find the dark is soothing.
8. Get in touch with your roots. Plant a tree! It's good for the soil, good for the birds, good for reducing climate change – and good for the air you're breathing!
9. Get off. Catalogs are great when they are from companies you like to order from. But if you're getting catalogs from companies you don't buy from, call them and tell them to get you off their list – and that's an order.

—From World Wildlife Fund, worldwildlife.org

Loving God & Creating Hope & Changing Lives

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

10-1 Joey Vandervorste
10-2 Braden Nunnery
10-11 Etta Levitt
10-18 Debbie Berlin
10-23 Martha Batch
10-24 Glenn Perkins
10-25 Gregory Wahl
10-26 Dan Daniels
10-26 Polly Stowe
10-26 Melissa Sullivan
10-29 Molly Nunnery
10-30 Belinda Alkula



OCTOBER PREACHING SCHEDULE

Worship Sundays at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom

October 4
"Only ten?"

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20
VIRTUAL COMMUNION

October 11
"Forty million reasons but not a single excuse"
Philippians 4:1-9, Matthew 22:1-14

October 18
"Ring out the news!"
Matthew 22:15-22, 1 Thessalonians 1:1

October 25
"The purpose of our being here"
1 Thessalonians 2:1-8, Matthew 22:34-46

St. Paul's United Methodist Church
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Follow us:

Our website at

www.stpaulsboulder.com

Our blog at

bolderstpauls.blogspot.com

