

The Epistle of St. Paul's

October 2021

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St. Paul's United Methodist Church

4215 Grinnell Avenue

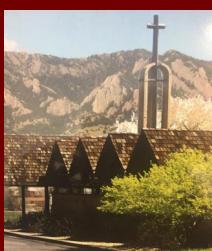
Boulder, CO 80305

303.494.0615

stpaulsboulder.com

bolderstpauls.blogspot.com

office@saintpaulsboulder.org



From The Pastor's Desk...

On October 22 & 23, the Mountain Sky Conference will gather to do the important work of the Annual Conference (AC). As was the case last year, AC 2021 will be all-virtual due to the ever-present consequences of the continuing pandemic in our midst. There will be routine business to conduct, including budgets, elections, and resolutions. There will be reports to receive, including announcing those among the clergy are retiring, those who have died in the past year, and those who are being commissioned or ordained.

What is not happening, again, is that there will be no action taken regarding the work of General Conference (GC). GC 2020 was initially delayed to September 2021 due to the global pandemic and then delayed again to 2022.

What had been anticipated is that final resolution would be taken regarding the subject of human sexuality, which has stirred and divided the denomination over the past fifty-nine years. Some are calling the likely outcome of the next GC (whenever it might next be held) a schism, and others are calling it a divorce. Regardless of what term is used, the likelihood of a radically different look to the denomination following the next GC is a foregone conclusion.

Already, there have been local congregations that have left the UMC because of disputes over sexuality. Some have left because the denomination is too slow to embrace the myriad of expressions regarding sexual orientations, identity, or expression, while others have left due to what are seen as norms that have become too loose. The Global Methodist Church has been launched as a conservative vision for Wesley's children, and there are United Methodist congregations and individuals who will leave to join this new denomination, including some right here in Colorado. What the denomination will look like when the dust settles is anyone's guess. The only thing I am sure of is that things will look different than they do now.

I raise this with you because I want us first to be informed and aware of the issues that are being discussed, and second because here at St. Paul's UMC, we will need to find out how we will express our faith as individuals and as a community of faith.

Questions for us to consider in the coming months include: Can the local church, and specifically St. Paul's UMC, still be relevant in the 21st century? Is the faith that has been part of our lives for so long able to offer something that we still need or has its shelf life expired? Do the teachings of the United Methodist Church still resonate with your personal understanding of the gospel? Where are you connected to the work of Christ in the life of your community? What does it mean to you to be a Christian? How do you understand words such as church, faith, religion, or spirituality?

These questions, along with others, must be part of our conversation so that when the moment of decision is upon us, we will be able to answer the call with clarity and the assurance of God's grace at work in our midst.

Every blessing, Pastor Charles

World Communion Sunday – October 3

“You are definitely my rock and my fortress. Guide me and lead me for the sake of Your good name!” –Psalm 31:3, CEB

Opportunities for higher education seem elusive when money is tight, but when students from around the world dream of going to college, we can do our part by giving generously to this day's special offering. How well do we nurture the students in our congregation to become leaders? What can we do better?

The United Methodist Church observes the first Sunday of October as World Communion Sunday. Your gifts provide scholarships for racial, ethnic, and international students, creating possibilities for mission and evangelism around the world and preparing people of color for leadership and ministry. Please give generously. Thank you!

Online Giving — Finance Q & A of the Month

A few people have asked how to make changes to their online giving. Because we are a full-service committee, we have the answer for you in an easy, step-by-step format! **This is how to make changes to your online giving:**

1. Go to <https://stpaulschurch.breezechms.com/login>. Then enter your username and password. If you have not signed up for a Breeze account, the financial secretary will have to make these changes for you. If so, contact the financial secretary with the specific details of the changes you would like to make (amount, frequency, specific fund, etc.).
2. Click on "Give Now" > "Recurring Gifts" (on the left).
3. Click "Show More Options"
4. Click "Change" next to the section you'd like to modify and make your desired changes.

To cancel or stop your online giving, follow these steps:

1. Go to <https://stpaulschurch.breezechms.com/login>. Then enter your username and password.
2. Navigate to "More" > "Contributions" > "Online Giving."
3. Towards the bottom of the page, you'll see the "Recurring" tab. Click on this tab.
4. Search for the donation you'd like to modify and click the amount.
5. Select "Stop Recurring Gift" at the bottom left of the Recurring Payment .

It's not too late to set up your Breeze account; email Martha and she can send you the link. As always, please let us know if you have any questions or concerns about online giving.

A memorial service for Wally Cleaveland will be held at St. Paul's on Saturday, October 9, at 10:30 a.m. All church family are welcome. Masks will be required. We will livestream the service via Zoom for those who cannot attend in person. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Paul's.

Ladies' Lunch Bunch will meet on Thursday, October 7, at Huckleberry's in Louisville at 11:45. Please let Joan Cooper know by October 5 if you are coming. Men's breakfast is **cancelled** this month for Wally Cleaveland's memorial service.

SUMMER WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP – FALL REUNION?

Several regular attendees of our Summer Book Group Zoom meeting have shown an interest in having one meeting, maybe in November, to share where we all are now, what's been happening with us in this ever-changing world – share our "weather reports," so to speak. We might even have time to talk about a good book we'd like to recommend, maybe even an idea for our 2022 summer meeting. Let me (judy38waller@gmail.com) know your thoughts about this. If there's enough interest, I'll get back to you about possible dates/times. Probably a Zoom meeting, but who knows?

Mountain Sky Conference UMW Annual Meeting

October 8-9

Register online at mtnskyum.org

On Friday, speakers will be zooming in to talk with us: missionaries, deaconesses, and representatives from UMW-supported National Mission Institutions. We'll conclude with a book review of "*Love is the Way: Holding on to Hope in Troubled Times*," by Bishop Curry.

On Saturday, the program will be presented by Rev. Nani Arning and Rev. Denise Bender. They are United Methodist deacons who founded a non-profit ministry consulting group called Sacred Stones Ministries, Inc. Their program will focus on soul care.

Please direct questions to Belinda Alkula (Belinda.Alkula@gmail.com or 303-916-2349).

Advent/Christmas Devotional

The third annual Advent/Christmas devotional is a wonderful opportunity for each of us to share what Chrismons mean to us. Chrismons are symbols that define our faith and serve to remind us that the season is first and foremost about what God is doing in the world around us.

Please participate! 1) Select a Chrismon that speaks to you; 2) Write a short reflection on what that Chrismon means to you; 3) Submit it to the office by November 1 either in writing or via email. A sign-up sheet is at the back on the sanctuary, or you can sign up online via the link provided in News You Can Use.

October Birthdays

10-1 Joey Vander Vorste
10-1 Sienna Pulaski
10-2 Braden Nunnery
10-11 Etta Levitt
10-18 Debbie Berlin
10-23 Martha Batch
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

October 3 / Communion

"Be careful what you say"

Mark 10:2-16, Job 1:1, 2:1-10

October 10

"Our place in the kingdom"

Hebrews 4:12-16, Mark 10:17-31

October 17

"The voice from the whirlwind"

Mark 10:35-45, Job 38:1-7, 34-41

October 24

"Was it worth it?"

Mark 10:46-52, Job 42:1-6, 10-17

October 31

"Jesus wept"

Revelation 21:1-6a, John 11:32-44

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