

ST. PAUL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
COLUMBIA, IL

OCTOBER 2023

THE PATHFINDER

*Journeys to the
Heart of Faith*



October 2023 Sermon Series

As we step into this new month, we are embarking on a special sermon series that promises to take us on profound spiritual journeys. We'll be diving deep into the Gospel of Matthew during this Season of Pentecost. Over the next five weeks, we will walk alongside Jesus and His disciples, questioning, learning, and deepening our understanding of what it means to be people of faith in a complex world.

The concept of a journey implies movement, progress, and a destination. Faith itself is not a static entity but something alive, dynamic, and evolving. Like any journey, the path of faith has its ups and downs, its roadblocks and open highways. And like all travelers, we have questions about the journey we're on. Is this the right path? Who's in charge here? What is the ultimate destination?

1. October 1, 2023

“Journey into Authority: Challenging Religious Systems”

Matthew 21:23–32

Week 1 challenges our preconceptions about religious systems and spiritual authority.

2. October 8, 2023

“Journey into Accountability: The Fruit of Faithfulness”

Matthew 21:33–46

Week 2 leads us to explore what it means to bear the fruit of faithfulness in our lives.

3. October 15, 2023

“Journey into Invitation: God's Eternal Feast”

Matthew 22:1–14

Week 3 invites us on where we'll discover God's eternal feast and ponder whom we might have forgotten to invite to the table.

4. October 22, 2023

“Journey into Allegiance: God and Government”

Matthew 22:15–22

Week 4 navigates a delicate exploration into the tensions between God and government, and the question of where our ultimate loyalty lies.

5. October 29, 2023

“Journey into Love: The Foundation of All Law”

Matthew 29:34–46

And finally, Week 5 takes us into the very core of all spiritual voyages where we'll look at the bedrock principle that underpins all of Jesus' teachings—the commandment to love God and neighbor.

A Journey Together

I invite you to journey with us, bringing your questions, your doubts, your insights, and your faith. Whether you are new to the path of faith or have been walking it for years, there's something in this series for everyone. It's not a journey we take alone; we go together, as a community and as part of the greater body of Christ.

So pack your proverbial bags, fasten your seatbelts, and let us begin these Journeys to the Heart of Faith. May our hearts and minds be open, and may we find that our faith has grown stronger, our vision clearer, and our love deeper through this adventure. Amen.

From the Desk of Pastor Jonathan

Dear Fellow Pilgrims,

Grace and peace be unto you all in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

As we gather in the warmth of God's grace and the light of God's truth, I am filled with gratitude and joy for the journey we have embarked upon as a church family. It has been a blessed four months since I was called to serve as your pastor and teacher. Our formal installation was a beautiful celebration of God's faithfulness and our shared commitment to God's Word and God's work in our lives and community. I wish to thank everyone who has been part of this process right from the beginning.

As we stand united under the banner of Christ, I am reminded of the words of the Apostle Paul in Philippians 2:1-2 (NIV):

"Therefore, if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind."

This passage calls us to unity and love, which are foundational elements of our Christian faith. We are called to be of the same mind, sharing a love that mirrors the unconditional love Christ has shown us. When we come together in unity, we magnify the joy of the Lord in our midst, displaying God's grace to the world around us.

Through this unity, we can achieve great things for the Kingdom of God. Acts 2:44-47 (NIV) paints a beautiful picture of unity and love within the early church:

"All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people."

Let us be inspired by their example and strive to cultivate a community that loves and supports one another, bearing each other's burdens and rejoicing in each other's triumphs.

In the days and months ahead, let us dedicate ourselves to a deeper understanding of God's Word, meditating on the teachings of Jesus and the wisdom of the Scriptures. In doing so, we will find the strength and guidance to navigate the challenges that life inevitably brings.

May the Lord continue to bless our fellowship, strengthen our bonds of love, and guide us in every step we take. Let us remain fervent in prayer for one another, seeking God's will and direction for our church and the lives of those within our community.

In God's love and service,
Pastor Jonathan

Consistory Corner

BY SUSAN HIBBITS

There were days over the summer when the heat and humidity made it challenging to work, play, or even get out of bed!! Now, with the cooler weather, we look forward to beautiful fall colors, cozy sweaters, and maybe a s'more or two!!

Looking forward. Here at St. Paul, we have so much to look forward to! As we celebrate our 175th anniversary as a church and reflect on our history, we look forward to new beginnings. By the time you read this, we will have celebrated the installation of our wonderful Pastor Jonathan. We look forward to the wisdom, support, and Christian leadership he brings to our congregation. We will also have celebrated Rally Sunday, renewing and strengthening our covenant with God and supporting and encouraging our youth as they continue to explore and build their faith in God. We look forward to the amazing ways they will enhance service in the church and community to the glory of God.

The Consistory is looking forward, too. The recent formation of a Technology team will continue to enhance our ability to share the word of God to our congregation and the community. They will work to address the hiccups we've had with our systems and improve our experiences. The subgroup working on our church bylaws will make sure that we are focused on building our church structure efficiently to allow our focus to continue our service to God and our community. The Consistory continues to review proposals and ideas for enhancing our service to the congregation and supporting the many needs in our community.

During the Consistory Retreat earlier this year, we developed a new Vision Statement for St. Paul UCC: "To encourage all individuals to utilize their time and talents in service to God and the Community." We use this vision to guide our work, and we look forward to the awesome things we will do in the future. As always, the consistory welcomes feedback and suggestions from each of you. It is partnership and collaboration with our congregation and community that enhances our ability to our best church with open doors and open arms. Here's to looking forward to the great things we will do!!

Yours in Christ,

The Consistory

Totenfest 2023

Mums will be used to decorate the Sanctuary for Totenfest on Sunday, November 5. They will remain for the following Sunday's service, after which, you may take them with you.

To order mums "In Memory Of" for Totenfest or "In Honor Of" as we enter the Thanksgiving season, pick up an envelope in the narthex or from an usher. The mums are \$13 each. Place the envelope in the offering plate or send it to the church office.

The deadline for placing your order is Sunday, October 29.



Pastor Jonathan's Installation Weekend

We officially welcomed Pastor Jonathan into our congregation as our called Pastor on Sunday, September 17, 2023. The weekend was filled with celebration, fun and of course lots of food! Thank you to all who came out to honor and celebrate this event with us and a special thank you to all of those that worked hard to make this event such a great one!



Board of Evangelism

BY DIANE HANNA

It will be a busy October! We hope to see many of you at the annual Pumpkin Hunt on Saturday, October 14 at Legion Hall, with doors opening at 6:00 p.m. There will be a Parents' Night Out that evening, so while you enjoy the Pumpkin Hunt festivities, your child will be safe and having fun at church. Tickets are \$15 for the Hunt, which includes a light meal, prizes, a silent auction, and fun. Tickets are available online and after the church service in the Welcome Center. This event is open to members and friends of St. Paul who are 21 and over, so invite some folks you know to join in the activities.

We will be handing out glow sticks, candy and safe Halloween wishes from St. Paul UCC at the YMCA Trunk or Treat on Friday, October 20 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. It is a fun time with lots of treats and music. On Saturday, October 28 from 10:00 a.m. to Noon, we will be greeting the children of Columbia at the Halloween Hi-jinks on Main Street. We will hand out candy with a message about our church attached. Stop by and see us at one or both events.

It's Fifth Sunday Potluck time on Sunday, October 29! We will meet in the Fellowship Hall after the church service and enjoy a meal together, served by our wonderful Hospitality Committee. Sign up sheets will be in the Welcome Center two weeks before the potluck so we can have an idea of the number of folks planning to attend. It's a great opportunity to socialize with other members of the St. Paul faith family.

Board of Mission and Stewardship

BY LYNDA SAUER

September was surely a busy month! Apple pie making was a huge success, with the proceeds going to Little Friends Preschool. Our other mission for September and October is to aid all the suffering people in Maui. To accomplish this, you may make a monetary donation which will be distributed by our UCC disaster ministry. Our goal is to raise \$1000. A surfboard will record the amount collected in \$50 increments. There is a collection box in the Welcome Center. You can also participate by donating to the virtual food drive as an alternative. There are explanatory handouts displayed by the collection box.

October 1st is Neighbors in Need offering day, and also World Wide Communion Sunday.

Thanks to all of you for your continued generosity. Without you, we could never help so many in need!!





Care Connection



by Joanne Counce

HEALTHIER TOGETHER—GET YOUR FLU VACCINE!
THE FLU SHOT----JUST NOT FOR OLD PEOPLE!
COVID-19 UPDATED BOOSTER AVAILABLE

It is that time of year when the flu shots are coming around for everyone 6 months are older! Make a family outing to get the needed vaccines. Updated COVID-19 Boosters are now available at most pharmacies for the new detected strain of Pirola. Thankfully, we are at a different place with COVID-19 than we were at the beginning of the pandemic, but COVID-19 is here to stay in different variants, and we can help ourselves and each other by taking precautions! New this year for adults 60 plus is a vaccine for RSV or respiratory syncytial virus which can cause as much illness as influenza. Though the COVID-19 and flu vaccines can be taken together, experts advise getting the RSV shot separately. Under the Affordable Care Act, all insurance companies are required to cover vaccines that are recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, including the updated COVID-19 vaccines. Uninsured or underinsured can get their vaccine through the Bridge Access Program.

If you feel ill on a Sunday morning, please watch the church service online!
If you are not comfortable Passing the Peace with another by touching, give them a wave!
Please feel comfortable in wearing a mask to church as you will be respected by others.

While volunteering at the Monroe County Fairgrounds to help with the first COVID-19 shots as people drove their cars in line around the fairgrounds, I had a man in his car ask me, “What would God think of using these shots?” At the time, I knew with my medical background that God would be pleased a medication was found for this disease just as when Penicillin was found and I probably made such a comparison to him. Since I always like to include a Bible verse according to the monthly subject for the Parish Nurse article, I found the following that I did not have on the tip of my tongue that day!

Matthew 10:26 But Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”

*Weekly
Attendance*
AUGUST 2023

August 6- 138
August 13- 122
August 20- 148
August 27- 159



Book Club



St. Paul UCC Book Club meets monthly on the 4th Monday of the month. All are welcome to join.

Here are the upcoming books that will be discussed:

- October - Still Life by Louise Penny (a mystery)
- November - All the Children Are Home by Patry Francis

Illinois South Conference News



Annual Meeting:
Saturday, October 21, 2023
9:30 am - 5 pm
St. Peter UCC, Red Bud

This year's Annual Meeting will center on
Doing a New Thing: Connection, Collaboration, Creativity.
We believe in this moment of our nation and world's history, more
than ever, people need to try something new.



Little Friends Preschool News

Our preschool is in full swing with 22 students enrolled! We went Apple picking at Braeutigam Orchards and will begin practicing songs & finger plays for our Halloween celebration! Thank you for helping us with our Wish Tree! The apples will turn to leaves & pumpkins with new items needed! Your support has been wonderful & is appreciated!

PRAYERS FOR OUR MILITARY And Their Families

Nathan Schnittger

U.S. Army

Nephew of Cathy Huels

Roberto DeMarquez

Army National Guard

Son of Ursula DeMarquez

James K. Combs

Marine Sgt.

Son of Jim & Debbie Combs

Jack Augustin

U.S Army

Son of Jason & Shelly Augustin

Sean Parrin

Army Ranger - Italy

Nephew of Jody & Jeff Taake



Youth Ministry News

FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR JULIE



By our publication date, the Scarecrow crawl will be upon us. Welcome Autumn! Our youth gathered on Saturday, September 23 to work on our scarecrow entry, "Refuse Rufus."

We are once again hoping to take the "Best Use of Recycled Materials" award. Enjoy a pleasant night on Main Street and stop by light pole #15 to see what became of our group effort.

Save the Date...

October 14 is the night of our 2nd annual Not-So-Spooky Parent Night Out (PNO), coinciding with the Pumpkin Hunt (for grown-ups). If you are not headed to the Pumpkin Hunt yourselves, please consider volunteering for our fun night.

Youth and adults are needed to make this a successful and fun event.



Use the QR Code below to access our online registration or visit our website:
<https://www.stpaulcolumbia.org/event-registration.html>



Confirmation

On Saturday, September 16, our Confirmation class joined with others confirmands in our region for a day retreat at Camp Wartburg in Waterloo. Our group was joined by a confirmand from Troy for most of our activities. We started the day with the high ropes course. Grant was the first up the ladder and the first to attempt a risky rope crossing that had him doing the splits. Kellan discovered that each challenge was more fun if he zip-lined across it. For the Group Interactive portion of our day, our youth practiced trust falls and came together as a team to conquer a seven-foot wall. Nathan and Jimmy (from Troy) were the climbing apparatus for their classmates; and everyone worked together to get them up over the wall at the end to complete the challenge.,



Director of Christian Ed *Denise Johnson*

GETTING OUR YOUTH INVOLVED... ENCOURAGING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE A PART OF CHURCH



Church is a time of holiness, an opportunity to gain experience in our understanding of God's love for us and his desires for our lives. Youth can experience and appreciate this if given the opportunity. Youth of all ages can enjoy music and prayers and begin to learn valuable lessons, even from sermons aimed at adults. They do not get everything, but they can get something from observing the fervency and genuineness of the church's expression of love for God, dependence upon Him, and joy in Him. This is the value of having youth in church. Youth progressively understand what a parent and the wider church members love and appreciate. How can the church be a place that draws youth in, empowers their leadership, and provides them in the ways that they need? By letting them be the body of Christ by serving.

First, we will ask youth to be responsible for elements of worship. Youth and their family will be invited to serve as greeters, acolytes, lay readers, operate technical equipment, or share a mission moment. Asking youth to be responsible enables them to take partial ownership of what is happening. They are more likely to be present, attentive, and enthusiastic about worship and specifically their role in it. Starting in October, our youth in sixth, seventh and eighth grade and their families will be serving by sharing their time and talents during worship.

All youth sixth grade and up will be attending church the first and third Sunday. Becky Trexler and Sherry Montgomery will have Sunday school/ Faith Formation class on the second and fourth Sundays.

You can still join our St. Paul Wednesday After School Program (3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.) This ministry program is for ALL CHILDREN and YOUTH, third through seventh grades. For more information and to register for our After School Program, please go to our website: [www: stpaulcolumbia.org](http://www.stpaulcolumbia.org) For questions you may contact: Denise Johnson email: christianed@stpaulcolumbia.org



thank you



The definition of a volunteer is a person who freely offers to take part in an enterprise or undertake a task. The jobs can be big or small, and sometimes it's the little things that make the biggest difference in everyday life to the ones they help. For instance, helping clean up after a party or assisting in a yard sale for charity. Other times, it's teaching a Sunday school lesson, spending hours creating a beautiful quilt, or cleaning, waxing, fixing, cooking, delivering meals and serving in many ways around our church and our community. We are so thankful! We want to let our volunteers know how special they are! Let's gather and take a moment to celebrate, relax and enjoy some food, fun and conversation at our Volunteer Appreciation Brunch on Sunday, October 22, will be held at 10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. RSVP by text, email or call to Denise Johnson 618-340-2952 or christianed@stpaulcolumbia.org

Our October Messy Church will be
A Thanksgiving Feast.

Together at Messy Church we will remember how God is faithful at all times. We will be studying Psalm 107:1-9. We will use sweet potatoes, popcorn, cranberries, apples, beans, and playdough to explore and discover how we to give thanks during the good times and the bad/hard times.



November Messy Church

Thursday, November 30

5:30 pm

Sunday School Christmas Program

Sunday December 17

9:30 am Service

Come and Celebrate the Advent Season
with Christmas Around the World

october

SUN

MON


TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

<p>1 World Communion Sunday Kindercottage Collection 9:30 Worship and communion 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Social Time</p>	<p>2 10 am Staff Meeting 7pm Property Committee 7 pm Stewardship Board</p>	<p>3 8:30 am Out and About Hermann, MO 9 am Preschool 6pm Daisy Girl Scout Troop 148</p>	<p>4 9 am Preschool 10am Morning Bells 3:30 pm Kids Crew 6pm Evening Bells 6pm Confirmation 7pm Chancel Choir</p>	<p>5 9 am Preschool 5:30 pm Personnel 7pm Executive Committee</p>	<p>6 8 am Quilters</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8 9:30 Worship 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Social Time</p>	<p>9 10 am Staff Meeting 6pm Girl Scout Daisy Troop 449 6pm Finance 7pm Consistory</p>	<p>10 9 am Preschool</p>	<p>11 9 am Preschool 10am Morning Bells 3:30 pm Kids Crew 6pm Evening Bells 6pm Confirmation 7pm Chancel Choir</p>	<p>12 9 am Preschool 7 pm Evangelism Bd 7pm Cemetery Board</p>	<p>13 8 am Quilters</p>	<p>14  6 pm Parents Night Out 7pm Pumpkin Hunt</p>
<p>15 9:30 Worship 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Social Time Pathfinder Articles Due</p>	<p>16 10 am Staff Meeting 7pm Boy Scout Troop 357 Parent Meeting 7:30 pm Board of Worship</p>	<p>17 9 am Preschool 7pm Boy Scout Troop 357</p>	<p>18 9 am Preschool 10am Morning Bells 3:30 pm Kids Crew 6:00 pm Girl Scout Troop Leaders 6pm Evening Bells 6pm Confirmation 7pm Chancel Choir</p>	<p>19 9 am Preschool 5:30 pm Tech Team 7pm Pastoral Relations</p>	<p>20 8 am Quilters</p>	<p>21 9:30 am Illinois South Conference St. Peters UCC Red Bud</p>
<p>22 Volunteer Appreciation Sunday 9:30 Worship 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Volunteer Reception</p>	<p>23 10 am Staff Meeting 6pm Girl Scout Daisy Troop 449 7 pm Book Club</p>	<p>24 9 am Preschool 6:30pm Preschool Advisory Board 7pm Boy Scout Troop 357</p>	<p>25 9 am Preschool 10am Morning Bells 3pm Kids Crew 6pm Evening Bells 6pm Confirmation 7pm Chancel Choir</p>	<p>26 9 am Preschool 530 pm Messy Church</p>	<p>27 8 am Quilters</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29 9:30 Worship 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Social Time</p>	<p>30 10 am Staff Meeting</p>	<p>31 9 am Preschool 7pm Boy Scout Troop 357</p>				



Memorials



Memorials and Tributes Fund
In Memory of Sharon Burgdorf given by:

Richard and Janet Zinn
Wyona Crosley
Sheldon Culver
Barb Miller

Memorials and Tributes Fund
In Memory of Bill Rauch given by:

James and Cheryl Logston

Labyrinth Fund
In Memory of Edna Dell Weinel given by:

Gina Wright

Building and Maintenance Fund
In Memory of Sharon Burgdorf given by:

Larry and Shirley Hoy

Our Members in Senior Living

Garden Place
480 DD Rd.
Columbia, IL 62236
618-281-4200
Clarice Giffhorn Rm. 204
Ed Schutte Rm. Rm. 113
Grace Volkert Rm. 110

Dammert G.C.
The Esquiline
Betty Lou Carle
726 Community Dr.
Belleville, IL 62223

Garden Place
Gene Haller: Apt 15
735 Columbia Ave.
Waterloo, IL 62298
618-223-5834

Magnolia Terrace
Mary Fassel
623 Hamacher St.
Apt 122
Waterloo, IL 62298

Our Members in Nursing Homes

Itegrity
Dorothy Klein
253 Bradington
Columbia, IL 62236

Eden Village
Nira Probstmeyer
400 S. Station Rd.
Glen Carbon, IL 62034

Oak Hill Nursing Home
Gladys Ludwig
Don Naumann
623 Hamacher St
Waterloo, IL 62298
618-939-3488

Financial Report

	August		Year to Date	
	2022	2023	2022	2023
Revenue				
Tithes & Offerings:				
Pledged & NonPledged	23,592.00	26,157.00	249,955.01	261,428.85
Misc. Contributions	80.00	197.00	5,557.00	6,784.00
Interest Income	7.48	77.51	3,168.95	3,239.40
Endowment Interest Income	0.00	600.00	41,273.12	41,410.71
Rental Income	0.00	0.00	300.00	1,450.00
Misc Income	2,904.21	5,297.62	10,242.66	30,101.73
Total Revenues	26,583.69	32,329.13	310,496.74	344,414.69
Expenses				
Personnel	28,638.90	31,099.40	227,731.02	250,622.15
General Expenses	8,002.91	9,566.74	84,661.07	108,044.73
* OCWM	3,786.19	2,553.03	21,824.11	19,257.43
Total Expenses	40,428.00	43,219.17	334,216.20	377,924.31
Net Receipts	(13,844.31)	(10,890.04)	(23,719.46)	(33,509.62)
RESERVES			98,671.17	56,391.43
*OCWM 10,000.00 out of St Paul Mission (833.33 monthly)				
Solar Loan Balance	30,850.61			

St. Paul United Church of Christ
127 St. Paul Street, Columbia, IL 62236



The Pathfinder

Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday
9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Monthly Newsletter of St. Paul United Church of Christ
Phone - 618-281-5102 / FAX - 618-281-3032 /
E Mail - office@stpaulcolumbia.org
stpaulcolumbia.org

Does the church office have
your current contact information?

We don't want you to miss out on any information. If you haven't been receiving emails, chances are we don't have a current email address for you, or the email went to your spam.

If you are unsure, please contact Amanda in the office by email (see below) or call 618-281-5102.

Staff Contact Information:

Senior Pastor

Rev. Jonathan Bangera- srpastor@stpaulcolumbia.org
Cell phone (215) 512-4024

Interim Associate Pastor for Youth & Visitation

Rev. Julie Kies - assocpastor@stpaulcolumbia.org

Office and Communications Coordinator

Amanda Stapf office@stpaulcolumbia.org

Financial Administrator

Barb Gerstenecker- financial@stpaulcolumbia.org

Christian Education Director

Denise Johnson - christianed@stpaulcolumbia.org

Lead Custodian

Terry Schramm - custodian@stpaulcolumbia.org

Custodian, Madison Shoellhorn

Music Coordinator/Organist

Lori Morton - music@stpaulcolumbia.org

Youth Bell /Inspire Band Director

Sue Phillips - band@stpaulcolumbia.org

Evening Bell/Choir Director

Emily Thoman- choir@stpaulcolumbia.org

Morning Bell Director, Patti French

Preschool Director

Jody Taake - preschool@stpaulcolumbia.org

Cemetery Treasurer, Robin MacLaughlin
cemetery@stpaulcolumbia.org

Consistory Members

President - Dennis Hoguet

Vice President - Shirley Bergmann

Secretary - Shirley Hoy

Shirley Asselmeier

Carrie Clayton

Rob Dehn

Susan Hibbits

Diana Kleinschmidt

Susan Kuergeleis

Faye Mehrmann

Mark Thompson

Al Wolfe