



From the Intentional Interim Senior Pastor's Pen

A Blessed and Happy New Year to all!

The Revised Common Lectionary epistle reading for Sunday, December 26th, 2021, is from the third chapter of the letter to the Colossians, verses 12 through 17:

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

This passage always strikes me as a prescription for living the good Christian life, which I suppose it's meant to be. Its writer, either the apostle Paul or an admirer or follower writing in Paul's name, is keen to help the letter's intended recipients navigate their day-to-day lives with as much life-affirming, forward-looking, peacekeeping, and faith-inducing positivity as they can. The aim is not laying down a set of rigid rules that must be followed no matter what; rather, the aim is steady, gentle encouragement through reminders of Whose children we are, and how God's children ideally act at every possible moment.

Impossible to do? Yes, impossible to do! But as we're told in the Gospel according to Luke, "nothing will be impossible with God." The angel Gabriel said those words to Mary, to whom Gabriel had just announced Mary's imminent pregnancy and eventual birth of a baby boy... *God's own*

child. It seems as though Mary might have had cause to ponder, among those many things she famously pondered, just exactly how the impossible could come about. Yet in due time, not so very much later, there was Jesus! It couldn't happen, but it did.

God has a way of doing the impossible. We curtail the joy of that fact when we forget, ignore, or refuse to believe the impossibilities of which God is capable. The Bible is full of examples, but so are our day-to-day lives. How rich life becomes when we step out of our own way, get out of God's way, and let the Almighty guide us into the future.

We can help by working to accomplish what the writer of Colossians prescribes. With hearts, minds, and actions steeped in "compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience," with lives filled with tolerance, acceptance, and forgiveness, with intentional efforts to concentrate on Christ's harmony, peace, and word, we can live lives that will change the world in every good and potential-filled way. Does that, too, seem impossible? Add to the mix a posture of love, unending worship, praise and thankfulness, and there is no end to the wonders that God will guide us into. Imagine the world that could be!

We can start the way we start most good things, by beginning these practices in our own lives, our own homes, our own workplaces, with our own families, our own friends, our own coworkers. Even in our own place of worship, with our own sisters and brothers in faith. Anywhere. Anytime. Everywhere. Every time.

We can exist with friction and dissent in any area of life, or we can thrive in impossible grace and the bounteous life that comes along with it. The choice is ours. Each one. Each day.

In Christ's service,

—*Pastor Elizabeth*

January 30,
2022



Director of Christian Education

Denise Johnson

Christ's birth meant the arrival of great **joy** on earth to the angels. To the shepherds, Christ's birth meant **hope** for all. To the wise men, Christ's birth represented the **greatest gift** anyone could receive. We discovered what Christmas truly means, more than decorations, sparkling lights on a tree, and presents, we find ultimate satisfaction when we fix our eyes on the eternal gift of Jesus. Our Sunday school helped us to focus on Christ and celebrate the everlasting gift of hope and joy that Christ brings with their program of *Jesus Means Christmas to Me*.



The Board of Mission and Stewardship rounded out the year with two successful Kindercottage events. Butter Braid profits and

donations totaled **\$981** to go to Kindercottage to help with the purchase/upgrade of playground equipment. The special collection of food for Christmas Dinners was taken to Kindercottage by Bob Habermehl. He informed me that he had a carload full. WAY TO GO!!! Look for upcoming events in February. The Board is going to take a brief respite in January to recharge and prepare for the upcoming year. **Blessings to all in 2022!!**



We are starting up our Junior and Senior High Fellowship programs once again!

All Fifth through 12 grade youth, we need your help in planning and inviting your friends! Our first meeting is a planning meeting and a celebration of Epiphany (the Arrival of the Magi)! Please, bring your ideas for Youth Fellowship trips and events. We are hoping we can plan several months of activities.

Please email Denise Johnson if you are able to attend and have a few ideas for refreshments:
christianed@stpaulcolumbia.org

The meeting is for:

Fifth grade through Eighth grade youth
Sunday, January 2,
3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Third Floor.

Freshmen through Senior youth
Sunday, January 2,
6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Third Floor.

We are also looking for adult volunteers!
Please contact Denise Johnson if you are able to help!

CONSISTORY

As this is being written, Christmas Season is in full swing. The Sanctuary is decorated. The Nativity scene is on display in the Chancel. The Sunday School Christmas Program is back on this year after not occurring last year due to the Pandemic. It is wonderful to see the kids back in Church and attending Sunday School. Thank you to all of the Sunday School volunteers who work every Sunday with the kids and the volunteers that helped with the Christmas Program.

The Consistory is working with the Nominating Committee to fill open spots on the Boards and Committees of the Church. The Consistory has two (2) open spots and the Treasurer position is still open. Please prayerfully consider serving in one of these positions or on one of the other Boards or Committees.

The Consistory has wrapped up their work for 2021. We are looking forward to 2022 and the opportunities that the new year will bring. Happy New Year to all.

—Your Consistory

Transition Team



The work of the Transition Team continues. We're learning about the Local Church Profile, church survey instruments, and all kinds of other fun, interesting, and useful things.

We begin meeting weekly in January, and will have more news and information to share with you in the weeks following. Stay tuned!



CARE CONNECTION

-Joanne Counce

HERE WE GO AGAIN!

Just when we think all is going well, a new variant shows up to complicate matters with COVID-19! Omicron, which is among the list of most mispronounced words of 2021, has shown up now in Illinois, and is expected to be arriving in Monroe County per John Wagner of the Monroe County Health Department. With Omicron, it is important to understand that we need to be well protected to go through winter, since gatherings are held mostly indoors with more contact of people. With the more mutations a variant has, the

higher level you need for your immunity to be. According to statistics, vaccine efficacy decreases over a period of months, which is the reasoning for booster injections which will then bolster your immunity level. At this date, 12/10, the Moderna vaccine offers the booster to those 18 and over. Pfizer, on 12/09, lowered the age level to 16-17 year olds in order for more people to be covered with boosters.

You may think "OK, but people with full coverage are still getting breakthrough cases." That may be the case and if it happens, the severity of the case is much lessened as well as fewer lingering problems. Vaccinations and getting a

booster whenever you qualify, along with other preventive measures like masking, hand washing, avoiding large crowds and poorly ventilated spaces remain the most effective methods for fighting COVID-19. Kiddos ages 5-11 can now receive Pfizer. "Doctors and the medicine they provide are to be seen as God's blessing." Protect yourself! Protect others!

DONUT HOUR—The Sunday School Kiddos taught us a trick when getting donuts. If the ladies do not serve you, please take a napkin to use to pick up your choice of donut! Still clean for all! What else can they teach us?? Looking forward to the New Year!!!

Offering Envelopes
2022 offering envelopes are ready to be picked up.

They are in the hallway between Fellowship Hall and the elevator.



January 24
7 p.m.

The Stranger in the Lifeboat
by Mitch Albom

| FINANCIAL REPORT | November | | Year to Date | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 2020 | 2021 | 2020 | 2021 |
| Revenue | | | | |
| Tithes & Offerings: | | | | |
| Pledged & NonPledged | 25,741.50 | 31,506.96 | 363,811.28 | 317,103.77 |
| Misc. Contributions | 340.00 | 1,500.00 | 6,222.77 | 6,035.00 |
| Interest Income | 9.58 | 0.00 | 4,149.83 | 3,988.84 |
| Endowment Interest Income | 0.00 | 0.00 | 51,883.31 | 52,617.51 |
| Rental Income | 850.00 | 500.00 | 2,912.50 | 1,700.00 |
| Misc Income | (27.45) | 2,388.93 | 3,658.13 | 18,312.33 |
| Total Revenues | 26,913.63 | 35,895.89 | 432,637.82 | 399,757.45 |
| Expenses | | | | |
| Personnel | 22,383.24 | 25,106.52 | 300,787.96 | 272,397.41 |
| General Expenses | 3,586.03 | 5,306.50 | 74,950.48 | 89,154.55 |
| * OCWM | 4,241.89 | 3,682.48 | 28,761.67 | 26,460.48 |
| Total Expenses | 30,211.16 | 34,095.50 | 404,500.11 | 388,012.44 |
| Net Receipts | (3,297.53) | 1,800.39 | 28,137.71 | 11,745.01 |
| RESERVES | | | 125,135.14 | 125,664.49 |

*OCWM 10,000.00 out of St Paul
Solar Loan Balance

57,769.54



BARBARA ANN SCHUTTE

September 29, 1936 - December 4, 2021

DELORES "DEE" STEPPIG

January 29, 1928 - November 9, 2021

In Memory & In Honor Of

David Berry Memorial Fund

In memory of Dave Berry, given by
Lea Berry

Kindercottage

In memory of Dee Steppig, given by
Kathy Kuehner

Kitchen Fund

In memory of Barb Schutte, given by
Ed Schutte

Renovations/Signage Fund

In memory of Dee Steppig, given by
Lea Berry
Becky Trexler, Charlotte Freeland, and
Bruce Freeland
Wyona Crosley
Columbia Gymnastics Assoc.
Ed & Vicki Wegner

In memory of Barb Schutte, given by
Eileen Sabo
Larry & Shirley Hoy
Ed & Vicki Wegner

Special Music

In memory of Dee Steppig, given by
Mary Ellen Norman

**Our Members in
Senior Living**

Helen Byers
Clarice Giffhorn
Garden Place Of Columbia
480 DD Rd.
Columbia, IL 62236
618-281-4200

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

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

**Our Members in
Nursing Homes**

Integrity
253 Bradington
Columbia, IL 62236
Dorothy Klein

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

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

Oak Hill Nursing Home
623 Hamacher St
Waterloo, IL 62298
618-939-3488

Gladys Ludwig
Don Naumann
Lucinda Smith

Little Friends Preschool would like to
thank everyone for your purchase (and/
or donation) with our Cardinal calendar
fundraiser.

We appreciate you and your continued
support of our preschool!

Thank you notes were received from:

House of Neighborly Service - for the
continued support and caring for those in
need in Monroe County

Nathan Schnittger

U.S. Army
Nephew of Cathy Huels

Roberto DeMarquez

Army National Guard
Son of Ursula DeMarquez

Military Prayers

Marine Sgt.

James K. Combs

Son of Jim & Debbie Combs

Jack Augustin

Army





Son of Jason & Shelly Augustin

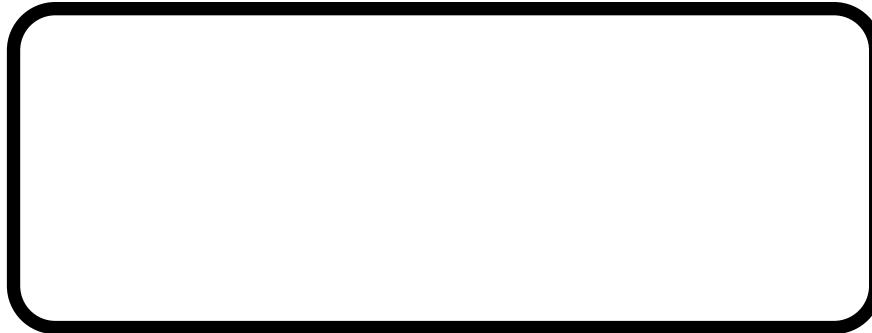
Sean Parrin

Army - Ft. Polk, LA
Nephew of Jody & Jeff Taake

Matthew Gage Toler

USMC, deployed to Syria,
Great Nephew of
Margie Lindhorst

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|--|
|  | | | | | | 1  |
| 2 Holy Communion 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Coffee Hour Kindercottage Collection 3-4:30 pm Jr. High Fellowship 6-7:30 pm Sr. High Fellowship | 3 7 pm Board of Mission & Stewardship 7 pm Property Management Committee | 4 9 am Preschool 2 pm Staff Meeting 6:30 pm Transition Team 7 pm Personnel Committee 8 pm Executive Team | 5 9 am Preschool 10 am Bells 2:30 pm After School Program 6 pm Bells 6 pm Confirmation 7 pm Choir | 6 9 am Preschool  EPIPHANY | 7 8 am Quilters Pastor's Day Off | 8 |
| 9 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Coffee Hour | 10 6 pm Band 6:15 Finance Committee 7 pm Consistory | 11 9 am Preschool 2 pm Extended Staff Meeting 6:30 pm Transition Team 6:30 pm 4H | 12 9 am Preschool 10 am Bells 2:30 pm After School Program 6 pm Bells 6 pm Confirmation 7 pm Choir | 13 9 am Preschool 7 pm Cemetery Board | 14 8 am Quilters Pastor's Day Off | 15 |
| 16 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Coffee Hour | 17 Office Closed 6 pm Band 7 pm Board of Worship  | 18 9 am Preschool 2 pm Staff Meeting 6:30 pm Transition Team Pastor Elizabeth on vacation until January 25 | 19 9 am Preschool 10 am Bells 2:30 pm After School Program 6 pm Bells 6 pm Confirmation 7 pm Choir | 20 9 am Preschool Pastor at ISC Clergy Community of Practice this afternoon | 21 8 am Quilters Pastor's Day Off | 22 |
| 23 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Coffee Hour | 24 6 pm Band | 25 2 pm Staff Meeting 6:30 pm Transition Team 7 pm Board of Education | 26 9 am Preschool 10 am Bells 2:30 pm After School Program 6 pm Bells 6 pm Confirmation 7 pm Choir | 27 | 28 8 am Quilters Pastor's Day Off | 29 Sanctuary reserved for memorial service |
| 30 9:30 am Worship Annual Meeting | 31 6 pm Band | | | | | |



THE PATHFINDER

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 Cathy or Barb in the office by email (see below) or call 618-281-5102.

Staff Contact Information:

Intentional Interim Senior Pastor - Rev. Elizabeth Terrill
srpastor@stpaulcolumbia.org

For after-hours pastoral emergencies, 419-602-9132

Secretary, Cathy Fritz - 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, Janet Zinn

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

Preschool Director, Jody Taake -
preschool@stpaulcolumbia.org

Cemetery Treasurer, Barb Gerstenecker -
cemetery@stpaulcolumbia.org

CONSISTORY MEMBERS

President - Dennis Hoguet

Vice President - Kathleen Habermehl

Secretary - Shirley Bergmann

Carrie Clayton

Gregg Giffhorn

Shirley Hoy

Mary Hillestad

Charles James

Karen Kirk

Michael Riley

Dennis Reuter

Al Wolfe

OFFICE HOURS:

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

Please note that masks are required in the building.