



From Pastor Mary Beth

“You Did Not Choose Me but I Chose You”

...So says Jesus to his disciples at the end of the Gospel of John. “You did not choose me but I chose you.” What a powerful promise!

And yet, many of us have gone through times in our lives when we’ve wondered where God has been, when we’ve wondered if God has been really present at all. Many of us have gone through times when we’ve cried out, in the words of Psalm 22: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” But Jesus’ words come to us, faintly, in that still, small voice, “You did not choose me but I chose you.”

We are chosen of God. Even when we don’t understand it, even when we forget it, even when we stray from it, *we are chosen of God*. Chosen to love each other as God loves us. Chosen to serve each other, and our community. Chosen to see and proclaim new life in a world that tells us we are foolish to see and say such things.

“You did not choose me but I chose you.” What a powerful promise! What an awesome responsibility. What amazing grace.

Thanks be to God!



Madrid Kids Summer Lunch Program – THANK YOU!!!

St. Paul's hosted on Tuesday June 26th and fed and entertained a lot of kids!! Thank you to all who donated food, helped prep food, helped serve the food and cleaned up after!!!

The picture on the left is Pat McDermott and Pastor Mary Beth singing the "Hokey Pokey" and the picture on the right is the McDermott's serving hotdogs and fruit and vegies.

Memorial Gifts

The Finance and Mission Committee is looking for ideas for Memorial Gifts! Look around the church – what might we need? What are we missing? If you have ideas, please share them with Norma Shepard! Ideas are approved by our board, and then are added to the Memorial Gift suggestion list.

"Strengthen the Church"

St. Paul's gave \$140.00 to our "Strengthen the Church" ministry of the UCC – one of our 5 for 5 mission offerings. Great job!

Are You a Camper?

If you are a child or youth and are going to camp this summer, please see Pastor Mary Beth! There just might be a camp scholarship in your future...

Pastor Mary Beth Wants to Visit You... in Your Workplace!

Pastor Mary Beth would love to come visit you in your place of work! This is a bit of a different approach to pastoral care, one that will give her a greater sense of the fullness of the people of St. Paul's. If you're interested, please give her a call, email or text!



Darwin Berglund's Funeral

Darwin Berglund ("Bergy")'s funeral will be held at St. Paul's on Thursday, July 12 at 11PM, followed by lunch downstairs.

Would You Like to Help Us Pick Curriculum?

Pastor Mary Beth and Michelle are going to Iowa Religious Media Service on Wednesday, **July 18 at 11AM** for the important task of picking curriculum for our children and youth for the upcoming year! We'd love your help. If you are able to, meet us there at 11:00: the address is **2400 86th St, Urbandale, IA 50322**.

Planning Meeting on July 18 for Outdoors Worship Event!!

On August 12, Hopkins Grove and St. Paul's are joining forces for an outdoor dinner/games/worship/music event for families of all ages! But we need your help! We are having a planning meeting for those interested in helping lead and contribute to this fun event on **Wednesday, July 18 at 6:00PM** at Hopkins Grove Church. Please join us! All are welcome.

Why Wear Nametags in Church?

At our “Completing the Circle” listening/reflecting meeting about worship at St. Paul’s (April 2018), the group had a wonderful conversation around many things (see newsletter article later in this issue that describes the meeting in more detail), including a conversation around name tags. Name tags are a wonderful way to be truly welcoming to new or newer folks. Here is a list I found that enumerates some reasons to wear nametags in church, written by a man named Chuck Lawless (Professor of Evangelism and Missions and Dean of Graduate Studies at Southeastern Seminary) :

1. **Few people know everybody in the church.** Even in the smallest churches, it’s sometimes difficult to remember everybody’s name. If/as the church grows, that task becomes even more difficult. Nametags allow us to admit that struggle while providing a way to overcome it.
2. **Leaders need help with names.** I want to know everybody’s name in my church, but I’m not gifted with that kind of memory. I admit I need help if I want to be the best church leader I can be. I would much prefer calling people by name as I minister to them – and nametags allow me to do so.
3. **Nametags invite conversation.** Knowing another person’s name breaks down one barrier to conversations that church folks ought to feel comfortable having. It’s simply easier to talk with others when you are on a first-name basis, and it feels more personal.
4. **Nametags save embarrassment.** We’ve probably all called someone by the wrong name, only to realize it later (or perhaps even within the same conversation). Nametags help alleviate that.
5. **Nametags are an inexpensive way to promote outward focus.** The church that says, “We don’t need nametags since we already know everyone anyway” is probably saying more than they care to admit. My guess is they might not want to see guests at their church; at the very least, they probably aren’t expecting any. On the other hand, using nametags is one way to say, “We expect God to send us guests, and we want to be ready for them.”
6. **Saying to someone, “Please let us know your name” also says, “We want to know you.”** People who come to a church are looking for something. They often welcome care and concern. Calling them by name is a step towards that.
7. **A “nametag” ministry provides opportunities for service.** Somebody must purchase the nametags. Somebody must distribute them. Greeters must remind folks to get their nametags. And, likely, somebody must clean up the nametags at the end of the service. The opportunities for members to get involved in a simple but significant ministry are numerous.
8. **Churches risk little by trying this approach.** We’re not omitting a ministry from the budget, re-writing the church constitution, or killing a sacred cow with this approach. We’re simply asking people to wear a nametag to promote fellowship and welcome guests. If this ministry fails – and I don’t think it will if leaders promote it properly and patiently wait for it to enter the DNA of a congregation – the church has lost little.

“Completing the Circle” Update

The Leadership Committee is now in the thick of our exciting initiative, “Completing the Circle!” This process helps provide high-quality feedback to our Pastor, other staff and lay leaders about how our members are experiencing the life and mission of our Church.

We have now completed four “listening/reflection” groups (our Board, our deacons, our experience around worship, and Christian Ed). These conversations have been WONDERFUL and so very informative. Here are updates from our most recent listening/reflection groups, Worship and Christian Ed:

Worship

On Sunday, May 6, a listening/reflection group met around the experience of worship. The conversation was lively, deep, informative, and even fun! Here are some highlights: in general, we in the group find meaning and even beauty in our worship services at St Paul’s, including the music, sermon, prayers and fellowship. We especially like our youth Sundays, and are proud of our young leaders. We would like to see the confirmands names in our bulletins, to be able to pray for them. We wondered about the possibility of an audio podcast each Sunday. We love to hear each other’s stories/sharing in church. We appreciate the variety of ways we engage in passing of the peace, and wonder if there are even more ways to vary that. We wonder about communion and have a mix of opinions: some of us prefer a seated communion, while others are happy with intinction. We wonder, too, about varying communion in other ways: slowing it down? Adding some silence? Etc. Many of us were interested in the possibility of using nametags: it seems, to us, to be an act of hospitality extended to all members (long-term and not so long-term!). *No matter who you are...!*

Christian Ed

This listening/reflection group met on June 24. We asked questions around what helps us engage with our youth and children, what are our challenges, and where we feel God might be leading us. We talked about the importance of nurturing our children, and discussed how that can be hard with all the “competing” forces out there (busy schedules, etc. – which all parents face). We had a robust conversation around the relationship between the Christian Ed committee and our Sunday School teachers – how do those two entities best interact and work with each other? We hope to be more streamlined in our approach to the program in general. We hope to receive input from the youth and children themselves, as well as their families. We wondered how we could best care for the whole family (more programs, fellowship opportunities for parents, for example?) We emphasized over and over how we are so grateful for our children, for their leadership, for who they are.



New Lending Library

If you haven't seen it yet, please take a look at our amazing new lending library (looks like a church!!) in front of St. Paul's on 2nd Ave. Alex Brown, one of our members, worked with the church to bring this about, and we love it!! Please also consider taking books, and sharing books, through this community outreach project! Thanks, Alex!!

Sanctuary Memorial Candle



For those gone in presence
but here in essence
This light shines as a symbol
of lives and loves remembered

The Sanctuary Memorial Candle can be designated in memory or honor of a loved one/s. A \$4.00 donation to cover cost of candle would be appreciated. Any donation can be put in the Offering Plate during Sunday Worship or given to Sue Barker, Wes Mathes or Diana Olsen. Please specify who the candle is in memory or honor of and if you want a specific Sunday otherwise the memorials will be assigned as they are received.

Sunday FUN DAY



DIXIE SLICKS

Sunday, July 15th

5:00-6:30 p.m.

The Cedars ·

600 N. Kennedy Madrid

Enjoy a nice summer evening with LIVE music from the Dixie Slicks! Bring your bag chairs and blankets, a picnic dinner will be provided.

Madrid Home Annual Pie Party

Sunday, July 29th · 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Madrid Home Dining Room

Please join us for the Friends of Madrid Home Communities event. Soft serve vanilla will be served along with HOME MADE PIES! Enjoy the musical talents of our NEW Chaplain, MARSHALL FELDERMAN.



Free will donations will be accepted for Friends of the Madrid Home



Access the churches
website
([http://www.stpaulsucc
church.com/](http://www.stpaulsuccchurch.com/)) on your
cellphone with this QR
Code (you'll need a QR
code App.)

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Membership

We are all on our journey through life, each with various circumstances, experiences, challenges and needs. We are unique in our separate journeys, but

yet with our belief in Jesus Christ, united with our creator and very similar in our hearts. Whether you are hungry for spiritual guidance, desirous of being with others who believe in Jesus as you do, wanting to enhance your biblical understanding, teach your children Christian values, need forgiveness and acceptance, or simply wish to find peace in your life, this is the place. St. Paul's United Church of Christ's Pastor and members will supply all of these and more of your needs, through the power of Christ's infinite love. We are a loving and compassionate church family from diverse backgrounds who follow the commandments given in Acts 2:42, "The believers devoted themselves to teaching, fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer." This is what you will find here: we teach a biblical doctrine, provide a safe and accepting place for believers to worship, we serve communion once a month, and we will pray with you, for you and support you through all of life's trials and tribulations, and join with you to celebrate your joys. A caring and warm church family you will find here patterned after Jesus' life and ministry. As we remember Christ's death and shed blood on our behalf, sharing the gospel of salvation will become second nature for you. After a brief time with us, you will want to become a member, such a small price to pay as you share your time and talents and just so you don't miss out on something (i.e. Lots of potlucks and fellowship). Remember Pastor Mary Beth's invitation: "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here." Yes, without a doubt this is where you want to be, and we are anxious to share our Christian love with you, and have you join us.

Written by Jerry Scott



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**United Church
of Christ**



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