



## From Pastor Mary Beth

*There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism one God and Father of all*

-Ephesians 4:4-6

As I sit down to write this, Election Day is only a few weeks away. And I, for one, will be glad to see it go.

This has been an especially divisive political season. Partisan passions have run high for well over a year now. And sadly, the political rift in our nation seems to run right through some of our churches, where some folks will only worship with those who see things their own way. And so, even in the church, to some extent at least, we can find ourselves divided by our politics.

In all this, it's easy to forget our baptism, the sign and the source of our unity. The Book of Ephesians reminds us that there is only one baptism—and only one church—because there is only one God of us all. And baptism suggests that belonging to the church is a lot more like belonging to a family than like belonging to a political party. We do not all have to agree. We do not all have to vote the same way or support the same candidates or champion the same causes. Because there is only one baptism, because there is only one church, we all belong to each other, whether we agree with each other or not, whether we like each other or not. In Christ, we are one.

In a nation so divided by partisan politics, what if we in the church could rediscover our oneness in Christ? Liberals and conservatives, Democrats and Republicans, Green Party members and Libertarians, we all share one God, one baptism, one faith, one church. What if we could reclaim this unity? What if we could remember that, through Christ, we belong to one another?

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Mary Beth



### **Pastor's Forum, "The Change that Changes Everything"**

Please join the pastor for her Pastor's Forum class, Wednesday evenings from 6-7pm (except for the last Wednesday of the month, which is potluck night). She will be teaching on one of her very favorite spiritual teachers of all time, Richard Rohr, and his focus on "The Change the Changes Everything." The deep thinkers and contemplatives have known for a long time that life is not about "who's in" and "who's out." They beckon us, instead, to enter a world where to see is to be astonished; to see is to be moved to the core about who we are and to whom we belong. The class will include a 20-minute or so video lecture by Richard Rohr, and then we'll discuss the change that really does change everything. We will meet downstairs. All are welcome!!

### **Share Your Faith Story!**

Do you have a faith story to share? For example, what made you join St. Paul's, and why do you stay? Or, tell us about your church growing up. Or tell us what some of the most important lessons you've learned in church have been. Or tell us what you love about the Bible, or Sunday school, or church music... or... the sky's the limit, really! If you'd like to jot down a few thoughts, you can give them to Michelle, and she will publish your "story" in an upcoming newsletter!

### **Special Congregational Meeting**

A Special congregational meeting to vote on proposed bylaw changes will be held on **Sunday, November 20**, directly after worship. Proposed changes to the bylaws are in the back of the sanctuary. All members are invited to vote!



## **FINANCE & MISSION COMMITTEE**

### **Proposed Annual Budget and Proposed Committees for 2017**

The Finance and Mission Committee has put together a proposed annual operating budget for 2017. Several copies are located in the back of the sanctuary for you to take. The congregation will vote on this budget at our upcoming **annual meeting on October 9**, right after worship.

Please take some time to look over the proposed budget, and if you have questions, feel free to direct them to Norma at [Inshep@iowatelecom.net](mailto:Inshep@iowatelecom.net). Also, the Nominating Committee has put together a proposed docket of nominees to serve on our various committees. That is posted in the back of the sanctuary as well. Please take a look!

### **Labor Day**

The totals for the Labor Day food stand are as follows: the net was \$3,329.14 with \$832.29 (25% of net) going to Greater Love, for a balance of **\$2,496.85** to be deposited into the general checking account. GREAT JOB, CHURCH!!

10/2 Neighbors in Need justice and compassion offering. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> of 4 national UCC special offerings. 1/3 supports the Council for American Indian Ministry; 2/3 is used by UCC Justice and Witness Ministries for justice initiatives and direct service projects through grants.

St. Paul's is a 5-for-5 church. First, OCWM (Our Churches' Wider Mission) basic support for State Conferences and National UCC ministries plus 4 special offerings throughout the year for vital ministries involving clergy-in-need and pensions; international disaster/emergency relief, health, education, and agricultural development; youth ministries and "new church" leadership; justice and witness ministries.

10/9 General Fund Budget for 2017 will be voted on. Copy is posted on the bulletin board; extra copies on the credenza in the lobby.

10/16, 23, 30 Stewardship Emphasis time is an opportunity to share our faith stories, recognize what membership/participation at St. Paul's means to us, understand how the blessings we have been given teach us about our own need to give and serve.



## **Test of Faith**

We are all on this journey of life and we never quite know how it will all turn out. Every day is a test and we don't know if we passed or not. We make plans and as we get older, our experience helps us determine if our plan will work out in our favor or if we need to adjust. Faith, for me, plays a big part in those plans, always asking for guidance and direction.

Often our lives are going well and we take for granted all the good things. We forget that God is there with us. As soon as something bad happens, we wonder where God is and why he left us. I have heard many times "why has God forsaken me?"

There is so much to my story of faith as it is for so many. Raising your children is sometime the most challenging as well as the biggest gift of joy. You raise them to know the difference between right and wrong, establish morals, standards and setting the right example so they grow up to be responsible, productive and compassionate members of society. You step back and take a look, asking for guidance along the way and believe you are doing a great job.

My oldest son, Andrew, had everything going for him. Doing well in school, being responsible and was a joy to be around. He was very easy going and well loved by so many. The last semester of his senior year, things started to change. He became very irritable, little patience and angry. I tried to get him to talk with no luck. We all have been educated to know the signs of drugs and get that sinking feeling but quickly turn it off and go to the thoughts of "my child would never, there must be something else going on". Time went on and things got worse, I didn't know what to do. I didn't know how to fix it. I prayed for the right words to say and the right actions to take.....nothing happened. God, please help me!

What I have learned through my journey is that we don't always pray the right way; we don't know what our prayer should be.....our prayer seems to be unanswered. Why is this all happening to me?

Turns out, it's not about me. After a couple of years of complete despair and one year of not knowing if Andrew as dead or alive.....I prayed a different prayer. God, please wrap your arms around Andrew, let him know you are there, fill his heart with your love and let him feel you. The other very simple prayer was, Please bring him home....to me.....or .....to You, keep him safe. That prayer was very hard, because I knew what it meant. Not too long after that prayer, the phone call came.....from jail, Andrew had been arrested. I knew then he was off the street and for the most part safe. He was there for 10 days, he was let out with nothing.....to walk the streets. He called me and I picked him up next to a garbage can in a parking lot. He was a mess.....but God answered my prayer. He was there with me always, giving me the strength and the courage to do what I had to do, even though that meant to let go. It was like God picked up Andrew and brought it home to me. God trusted me enough to send him back to me. He has been with me and has been with Andrew helping him all the way to clean and sober for 3 years.

Bad things don't happen to good people; it's all a test of faith. There is nothing we can't handle as long as we know that God is there to comfort, love and guide us. We are never alone; he always knows what we need even if we don't.

I love St Paul's Church family because, through Pastor Mary Beth, she helps us know that our prayers, whether it's a grunt a groan, tears or joy, God knows our heart and is there with us no matter what.

My faith and love for God is never a test, I just know and love that he is on my side.

### Youth Calendar 2016-2017

The youth are off to an awesome start this year! In September, they painted the youth room (it is bright and beautiful – check it out!). See below for more fun activities to come...

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Time</u>
*Oct 9th	Fall Family Cookout	Harwoods (1621 315 <sup>th</sup> St)	5-8pm
*Nov 13th	Bowling Party	Tiger Bowl	4-6pm
*Dec 11th	Musical Cast Party	Youth Room	12-2pm
Jan 8th	Game Night	youth Room/Basement	6-8pm
Feb 12th	Sledding/Skiing Outing	Saylorville/Seven Oaks	1-3pm
*Mar 12th	Open Mic Night	Youth Room/Sanctuary	6-8pm
Apr 9th	Movie Night – “Passion of Christ”	Youth Room	6-8pm
*May 14th	Spring Family Lunch & Games	St. Paul’s	12-3pm

*\* = open to all ages (all other activities are for 5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade)*

### Work Begins on Christmas Musical!

Rehearsals are underway for “Three Wise Men and a Baby” the upcoming Christmas musical. The choir and Sunday school students have started learning the music, and work has begun on speaking parts and staging. There is also considerable behind – the- scenes activity going on for costumes, sets and props. The production date is Sunday, December 11, during the morning worship service. You don’t want to miss this exciting multi-generational musical event at St. Paul’s!

St. Paul’s Contact Info:  
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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Pauls-UCC-Madrid-Ia/201720056589635>

### **Remembering and Celebrating on November 6!**

Sunday, November 6 (in conjunction with All Saints' Day) is Memorial Dedication Sunday at St. Paul's! During worship, we will dedicate items given in memory of loved ones over the past several years (see below), as we also remember and celebrate those who have gone before us.

MEMORY NAME	PURPOSE	CONTACT
	<b>Bike Rack</b>	
Beverly A. Morning	Bike Rack	Deb Wibe
	<b>Choir Music Lateral File</b>	
Ida Day	choir music lateral file	
Barbara Ele	choir music lateral file	
Reuben Peterson	choir music lateral file	
	<b>Flowers in Pot by the Street</b>	
Reuben Peterson	Flowers	Dean & Genta Ringgenberg
	<b>Microphones</b>	
Elsie Gayer	microphones	
Wilbur Mathes	microphones	Wes Mathes
Nick Kelderman, Ida Day's nephew (CA)	microphones	
Robert Howard	microphones	
Mel & Dorothy McFarlane	microphones	
Barbara Ele	microphones	
	<b>Outside West Wall Cross</b>	
Beulah Duling	outside west wall cross	Carl Duling
	<b>Sanctuary Paraments</b>	
Anne Lundahl	sanctuary paraments	Willard Lundahl
	<b>Scholarship Fund</b>	
Reuben Peterson & Ida Day	scholarship fund	

## **What St. Paul's Youth Did This Summer**

**By Josie Mowrer**

**Give a brief description (or list) 3 things you did or places you went this summer:**

Henry – rode the sky glider at the Iowa State Fair, rode a camel at Blank Park Zoo, took swimming

lessons & spent lots of time at the aquatics center

Rory – RAGBRAI, went to Florida, got some good sleep!

Elizabeth - church camp at Wesley Woods, golf camp at Veenker golf course, Iowa State Fair

Hunter – Wisconsin Dells, going swimming, summer camp

Vandon – Michigan, home, camp (for a week)

Emily – babysat, Florida/Georgia vacation, soaking up sun

Maddie – Girl Scout camp, Boone County fair, Grandma & Grandpa's house

Marinza – Michigan, school, Mackinaw Island

Sean – RAGBRAI, ran, went to Florida

Josie - Boone County Fair (to show sheep, 6 static exhibits, work in food booth), Iowa State Fair  
to show sheep, worked in Madrid Labor Day food booth

**What was your favorite part about the summer?**

Henry – spending time with my family

Rory – going to Florida and spending time on the beach

Elizabeth – making new friends at Wesley Woods Church camp

Hunter – Wisconsin Dells

Vandon – my birthday

Emily – spending the time with some pretty great people

Maddie – not going to the sitters but having Emily come stay with us so I could sleep late and she was fun

Marinza – going to Michigan/spending time with my family

Sean – going to Florida on vacation

Josie - Doing really well at the county & state fairs

**What was your favorite thing to do/place to go this summer? Why?**

Henry – sky glider & big slide at the Iowa State Fair

Rory – biking on RAGBRAI

Elizabeth – competing in the Harry Potter trivia contest at the Ames library with my 2 best friends  
and my mom & grandma. I loved studying for it because I love reading Harry Potter & we finished  
in the top 5!

Hunter – Wisconsin Dells – fun water slides

Vandon – home, I felt weird away from home

Emily – taking a vacation down south because it had been a while and it was fun

Marinza – Michigan – it was fun

Maddie – camp - doing the crafts, campfires, sleeping in the top bunk

Sean – biking on RAGBRAI because it was cool to ride with so many people

Josie - going to Adventureland and having fun watching lifeguards and people run to safety when the rain poured down and there was thunder and lightning when we were at the water park

### **Habitat for Humanity**

You Are Invited! Heart of Iowa Habitat for Humanity invites all to celebrate with the James and Nyarok Kouk (Cook) family as we bless their new Habitat home on **Sunday, October 9, at 1:30 p.m.** Constructed at **2110 Carroll Street in Boone**, their efficient new house is now complete and ready to provide a stable, healthy and happy home for many years to come. The Habitat for Humanity housing ministry has been richly blessed and supported by our local Christian community as many have witnessed to the love of Christ through serving others. Please plan to join us in celebrating and, yes, there will be refreshments!

**Bonus:** Habitat's 2017 partner family for a home to be built in Madrid will be publicly introduced for the first time. See you there!

October/November 2016