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THE GOOD NEWS

AUGUST 2025

The Search Committee has had an eventful month. We finally put the finishing touches to our profile. As of the first week in July, we are officially “live” on the national database. That means that ministers looking for a position can check us out and see if they’re interested in being called to our pulpit. We haven’t heard anything yet, but that’s not surprising. It can take time for pastors to search the possibilities. Besides, General Synod took place in the middle week of the month, and that was a focus of attention for many folks. We do already have one candidate who has expressed an interest through the Conference, and are currently attempting to see if this candidate is a good fit for us. As we progress, we will share more information on the process. Additionally, the committee has worked with the Worship Committee to ensure that our pulpit is filled each week.



*Buster & Mary Fritz—Aug 10
Steve & Gail Popyk—Aug 11
Kurt & Laurie Gardner—Aug 22*

The Website Committee has begun working on the new site for the church. We met on Tuesday, July 22nd, to put our heads together to start filling in the interesting information about St. Paul. We are able to include many pictures on this site so those people looking for a great UCC congregation can see what we do and who we are, not just what our building looks like. We will keep you posted as to when it is officially finished and up and running so you can all take a look. Also, once we are up and running, we will welcome any info or pictures that you would like posted on the site as well. We would like the congregation to have input since this is OUR church website!



Consistory

July's Consistory meeting had much of the focus on dealing with operations matters. The stained-glass window that needs repair will be removed, repaired and replaced. An air quality company came in last week to determine what needs to be done in the basement following the flood.

We also discussed how we are going to fill the Sundays until a new pastor is called. Thank you, Gail, for making the arrangements for pulpit supply. As you can see, our August Sundays are filled.

Our new challenge is the lightning strike that occurred two weeks ago. Several electronic devices were affected, with the main one being our sound mixer, which will need to be replaced. A big thank you to Maria for making all the calls for insurance and repairs and for coming in on her day off to check our sound system and Wi-Fi. Also, thank you to her son Andrew for loaning us a sound system so we can continue services. In spite of all the challenges, we were able to have KC still do the service on July 20th with help from Laurie and Mike.

Thank you to Steve, Dawn and Erich for cleaning up the bricks that had fallen off the church and thanks to Beth who came in several days to help.

Work is continuing on our new website and the Search Committee has an update in this newsletter.

Rummage

The rummage has mostly been moved to the large dining room and much of the sorting has been done. We are waiting for the report from the air quality company before we schedule any more sorting days. Thank you to everyone who has been helping.



- 9 Cindy Weiler
- 11 Betty Wolgast
- 15 George Dimas
- 19 Jim Farrow



We are currently in a state of transition in our church. We are between pastors, and uncertain of our future direction. This can be an uncomfortable situation - where are we now and where are we going? Yet this can also be a time of opportunity. We are not on a course set in stone. We can decide what we want to be “when we grow up.” Where do we

see St. Paul being three years from now? Five years from now? Ten years hence? Do we even see a future for ourselves? While our current demographics may be a challenging, it can be productive to take a step back and think about what our course should be. Like any organization, or even a living organism, a church which does not continuously seek to grow will die. If we don’t want our church to die, we have to ask ourselves some questions.

The first question we need to ask is for whom do we build our church? For our own benefit? For the next generation? For the community around us? For God? I don’t mean the physical structure, but the social one, that grouping of specific humans who hold the conviction of a single identity. There are two thoughts on this. The first is a favorite verse from the King James version of the Bible, “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Our churches, and our own church in particular, are the substance of what we hope for, the evidence of things we do not see. So, what do we hope for in a church? Something that simply is there from us every week and especially when we need it? Or something that will give us more than we put into it and that will still be there after we are gone? These two visions are not mutually contradictory, but to accomplish both requires a broadness of vision.

A second thought: we do not inherit this world from our parents, we borrow it from our children. This is an old Native American saying. What we build today may be built on the ashes of yesterday, but it is also very much the trajectory of the future. There are many examples of individuals who have built something they cannot see the final form of. The builders of cathedrals are perfect examples. Cathedrals took centuries to build. Few who labored on them ever saw the finished product, but they built in the faith it would ultimately be worth the effort. Scientists build on the work of the scientists who went before them, each generation building on the work of the last. The pioneers of the Atomic Age at the end of World War II generally did not live to see the ultimate outcome of their research in nuclear power plants and even more powerful nuclear weapons. And our Founding Fathers were also individuals who started to build what they could not see the full flowering of: a democratic country with universal suffrage (voting rights) and, just perhaps, freedom and justice for all. We’re still very much working on that. It remains to be seen whether or not we ourselves will see the culmination of this process.

So, we should not be discouraged if our faith communities ebb and flow over the years. Rather, we should see the alternating cycles of growth and contraction as part of the natural life cycle of a vital organism. It is our continued effort to contribute to their survival that justifies the expenditure of our time, talent and treasure.

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So, it is fair to ask what this all means for St. Paul in our current situation. Do we view our church as vibrant and welcoming, or do we see it as stagnant and looking inward? If the latter, then it is up to us to adjust our perspective, for a stagnant church will not survive. Do we proactively invite others in, or simply assume everyone we know already has their spiritual house in order and wouldn't be interested in seeing what we have to offer, so we miss opportunities to grow our congregation? Do we explore new ways to get the word out that we are here to the community, ready to spread the good news of Jesus? Do we employ innovative methods of communication to reach out to the larger world? Do we view ourselves as part of the community, or separate from it? Are we ready to change to meet the needs of a new generation of believers? If the answers to many or most of these questions is "no," then we cannot expect to grow and survive. If we are willing to tackle the challenges of current society, then we will be building a cathedral for the future. Even if we do not see the results of our efforts in our lifetimes, when we go to our final reward, we will see the final flowering of our work.

Woof – I'm Jackson!! My Pawrents are Glenn & Maria Momeyer. I'm a leader dog in training. My mom is a golden retriever and my dad is a chocolate lab. They were trying for chocolate babies, but got 5 yellow and 4 black.

Like any toddler (I'm almost 6 months old), I like to get into a *little* bit of trouble, now and again. My newest bad habits are counter surfing (I'm really tall for my age and can grab a hand towel hanging near the top of the fridge) and jumping on the couch. We have boxes on the couch to stop me from jumping – my mom doesn't like that look, but what can I say, I'm just a *wild child*.

Every day we work on relaxation techniques – the best part of that are the treats I get for sitting still while my Pawrents run around me, hide from view, jump up and down, and somehow try to distract me. Hey, who wouldn't sit for a dry, meat byproduct, non-human, piece of hard kibble? I do get frozen carrots as a treat too – those are scrumptious.

I'm always glad to be near my family and meet anybody new. I love sitting on the floor by someone's feet (sometimes I like to nip at their toes) and chew my favorite toys. While my mom is cooking dinner, I like to sit right in front of the stove – in her way. And, I have to find the rays of the sun anywhere I can so I can work on my tan.

But, but....I have a superhero alter ego. When I put on my cape and gentle leader, I am all business. I go to crowded places with many distractions, including screaming kids, people walking closely, and I pay no attention to them. A few days ago, when my Pawrents sat down for a snack at Costco, I laid under the table calmly occupying myself with a bone and a peanut butter-filled Kong. I also go on Leader Dog outings and train with other puppies (just like our Detroit Lions).

I hope to share more adventures with you AND maybe attend a service, if you will let me. I hear you're all really nice humans.

