

The Link

February
2023

St. Paul United Church of Christ
101 South Perry Street • PO Box 147 • Wapakoneta, OH 45895
Phone: (419) 738-2215 Fax: (419) 738-2076
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Interim Pastor's Page

First a look back. We have spent considerable time during the Annual Meeting getting a better understanding of the current financial state for St. Paul as we come out of the COVID hiatus. Here is the distribution of pledges from last year. The total Given of this chart is \$25,885.02 more than the total given from the Pledges and Contributions Needed over Pledges lines on the 2022 Actual column in your annual report because directed gifts which are passed through and special gifts are posted to each person. The totals on the 2023 proposed budget are for General Fund only.

This information is offered for your prayerful consideration. Yes, it's true, your church's General Fund needs your help. Thank you for all that you do to forward the Kingdom of God through the many ministries of St. Paul UCC Wapak.

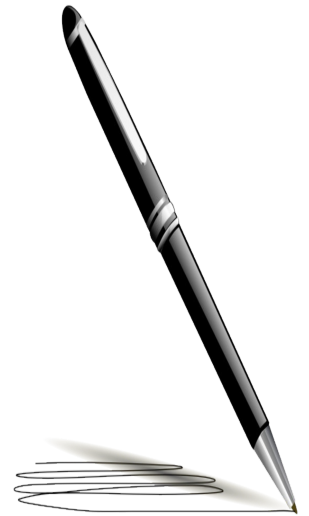
Giving	Range	Number	Given	Pledged	Over Pledge
\$ -	\$ -			\$ 7,422.00	\$ (7,422.00)
\$ 0.01	\$ 250.00	44	\$ 3,879.36	\$ 1,040.00	\$ 2,839.36
\$ 250.01	\$ 500.00	19	\$ 7,786.75	\$ 1,260.00	\$ 6,526.75
\$ 500.01	\$ 750.00	13	\$ 8,075.48	\$ 2,060.00	\$ 6,015.48
\$ 750.01	\$ 1,000.00	13	\$ 11,187.00	\$ -	\$ 11,187.00
\$ 1,000.01	\$ 1,500.00	19	\$ 23,299.03	\$ 73,908.00	\$ (50,608.97)
\$ 1,500.01	\$ 2,000.00	9	\$ 15,849.00	\$ 5,720.00	\$ 10,129.00
\$ 2,000.01	\$ 2,500.00	10	\$ 23,470.38	\$ 7,280.00	\$ 16,190.38
\$ 2,500.01	\$ 3,000.00	3	\$ 8,252.00	\$ 5,200.00	\$ 3,052.00
\$ 4,000.01	\$ 5,000.00	7	\$ 31,496.89	\$ 3,900.00	\$ 27,596.89
\$ 5,000.01	\$ 6,000.00	4	\$ 21,234.97	\$ 5,200.00	\$ 16,034.97
\$ 6,000.01	\$ 7,000.00	3	\$ 19,150.00	\$ 10,840.00	\$ 8,310.00
\$ 7,000.01	\$ 9,000.00	1	\$ 8,414.01	\$ -	\$ 8,414.01
\$ 10,000.01	\$ 15,000.00	4	\$ 50,465.00	\$ 26,000.00	\$ 24,465.00
		149	\$ 232,559.87	\$ 149,830.00	\$ 82,729.87



Thank you to everyone who showered us with Anniversary cards for Susan and my 50th wedding anniversary. As we talked about it, there were a LOT of folks who shared that they "remember" their 50th, but have been married for 53, 56, 58, and yes, even 70 years. This gave Susan and I an idea.

Now, a look forward. We cordially invite you to a special kind of fellowship dinner, after church on Sunday, February 12, 2023. Everyone is invited, but we need you to sign up or call the church to let them know how many of your family will be attending. The program will be a fun way to honor the many Valentine couples in the church who have been married 50 years or more. We will spend time honoring them, or maybe I should say having fun "roasting" them. Come and find out which is more true. It will be fun! Really, everyone is invited!

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN...



Did you know that last year donations from pledges paid for only 51.5% of our Church's general fund expenses while the Piel Fund only paid for 12.5%? The COVID Employee Retention income of \$33,336 and the carryover from previous years made up the difference. Our van was purchased from these funds.

Regardless of how our Church is doing financially, only 4% of the value of the previous year's market value of any endowment, except the Building Fund endowment, can be withdrawn in any one year. Endowments may only be used for their designated purpose. The amount withdrawn from the Piel Fund was \$10,233 less in 2022 than in 2021 because the ending value was smaller in 2021, decreasing what could be withdrawn in 2022. Thankfully, the market value has increased in 2022, increasing what can be withdrawn this year to \$58,746 which is only 15.3% of our budgeted expenses for the general fund.

Our Church, like any other church, is dependent upon giving. From 2018 to 2022, giving has declined by 11% and expenses are up by 13.5%. The cumulative Inflation rate%, according to the CPI Inflation Calculator since 2018, has been 19.6% so the increase in expenses is lower than the inflation rate but expenses are still increasing. While the Council is working hard to control spending, utilities, salaries, and office supplies, postage, etc., these are necessary costs of doing what we do.

Between 2018 and 2022, we have lost 63 members due to death; while only 11 adults joined our Church during this same period. Of course, this period covers Covid, but we still have to deal with the decline in giving.

I want to thank Mark Vaughn for serving as Council President for three years and Kathy Haehn serving as Head Deacon. Three years is a long time as President and the last three years have been anything but normal. Less than two months into Mark's first term as President, Covid hit, and we suspended in-person services and meetings and became proficient with zoom. Repeatedly, the Council struggled with the decision to resume in person services and meetings. As things finally returned to almost normal, Pastor Becky resigned with no interim minister available. Mark stepped up and provided the needed office supervision and direction. Most notably, Kathy and the other Deacons verified our list of committees as we returned to normal after Covid, determining who was still active on them and what the committee's mission is.

Cindy Preston, Council President

HATS OFF TO THESE

CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR CHURCH

- ◆ Mark Vaughn and Kathy Haehn who have served on the Church Council the last four years.
- ◆ Kay Wellington and Jim Smith who have agreed to serve on the Church Council.
- ◆ Cindy Erb for all the extras she did as Church Secretary. We wish her the best as she simplifies her life.
- ◆ Pastor Mark Bishop for the tremendous amount of time, patience, and tolerance that he has devoted to us to prepare us for our next called pastor.
- ◆ Susan Bishop for graciously doing without her spouse during their retirement while he ministers to us.
- ◆ Those on the Transition Team and Search Committee for taking on these difficult and time consuming tasks.
- ◆ Those who serve on Call to Care, Prayer Chain, Mission Committee, and Faith Formation Committee; work at FEAST, Take Out Tuesday, and Monthly Food Distribution; participate in the Bell Choir, Chancel Choir; and any other of the many, many activities that are part of our Church.



YOUR CHURCH COUNCIL

IN ACTION...

January 16, 2023

Meeting Highlights



The Church Council met at their regular meeting on January 16. The highlights of the meeting included finding a substitute custodian while Greg Hengstler is on leave of absence. (Outgoing) President Mark Vaughn excused himself from the discussion and Vice-President Cindy Preston conducted the discussion and the Council voted to hire Mark as substitute janitor.

Office Secretary, Cindy Erb, submitted her resignation which was accepted. After job descriptions are reviewed, the position will be advertised.

The 2023 Church budget in the new format was discussed at length, with the focus on transparency and clarity. The changes to the format combine all income and expenditures in one consolidated budget. The Council also discussed the decline in giving and rising expenses.

Kay Wellington and Jim Smith have agreed to serve on the Council. The outgoing Council members are Mark Vaughn and Kathy Haehn.

Members of the congregation are welcome to express their concerns at meetings. We ask that you notify either the office or (Incoming) President Cindy Preston at 419-303-0325 so you may be put on the agenda.

The next meeting of the Council is February 13 at 6:30 p.m.



St. Paul United Church of Christ
Congregational Meeting
Sunday, January 22, 2023

Opening of Meeting... Mark Vaughn, President

Opening Prayer... Rev. Mark Bishop

Approval of Last Year's Meetings Minutes-After the correction of the date noted on the minutes from 2021 to 2022 a motion to approve the minutes from the 2022 Annual Congregational Meeting was made by Melanie Wright; seconded by Nancy Newland. Motion carried.

Recognition of Outgoing Council Members-Cindy Preston came forward to express the congregation's gratitude for Mark Vaughn and Kathy Haehn's years of service. They were each presented a gift and were greeted with applause from the congregation.

Re-Election of Eligible Council Members to a second term ending in 2025- Motion to elect the following members to their second 2 year terms was made by Janice Wright; seconded by Pat Shaw. Motion carried.

Fritz Ankerman
 David Brautigam
 Kevin Frische

Election of new council members for a first term ending in 2025 based on the Nomination Committee recommendation and possible floor. No additional nominations were voiced from the floor. Recommendations for a first term ending in 2025 - Motion to elect the following candidates to their 1st 2-year term was made by Jenny Frische; seconded by Michele Prater. Motion carried.

James Smith
 Kay Wellington

Explanation of church finances... Pastor Bishop addressed the need for additional information regarding the proposed church budget for 2023. The main topic was the difference between Endowments and the General Fund. The General Fund is powered from donations/pledges. Endowments are accounts we may only draw a percentage of the interest each year *typically 4 %). Ushers handed out a report that addressed the financial and economic trends for the past several years

After his presentation he opened the floor for any questions or concerns. Concerns voiced from the congregation included the following topics;

Needs of Church programs and their impact on the general fund,
 Staffing concerns
 Increased giving over pledges
 Reasons for the current membership decrease.
 Posting of a distribution graph of offering amount

Rev. Bishop asked that the congregation look over the proposed budget and return next Sunday (1/29/23) to vote on it.

Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Jenny Frische; seconded by Jane Myers. Motion carried. Cindy Preston asked council members to meet in the church library for a short reorganization meeting. Rev. Bishop offered a prayer for the luncheon in the Fellowship Hall. Meeting Adjourned.

THANK YOU!

THANK YOU!!!! A sincere thank you to **Mark Vaughn & Kathy Haehn** for serving on the St. Paul Church Council for the past four years. Your willingness to serve the congregation of St. Paul in a leadership position is **GREATLY** appreciated. Your valued talents, ideas, and opinions will be missed. Thank you again for making a difference at St. Paul and for a job well done!!!!



Welcome

WELCOME NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS

A **WELCOME** to **Kay Wellington and Jim Smith** for agreeing to serve a term on St. Paul Church Council, beginning February 2023. Your willingness to serve and share your leadership talents for the benefit of our church is deeply appreciated. Again welcome to Church Council and thank you in advance for what you will do to continue to lead St. Paul in positive directions.

St. Paul UCC Church Council February 2023 to January 2024

President – Cindy Preston – president@stpaulucc.com – 419-303-0325

Vice President – Tammy Nuesmeyer-snues@bright.net-419-230-4049

Treasurer – Fritz Ankerman - ankerman@bright.net—419-738-2223

Head Deacon—Kay Wellington-rwellington@woh.rr.com-419-236-7583
Peg Schlenker—bpschlenker@gmail.com—419-738-6097
Cheri Brandt-jasonbrandt35@gmail.com-567-356-7390
Jim Smith-wapajim@bright.net-419-773-1612

Head Elder – Heather Nolte—hnolte91@gmail.com—567-204-1641
Michele Prater-mprater2@columbus.rr.com-614-378-0469

Head Trustee – Don Webb—webbmac@gmail.com—419-738-3048
David Brautigam—dbraut@bright.net—419-738-6093
Kevin Frische—Kalvinator@hotmail.com-419-738-6703

WELCOME AND THANK YOU...



Meetings and Events

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES/ HELP WANTED

Volunteers to be the Liturgist during Sunday morning worship. You will be given the material to read. Contact either Cindy Preston at 419-303-0325 or the Church office at 419-738-2215.

Volunteers to give the Children's Sermon. You may either pick your topic or base it on the scriptures for the week. Contact either Cindy Preston at 419-303-0325 or the Church office at 419-738-2215.

Church secretary. This is a part time position. Contact the Church office at 419-738-2215 for more information.

NEW WEBSITE

Check out our new website at stpaulucc.com! It goes up in February. Some of the areas that are updated include Vanco, where you can give online. You can also set up your giving to be automatic.

FAITH FORMATION

The Faith Formation Team will be meeting on Monday, February 6th at 6:00PM. We will be making final plans for Heifer activities this Wednesday at FEAST which includes decorating animal sugar cookies. We will also discuss how FEAST is going so far..

All are Welcome!!!!

MISSION COMMITTEE

The Mission Committee will have a meeting on **Wednesday, February 15h at 6:00PM.**

HEIFER SUNDAY

Heifer Sunday is February 19th. After the church service, come over to Fellowship Hall for delicious animal sugar cookies decorated by our FEAST children and a glass of milk. Heifer International's mission is to end hunger and poverty while caring for the Earth. For more than 75 years, Heifer International has provided livestock and sustainable agricultural training to struggling communities around the world. They currently work in 21 countries, including the United States. Heifer's founder, Dan West wanted to help poor families around the world in a sustainable way - with gifts of livestock and seeds so they could care for themselves and their children. The core principle is "Passing on the Gift". For each livestock gift, families agree to pass on the offspring of that animal to another person in need. Animals that are given provide life-sustaining products such as milk, cheese, eggs, honey and wool. Make a difference with life-changing donations to help provide families opportunities to improve their lives and to transform entire communities. If donating by check, please make check out to St. Paul UCC and write HEIFER in memo line.

MONTHLY FOOD DISTRIBUTION

The next large West Ohio Food Distribution will be on Thursday, February 23, 2023, at the Auglaize County Garage.

Our Church Family


With caring thoughts...

Our deepest sympathy and condolences on the passing of **Lewis Knoch. Louie passed** on Monday, January 16, 2023.

Happy Anniversary!!



02/07/1976	Bruce & Pam Baker
02/11/1984	Mark & Tracy McDonald
02/14/2019	Fritz & Peggy Ankerman
02/28/1953	Dick & Carol Presar



HAPPY BIRTHDAY
to our
St. Paul Youth!

February

Andi Prater	2/01/2019
Rudy Mathewson	2/08/2011
Samatha McMichael	2/08/2010
Jack Allemeier	2/17/2010
Henley Johnston	2/22/2016
Marlow Johnston	2/24/2012



02/01	Carol Presar	02/13	Doris Hollenbacher	02/24	Jacob Azbell
02/02	Jack Preston Sr.	02/14	Angela Merricle	02/25	Janet Winkler
02/02	J.T. Schlenker	02/15	Ariana Brandt	02/26	Janice Wright
02/04	Helen Erb	02/15	Timothy Place	02/26	Angela Honaker
02/04	Mindy Webb	02/15	Michelle Herman	02/28	Gary Halfhill
02/07	Jeff Bartlett	02/16	Dusty Anderson	02/29	Carlee Hosterman
02/07	Dirk Bartlett	02/17	Nancy Stroh	02/29	Anthony Brookhart
02/07	Sandy Koenig	02/17	Sean Martin		
02/08	Michael Bartlett	02/18	Gale Gebhart		
02/08	Erica Preston	02/19	Alex Stinebaugh		
02/09	Jamie Allemeier	02/19	Mitchell Presar		
02/10	Robert Schroer	02/20	Sandy Cary		
02/11	Tami Zwez	02/21	Chris Hibner		
02/11	Krystal Loy	02/22	Timothy Norton		
02/12	Tom Schlenker	02/22	Linda Caton		
02/12	Barbara Frische	02/23	John Schlenker		

General Fund

	<u>Current</u>	
General Fund Monthly Budget		\$31,678.34
Given to General Fund		\$22,486.03
General Fund Monthly Actual Expenses		\$32,248.07
(Note: This includes final retreat expenses \$1,867 and Most of Security Cameras \$3,175)		
Difference		\$ 9,762.04
Given to Benevolences Fund		\$ 637.75
Given to Building Fund		\$ 557.50

	<u>Year to Date</u>	
General Fund Budget Year to Date		\$31,678.34
Given to General Fund Year to Date		\$22,486.03
Expenses General Fund Year to Date		\$32,248.07
Difference		\$ 9,762.04
Given to Benevolences Fund Year to Date		\$ 637.75
Given to Building Fund Year to Date		\$ 557.50

General Fund 2023 Budget		\$380,140.07
Number of Months	1	

DEC 2022
Income \$47,798.87
Expenses \$33,500.53

Benevolence Giving for February ~ Camp Fund



February 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<i>1</i> 3-5:30PM FEAST 6:30—Bell Choir 7:30—Chancel Choir	<i>2</i> 6-8:00PM Video Study	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>5</i> 8:30AM Bible Study 10:15AM Worship (with Installation of All Council Members and the Pastoral Search Committee)	<i>6</i> 6:00PM Faith Formation Meeting	<i>7</i> 5:00-6:00 Take Out Tuesday Meals	<i>8</i> 3-5:30PM FEAST 6:30—Bell Choir 7:30—Chancel Choir	<i>9</i> 6-8:00PM Video Study	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>12</i> 8:30AM Bible Study 10:15AM Worship Celebration of Marriage Dinner (everyone sign up please)	<i>13</i> 6:30PM Church Council	<i>14</i> 5:00-6:00 Take Out Tuesday Meals 	<i>15</i> 3-5:30PM FEAST 6:00PM Mission Committee Meeting 6:30—Bell Choir 7:30—Chancel Choir	<i>16</i> 6-8:00PM Video Study	<i>17</i> 5:00PM Wedding Rehearsal	<i>18</i> 2:30PM Emilie Thiedt and John Kimmel Wedding
<i>19</i> 8:30AM Bible Study 10:15AM Worship Heifer Sunday	<i>20</i> No School President's Day	<i>21</i> 5:00-6:00 Take Out Tuesday Meals	<i>22</i> NO FEAST Ash Wednesday at St Paul UCC	<i>23</i> Loaves & Fishes St. Paul UCC Preparing 10-12:00Noon West Ohio Food Distribution @ County Garage 6-8:00PM Video Study	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>26</i> 10:15AM Worship	<i>27</i> 6:30PM Policy and Procedure Meeting	<i>28</i> 1:00PM Publicity Committee 5:00-6:00 Take Out Tuesday Meals				

St. Paul United Church of Christ
101 South Perry Street
PO Box 147
Wapakoneta, OH 45895



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Church Office

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Website: www.stpaulucc.com
Email: cindy@stpaulucc.com

Rev. Mark Bishop, Pastor Interim

Phone: (419) 217-0143
Email: pastor@stpaulucc.com

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

LET'S GET TOGETHER !

**IN-PERSON
SERVICES
WEEKLY AT 10:15AM
also
available on the church
Website:
www.stpaulucc.com
or our Facebook page:
[www.facebook.com/
StPaulWapakoneta/](http://www.facebook.com/StPaulWapakoneta/)**

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY



ST. PAUL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Wapakoneta, Ohio

Our MISSION

As a congregation of God's people, we welcome and encourage all to join in fellowship, joyful and inspirational worship and faithful stewardship. United in Christ, we support and nurture one another in personal development and spiritual growth. We strive to reflect Christ's Love and to spread God's Word throughout our community and the world.