



St. Paul United Church of Christ
 31654 Mound Road
 Warren MI 48092
 586/264-4777
 Office Hours: M-TH, 9am-1pm
 Rev Dr KC Lazzara, Pastor
 www.spuccwarren.com
 email: stpauluccwarren@gmail.com



The Good News

JANUARY 2025

PASTOR KC



Philip went to look for Nathanael and told him, "We have found the very person Moses and the prophets wrote about! His name is Jesus, the son of Joseph from Nazareth." "Nazareth!" exclaimed Nathanael. "Can anything good come from Nazareth?"
 John 1:45-46a

Subscribe to our
YouTube Channel

When I led worship in November, do you remember the first question I asked during the Children's Message? After living in Florida for 18 months, I was sure the Lord continued to work in the lives of the kids and asked, "What did I miss?" Each child, one after the other, excitedly told the congregation something important that happened in their life. Humbled and honored to be your Pastor once again, my question is the same for you.

Being physically on the other side of the country didn't mean my heart was far from St. Paul. The congregation was in my prayers, thoughts, memories, reflections, and ponderings. I would love to know how the Lord has worked in your individual lives as well as the life of St. Paul since I've been in Florida. I see a gorgeous lobby. I see the beautiful landscaping and butterfly bushes have flourished. I see that the children have grown as well (and are flourishing too!) However, what are the things I can't see that the Lord has done in your hearts? Paul writes in his letter to the Corinthians, "Clearly you are a letter from Christ showing the result of our ministry among you. This 'letter' is written not by pen and ink, but with the Spirit of the living God. It is carved not on tablets of stone, but on human hearts" (2 Corinthians 3:3).

Starting this new year, Nathanael's honest inquiry resonates deep in the hearts of all of us, who after celebrating the birth of Christ Jesus, are eager to bear fruit in His Holy Name. "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" What will flourish from your walk with Jesus that is carved on your heart? May we bear witness to Christ Jesus in the daily life of our church.

Revival starts in your heart! Amen!





Happy Anniversary—January 29
James & Ellen Fox



- 4 Mikey & Tori DeMarco
- 5 Adelaide Ammon
- 15 Kurt Gardner
- 19 Mike DeMarco



It's the start of a new year, and we look forward to a fresh start. But is a fresh start really what we need? Perhaps we would be better served with a *revival* of what is already good and valuable in our lives. In the press of daily life, particularly during the frenzy of Advent, it's easy to turn away from what's important, to lose our focus. That doesn't mean we need a new focus to our lives or new priorities. It might mean that we simply need to revive our sense of self and, most importantly, our connection to God, for it seems to be this connection which, paradoxically suffers the most as we celebrate the arrival of God's son.

What does scripture have to say about revival? Quite a bit, actually. "...you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near" (Romans 13:11-12 NRSV). What time is it? What day is it? Perhaps, just perhaps, today is the day you revive your faith, and salvation draws even nearer to you than when you became a believer. God recognizes that we all "grow faint" and feel "powerless" at times, but reviving our faith can remedy that, "but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint" (Isaiah 40:31 NRSV). This begs the question, what do we do now? The ancient Israelites felt the same, "will you not revive us again, so that your people may rejoice in you" (Psalm 85:6 NRSV)?

So, what exactly do we do now? Scripture provides a pretty fair blueprint in the first epistle to Timothy. When the church at Thessaloniki starts to falter, Paul sends his protege, Timothy, to it to revitalize it. He recommends that Timothy take the following steps. First, start with prayer for everyone, by everyone, and do it as a community. Here we see three important points. To revitalize our faith, we need to be meeting in community. Worshipping together is critical for revitalization. And when we worship, prayer is essential, and that prayer must be global in scope. We are not just praying for ourselves; we are looking to the world around us. Next, Paul instructs Timothy on how authorities within the church are chosen. A revitalized community must look to its leaders for direction and purpose, and must ensure that its leaders are of sound character. Paul then moves on to the mystery of our faith: communion. To have a vital faith, regular communion is essential. And he rejects the type of faith that prohibits certain foods or marriage, saying everything that comes from God is good, so we need not deprive ourselves to be good Christians. Timothy is told to train himself to be a good minister. How? The second book of Timothy answers that, saying all scripture is sufficient for teaching. Finally, Paul tells Timothy that the church must care for the "widows and orphans," so caring for the poor and helpless is a priority.

So, in short, to revitalize your faith, you should worship regularly, pray consistently and broadly, consider your role within the church, take communion, read scripture, and practice charity. It might seem to be a daunting list, but if you break it down, it's probably just an enhancement of what you're already doing. You would just be doing it in a mindful way.

Continued on page 4

Continued from page 3

Let's take a look at what happens when you revitalize your faith. We already know you will find new energy ("mounting with wings like eagles," not growing faint), but there is more. As with your physical muscles, constant use of your prayer "muscles" strengthens them, and with that comes another benefit, "...in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7 NRSV). So, with renewed prayer we gain more peace in our lives. Then there is the joy of getting to know Jesus better, through scripture and, if you're so inclined, discussion with others and/or Bible study. Another part of our faith revitalization is renewed participation in worship and our faith community. Communal worship is a meaningful aspect of Christian life. This increases the bonds of friendship with others, and strengthens our safety net in times of trouble. We know we can always turn to our church family in times of tribulation, but also to share our joys. By taking part in various activities within the church setting, we learn new skills, and make new connections within the community. We may gain creative outlets that we wouldn't otherwise - in song, in writing, in craft or in art. We may discover new talents. Regular worship enhances our connections to God and to each other in a way that solitary worship cannot match. We build ourselves up as we build community.

Not a bad way to start the year, is it?



**\$415 was donated to
Women's Fellowship from
the 2024 Christmas Raffle!**

St Paul held its monthly Consistory meeting on December 10. We are on track with the re-instatement of Rev KC Lazzara as our permanent pastor come January 5. We had a very nice service and visit from the Conference Minister of the Michigan UCC, Rev. Lillian Daniel. She met with Consistory, and we went over some challenges, hopes and successes. We also gave her and her husband a quick tour of the church. We had boiler work done with a pump that needed to be replaced. The



lobby continues to get little things added to make it look more inviting (new lamps). Some other little items will be added. We also added battery operated aisle candles that seem to be working great. They are clean, less work and look just like the real thing. It seems like we just put the Christmas decorations up and Taking Down the Greens will be here— Sunday, Jan 12th. Our Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Jan 26th (lunch will be provided). The year has ended and as a reminder, we are always looking for members to consider joining Consistory. It is only one day a month at 7pm and the meeting only lasts about an hour and a half. People also can join through Zoom, so if getting to the meeting is a challenge, Zoom is always an option. I will be stepping down as President, but will still help with building and grounds. Please remember if you see anything in and around the church that needs attention, please let a member of Consistory know.

[KIM](#)

SPUCC was invited to help Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church in Detroit with their Children's Christmas Party. On Saturday, Dec 14, Beverly, Tom, Jim and I helped with this awesome event. While the children were doing activities, a parent was in another room picking up pre-arranged and purchased gifts that were later placed in their car. Tom and Jim worked in the gym and helped with the moving of the 'Santa' style bags. Beverly helped children with stickers being placed onto a manger scene picture. I had Christmas coloring pages for the kids to do. There were helpers for face painting and making other crafts. The Family Clothing Closet was open that day too. They provided coffee and donuts for the helpers and lunch for everyone.

It was a beautiful and meaningful Saturday meeting new people, making new friends, helping a community, and sharing in fellowship together.

In addition to their Christmas Party, they also host an Easter Party. We have been invited back next December!

Two members from MCLC came to our Rummage Sale. After our sale, they were one of the organizations that we donated clothes, household items, Christmas trees and decorations to. They have a Family Closet on the 3rd Saturday of each month. Anyone can come to the church and take what they need from the Closet, which is really a large room. They do this all year round.

