Wednesday Night EPIC Youth Groups

A meal will be served at 6PM

- **12/7: Pizza, salad, dessert**
- **12/14: Christmas Party! Bring a $5 gift.**
  - **Ham sliders, potato chips, salad, veggie sticks, apple slices & caramel**
- **12/21: No EPIC - Winter Break**
- **12/28: NO EPIC - Winter Break**

Youth groups will begin at 6:30PM
Grades 5th & 6th - PB&J
Grades 7th - 12th - SPUMY

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Williamsburg, Iowa
No. 12 December 2022

St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Williamsburg, Iowa

THE ANCHOR

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THE ANCHOR

A Letter From Pastor Harlan

"Dear Friends in Christ,

Oh my, the year is ending fast! It is an honor and a great pleasure to be serving as your interim pastor. I pray that I have blessed you as much as you've blessed us. It is December already!

I have prepared a daily Advent Devotional that is directly connected to our weekly worship through the end of the year. Signs and Wonders: Walking in the Light of the Lord is available by emailing me at: pastor@stpaulsumcwilliamsburg.com or by calling/texting me at 515-238-6729 and I will add you to the email distribution.

Advent, Christmas, and the New Year. Please note the calendar in this issue of the Anchor for the dates and times for Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day worship services. I am grateful to our very talented and devoted musicians who offer their skills and talents for rehearsals and worship services. They have prepared excellent, inspirational, and prayerful music for our worship.

Many thanks to Dave Gustafson for his leadership for the Community Thanksgiving Dinner and to all who prepared food, served, organized, provided music, and offered Christ-like hospitality. I agree with Dave when he commented, "We have a great team."

The church has been blessed with many baptisms from August through December. What a joy when parents bring their children to be baptized by renewing vows of following Christ and making promises before God for the future of their faith in Jesus Christ. The same joy occurs as the congregation renews vows and makes promises for these children's faith. Confirmation has begun, and new member classes will take up after the first of the year.

We continue the work of God with the restarting and reimagining God's call in the church's mission and ministry. In the near future, I anticipate setting aside time to visit with you in congregational meetings reviewing the progress we have made in our congregational interim work.

Thank you for your prayers and participation as we come to know who we are as a church now and who God calls this church to be.

In this issue of the Anchor, you will find a list of mission opportunities for your prayerful consideration. Thank you for the generosity of your resources including yourself. I am looking for people who will become a Mission Team to organize and lead our mission outreach. Maybe one of the team will be you. Contact me when you have come to this realization.

Deb and I pray that you may have a blessed and meaningful Advent and Christmas Season leading to a New Year with renewed faith.

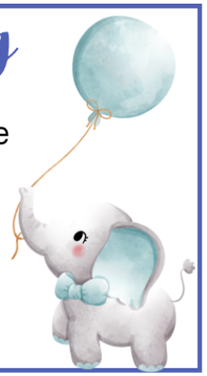
Pastor Harlan Gillespie

STAY CONNECTED!

www.stpaulsumcwilliamsburg.com
Facebook - @STPAULSUMC803
https://www.youtube.com/c/stpaulsumcwburg

What a Blessing

We welcomed
Maxton Adair Wade, son of Kyle and Sara, on November 6th
and
Alonzo Jay Slaymaker, great-grandson of Maralyn, on November 27th



NEW MEMBER CLASSES

Those interested in joining St Paul's family can contact Pastor Harlan to register for classes held at 11am on January 22nd and 29th

pastor@stpaulsumcwilliamsburg.com
or 515-238-6729

Vital Statistics

11/6 - 107 11/13- 118
11/20 - 118 11/27 - 129

As of November 28, 2022
Total Income - $220,557.56
Total Expenses - $205,517.14

THE LIGHT OF CHRIST CHRISTMAS SERVICE

December 14, 2022 at 2:00 PM

This service will focus on the "Amazing Grace" of our God, that he came to take away darkness and fear. He said "my grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in your weakness." Music and prayer and scripture will encourage everyone with the Hope that is Christ. This service will leave you with a message of God's love deepening our faith.

Worship Calendar for December

December 4 - Second Sunday of Advent
December 11- Third Sunday of Advent
& Children's Christmas Program at both services
Pancake breakfast @ 9:15am
December 18 - Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 24 - Christmas Eve Worship
3 pm traditional service
7 pm contemporary
December 25 - Christmas Day 10:00 AM
Combined Worship
January 1 - New Years Day 10:00 AM
combined service

Help Wanted

St Paul's Praise Band:
Lead Guitarist or Keyboard Player
5-7 Hours/Week at $20/hour for either position
Contemporary Worship

Email: pastor@stpaulsumcwilliamsburg.com

St. Paul's Vision Statement:
...to be a church where you can S.E.E. (Serve. Experience. Embrace) Christ

PB & J - 5th & 6th

November was filled with Christmas Program preparations in our PB&J class, as the kids have been working so hard on their speaking parts and songs to share the news of our Lord's birth with each and every one of you. The kids have done such a good job of making attendance a priority and really getting into their roles

Important Upcoming Dates to Note:

· Sunday, December 4th - All Students meet in the sanctuary at 9:15 for rehearsal ·WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7TH -DRESS REHEARSAL 6:30PM

·Sunday, December 11th - Meet no later than 8:15am! Perform at 8:30 and 10am service. Breakfast served in between.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14th- BRING A SILLY OR FUN WRAPPED GIFT ($5ish in value) FOR OUR PB&J CHRISTMAS PARTY!

SPUMY- 7th through 12th

SPUMY continued to find places to plug in during the month of November. The group was a HUGE help in getting things set up for the Community Thanksgiving Dinner! Many thanks for all the help!

Please remember that SPUMY is cooking and serving the breakfast meal on Sunday, December 11th. Don't forget to double check with your youth leaders about what shift and job you're signed up to do.!

Please bring a wrapped $5 gift item with you to EPIC on Wednesday, December 14th, for our annual Christmas Party! The more fun and creative you can be with your $5, the better!

Christmas break for EPIC runs from 12/15/22 to 1/3/2023. See you all back here on Wednesday, January 4th, 2023!!

SPUMC Children & Families

December 2022

NURSERY - 1ST GRADE

We continue to have our nursery available for anyone to use as needed, starting at 8:30 each Sunday. The room will be available to use but will not have a staffed attendant until the 10:00am Service.

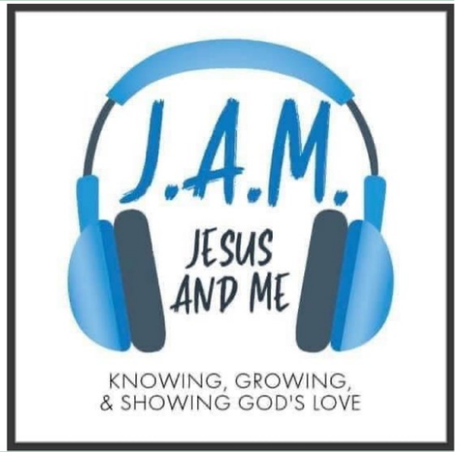
At 10:00am our families will all start together in the sanctuary for worship music with our Praise Band, and will get to participate in a Children's Moment of Ministry. After Children's Moment, the attendant will meet any interested children, infant up to 1st grade age by the door to the fellowship hall. The attendant will then take the children to the Children's Area for a small lesson, prayer and play! Our featured curriculum for Pray & Play is "Simply Loved" - where we get back to the heart of what matters: teaching your kids to Love Jesus.

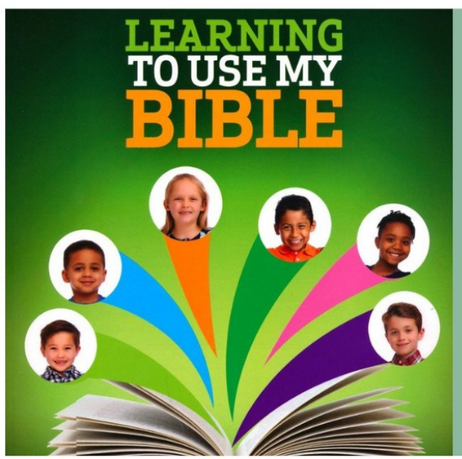
Just as a note, the nursery room will be available to use but no attendant will be on duty on Sunday, December 11th, Saturday, December 24th and Sunday, December 26th.

SUNDAY SCHOOL - PRE-K TO 4TH

We're so thankful for this group of kids and their hearts for Jesus! We have been working so hard on this year's Christmas Program. They can't wait to show you all!

Important Upcoming Dates to Note:
- Sunday, December 4th - All Students meet in the sanctuary at 9:15 for rehearsal
- **WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7TH -DRESS REHEARSAL FOR ALL 6:30PM**
- Sunday, December 11th - Meet no later than 8:15am! Perform at 8:30 and 10am service. Breakfast served in between.
- Sunday, December 18th- "Happy Birthday, Jesus" Party during Sunday School
- CHRISTMAS BREAK UNTIL 1/8/2023





CALLING ALL 3RD - 6TH GRADERS

You have your own Bible, but now what?

We are inviting you to take part in a special class, lead by Jennifer Lane on Sundays in January and February! This class will help you each celebrate the important passage of receiving your bible from the church and help you make the Bible a life long companion. Parents are welcome but not required to attend.

Topics that will be explored include: What is the Bible, The Book of Law, Old Testament History and Poetry, Books of the Prophets, The Gospels, New Testament History, Letters from the Apostles and A Gift from God. Each week will be broken into three parts-knowledge, application and connection.

Please sign up by emailing Jenn Lane at: jennifer1974@gmail,com

The Light of Christ Christmas Service

by Kelly Loftus, Congregational Care Coordinator

We would like to offer a Christmas service that would take place during an afternoon a week or two before Christmas (Wednesday, December 14th @ 2:00 or the snow-date of Wednesday, December 21st @ 2:00). Everyone is invited, it is geared to those who may be grieving the loss of loved ones, but also to those who may be going through any difficult time. This is not a service where we will dwell on sadness; quite the opposite. This service is about the meaning of Christmas; *John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."*

This service is about the message of Hope in Christ Jesus; the reason he came was to end all suffering, loss, pain, sin and hopelessness. So in this service we acknowledge the pain and anguish and hurt and loss of loved ones and other significant losses, but we focus on the light that is Christ, our faith with the strength that passes all understanding and the gift of salvation that promises we will be with our loved ones in an eternal life. Praise God.

There will be a sign-up sheet in the sanctuary for anyone interested in attending. I am sure most of us have lost someone who was very dear to our hearts; this is why this service is for everyone. Another reason we invite everyone is so that we can take a break from all the craziness that this season can sometimes bring and focus on the reason for Christmas; the gift that is Christ Jesus and take a little time and truly be grateful for the loving and amazing God we have as our Father.

Come one, come all and bring a friend; help honor our loving memories of those who have passed and support one another in the healing process. After the service we will have coffee and cookies in the fellowship hall and a short meeting for those interested in an ongoing healing group; literature will also be available for you to take with you as a guide during the holiday season and the weeks ahead.

Healthy Living Steps

The memories you have with your loved one/s are a gift, cherish them.

Include and help others who may need you, focusing on others is often another of God's blessings and steps towards healing.

Don't deny your own feelings (trying to pretend everything is alright). Be honest and admit when you are struggling and don't be afraid to ask for help.

Embrace letting go of things that don't feel right anymore, and be open to starting new traditions.

Remember the song, "One Day at a Time, Sweet Jesus" that is all we have and it is enough.

In Support of Those Who Are Hurting....we can...

Listen to and encourage people to talk about their loved ones.

Invite them and include them in your holiday plans.

Acknowledge their pain and loss and ask how they are doing.

Offer a hug, prayer or just tell them how much you care.

Call, send a note, text a message, visit and show them you care.

OFFICE HOURS

Mondays
8:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Tuesdays
8:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Wednesdays
Closed
Thursdays
8:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Fridays
By Appointment

Prayer requests can be emailed to office@stpaulsumcwilliamsburg.com

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***Choir Director**: Steve Manning*

***Organist**: Sue Heitmann*

***Custodian:** Melissa Savage*

***Editor**: Shelley Berger*
Deadline for news for next month's newsletter is the 20th of the month.

Welcome Our New Sister and Brother in Christ

We welcome Hayden Kelly Blythe, infant daughter of Austin & Kiley and little sister to Reed and Callie

We welcome Stetson Merle Blum, infant son of Mitchell and Lynette with sponsors Taylor Davis and Nolan Bruner

POINSETTIAS

in memory of loved ones

We will be decorating the sanctuary with poinsettias for Christmas. Each plant can be ordered for $12.50. **Orders are due by December 4th**. Sign up sheet can be found in the back of the sanctuary or you may call the office. Please write "Poinsettias" in the memo if paying by check.

Blessings abound in our community and in our church family! With the help of many hands we were able to share a Thanksgiving meal with 76 people. Thank you to everyone who organized, baked and prepped food, set up tables and decorated, served and delivered food, cleaned up afterwards, and all the other little things that make a big difference in making our Community Thanksgiving a success.

DECEMBER AND FIRST OF THE YEAR MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

The mission of Jesus Christ takes no time off for the Holy Days. If anything, holy days reminds us all the more of the call Jesus has upon our lives to share in his mission and ministry. Here are some of the mission opportunities for the months of December and January.

Mission Opportunities

·**The Angel Tree Cards** from the Love Network will be delivered to SPUMC and be on the tree Sunday, November 27th. The Angel/Giving Tree is located in the foyer of the church. Pause on the way to worship and select a tag that has caught your interest and follow the directions in making Christmas special for a household. Gifts are due by December 7th.

·**Samaritans Purse Christmas Shoebox Ministry** has been a regular mission project at SPUMC. This year we are asking you to go to www.samaritanspurse.org/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/ and click on Give. You may choose any financial amount you would like to give to Operation Christmas Child. It may not be the same as purchasing items to place in a shoebox yourself, but this is a very effective way for children to receive gifts who might otherwise be overlooked.

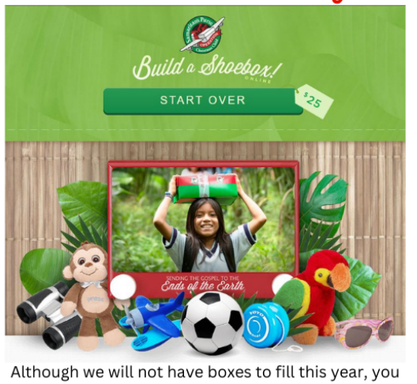
·**Disaster Relief** for recent disasters in the USA and around the world may be given online at https://umcmission.org/umcor/. All of your donations will go directly to a relief effort of your choice, or you may choose to give a donation that will support a relief effort needed in the next disaster. If you add SPUMC's church number 560387 your gift will show up on our financial statements we receive from the Iowa Conference. This is the fastest and most effective way to provide relief assistance.

·Remember there is a drop off for our local **Food Pantry** in the entry way of the SPUMC. Your donations will be a blessing.

·We are intending to assemble meals through **Take Away Hunger Now** to be shipped to Ukraine or another location that has immediate need. We hope to have this scheduled after the first of the year. We also need a team of persons with mission hearts to plan and organize the many of us needed to complete the project.

If you are a potential mission team leader, contact Pastor Harlan at pastor@stpaulsumcwilliamsburg.com or 515-238-6729 as soon as possible.

Share Some Joy!



Although we will not have boxes to fill this year, you can still share some joy by filling out a box online for $25 or donate $10 to help with costs. https://www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/buildonline/

WINTER WEATHER CANCELLATIONS

Since Winter has decided to stick around, here are some reminders on St. Paul's Weather Cancellation Policy:

- School starts late - morning church activities cancelled
- School cancels or lets out early - all church activities cancelled
- Check KCRG, Channel 9 & their website for Sunday cancellations
- Church service cancellation announcements will be posted to Facebook and emailed to those receiving the Weekly Update