



Rethinking Giving

In the church, the theology of money tends to be “It’s my money and I can do what I want with it.” or “I’m on a fixed income.” Both are theologies of scarcity. A scarcity mindset worries that there won’t be enough. We believe we can’t share because our finances are precarious. And if we do share, our giving is on our own terms and ought to remain fixed. We see this in the ever-diminishing percentage of income donations to the church.

In response to the first reply, the Bible reminds us that everything belongs to God. Everything we have is a gift from God. We’re to return a trust portion in thanksgiving to God. As we do this, God asks us to be as generous in our giving- as God is with us.

The problem with the second reply is that everyone is on a fixed income. It’s why financial advisors insist we make budgets. They want us to live wisely within our income.

In our current ‘do more with less’ economy, many are expected to work longer hours because with less people, the workload is greater. They work far more than the traditional 40 hours per week. This makes it difficult to have a second job, especially if there are children and/or older parents who need care.

Also in our current economy, job security is an issue. In the past, workers got hired by a company, moved up as they gained experience, and retired from that same company. That’s now unusual. Sometimes it’s the worker who moves from job to job in search of better pay. But at other times, companies rid themselves of employees to decrease wage costs. Employment isn’t guaranteed.

In contrast, those whose annual income comes from a government program (social security, military pension, disability benefits) have guaranteed income. Guaranteed incomes consistently allow for cost-of-living raises. Most recently, they increased 1.3% in 2021, 5.9% in 2022, and 8.7% in 2023. These cost-of-living increases generally outpace raises for paid work.

Naming retirement income as ‘guaranteed’ rather than ‘fixed’ opens us up to an abundance theology. So does thinking about compensation as being the result of using our God-given gifts. Both allow us to share from a place of strength and generosity.

Abundance theology resonates with Biblical instruction. It recommends we base our giving on all of our income. Traditionally, this was from field, orchard, flock, and herd. Today it would include checks, bonuses, investments, inheritances, and windfalls.

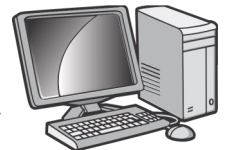
The Bible insists that we give ‘off the top’ and trust that God will continue to provide. It also recommends a minimum tithe of ten percent. So, if you’re not already giving ten percent, how much can you increase your giving? If you’re already giving ten percent, how might you give more? Church members are willing to offer the Dave Ramsey Financial Peace course to help you in this endeavor.

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We Live Streaming to You Tube on 10 am on Sunday morning. [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) in the box up on the top put in St. Paul’s Attica or here is the direct link <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCi2hK62nkmeNAMJwMpchvJw>.

It will be posted to Facebook after the broadcast.

Still looking for volunteers to learn and do the sound on a Sunday am. This can be done right at your seat. There is a sample bulletin for you to follow. This the easiest way to help without much training.



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On-Line Donations—Do you pay your bills on-line?

Consider adding your monthly church donation to that list.

Donations to the church can be set up as recurring transactions.

Checks are mailed from the bank to the church and clearly indicate the donor.

# Pray for our Shut-ins

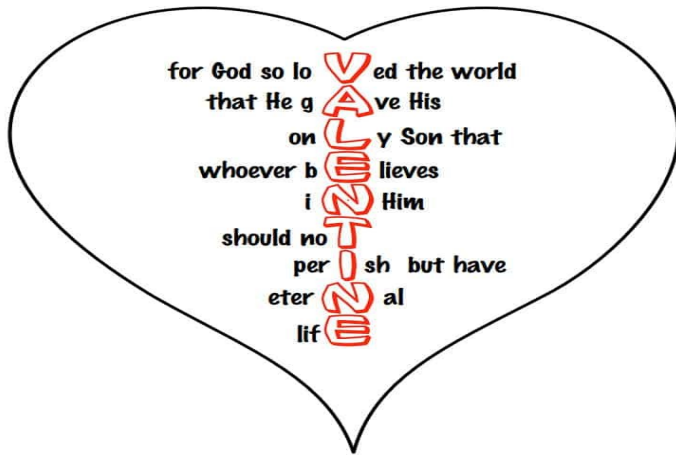


Bev West

Larry Taylor

...and others who are physically unable to join us.  
Why not call or visit, to let them know they are missed?

## John 3:16



DUNKIRK CAMPERS

Online registration is now Open

See Tom Baker for details

Dunkirk Scholarship  
Basket Raffle

During Pancake Breakfast

Leave donations in the  
Narthex by February 18th.

Help support our kids going to  
Dunkirk camp this year



### Attica Food Link Distribution:



Attica Presbyterian Church  
February 7  
10am-12pm

—1st come 1st served , Bring your own bags  
This will be for the next six month period.  
Sponsored by Attica Food Pantry



## Bible Studies

*Dig Deeper with Friends*



Bible Study groups will meet in our respective areas.  
If you have additional questions or concerns,  
contact the Convener:

Lisa Knerr- Mon. evening, 7 pm  
Charles- Wed. morning, 10 am

### Sunday Bible readings:

The first reading is *italicized*; the message text is **bold**.

February 4

**1 Corinthians 9.16,19-23**

*Mark 1.29-39*

February 25

**Romans 4:13-25**

*Genesis 17.1-7,15-16*

February 11

**Mark 9:2-13**

*2 Corinthians 4.4-6*

February 18

**Mark 1.9-15**

*Genesis 9.8-13*

COME JOIN OUR

# BIBLE



## Study

## Special Meeting of the New York Conference- February 3

A Special Meeting of the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ will convene online via the Zoom meeting platform, beginning at 4pm on Saturday, February 3, 2024. St. Paul's is entitled to representation by two lay delegates.

**If you are interested in being a delegate, please tell Pastor Laurie.**

The sole Item of Business for this meeting is to vote upon the recommendation of the Conference Board to call the Rev. Dr. Marsha Williams as Conference Minister of the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ.

WANT TO DECLUTTER YOUR HOME?

INSIDE GARAGE SALE March 9th

Pay \$10 for a 6' table and bring your stuff to sell.

Rsvp by calling church by March 4th

Beys Bites will be selling food



This is NOT a rummage sale. Questions? See a Council member.

\*\*\*SAVE THE DATE\*\*\*

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

February 25, 2024

8 am to 12 Noon

Pancake Breakfast with sausage, fruit, fasnauts, juice and coffee

Cost \$10 (children \$5)



## Souper Bowl of Caring- February 11



Our youth will collect your “noisy money” (coins) on Super Bowl Sunday. All money collected will support the Attica Food Pantry. The total will be reported to the Souper Bowl website.

**You may also donate food items.**

Thank you for supporting our youth and Food Pantry on Super Bowl Sunday!

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### Scrapbooking (or crafting) Days

March 16th and 23rd from 9 a.m. to 9 pm \$40. Half day is \$25

If you want to do both weekends and leave your area set up the cost is \$75 (half days would be \$45)

There will be help to carry in and out your supplies. Breakfast, lunch and dinner will be provided along with snacks and drinks.

Please r.s.v.p. by March 13th to the church at 591-2705.

All proceeds will benefit the youth attending church camp.



Connecting UCC & Disciples Congregations of Western New York

*In the Vineyard* Editorial Board asks the question:

**What good things happening in your church life now are a result of the pandemic experience?**

Please expand on your answers when you respond. We would like to hear more of your thoughts!

Then email your answer to Lois Vidaver at [loismaevid@yahoo.com](mailto:loismaevid@yahoo.com) by Wednesday, February 14. Thank you!

Annual Meeting  
January 21, 2024

Pastor Laurie led us in prayer

Meeting was called to order by President Mary West with a quorum of 33 established.

Susan McPherson made a motion to adopt the agenda with a correction of the Annual meeting minutes date to January 15, 2023. Justin Kipfer seconded the motion. All were in favor. None were opposed. Motion carried.

A motion to approve the prior year annual minutes was made by Cris Mahoney, seconded by Jeff Peters. All were in favor; none were opposed; the motion carried.

#### Treasurers Report

Susan McPherson reported the beginning balance at January 1, 2023 was \$4,119.45 and the ending balance at December 31, 2023 was \$18,532.54.

Laurie Bellucci made a motion to accept the 2023 financial report as presented. Chris Kipfer seconded the motion. All were in favor. None were opposed. Motion carried.

#### Committee Reports

Ruth Hopfinger made a motion to accept all church reports as presented. Seconded by Becki Peters. All in favor.

Motion carried.

#### Old Business

None

#### New Business

2024 Proposed Budget – It was asked that the agenda be corrected to say “Proposed” budget. Jeff Peters made a motion to adopt the 2024 budget as presented. Motion seconded by Ruth Hopfinger. All were in favor. None were opposed. Motion carried.

Mike West asked if there were any C.D.’s left. Justin answered there are not. We cashed in three CDs in 2023; two in May and one in October. They all went into the operating fund. We only have the parsonage account left, as shown on the investment report.

Discussed who was on the nominating committee and discussed the investment committee and how often they meet.

Nominating Committee Report:

Deacons – Jeff Peters, Justin Kipfer

Trustees – Chris Eddy (a second trustee is still needed)

Christian Ed – Chris Kipfer and Susan McPherson

Memorial Committee – Diane Storch and Cris Mahoney is filling the unexpired term of Michelle Lovell

Investment Committee – Lisa Neary

Pastoral Relations – Deb Best

Jeff Peters made a motion to accept the nomination report.

Ruth Hopfinger seconded the motion. All were in favor.

None were opposed. Motion carried.

Jeff Peters reviewed the church’s safety procedures and information.

Mike West thinks we should put any extra money in a real estate investment because they provide dividends, some monthly. A CD or anything like that creates wealth. Roy Ticen feels we should have a growth fund where we can live off the interest. Deb Best asked about the United Church Fund and asked if those provide dividends. Justin explained that we have 35% of the United Church Fund in mutual funds and 65% in fixed income and as the market grows and dividends are received, they remain in the fund to increase growth. We can always change the allocation at any time.

David Williman announced the church has received \$5,000 from Sharon Davis’s estate.

JoAnne Ripstein asked what the parsonage account can be used for and the answer is it can be used for anything including operations.

Pastor Laurie spoke about yoking with another church as a possible option for the church in the future but that it takes time to set those up and negotiate. She explained that yoking is two or more churches sharing one pastor. She plans on discussing this with church council at their February meeting. It’s best to be proactive instead of reactive, as we’ll have more choices if we are proactive.

Cris Mahoney suggested using our interest and dividends to supplement offering for church operations, keeping a fixed amount of principal in our account. And when we get estate money, that could be added to our fixed principal amount. Cris Mahoney also asked if we could notify the congregation when a member passes away, possibly via email.

Pastor Laurie said this has been taken care of.

Marie Lowe made a motion to close the nominations and accept the slate of officers. Seconded by Ruth Hopfinger. All in favor. Motion carried.

Lisa Neary read and reviewed the minutes to this meeting.

Jeff Peters made a motion to accept the minutes as read.

Diane Storch seconded the motion. All were in favor. None were opposed. Motion carried.

Mary West thanked those going off of council and those who were volunteering to come on. Council members were asked to meet after the annual meeting.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Chris Kipfer.

Motion was seconded by Deb Best. All were in favor.

None were opposed. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m. with the Lord’s Prayer said by all.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Neary

Council Secretary





## February Parish Notes

February- the word comes from Latin februa which means to cleanse. The month was named after the Roman Februalia which was a monthlong festival of purification and atonement. Use this month to restart your health planning.

February is American Heart Month- learn CPR and lifesaving skills. Wear red on Feb 2nd- WearRed day to call attention to heart health, especially in women. Learn the signs of heart attack- chest pain/ tightness/ pressure, sweating, nausea/ vomiting, dizziness or feeling of impending distress. Call 911 immediately. If you witness someone with these symptoms or if they collapse, call 911 and check for a pulse. Start CPR if no pulse. Time is muscle and you can help save muscle if you act quickly.

February is also Low Vision Awareness month. Take this month to get a routine eye exam. Your local Lions club collects used glasses that are refurbished to give sight to others. Put them in box in back of church for collection.

Children's Dental month is also acknowledged. Make sure your children get regular dental exams, and keep up with good dental hygiene.

February 14th is St. Valentine's Day- now a celebration of kindness and love. Use this day to send a note to friends and family to express your feelings to them. Random Acts of Kindness Day is the 17th- do a random act of kindness, especially to a stranger. Being kind gives us a warm, happy feeling. And helps our hearts feel good!

Remember to try to eat healthy which will help your heart stay strong. Regular exercise and good sleep habits will also help. Stay safe and healthy- you are a valuable person 💖



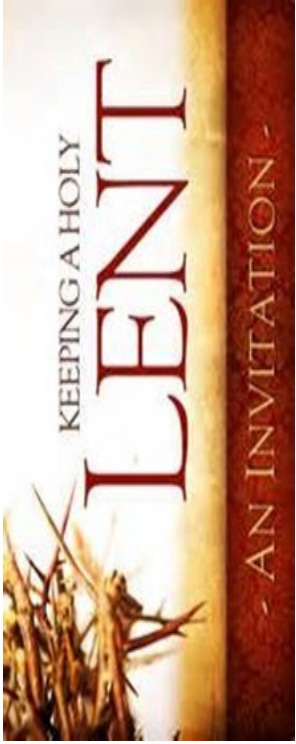
*SAVE THE DATE*

New York Conference UCC Annual Meeting—2024

May 31—June 1, 2024

At the Holiday Inn in Binghamton, NY

If you are interested in becoming a delegate  
from St. Paul's  
See Pastor Laurie.  
We are allowed two delegates.



# FEBRUARY 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 Chancel Choir 7:15pm	2	3
4 Worship and Communion 10 am	5 Bible Study 7pm	6	7 Bible Study 10am Food Link	8 Chancel Choir 7:15pm Sister's in Faith 6:30pm	9 <i>Justin Kipfer</i> <i>Danielle Harvey</i>	10
11 Worship 10 am	12 Bible Study 7pm	13	14 Bible Study 10am Ash Wednesday Lent begins <i>Susan &amp; Dave</i> <i>McPherson</i>	15 Chancel Choir 7:15pm Deacon's/Trustees and Council	16	17
18 Worship 10 am Newsletter deadline Pastoral Relations meeting	19 Bible Study 7pm <i>Dylan Kipfer</i>	20 Deacon's/Trustees and Council	21 Bible Study 10am	22 Chancel Choir 7:15pm	23	24
25 Worship 10 am Pancake Breakfast 8am-12 noon <i>Flo Nolan</i>	26 Bible Study 7pm	27	28 Bible Study 10am	29 Chancel Choir 7:15pm		

St. Paul's United Church of Christ  
11 Washington Street  
Attica, NY 14011

**SP** The Spirit

Feb 2024

of St. Paul's United Church of Christ, Village of Attica

**St. Paul's UCC, 11 Washington Street**

Just around the corner, first block down from Main Street.

**Join us for Sunday Worship at 10:00 am**

*Sunday School for children K-7th Grade - Nursery always open!*

"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome at St. Paul's."

Reverend Lauran Heidenreich

Call the church at (585-591-2705), [stpaulunited@verizon.net](mailto:stpaulunited@verizon.net) or [pastorucc@verizon.net](mailto:pastorucc@verizon.net)

Website: [atticaucc.org](http://atticaucc.org)

**March Newsletter Deadline**  
**February 18th**

**Please make sure all newsletter submissions are in by this date.** In the pink folder on the office window or e-mailed to:  
[stpaulunited@verizon.net](mailto:stpaulunited@verizon.net)