



Seeking the Star

The little girl stood by herself as the other children took turns trying to break the piñata. Her eyes were fixed on its shape—a star. After a series of hefty whacks, it split open and crashed down. The other children squealed with delight as they scampered after the candy and plastic trinkets. The little girl darted to where the broken star lay. As she clutched it close to her heart, she shouted, “I got the star!” That star perched on her bedpost for many years.

The Magi also ‘got the star’. They were astrologers: people who watched the night sky. They were familiar with constellations and the time of year they appeared. This star was somehow different. Matthew’s gospel tells us that the Magi ‘observed his star at its rising’. When they saw it, they knew that a new king had been born who was the king of the Jews.

The people of Matthew’s time would not have thought it unique that a star rose to herald a king. A comet supposedly passed over Rome on the night Caesar was born. But more recently, other explanations have been offered. Johannes Kepler, a German astronomer and natural philosopher, noted for formulating the three laws of planetary motion, suggested that it might have been an exploded supernova. Other scholars presume it to be a sighting of Halley’s comet.

The most popular theory is of a planetary conjunction. In 1604, Kepler witnessed the conjunction of Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars. He calculated that this occurred once every 805 years. This would place the last incident of the conjunction in the year 6 BCE, a perfect time for Jesus’ birth. However, still other scholars believe that Matthew’s intention is to present the star as strictly supernatural.

But it does not really matter whether it was a comet, a conjunction of planets, or an unusually bright star. What does matter is that it is linked to the Gentiles seeking Jesus. We Gentile Christians are to seek Jesus. And like Jesus, we are to help bring about God’s Reign. We are to work together as the Body of Christ in the world today. We are also to risk telling others about Jesus and invite them to seek him for themselves.

In Matthew’s gospel, the role of the church is to welcome and include. We are to spread the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ so that others might seek him as well. Then, the star will become the symbol of a welcoming beacon to seekers everywhere. It will illuminate our world and guide more and more people to the True Light of the world.

Annual Reports Due- January 2

If you’re the person in any St. Paul’s UCC Committee who’s tasked with writing the Annual Report for that committee, please e-mail your reports to stpaulunited@verizon.net by January 2 for inclusion in the Annual Reports booklet. Thank you!



Would you like a 2024 Calendar?

Free for the taking

Check out the table in the back of church

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



Larry Taylor

Bev West

Chuck Kellogg

...and others who are physically unable to join us.

Why not call or visit, to let them know they are missed?



NEW ADDRESS:

Rev. Carlton Norton
1939 N Signal Hills Drive
Kirkwood, MO 63122
Email: carmanort@icloud.com



As a reminder

The annual meeting of
St. Paul's UCC
is January 21st
following worship.

Meeting

Attica Food Link Distribution:



Attica Presbyterian Church
January 3
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**.

Jan 7

Acts 19.1-7

Mark 1.4,7-12

Jan 28

Mark 1.21-28

Psalms 111

Jan 14

John 1.43-51

Psalms 139.1-7,13-14

Jan 21

Jonah 3.1-5,10

Psalms 62.5-8,11-12a

COME JOIN OUR

BIBLE



Study



CE Sponsored
Cookies and Milk

Following church before our
Annual Meeting

Cookies and Milk
in the back of the church



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)





CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

In Honor of:

Joshua Phillips, Andrew Phillips, Michael Hughes
Jen Eddy
Family & Friends
Family

From:

Linda Paine Hughes
Marie Lowe
Mary & Michael West
Marilyn Wilson

In Memory of:

Kathy Koers
Mom & Dad, Larry
Florence Williman
Marie Taylor and Dorcas N. Taylor
John West and Marie Taylor
Family

From:

Mom & Dad
Laurie Bellucci
Marie Lowe
Larry Taylor
Mike & Mary West
Marilyn Wilson

Poinsettias also given from The Bakers

November 21, 2023

Meeting called to order at 6:35 pm

Pastor Laurie led us in prayer.

Members Present: Laurie Bellucci, Lisa Neary, John Brandon,
Mary West, Lorraine Wolf and Pastor Laurie. Members Absent: Marilyn Wilson.

Agenda reviewed and motion made to accept by John Brandon and seconded by Lorraine Wolf. Motion carried.

October minutes reviewed and motion to accept made by John Brandon and seconded by Mary West with updates that last year's Confirmands (Madeline and Joshua) lit candles for the Candlelight Service instead of Deacons. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Lay readers, Ushers and Greeters schedule reviewed. Lorraine Wolf responsible for December.

December 31st Service discussed. Deacons will be providing service for that day. Each Deacon responsible for selecting a hymn, give a description of hymn and then will be sung by congregation. Verification must be made that there is no copyright for selected hymns.

Christmas Eve Service: Due to cancellation of last year's service because of snow storm, Candles are all set. Need candle lighters for globes on pews. Suggestion made to see if Joshua and Madeline will do.

SUGGESTIONS/OTHER: Request made to use Chimes on organ during Candlelight Service as bell used could not be heard.

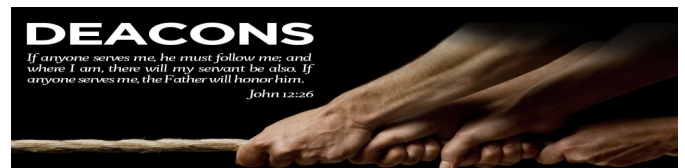
A suggestion was made, by a couple of members, to move Christmas Eve Service back one hour to 10:00 pm. Suggestion will be referred to entire Council.

Meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm with Lord's Prayer.

Next meeting December 19th at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorraine Wolf, Deacons Secretary



CHURCH COUNCIL

November 21, 2023

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mary West.

Present: Lorraine Wolf, David Williman, Tom Baker, Chris Eddy, Laurie Bellucci, Lisa Neary, John Brandon, Marie Lowe, Pastor Laurie and Mary West

Also present: Susan McPherson

Absent: Deb Best and Marilyn Wilson

Pastor led us in prayer.

A motion to accept the agenda was made by Marie Lowe, seconded by John Brandon. Motion carried.

October meeting minutes were reviewed. Laurie Bellucci made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Lorraine Wolf. Motion carried.

Reports:

Deacons – Discussed candlelight service. Decided next year to use the organ chimes instead of a handbell. Reviewed lay readers, ushers and greeters. Lisa Neary has January. Discussed the December 31, 2023 service which will be led by the Deacons. Discussed Christmas eve. We will need four people to light the candles – one to remove the hurricane lamps and one to light – two sets of people for each side of the sanctuary.

Trustees – Cross was taken down and the Christmas tree was put up. Talked about a possible leak in the hallway.

Treasurer's report – Susan McPherson was present to discuss the budget for the next year. Together, Susan and council reviewed and determined each budget line for the coming year. Susan will put together all recommendations made.

Christian Ed – They are coordinating birthday for Jesus. Did not meet in November. Advent Sunday ornaments were made. \$610 was raised at the basket raffle. Susan is working on a Christmas play. They are planning on providing cookies and hot chocolate for the annual meeting.

Pastor's Report — The Pastor and Pastoral Relations Committee designate \$14,000 of the Pastor's 2024 Base Salary as a housing allowance for Internal Revenue Service purposes. Harassment prevention class has been taken. Pastor's 2nd term on the church and ministry committee has ended. They met on the 2nd Monday so Pastor will now be here on those days. The date to undecorate the church needs to be determined. It should be after 1/6/24.

A motion to accept all reports was made by Laurie Bellucci, seconded by John Brandon. Motion carried.

Business:

Pork and Kraut supper – raised about \$1,950. 134 take outs, 39 eat ins and 1 child for a total of 173 served. Council decided to place proceeds in the operating fund. Motion was made by Marie Lowe and seconded by Lisa Neary to move everything out of the "other" fund except for the mission and heifer money. Motion carried.

Tee-shirt order was placed. They will be in in the next few weeks. 25 were ordered.

The counting schedule was passed around.

The nominating committee gave a progress report. Need 2 deacons still. Christian Education committee may need to stay at 4 due to lack of people to serve. Based on the number of children, it is felt that this is acceptable. Winterfest is 12/9/23. Will sell hot apple crisp with ice cream from noon – 4 p.m. or until sold out. Price will be \$3.00 a bowl.

Reviewed usher responsibilities – 1) make sure we have an acolyte to begin and end the service. 2) count children and adults. 3) stay in the back of church to keep an eye on people coming and going, as part of our safety plan. 4) Bring up the officering and check for children and choir offering.

March will be our "inside" garage sale/vendor blender – we'll talk more about it in January. NOT a rummage sale. People will rent tables and bring in their wares and take with them whatever has gone unsold.

Christmas eve service time change was discussed. Council took a vote with the majority ruling to keep the time the same as in the past, at 11:00 p.m.

Laurie Bellucci made a motion for candlelight service offering to go into the operating fund. Marie Low seconded. Motion carried.

John asked if there was enough money in the memorial fund to replace the back door. There is not.

Next meeting will be December 19 - Christmas Party at 6:00 p.m. Bring a dish to pass.

Meeting adjourned at 8:47 with Pastor Laurie leading us in the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Neary
Council Secretary





January Parish Notes

January- start of a new year, a chance to plan for better health for your future. Take this time to review your overall health and health goals. Schedule your yearly physical, including fasting blood work to check cholesterol and glucose levels. If you're over 40, get a baseline EKG. Make sure you have had a colonoscopy or check for colon cancer within the last 5 years. Schedule dental cleaning, routine eye exam, mammogram if needed. Update your vaccines and get appropriate vaccines. If you smoke or smoked in the past, ask your PCP for a low dose CT scan of your chest to check for lung cancer. Review your diet and try to decrease starches and fats. Make a plan to increase activity and exercise as able. There are many low impact exercises that can be done. Make sure you are eating healthy meals, and decrease snacking through the day. Substitute healthy snacks such as fruit and nuts for chips and cookies. Sleep is so important to overall health- recommend 7-8 hours sleep. Keep your room dark and cool to improve sleep habits. Decrease alcohol, chocolate and caffeine 2-3 hours before bed to help improve sleep.

January is Glaucoma Awareness month- make sure you get an eye exam to determine if you have this disease and/or to control the progress. Glaucoma is an increase in the pressure in the eye which can cause pressure on the optic nerve. Left untreated it may lead to vision impairment and blindness. Glaucoma is the leading cause of blindness in the US. Treatment options are available to reduce severity of disease.

January is also Blood Donor month. Donations of blood provide treatment for accidents, injuries or congenital diseases. Blood donation also are used in research to continually provide resources to help with research. Giving blood is safe, easy and a generous gesture.

Remember we are still in flue, Covid and RSV season. Get vaccinated, maintain healthy lifestyle- eating well and sleeping well will help to fight off these viruses. Wash your hands, stay home if not well, and cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze or cough. Keep yourself safe and healthy and also those around you.



*Thank you to the Streaming team
for all the hard work you put into our
Service throughout this past year.
Without your help we would not be able to
stream our Church service.*

Thank you to Dan & David, Marilyn and Sawyer



JANUARY 2024



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 Happy New Year Office closed	2 <i>Debbie Best</i>	3 Bible Study 10am Food Link	4 Chancel Choir 7:15pm	5	6 Epiphany
7 Worship and Communion 10 am Sisters In Faith - Soup & Bingo	8 Bible Study 7 pm	9 <i>Pastor Laurie</i>	10 Bible Study 10am <i>Hannah Hopkins</i> <i>Hayley Hopkins</i> <i>Ambrey Donohue</i>	11 Chancel Choir 7:15pm Sisters In Faith 6:30pm <i>Stephanie Brasz</i>	12	13
14 Worship 10 am <i>Jude Williman</i>	15 Bible Study 7 pm Martin Luther King day	16	17 Bible Study 10am	18 Chancel Choir 7:15pm	19 <i>Sara Baker</i> <i>Carter Breedlove</i>	20
21 Worship 10 am Newsletter deadline Annual meeting, CE Cookies and milk	22 Bible Study 7 pm <i>Emersyn Perry</i>	23	24 Bible Study 10am <i>Michael Valtin</i>	25 Chancel Choir 7:15pm <i>Ruth Hopfinger</i> <i>Anna Hopfinger</i>	26	27
28 Worship 10 am <i>Charles Williman</i>	29 Bible Study 7 pm <i>Laura Cohenbach</i>	30	31 Bible Study 10am			

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

SP The Spirit

Jan 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 or pastorucc@verizon.net

Website: atticaucc.org

February Newsletter Deadline
January 21st

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