

THE TOWER

ST. PAUL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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DEATHS

Mary Vernon Witten - April 9, 2020
William Lawrence Hickerson - April 10, 2020
Dorothy Esterle - April 15, 2020

MEMORIALS

In memory of Nelda Cannon
 from Hugh and Jo Spencer

In memory of Nelda Cannon
 from Jan and Nancy Ewing

In memory of Bob Couch
 from Hugh and Jo Spencer

On the Front and Back Covers

As the coronavirus pandemic has escalated in recent weeks, the St. Paul staff embraced many new ways for offering worship and connecting with the St. Paul congregation and each other.

Front Cover: Karla Temple and Dr. Lori Elbert sing a duet during St. Paul's first virtual worship service, via Facebook Live on March 15, 2020.



Back Cover: Crazy Hat Day on the St. Paul staff Zoom meeting on April 7.



STAY CONNECTED!

JOIN THE WEEKLY EMAIL LIST: To receive Pastor Darren's weekly email with an update on what's happening in the life of the church, you can email janet@stpaulchurchky.org, call the church office at 502-459-1595, or subscribe at stpaulchurchky.org.

JOIN THE PRAYER CHAIN: Each week, and as needs arise, we share prayer requests from our congregation and the community. If you would like to receive this email and join this ministry of prayer, email janet@stpaulchurchky.org, call the church office at 502-459-1595, or subscribe at stpaulchurchky.org/prayer-requests/.

May Star Thoughts

Star words offer a tangible, clear sign of God's presence. What is your star word and in what new ways are you feeling God's presence?

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT TOWER ISSUE
Monday, May 18 at 5:00pm

Submit articles and/or pictures to Sara Ferebee at sara@stpaulchurchky.org.



Connect with St. Paul Church on **Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.**



Find updates on upcoming events, and share your pictures and thoughts from your favorite St. Paul Church activities.



WHAT DO WE DO WHEN CHURCH CAN'T GATHER

DARREN BRANDON, SENIOR PASTOR

Sometimes all it takes is a small word of encouragement and things look completely different. Do you remember how it was to first learn how to do something? At the beginning, everything is unclear and first steps are clumsy. With time and someone to work with you, confidence comes.

The clumsy feelings have lingered with me during this COVID-19 pandemic. How do we do ministry as the church when we can't gather?

As you have helped me see, the church can take shape in new ways. I am thinking of the stories you've shared of checking on friends and family. I love the ways we are all sharing our unique gifts. Walking our neighborhoods, many of us saw rainbows in windows and made our own to join in sharing hope. We asked you to help us sing and read scripture for the virtual worship service, and you did so with glad and generous hearts. We invited you to share sightings of birds and blooms, and you passed along photos of the beauty you saw and a poem by Wendell Berry.

Dr. Julia Mitchell shared a resilience resource that helps with building relationships, especially with

WORSHIPING ONLINE

LORI ELBERT, DIRECTOR OF KOINONIA WORSHIP

A big part of our worshiping together is being together. It is so hard to worship without being surrounded by our church family. But worship is not, has never been, confined to Sunday morning in a church sanctuary. Worship is an action we can carry out at any time and in any place. Worship is giving our praise to God for who God is. It is expressing our gratitude for all that God has given us. It is remembering, as if we are experiencing again, all the ways God has acted in history and in our lives.

Worship is active, not passive. It is not watching what the people up front or, in our current situation, on the screen are doing/singing/saying. It is entering into what is happening: singing the songs (even in your living room where there is no one to sing along with you); praying the prayers; actively listening to the scriptures and the sermon, while thinking how does this apply to my life, our world today.

young people. It is called the 4S's and can be used to get to know someone by asking about:

Sparks: Talents, deep interests, and activities that bring enjoyment and meaning to life.

Strengths: Skills, behaviors, attitudes, and values that promote success and development.

Struggles: Problems that cause concern and potentially undermine success and development.

Supports: People and programs that nurture sparks, build on strengths, and reduce struggles.

Despite not gathering in person on the St. Paul campus, we are still being the church and sharing hope. The church is resilient. It has endured much in 2,000 years and will continue on because it shares the light from the LIGHT who was never overcome by the night - and never will be.

Thank you for all that you continue to do to be the church through your prayers, presence (online), gifts, and service. Don't stop now. Keep offering the best you have and trust that God will bless it.



It is awkward to sit in my living room and watch worship on Facebook, but it is also wonderful that

I can feel that connection with my church even in the midst of the isolation of quarantine. I pray that we will not let this opportunity to be with our church family pass. I pray that we will not miss this opportunity to show our families how important our faith and our worship are to our lives - important enough to fully engage, even in our living rooms.

May our homes ring with the praise of our Heavenly Father. May this time of being forced to worship differently lead us to bringing worship to the forefront of our homes and daily lives.

Church Leadership Announcement

Debbie Wesslund, Lay Leader, St. Paul Administrative Board

I have the privilege today to announce the appointment of our church leadership for the upcoming year, which begins July 1.

First, Dustin Woods from Paintsville, Kentucky, will become our Associate Minister. He graduated



from Georgetown College and received his Masters in Divinity from Asbury this spring. He served a church in Scott County during his ministry training.

Dustin spent six years as a middle school Social Studies teacher and academic coach prior to answering the call to ministry. His wife, Emily, is from Buckner in Oldham County and has been a middle and high school math teacher. They have four sons, ages 7 and younger.

He comes to us highly praised for his commitment and enthusiasm for the ministry. We will welcome him at a reception later in June, if an in-person event is possible at that time.

Next, I am glad to share with you that Rev. Darren Brandon will return to St. Paul as our senior minister. He has already spoken with Dustin a few times, and they will work closely to form a strong team to support and grow the ministries at St. Paul.

Darren has proved to be an innovative leader, with excellent administrative skills. He is also a talented preacher and comforting pastor. Along with us, he has worked through some challenges this past year, and we have continued to be a vital, impactful congregation. I am looking forward to supporting Darren in his ministry.



You know, we are blessed to have this beautiful church building on a busy corner in Louisville, KY, where we worship and work. But this structure is meaningless without its people - the true heart of the church. Darren and Dustin will depend on us for support as they lead us in being a place of hope and encouragement for all.

The Bells of St. Paul Attend Area Five Spring Hand Bells Festivals

The members of The Bells of Saint Paul spent two days in March attending the Area Five Spring



Hand Bells Festival in Louisville. The Festival had 500 bell ringers in attendance from four states: Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, and Kentucky. There were classes offered for

bell ringing and rehearsals leading up to a closing concert on Saturday. It was an intense, hard-working conference with a guest conductor. It was very exciting to come together with so many people from so many church denominations and schools. We were divided into two sections of ringers, "Coppers" and "Tins," so named for the metals of which the bells are constructed - "Coppers" being upper level players and "Tins" being intermediate level players. The Bells of St. Paul are "Coppers." Prior to attending, we had to learn five new pieces of music of considerable difficulty. We had a very educational,

enlightening, and enjoyable time with 485 other ringers.

It gave the St. Paul ringers an opportunity to be with one another on a more personal scale than dedicated to practice during Wednesday night rehearsals.

Our sincere thanks to Dr. Jim for his dedication teaching us this very difficult new music for the past two months and to Steve Farris for making the arrangements to attend the Festival. More thanks to the people who hauled and set up all of our bell cases, chime cases, bell tables, foam covers, stands, etc., to the Marriott Hotel in downtown Louisville. The list could go on and on.

The biggest THANK YOU is to the donor who paid our entrance fees to attend this festival. This made it possible for us to attend the wonderful event. We would not have done it without you! You are a blessing to St. Paul and our Bell Choir.



St. Paul Summer Music Camp 2020

Plans are in the works for our annual summer music camp! Music Camp will be the week of July 6-10, 9:00 a.m. to noon, with performances on Sunday, July 12, 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. All children entering grades 2-7 are invited to attend. This is such a fun time for our kids and youth, and will be especially joyous this year as we will be so excited to be back together!

During music camp, we enjoy a variety of activities including crafts, folk dancing, outdoor playtime, large group and small group rehearsals, and music games. During the week, campers learn a

musical to present to the congregation on Sunday.

This year, our musical is (drum roll, please ...) "Malice in the Palace, The Story of Esther," by Alan Pote. This musical has it all! You'll experience fun and witty characters, a godly and humble heroine, a king, a villain, a loving father figure, and most importantly, the message that God is faithful to his people and that each of us is placed on this earth for a purpose "for such a time as this."

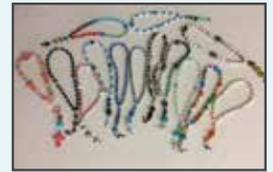


St. Paul's Prayer Bead Ministry Supporting Hosparus

The Prayer Bead Ministry has continued making prayer beads during COVID-19. However, instead of meeting at the church, Sally McMahon and Kim Smith are making prayer beads at home.

A new partnership was recently formed with Hosparus Health and 20 sets were made for the Inpatient Care Center (HICC). Volunteer Coordinator, Sky Kevyn Yeasayer, said that patients, families, doctors, and nurses were very excited to receive them. For those not familiar with the HICC, here is a video about a family who celebrated a wedding at the HICC: <https://bit.ly/3ev6pi0>

Donations are needed. If you have jewelry (broken is fine), beads, or crosses, email sally@igemedia.com to arrange for a porch pick up.



If you want to make prayer beads at home, email sally@igemedia.com to coordinate delivery of supplies.

Sally and Kim are excited to resume monthly prayer bead sessions at church once COVID-19 passes!

Guided Meditation for a Time of Sheltering in Place

For over five years, an evolving small group of people have gathered in the Parlor on Monday evenings and/or Wednesday mornings to practice being present to God, who is always present to us. Marilyn Stoner guides this time of prayer, silence, and sharing, creating a sacred and confidential space to listen deeply to each other and to the movement of God's Spirit. The gifts of this practice include increased comfort with silence and solitude, humility, insight, gratitude, patience, loving-kindness, compassion, wisdom, stress reduction, and a stronger immune system. These are all gifts we could use more of in this time of social distancing and uncertainty.

Since we cannot meet in the Parlor for the time being, Marilyn has moved both groups to a home conference call format that has worked very well.

New people have continued to come and go from this very flexible group. No prior experience is necessary, and all are welcome to try out a session. If you are new to guided meditation or have questions about it, feel free to contact Marilyn at marilynstoner@fastmail.com, 502-456-1502. You can listen to some of Marilyn's guided meditations at marilyn-stoner.squarespace.com.

Group facilitator, Marilyn Stoner, is a retired psychotherapist with 25 years of experience in Guided Imagery in her practice with groups, individuals, workshops, and retreats.

Every Month a Mission

April-May Focuses: Portland Promise Center & Kentucky Refugee Ministries

Portland Promise Center Fundraising Drive

This time last year, we held our 5th annual Portland Promise Center Dinner and Auction in the Family Life Center. It was a fun-filled evening of food, fellowship, and generous giving to support the summer programs at PPC. The tables were full of friends and guests, the silent auction offered all types of potential bargains, and the bakers of the auctioned desserts teased us with tantalizing confections. The results of that great night for giving allowed us to give over \$20,000 to the Portland Promise Center.

What a difference a year makes! One way or another, we are sidelined by the coronavirus outbreak. We are not able to get together, physically, for the near future and find ourselves trying to find new ways to support those in our community who are in great need. The Center is closed for student activities, but the PPC staff continues to support families through food and other handouts at the door.

This year, our event planning team is working to provide a different way to respond to the Center's need to support families in the Portland area. This event has become a St Paul tradition and we want to keep it alive, if at all possible. Our team has planned a week for online giving during the first week in May to allow those who can to support our church gift to PPC. In these difficult times, family comes first. But, if you are able, please consider giving the amount of your table seat last year. If you bid on items last year, individually or as a class, please consider giving something additional.

Every donation counts and helps with these costs:

- \$15 provides classroom supplies for one child for one year.
- \$50 provides after-school programs for one child/youth for one week.
- \$100 provides field trips for one child/youth for one year.
- \$200 allows one youth to attend a week of summer camp at a Christian Youth Camp.

Last year, we sold tickets to our dinner and auction for \$25/seat or \$175/table of eight. If you participated last year, please consider giving at that level this year. Both groups and individuals bid on the wonderful desserts that were prepared. Many of you also bid on silent auction items. You can support the Portland Promise Center this year by going to our church website and clicking on the PPC donation button. You could also write a check made out to St. Paul UMC, with PPC in the memo line, and mail it to the church.

These are difficult times for all of us. Thank you for any gift you may be able to give. With your help, we hope to continue the blessing we have become for the children and families of the Portland community.

In gratitude for you,
Brad Matthews, Cullen Hornaday, Margi Garcia,
Sara Ferebee, Nicole Farmer, Clair Colvin, and
Ann Butler (PPC Event Planning Team)

YOUTH UPDATE!

Due to cancellations around the county, the Senior Banquet originally scheduled for May 19 has been rescheduled to August 9 at 6pm in McAdam's Hall. Here, we will honor our seniors and send them off into their next adventure.

The Youth Futures Fundraising Campaign that was originally scheduled for March 15 and 22 will also be rescheduled; date TBD. We don't want to miss

an opportunity to display the wonderful work our youth have been doing over the years!

Also, St. Paul will continue to pay half of the cost for children and youth to go to Camp Loucon this summer. For more information, contact Mary Paige.

If you have any scheduling questions concerning future Youth activities, please contact Mary Paige Taylor, Director of Youth Ministry, at marypaige@stpaulchurchky.org.

Kentucky Refugee Ministries Dish Drive

Clean out your cupboards!

Gather your spare dishes, silverware, mugs, and glasses. When we are able to gather again at St. Paul, bring your collected dinnerware, and we'll clean, sort, and box the items for KRM!

All of us are facing considerable challenges at this time and it can be difficult to quiet our fears and emotions to hear God's voice. We can easily start to focus on everything that is going wrong instead of being thankful for all that we have. I've been thinking lately about what I'm grateful for and how many things in my life that were out of focus have come more sharply into focus. I find myself enjoying things that I overlooked before. In fact, although I'm more physically separated, I feel more connected to everything and everyone than ever before. It's strange, but I feel like everyone is a little kinder and a little more willing to connect with a wave or a smile.

I've also been thinking about everything God has made possible for us at this time; if it had happened a few years ago, these things would not have been possible - things like virtual church services and Sunday school classes, Facetime visits with Grandma and Grandpa, and telemedicine. We see God's love conveyed everyday by people in our community doing little things in big ways - like eating carryout to sustain our restaurants and their workers; helping our more vulnerable population with groceries and prescriptions; neighbors reaching out to neighbors with phone calls and letters; and many are donating blood and making cloth masks.

With this in mind, the Beyond the Walls team has an idea we were hoping you could help us with - a "dish" collection for Kentucky Refugee Ministries



(KRM). I'm sure many of you, just like myself, have been undertaking some "spring cleaning" with the extra time you have at home. I started in my kitchen and as I proceeded to go

through every cabinet I found a variety of things that we weren't using and were just taking up extra space. So many of the items were still useful, like silverware, dishes, coffee cups, and glasses - the very things that KRM collects for families coming into the United States. If you happen to be going through your stuff and find you have more than you need, please place those items in a box and save it for us. We would need everyone to hang onto these items until the Governor lets us know its safe to come back together for worship services. Then we could clean and organize these items and deliver them to KRM, ready to be distributed to families who need them. This might not serve an immediate need but it will help KRM be prepared for the future and is something that we can do as we practice social distancing.

Thank you for help with this and all the ways you show Gods love. May you be surrounded in His light and strength in the coming days.

Kim Simpson and the Beyond the Walls Team

Dear Friends at St. Paul,

My sister, Kathy Mealer, and I sincerely thank you for the many sympathy cards you sent to our family on the death of our beloved mother, JoAnn Shelton, who passed away at Treyton Oak Towers on January 20, 2020. After her funeral on February 1, she was buried alongside her parents and dear sister and brothers in her hometown near Savannah, TN. Thanks to all of you for honoring our mother with your kindness.

Blessings, Donna McCoy

*Thank
You*

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