

# THE TOWER

ST. PAUL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



St. Paul Church  
A UNITED METHODIST COMMUNITY

VOLUME 71, ISSUE 1 // JANUARY 2024

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## IN MEMORY & HONOR

To the Habitat for Humanity Fund in honor of Ray & BJ Fore  
from Malinda Grant

In honor of the Bereavement Committee  
from Cathy Leist

To Boar's Head in memory of Mike Kasbaum  
from Paul & Nancy Klapheke



**Holiday Office Hours:**  
**January 1**  
 Closed for New Year's Day  
**January 15**  
 Closed for Martin Luther King, Jr Day

**NEXT TOWER DEADLINE!**  
**Thursday, January 18, 2024**  
**at 5:00pm**

Submit articles and/or pictures to  
 Sara Ferebee at [sara@stpaulchurchky.org](mailto:sara@stpaulchurchky.org).

## STAY CONNECTED!



**WEBSITE: The St. Paul website is our communications hub!** To keep up with all the St. Paul news and activities, visit [StPaulChurchKY.org](http://StPaulChurchKY.org). Bookmark it!



Connect with St. Paul Church on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [X](#).

**Prayer Requests:** Send prayer requests or sign up to receive the Prayer Chain by emailing [prayer@stpaulchurchky.org](mailto:prayer@stpaulchurchky.org) or by filling out the form at the **St. Paul website**. *The Prayer Chain is emailed throughout the week as prayer requests are received.*



### St. Paul Weekly Email - Stay informed!

Stay informed about the news and happenings at St. Paul. Subscribe at our website or email [info@stpaulchurchky.org](mailto:info@stpaulchurchky.org).



### Pastor Darren's Weekly Phone Message

Each Wednesday, Pastor Darren sends an uplifting phone message. To receive these calls, email [info@stpaulchurchky.org](mailto:info@stpaulchurchky.org) or leave a message at 502-459-1595.

**Worship Recordings:** Our Sunday morning worship service is video-recorded. Find the recordings at [StPaulChurchKY.org/sermons](http://StPaulChurchKY.org/sermons), or follow the link under **Recorded Worship Services!**

# At the Threshold of Yesterday and Tomorrow

Rev. Darren Brandon, Senior Pastor

The beginning of a new year is a threshold - an opportunity to look back and to look ahead. I want to invite you to listen to your life and discover what it might say to you.



"One day you'll look back and realize how hard it was, and just how well you did."

As you reflect on your life, know that I am offering a prayer, which includes two hopes. The first comes from a favorite children's book of mine, *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, and the Horse*. Standing together and about to cross

the river, the horse says to the boy, "One day you'll look back and realize how hard it was, and just how well you did." The illusion in life is that we can somehow make it perfect with our hard work and determination. Surely, there are those occasions that are just perfect - like watching the sunset explode with color from your favorite spot on the porch. Life is also full of moments that don't get better right away and dreams that are still incomplete. I hope we can recognize grace is in all of our moments and have compassion for ourselves.

The second is that you have a deep knowing of what the first disciples experienced. After the resurrection, the angel says to the women, "Go quickly and tell his disciples...he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him." (Matthew 28:7). In the new year, Jesus is going ahead of us to prepare the way - a way filled with grace if only we can recognize it. Much grace to you in the new year and as you listen to your life.

Blessings,  
Darren

## The Practice

(Note: I like to have a journal nearby so I can doodle or record thoughts that come to me.)

Find a quiet space where you can be comfortable. Sit in silence for a few minutes and invite the Holy Spirit to be present with you.

**Looking Back.** What have been the major turning points, signs, or guiding events in the past year? Ask yourself, "For what in the last year am I most grateful?" Give thanks to God for these blessings. Ask yourself, "For what in the last year am I least grateful?" Pray for forgiveness and healing.

**Looking Ahead.** Thank God for being present throughout all of your days, in good times and bad.



## Casual Conversation and Coffee with Pastor Darren

On Sunday mornings, I have a chance to say hello and catch up with many of you, but the conversation is sometimes rushed.

On January 28, I'll be in McAdams Hall for casual conversation and coffee from 10:10-10:40am. All are welcome. Whether you've been here a long time or it's your first Sunday, I'd love to visit with you.



Photo by tabitha turner on Unsplash

# Worship in January 2024 Features Stars and Water

Stars and water feature prominently in the stories we'll read in the New Year. On Epiphany Sunday (January 7), we hear the story of Magi from the East following a star (Matthew 2:1-12). One way we enter the story is with the Star Word tradition. When you come forward for communion, you'll be offered a word in the shape of a star.

Consider how God gave the Wise Men a star for guidance. How might God use a word to guide you or help you go deeper in your walk with God? Ponder the Star Word. Please keep it where you will see it often: refrigerator, on your nightstand, wallet, etc. Pray and ask God to show you how this word speaks to your life. You can keep the word private, just between you and God. Or you could share your word with others and see what insights they offer.



Your Star Word could be something:

- You need more (or less!) of in your life.
- A quality in your life or a relationship that needs your attention.

- That will bring you closer to God and bless you and others.
- You need to wrestle with in order to gain understanding.

Water is the central image for our observance of the Baptism of the Lord on Sunday, January 21. In Mark 1:4-11, we read how John baptized Jesus in the River Jordan, and Jesus heard from deep within the Voice that said, "You are my beloved in whom I am well pleased." During worship on that Sunday, we will remember our Baptism and think of those who nurtured us so that we could experience the sacrament of belonging.

The following Saturday (January 27), we'll gather from 10am-Noon for our Leadership Orientation for anyone serving on church ministry and administrative teams.

Worship keeps us focused on God and renews us. I hope you'll plan to worship with us in the New Year.

Blessings,  
Darren

## Diaper Drive for MIHOW January 1-31



The St. Paul Adult Ministries for Seniors (SPAMS) will be collecting diapers for MIHOW (Maternal Infant Health Outreach Workers) at Henderson Settlement. MIHOW began as an initiative by the Vanderbilt Center for Health Services to help with health and early childhood development in Appalachia. The first four MIHOW sites were in Tennessee and Kentucky, with the program later expanding into West Virginia, Virginia, and Louisiana.

**Most needed sizes: Newborn, 1, 4, 5, 6, pull-ups**

**Donations can be placed in the blue tubs in the lobbies. You may also contribute financially by writing your check to St. Paul UMC, designating it for "MIHOW" or "diapers."**

# January 2024 Hymn of the Month: Christ Our Hope in Life and Death

by Dr. Lori Elbert, Director of Koinonia Worship

One of the oldest teaching methods, used by the Greek philosopher Socrates himself, is the asking of questions. It was also the method used by the teachers of the Reformation to pass on the faith to those who were preparing themselves for baptism and entrance into the Church. Our hymn of the month uses that same method to pass on deep theological truths to us today. Each stanza asks us a question and then provides the answer.

Stanza 1 was based on the opening question of the Heidelberg Catechism\* – one of the first catechisms of the Reformation. It's first question is this:

1. Q. What is your only comfort in life and death?

A. That I am not my own,[1] but belong with body and soul, both in life and in death,[2] to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ.[3] He has fully paid for all my sins with His precious blood, and has set me free from all the power of the devil.[5] He also preserves me in such a way[6] that without the will of my heavenly Father not a hair can fall from my head;[7] indeed, all things must work together for my salvation.[8] Therefore, by His Holy Spirit He also assures me of eternal life[9] and makes me heartily willing and ready from now on to live for Him.[10]

[1] I Cor. 6:19, 20 [2] Rom. 14:7-9. [3] I Cor. 3:23; Tit. 2:14. [4] I Pet. 1:18, 19; I John 1:7; 2:2. [5] John 8:34-36; Heb. 2:14, 15; I John 3:8. [6] John 6:39, 40; 10:27-30; II Thess. 3:3; I Pet. 1:5. [7] Matt. 10:29-31; Luke 21:16-18. [8] Rom. 8:28. [9] Rom. 8:15, 16; II Cor. 1:21, 22; 5:5; Eph. 1:13, 14. [10] Rom. 8:14.

The first stanza of our hymn mirrors this:

What is our hope in life and death?

Christ alone Christ alone.

What is our only confidence?

That our souls to Him belong.  
Who holds our days within His hand?  
What comes apart from His command?  
And what will keep us to the end?  
The love of Christ in which we stand.

Each stanza grapples with some of the deep questions of our human existence. Stanza 2 asks where we can go when our fear outstrips our faith and the storms of life seem about to break us to pieces. Stanza 3 helps us face the reality of death as well as the hope of eternal life. And where is all this hope centered? Where is the source? It is, was, and always shall be in Jesus Christ.

Our response to such an amazing revelation is praise and thanksgiving, which the chorus helps us voice:

O sing hallelujah! Our hope springs eternal;  
O sing hallelujah!  
Now and ever we confess  
Christ our hope in life and death.

As We sing this hymn in our services this month and around our homes, spend time thinking about the text and what it means for your heart and life, for your family. May we all be encouraged in our only hope: Jesus Christ.

A recording

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oibli1rz7mw>

The story behind the song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLoMST0X2IM>

*\*Catechism -a summary of religious doctrine often in the form of questions and answers.*

**Leadership Orientation - Save the Date!**

**Saturday, January 27, 10:00am-12:00pm**

## Women of the Word Bible Study

Join the Women of the Word Wednesday Bible study this winter for two short DVD studies. We're a caring and diverse group of women who want to grow in faith through studying the Bible together, prayer, and great fellowship (and food). We meet Wednesdays at 10:00 in Room 113.

Beginning January 10, we'll start with Grammy Award-winner Laura Story's five-week DVD study, ***When God Doesn't Fix It: Lessons you never wanted to learn; truths you can't live without.***

You may know her music, specifically ***Blessings***. She and her husband were not expecting the medical crisis they experienced. This study will cover:

1. *Don't Be Surprised by Trouble - Healthy ways of recognizing the existence of loss and pain without being paranoid or cynical.*
2. *Best-Made Plans - A closer look at human plans and God's plans and how they might be different.*
3. *When God Doesn't Fix It - How stories of imperfect lives and struggles can showcase God's faithfulness and what that means for us.*

4. *Why? The Question on Replay - Finding freedom in not having all the answers.*
5. *A Better Broken - How to change despite our unchanging circumstances.*

Sign up at the church office and pre-pay for the book, check payable to St. Paul or exact cash.

After that, we'll begin Max Lucado's ***You Are Never Alone*** DVD bible study, a walk through John's Gospel and that explores Christ's miracles and how He's still at work in our lives today! In this six session video study, you'll discover you're stronger than you think because with Jesus in our lives, we are never truly alone.

1. *God is With You in the Ordinary*
2. *God is With You When You're Stuck*
3. *God is With You in the Storm*
4. *God is With You in the Dark*
5. *God is With You in the Valley*
6. *God is With You When You Need Grace*

Hope you will join us! Any questions, please contact Gail Henson at 648-2201 or [grhenson@gmail.com](mailto:grhenson@gmail.com)

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## United Women in Faith

United Women in Faith will meet Tuesday, January 9 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 113. We will introduce the 2024 United Women in Faith reading program. There are four plans from which to choose. Books span five key categories (Spiritual Growth, Social Action, Leadership Development, Education for Mission and Nurturing for Community). Anyone is welcome to participate. There is no charge and many books are available from the Louisville Free Public Library. Reading meant to inspire faithful and informed action on behalf of women, children and youth. National virtual offerings will include quarterly live events (small group book discussions and author talks) and a Mighty Networks discussion platform. Hope to see you.



United  
Women  
in Faith



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## Prayer Beading Group

Sunday, January 14 at 1:00pm, Common Cup

Prayer beads are given to those who are in the hospital or grieving. They are also given to those who have joined St. Paul.

You can also donate any beads or crosses you may have; just drop them off at the church office. Learn more about St. Paul's Prayer Bead Ministry and find a link to the Amazon wish list here: <https://www.stpaulchurchky.org/prayer-beads/>.



# Wesley Night Returns January 10

## Wesley NIGHT



### Schedule:

- 6:00-7:00pm - Dinner in McAdams Hall
- 6:00-6:30pm - Music Milestones (PreK & K) - Room 302
- 6:00-6:30pm - Gym time and homework help for 1st-6th graders - Gym (Volunteer supervisors needed; contact [tracy@stpaulchurchky.org](mailto:tracy@stpaulchurchky.org))
- 6:30-8:00pm - Youth Jam and Hangout - Youth Center
- 6:30-7:00pm - Gym time for age 3-K (bring a trusted adult with you!)
- 7:00-8:00pm - Joyful Song (1st-3rd grade) - Room 306
- 7:00-8:00pm - Wesleyan Choir (4th-6th) - Room 302
- 7:00-8:00pm - Adult Book Study - **Sermon on the Mount**
- 8:00-9:00pm - Bells of St. Paul Handbell Ensemble - Room 303

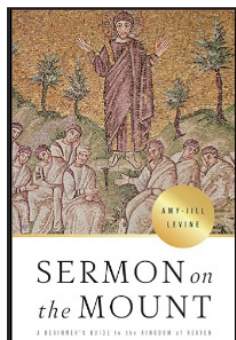
Please make your Wesley Night dinner reservations no later than Tuesdays at 2:00pm by scanning the QR code or visiting [stpaulchurchky.org/ministries/wesley-night/](http://stpaulchurchky.org/ministries/wesley-night/).



## Wesley Night Adult Study

Wesley Night resumes in 2024 on January 10th! We are excited to begin another semester of spiritual, musical, and discipleship formation. This new season promises to continue the great experiences we had in the Fall of 2023.

Meals will begin on the 10th and will kick off the season with: Home Cooked Meal Night! Remember to look for emails a few days prior to each Wesley Night in order to register for the meals. A special thanks to all our wonderful servers and cooks who make these nights special and the food delicious!



The first adult study for 2024 will feature **Sermon on the Mount: A Beginner's Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven**, by Amy-Jill Levine. In this book, Levine guides readers through a study of Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount and addresses questions such as:

*"What might these teachings have meant to his disciples, and to the others who first heard them? How do they enhance our reading of the rest of the Gospel of Matthew, and how do they speak across the centuries to listeners today? How, if we pay careful attention to his words, does Jesus provide us a road map to living as God would have us live?"*

All are welcome and encouraged to attend!

Children's and Youth Activities will resume according to the regular schedule listed above. Learn more about children's choirs on page 8.

We are confident that Wesley Nights in 2024 will be great experiences of fellowship, music, discipleship, and more. We hope that you can join us!

# St. Paul Kids & Tweens Programs!

## TWEENS

Tweens resumed in August and has been going strong, so beginning in February, we will meet on the **first AND third Sundays from 5-7pm!** Our 4th-6th graders eat dinner together, participate in a service project of some type, and usually finish with gaga ball or another fun activity.

### Tweens Service Project - January 4, noon-2:30pm

We will be assembling bagged lunches for the families staying at the Ronald McDonald House on 2nd Street. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to show God's love to Kentucky families experiencing hardship. Spots are limited, so email Tracy ASAP if your 4th-6th grader is interested in joining us!



## St. Paul Children's Choirs

St Paul has a rich tradition of vibrant and active children's choirs. We've had a wonderful time this fall with growing numbers in each group! Our choir kids learn basic music concepts, note reading, rhythm exploration, good singing technique, and most important of all, their faith journey is enriched by biblical songs and concepts that are taught. We also have plenty of fun with music games and instruments!

The music program at St. Paul is always open to new members and everyone is welcome! If there is a child in your life who would like to give it a try, please share the following information with them.

Children's Choirs resume for the spring semester on Wednesday, January 10 with the following schedule:

**Music Milestones Class for ages 3-5: 6-6:30pm, Room 306**

**Joyful Song Choir for grades 1-3: 7-8pm, Room 306**

**Wesleyan Choir for grades 4-6, 7-8pm, Room 302**





# Youth News!

To stay up to date on Youth events:

- Sign up for the Youth email list [here](#)
- Check the Youth Instagram account @stp.youth

General Youth info can be found on the St. Paul [Youth Webpage](#).

## Spring Semester Schedule

### January

1/6 - Progressive Dinner (SATURDAY)  
1/7 - No Youth  
1/14 - Youth Group Returns!  
1/21 - Regular Youth  
1/28 - Regular Youth

### February

2/4 - Regular Youth  
2/11 - Youth Super Bowl Party (pick up at halftime)  
2/18 - Regular Youth  
2/25 - Regular Youth

### March

3/1 - 3/2 - Lock In  
3/3 - No Youth (Recover from Lock In)  
3/10 - Regular Youth  
3/17 - Regular Youth  
3/24 - Regular Youth  
3/31 - No Youth - Easter

### April

4/7 - Youth Activity  
4/14 - Regular Youth  
4/21 - Regular Youth  
4/28 - Regular Youth

### May

5/5 - Regular Youth  
5/12 - No Youth / Mother's Day  
5/19 - Senior Banquet

### Summer Schedule coming mid-March!

\*Calendar Subject to change - changes will be sent out in the weekly email



Email Janet and Billy Sewell at [youth@stpaulchurchky.org](mailto:youth@stpaulchurchky.org) for more information.

## LOUISVILLE Boar's Head & Yule Log FESTIVAL



## Boar's Head Festival Thanks

Thank you to all who came together to make the 2023 Louisville Boar's Head and Yule Log Festival a success! This long-standing tradition of bringing the Light of Christ to our city is a meaningful ministry that would not be possible without your generosity. Each year it takes roughly 180 volunteers to carry out every aspect of the show and we so greatly appreciate you all! Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

Jim McFarland, Karla Temple, and Boar's Head Steering Committee



OPEN  
DOOR  
MINISTRY

## Mobile Resource Center at Fourth Ave UMC's Open Door Community Ministry Saturday, January 13 11:15am-1:00pm

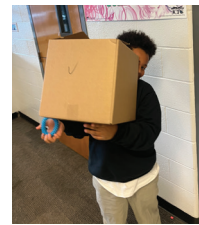
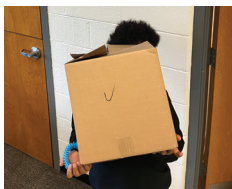
You can sign up to volunteer here:  
[stpaulchurchky.org/mobile-resource-center/](http://stpaulchurchky.org/mobile-resource-center/)

## Current Resource Center Needs

- LONG-SLEEVED MEN'S T-SHIRTS (all sizes, but especially XL-3X)
- MEN'S SHOES (especially sturdy shoes and sneakers) in all sizes!
- Men's blue jeans and casual pants
- Men's and women's lightweight jackets
- Winter coats, scarves, and gloves
- HotHands hand and toe warmers
- New underwear and socks always needed
- Gently-used, casual clothing always welcome
- Large shopping bags or reusable totes (larger Kroger delivery/pickup bags are useful)

*A list of current needs can be found on the  
bulletin board near Room 205.*

*Thank you from the families of Waller-Williams students  
for making their Thanksgiving celebrations delicious!*



## Highlands Community Blood Drive

Monday, January 22, 2024  
1:00pm to 5:00pm in the Youth Center

To schedule an appointment, please log on to [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) and enter sponsor code: stpaulumclouky or contact the church office at 502-459-1595.

January is National Blood Donor Month, the perfect time to make a lifesaving donation. From the record number of people who travel for the holidays to seasonal illnesses and the potential for hazardous winter weather, the winter months can be difficult for the Red Cross to collect enough blood for patients. Our drive has pledged 22 units to our hospitals, and we need 30 donors to ensure enough blood is collected for patients. Donors of all blood types are urged to give, especially type O blood donors.

All who come to give will automatically be entered for a chance to win an exciting trip for two to Super Bowl LVIII in Las Vegas! Includes travel, hotel, \$1,000 gift card, pre-game activities and more! Terms apply; visit [RedCrossBlood.org/SuperBowl](http://RedCrossBlood.org/SuperBowl).



## Update on the White Building by Jason Ramsey

The White Building Committee, formed and led by Betty Jo Fore, as a sub-committee under the Trustees, presented to St. Paul UMC's governing board during the first week of December, with recommended plans for the future of the White Building. This building is owned by the church, sitting adjacent to our parking lot on Douglass Blvd. The building has been used solely for storage during the past few years, as the building is not up to code and is in need of repairs/renovations. I am happy to



convey that the presented plan was well received and accepted by the Board in concept, pending funding.

The building must be renovated prior to any use (brought up to code, in addition to other needed repairs). Funding is not currently available for the project, but charting out a definitive plan for the space moves us one step closer to utilization as we search for funding. Once the renovation work can

be funded, the committee recommends that the building should serve as the St. Paul UMC Outreach Center, providing space for the Resource Center and Boy Scouts, while also providing meeting space for Bible studies, Sunday school classes, AA Groups, etc.

While specific renovation details will be decided at a future time (by a committee made up of stakeholders and intended users), the renovations will need to include: 1) Making the first floor handicap accessible, 2) Ensuring there are two bathrooms on first floor, with at least one being handicap accessible, 3) A working kitchen/kitchenette, 4) Room for Resource Center supplies, 5) Room for Resource Center staff/volunteers to assemble and operate, 6) A front room to be used for meetings, 7) Meeting area for Scouts, and 8) Storage area for the Scouts in the basement.

The church is appreciative of the efforts of Betty Jo Fore and other White Building Committee members: Sal Rubino, Bill Fenton, Whitney Meadows, Amy Johnson, Dustin Woods, and Jason Ramsey.

### SAVE THE DATE!

## Agape Valentine's Day Party

The Resilience Team of St. Paul cordially invites you to reserve

Food

**Saturday, February 10**  
**5:00-7:30pm**

Fun

Music

Dancing

For more information or  
to help with this event,  
please contact  
Peggy Lutes at  
[peggylutes@gmail.com](mailto:peggylutes@gmail.com).

Games

Entertainment

Photo by freestocks on Unsplash

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ST. PAUL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Advent Service, led by  
our children and youth.

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