

## December 2017

Rev. Sarah Varnell - Pastor, Jim Kennedy—Music Director, Tim Wiegenstein— Family Ministries Coordinator, Sylvia Duquet Organist/Pianist  
Whitney Ford—Nursery Director, Megan Wallace, Nursery Assistant, George Byrge—Custodian Doug Spencer—Administrative Assistant

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### ADVENT 2017

#### SATURDAY - Dec 2

Prayer Breakfast 8:00 AM  
Church Leadership 8:00 AM

#### SUNDAY - Dec 3

Sunday School 9:30 AM  
Worship Service 10:45 AM  
**MORE HOPE** Luke 1:5-25, 57-80

#### WEDNESDAY - Dec 6

Fellowship Meal 5:30 PM  
Bible Study 6:30 PM

#### THURSDAY - Dec 7

Tai Chi 6:00 PM

#### SUNDAY - Dec 10

Sunday School 9:30 AM  
Worship Service 10:45 AM  
**MORE PEACE** Matthew 1:18-25

#### MONDAY - Dec 11

Hope Circle Christmas Party  
Hester Keller's Home 6:30 PM

#### TUESDAY - Dec 12

Day Circle Christmas Luncheon  
at the Chop House 11:00 AM

#### WEDNESDAY -Dec 13

Fellowship Meal 5:30 PM  
Cookie Decoration  
Bible Study 6:30 PM

#### SUNDAY - Dec 17

Sunday School 9:30 AM  
Worship Service 10:45 AM  
**MORE JOY - CHOIR CANTATA**  
Impromptu Nativity and  
Potluck 5:00 PM-

#### SUNDAY - Dec 24

Sunday School 9:30 AM  
Worship Service 10:45 AM  
**MORE LOVE** Luke 2:1-15  
**Christmas Eve Service:** 7:00 PM  
**MORE GOODWILL**

#### SUNDAY - Dec 31

**MORE LIFE** Matthew 2:1-23  
Magi

### RECORD OF FAITHFULNESS

*We covenant to be loyal to the United Methodist Church and support it with our Prayers, our Presence, our Gifts, and our Witness.*

#### **OUR PRAYERS:**

Janice & Gary Grant, Jane Allen, Sally Johnston's daughter and granddaughter Sharon, Angela Camp's father,

#### **OUR PRESENCE:**

Average Attendance : Sunday School 39 Worship 77

#### **OUR GIFTS:**

Month of November,	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>
Gifts to Budget	\$11,923	\$13,211
YTD	\$190,250	\$173,578



### POINSETTIAS

The Sanctuary will be decorated with poinsettias in time for the Christmas Cantata. The cost of each plant is \$10.00. if you would like to dedicate one or more in honor or in memory of a loved one, please notify the church office by December 12 by writing the name(s) on an offering envelope and placing it in the collection plate. Or, you can contact us by email at [stpaulinfo@bellsouth.net](mailto:stpaulinfo@bellsouth.net) or by calling 865-687-2952.

### DAY CIRCLE CHRISTMAS PARTY

Please join us at the Chop House on Tuesday, December 12 at 11:00 AM. Make your reservations by calling Jane Allen at 865-689-4753 by Friday, December 8. We look forward to fun, good food, and good fellowship.

### MEMORIAL DONATIONS IN NOVEMBER 2017

#### IN MEMORY OF:

**James Harter**

by Susan Hamrick

**Irma Keith**

by Phil and Fran Keith



St. Paul United Methodist Church, Fountain City

4014 Garden Drive, Knoxville, TN 37918



## COOKIES!!!!!!!

It seems people go all out for Christmas around the world. Christmas is another opportunity to feast after the Advent fasting period. But not only is feasting part of the tradition, visiting and entertaining friends and family is almost mandatory.

According to Scandinavian folklore, mischievous red-capped and bearded elves leave artfully decorated cookies at Christmas to brighten your home and sweeten your holiday. Around the world; Germans bake Springerle, the English Gingerbread, Norwegians make Fattigmann, and Mexicans make Reposteria.

Many countries have a long history of cookie baking at Christmas, and St. Paul UMC is celebrating this tradition with our own version! Come to dinner on Wednesday, December 13th, and decorate some cookies. We'll have all the supplies, you just come to have fun (and maybe a cookie ...or two).-

## FROM THE PASTOR

I need Advent this year. Advent is the season in the Church year when we actively wait for what we know will be the good news; correction, the best news! We will hold off singing Christmas hymns in exchange for singing about our longing for Jesus to enter into our world. I need 2017 to come to a close with more Jesus in my world.

2017 has felt like a hard year - an ever-increasing gap between our two main political parties, unprecedented natural disasters, the threat of nuclear war, the revolving door news cycle of gross sexual misconduct, and continued shock over what will inevitably be the next mass shooting in a long string of nightmares. All of this, and we welcomed our 3rd daughter into this world back in March. 2017 hasn't been all bad by any means, but I find myself more weary and ready for tidings of hope, peace, joy and love in Jesus.

Jesus, who comes to us not as a conquering know-it-all king, but rather as a fragile, vulnerable, needy baby; hungry for the snuggles and nutrition of his earthly parents. Jesus, who slips his way into our world on a Bethlehem night, but whose birth means everything for all time.

What about you? Maybe you need Advent this year for all the reasons I do, or maybe you need it for more personal pains that you have endured. Let's lean into the promise of hope for all the world; hope and grace enough that only God can and will provide. In John 1, the words are "the light so shone in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it." More appropriate might be that the darkness cannot or will ever overcome the light. Thanks be to God!

I hope you'll join us for worship during this season and lean into the warmth of your church family, which will prepare you to go and serve Jesus in the world around you. We worship on Sundays at 10:45 AM with Sunday School for all ages at 9:30 AM. This week we enter the story with Elizabeth and Zechariah in Luke 1, who were "getting on" in years, but who found themselves right in the middle of God's plans. I suspect that we are there too.

With Hope, Peace, Joy and Love  
Pastor Sarah



Rev. Sarah Varnell

**Celebrating 72 Years of Praising God with Open Hearts, Open Doors, Open Minds**