

**St. Paul's  
United Methodist Church,  
a Reconciling Congregation**

# St. Paul's Letter

February 2012



**From Bob McCune, Our Interim Pastor**

As I write this letter, I am filled with gratitude for this time of “respite and relaxation” that the church has made possible for Alice and me to enjoy. We are here in Tucson, AZ and will return to Ithaca February 1st. It has been wonderful to share with you the glories of the Advent and Christmas season, and now, as we move through these

January and February days, there is opportunity for us to relate the message of Christmas to our everyday lives. During these months prior to Lent, we have a chance to reflect on our life priorities and to ask how they line up with the teachings of Jesus and our commitment as Christian disciples. In general these winter months provide us with opportunity to read, reflect, and pray as we move forward on our Christian journey.

In our worship we will be considering how our life’s priorities show themselves in dealing with all of the diverse human relationships that we experience. We will also be looking at our priorities as they relate to our families, and to our vocations. Hopefully this will help prepare us for the seasons of Lent and Easter.

On another level, these months will challenge us as we work with and around the construction crews that are installing new bathroom facilities and a new roof on the educational wing. We ask for your patience if this is an inconvenience to you. Your generosity and faithfulness have made possible this long overdue upgrade of our facilities.

I pray that the peace and love of Christ will find a home in your heart during these precious days...

Grace and Peace

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**St. Paul's is a  
compassionate  
community  
led and  
transformed by  
the Spirit.**

**From the Reconciling Ministries Team:**

If you bought a **rainbow stole** a few years ago in celebration of our 10th anniversary as a Reconciling Congregation, pull it out of storage and wear it proudly on **Sunday, February 5th**, when we celebrate 14 years as a Reconciling Congregation!



*Lectionary Readings for February:***February 5, 2012**

Isaiah 40:21-31  
 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c  
 1 Corinthians 9:16-23  
 Mark 1:29-39

**February 12, 2012**

2 Kings 5:1-14  
 Psalm 30  
 1 Corinthians 9:24-27  
 Mark 1:40-45

**February 19, 2012**

2 Kings 2:1-12  
 Psalm 50:1-6  
 2 Corinthians 4:3-6  
 Mark 9:2-9

**February 22, 2012**

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17  
 Psalm 51:1-17  
 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10  
 Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

**February 26, 2012**

Genesis 9:8-17  
 Psalm 25:1-10  
 1 Peter 3:18-22  
 Mark 1:9-15

*Child Care***Sunday, 9:15 a.m.***Worship Services***Sunday, 8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m.***Church Office Hours***Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.***Eunice Tabor***Tuesday, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.****Note:**

**Rev. Bob McCune is off on Thursdays  
 Jacqueline Bonner is off on Fridays**

*St. Paul's Letter***St. Paul's United Methodist Church**

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E-Mail: [office@tpaulsithaca.org](mailto:office@tpaulsithaca.org)<http://www.stpaulsithaca.org>*Interim Pastor*

Robert J. McCune

*Assistant Organist*

Andi Merrill

*Director of Church Ministries*

Jacqueline F. Bonner

*Chancel Choir Director*

Jayne Demakos

*Administrative Ministries**Coordinators*

Kevin Miller &amp; Sarah Crossgrove

*Bell Choir Director*

Dorothy Preston

*Loving Care Ministries**Coordinator*

Eunice Tabor

*Children's & Youth**Choir Directors*

Lydia Dolch &amp;

Beverly Stokes

*Children's Ministries Coordinator*

Laura Dolch

*Childcare Coordinator*

Laura Dolch

*Youth Ministries Coordinator*

Ruth Keagle

*Custodian*

Suzanne Orzel

*Pastor Emeritus*

Robert J. McCune

*Bookkeeper*

Maureen Anguish

*Music Director & Organist*

John W. White

*Ministers*

All The People

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## Stewardship

### Are You Committed to St. Paul's?

What does it mean to make a pledge to the church? Is this something intended only for those who are rich? Does it really make a difference if I pledge, even though it's a small amount?

In answer to the last of these questions, YES!!! Making a pledge of any amount makes a difference to both the church and the giver. Many people make a pledge based on their income (deciding to give a certain percentage, for instance), while others pledge as a way to bring their spending into alignment with their values. Still others, like the poor widow in the gospel of Mark, give from their heart, from the abundance of their spirit, faith, and gratitude. This story teaches us that you don't have to be rich to make a pledge. The widow gave "extravagantly what she couldn't afford—she gave her all" (Mark 12:44).

Making a pledge is like joining the church instead of just attending the church when it is convenient. When we join, we make a commitment to the community, and we make room for the Spirit to work in our lives through that community. By calling it a Faith Commitment, we have underscored the way in which the pledge is a visible and tangible sign of the promise we make to support the church with our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness.



*Making Room for the Spirit*

At this critical juncture in the life of St. Paul's, it is more important than ever to increase the strength of our faith and commitment to God and to our church family. Pastor Bob and our staff members have been working tirelessly to get us through this difficult time. Many members have asked, "What can I do to help?" You can help by making a pledge, particularly if you have never done so before. This powerful sign of faith will make a difference — I guarantee it!

St. Paulians have been extraordinarily generous this year, giving not only as part of their ongoing commitment to the church but also to support the capital campaign. So far, we have received pledges for approximately \$413,000 for 2012, just \$9,000 shy of our goal. This reflects around 165 pledges. In previous years, we have received between 176 and 220 pledges. Rather than extending a regular second appeal to the congregation to complete our Stewardship Campaign, we have decided to focus on encouraging more people to make this commitment, to grow in faith through the spiritual discipline of pledging some amount to the church.

#### **No amount is too small!**

We are so grateful to all of you who have turned in your Faith Commitment cards, and we encourage everyone who has not made a pledge to do so. Maybe your pledge will be \$10 a week or \$10 a month — maybe you will decide to skip a few of those \$2-\$4 coffee drinks to align your spending more with your values — maybe you will look at your monthly budget and realize that an extra \$20 a month can indeed be found to pledge to the church. We would like to receive at least 25 more pledges before Lent.

Faith Commitment cards can still be found in the pews. Or, you can contact Dick Tenney at [rwt1@cornell.edu](mailto:rwt1@cornell.edu) (277-6510) or Jacqueline Bonner at the church office.

## Around the Church

### Sunday Messages are back online!



Pastoral messages are once again available on our website. From the home page go to "Listen to Our Services," you will have access to services up to one year ago.

Thank you for your patience as we worked through our technical difficulties.

### We celebrate....

The birth of Orion Mark Moltion-Masler on Saturday, December 10, 2011 to parents Adrienne Masler and Zachary Moltion.

The birth of Brenden Page Phillips-Burdge on January 12, 2012 to Ellie and Adam Phillips-Burdge.



*Thank You*

Your generous donations of Christmas ornaments helped several families in the Owego flood area to have a brighter holiday. We nearly filled a large van with the trees and other decorative items. Several families were surprised that they would be able to have Christmas decorations this year, as they had lost theirs in the flood. Thanks to you all.

*Dick Tabor and*

*John Conklin, Flood Response Coordinator*

### From The Neighborhood Center (Giving Tree Recipient)

Dear Friends:

I want to write a little note to let you know how appreciative we are for your generous contribution of books, cars, crib sheets, school supplies, games, hats and mittens made to the Neighborhood Center. This nation's economy continues to sprawl as unemployment is on the rise, as well as crime, scandals, medical issues, and several other disheartening issues of life. People are desperately seeking hope; the need for outside resources is immense. Without your faithfulness and unwavering commitment to this Agency we would not be able to remain that piece of hope which so many rely on.

Last year we were able to serve 206 families. Thank you for believing in us and continual support to the Mission of the Neighborhood Center. You make our job easier.

May God richly bless you and your family this season of Christ's birth and throughout the New Year. Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift. ~ 2 Corinthians 9:15

Happy Holidays,

Sandra L. Soroka  
Executive Director



## Remembering Margie...

Hearing about Margie's deep affinity with labyrinths at her memorial service, hospital chaplain Tim Dean told St. Paul's staff about a **bulb labyrinth garden** that is being created at the Ithaca Children's Garden in memory of children and babies who have died. Margie loved labyrinths; she loved flowers; and she loved children. So, instead of exchanging gifts among ourselves this year, the St. Paul's staff decided to pool our money to give a donation in Margie's memory to this project as our Christmas gift. We were delighted to collect \$270, more than enough to purchase a small engraved stepping stone in her memory. We will always miss Margie's bright spirit among us, but we feel this small gift is a token of her continuing legacy of love and compassion!

If you are interested in learning more about the garden and its purpose, we invite you to check it out on line at <http://www.ithacachildrengarden.org/bulb-labyrinth.html>

The St. Paul's Staff

## Ash Wednesday — February 22nd

We human beings often find it difficult to admit our failings. It seems a bit counter-intuitive to enter a 40-day period with the purpose of unearthing and confessing our shortcomings and asking God to forgive us. Yet, in some ways, this period provides us with an opportunity to clean some of the sludge out of our lives and open us to the miracle of forgiveness that God offers to each of us. Lent begins with **Ash Wednesday, February 22nd**, and we will gather at **7:00 p.m.** for a time of reflection, confession, and communion. This service provides opportunity for us to intentionalize our Lenten journey and to take some first steps in our 40-day journey to Easter. We hope you can join other members of our church family at this service.



## Our Ministry of Reconciliation: History and Hopes

*by Karen Kaufmann*



In the beginning, back in 1994, four St. Paulians—inspired by Pastor Rebecca's preaching? or by Disciple Bible study? or by the workings of the holy spirit in our midst?—independently contacted the Reconciling Congregations Program (RCP), a national advocacy group encouraging orientation-inclusiveness in the United Methodist Church. The RCP put the last caller in touch with the other three, and a church-transforming study and advocacy group, the St. Paul's Reconciling Congregations Task Force (RCTF) was born! "If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; everything... has become new!" [2 Cor. 5: 17]

For over three years, with the support of Church Council, the RCTF opened discussion at St. Paul's around the issues of inclusiveness and sexuality. Drawing first on RCP resources, the task force soon embarked on uniquely St. Paulian "course of study," including field trips, a human sexuality class, a retreat, an annotated bibliography and lending library, and a series of church-and-community forums on Bible teachings, led by pastor/theologians from Colgate Rochester Divinity School. The process reached St. Paulians and others at many levels—youth and seniors, gays and straights, heart-led and head-led, hesitant and bold. The issues were many, and tough:

**Continued on p. 6**

## **Our Ministry of Reconciliation — continued from p. 5**

- **whether and why persons were excluded from the life of the church on the grounds of sexual orientation,**
- **whether and why the church should single out sexual orientation as a basis for welcome or participation,**
- **what teachings about sexual orientation and sexuality we were comfortable with or could learn from,**
- **whether we could agree to disagree about this or any other issue of congregational life,**
- **what the guiding principles of the church and the faith were anyway....**

Meanwhile, the RCTF worked to agree on the principles and visions underlying a Statement of Reconciliation that might be presented for congregational review. This was also a challenging process. Even on the task force, people came to the ministry of reconciliation with differing histories and expectations: some spoke from places of exclusion or persecution, others from the pain of friends or family; some urged justice, others conciliation; all had to work to build trust and shed fears, defenses and stereotypes.

And yet, undergirding and overarching the task force's work was a shared appreciation of the grand and moving themes of our Biblical and historical faith: liberation, justice, wisdom, prayer, blessing, healing, and grace. These themes inspired our final Statement, drafted by former St. Paulian Anne Foster, a church historian and grace-filled writer.

In February 1998, with the support of council, the Statement was brought to the congregation for a three-week period of Q&A, followed by a sacred Sunday of open comment and vote. Sensitive to congregational needs, the task force asked that an outside leader conduct the voting session, under rules set forth in the formal Discipline of the Church, and that any vote of approval be by super-majority. In the end, the task force's hesitations were groundless. Over 90% of the voters approved the Statement, and St. Paul's became a reconciling congregation, boldly extending a welcome (and a role) to all, regardless of orientation.

In the ensuing fourteen years, as a reconciling congregation, St. Paul's has tried to reach out to all who seek a welcome (and a role) in our warm-hearted, visionary community of faith. We have offered formal and informal support to individuals and families who, irrespective of sexual orientation or gender identity, seek to live out their faith and share their gifts and burdens in Christian community. We have shared our message of reconciliation and inclusion in our community, our new United Methodist Annual Conference, and with other congregations seeking to discern the nature of their own reconciling ministry. And we continue to advocate for openness and an end to discrimination in the United Methodist Church, which struggles mightily with its call to be the church of open hearts, open minds and open doors. Most recently, we have been nudged by the spirit to open our own hearts and minds to the human rights and spiritual needs of transgender persons, and to respond with integrity to the pastoral and congregational challenges imposed by our denomination's restrictive stance on orientation in a state that has newly adopted inclusive marriage laws.

We are, indeed, a new creation, ever open—we trust—to the stirrings of spirit and the boundary-challenging, grace-filled teachings of the Christ. “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.... So we are ambassadors for Christ.” [2 Corinthians 5: 18, 20].

**Don't forget your rainbow stoles on Reconciling Sunday, February 5th.**

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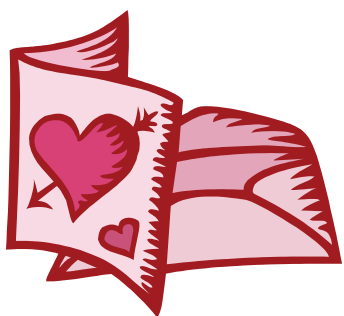
## Loving Care Ministries

### A Special Thank You

We appreciate all who have given the gift of poinsettias to beautify our worship services and special thanks go to all those who faithfully delivered the beautiful poinsettias to our seniors and homebound. These lovely plants will not only brighten their winter days but be a reminder of our love and care. Thanks for taking time out of a busy season to help with our caring ministry.

### Valentine Card Making Workshop

**Saturday, February 4th — 10:00 a.m. -Noon**



For the fourth year, Loving Care Ministries is sponsoring a Valentine card making workshop, where you are invited to create beautiful greeting cards. We will mainly be using rubber stamps, but a variety of other materials will be available to make handmade, unique cards. All materials, including paper, inks, and Valentine stamps, will be provided. You will be able to make as many cards as you'd like, but I am asking that you give at least one card to our Loving Care Card Ministry. You may sign up at the table outside the sanctuary or call the church office to sign up. We are looking forward to encouraging your creative side and having fun.

As we begin this New Year and contemplate the long winter days that may seem colorless and confining for many of our homebound, may we think about how we can bring some joy and color into their lives. Perhaps a phone call, a visit or a lovely card can help to bring light and life to those who cannot get out to come and be with us. It will help them know that we do remember and care. If you feel God calling you to connect with these special persons through this ministry, contact me. Thanks!

**New "Care Notes" Have Arrived!** Located in the Welcome Room, the Care Notes are available for anyone to take one for yourself or a friend, on a variety of topics such as Grief, Aging, Illness, and Suffering. New titles include: "After the First Year of Grief: Being Ready for the Challenges," "Grieving the Loss of a Good Friend," "Holding on to Faith in the Midst of Suffering", "Hospice Care: When Enough is Enough," "When Alzheimer's Steals the Loved One You Knew," "Prayers for Coping with Cancer," "When Someone You Love Has Cancer."

May you enjoy the many blessings that come with loving and caring for one another.

*Rev. Eunice Tabor, Loving Care Coordinator*

### Expressions of Remembrance Program...A Possibility

It has been nearly three months since the passing of Pastor Margie Mayson. Our choir director, Jayne Demakos, who also shares her music in her work with Hospicare, is willing to help set up a program in coordination with the Bereavement Team to offer healing and support including music. To let us know your interest in this kind of program, please email either Jayne, [jdemakos@stpaulsithaca.org](mailto:jdemakos@stpaulsithaca.org), or Eunice, [etabor@stpaulsithaca.org](mailto:etabor@stpaulsithaca.org), or call the church office.

## Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) Update

I want to thank Rev. Bob McCune for agreeing to be our interim pastor. Bob was initially appointed to be our interim pastor through Advent. In conversation with the SPRC, The District Superintendent (DS) then requested that Bob remain our interim until June 30, or until such time that a permanent appointment could be made. After prayerful consideration, Bob and Alice agreed to serve this interim role for the duration. Pastor Bob has jumped right in, meeting with the staff, and making plans for the months to come. Bob and Alice will be taking some “sunshine breaks” in Arizona as part of this agreement.

In the meantime, the SPRC, the DS, and the Bishop have started the process of finding a new pastor for St. Paul's. The SPRC spent our December meeting reviewing and updating our Church Profile, the major document that the DS and Bishop use to help discern whom they will appoint as our new pastor. The Church Profile provides an important picture of the unique character of our congregation that contributes to the discernment process. Once a pastor has been identified, the DS will request a meeting with the SPRC, and we will conduct the intake interview. The SPRC will then make a decision about accepting the candidate and announce it to the congregation when there is agreement of all parties involved. We ask for your prayers and patience during this process of discerning our future leadership at St. Paul's.

George Gull, SPRC Chair

### Staff-Parish Relations Committee

Josephine Allen  
Jacqueline Bonner, Staff  
Margarete Couture  
Fred Deppe  
Greg Eells

Barbara Eshelman  
George Gull, Chair  
William Highland  
Karen Kaufmann, Lay Leader  
Rev. Bob McCune

Ashlee McGandy  
Sue Ellen Stuart  
Drew Tennant  
Lisa Waldrop  
Debby Wells-Clinton, Lay Member

## St. Paul's Connections

### Saucy Evening Game Night!

Join the Spirited Connections Team on **Friday, February 17, at 6:00 p.m.** in the Memorial Rooms for an evening of **homemade soup, salad, and, yes, games, games, games!** We will provide the meal; just bring yourself and your favorite game to share with others. (Bring a dessert, too, if you like.) We hope to see you there for an evening of fun and fellowship!





## Coffee Hour Hosts are needed for February and March!

No advance preparations or shopping required.  
Please contact the church office for more info or  
to volunteer for this important ministry of hospitality!

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Chili Cook-off

**Do You Have a Favorite Recipe?**  
**Bring a pot of chili and win a prize!**



**Sunday, March 4th**, the Casowasco Retreat Team will host the 2nd Annual Chili Cook-off in the Memorial Rooms after worship. Chefs: make your favorite recipe and encourage other St. Paulians to taste and buy your chili. First two empty crock pots win a prize! We also need bakers to make corn muffins and brownies. All proceeds will be used to reduce the cost of our annual retreat April 20-22. For more information, contact Wendy Johnson at 277-9058 or [wjohnson@twcny.rr.com](mailto:wjohnson@twcny.rr.com).



**April 20-22, 2012**

Spend some time with us in April for our Club Casowasco Retreat and get to know other St. Paulians. Again this year, we'll be offering a variety of activities to choose from throughout the weekend. In addition to our traditional game night, campfire, worship, work project, and free time, we'll have a few organized activities. Last year, cake-decorating, story-telling, and scrap-booking were popular. Discounts are available for those who sign up early, help with fundraising, or volunteer to lead a program. Registration will begin in February. For more information, contact Beth Mudge at 273-2367 or [bethmudge@hotmail.com](mailto:bethmudge@hotmail.com) or Wendy Johnson at 277-9058 or [wjohnson@twcny.rr.com](mailto:wjohnson@twcny.rr.com).

**Tuesday, February 21, 11:30 a.m.**

**Older Adult Shrove Tuesday Lunch  
and "Ash Wednesday" Service**

Enjoy the 6th annual older adult pancake and sausage lunch downstairs in St. Paul's Dining Room with your friends. For \$10 per person, this feast will be prepared for you with love by the Older Adult Ministry Team and Griddle Meisters Dick Tenney and Bill Highland. After lunch, we will move from the celebration of Shrove Tuesday to the more introspective season of Lent with an Ash Wednesday service (*yes, on Tuesday afternoon!*) designed especially for you by Interim Pastor Bob McCune. For more information, contact Mary Lou Tenney, 277-6510 or [mlt6@cornell.edu](mailto:mlt6@cornell.edu).



## **St. Paul's United Methodist Church Statement of Reconciliation Adopted by Church Conference vote on February 1, 1998**

Because we are an invitational church, we, as members of St. Paul's United Methodist Church, affirm Christ's unconditional invitation to all to seek a personal relationship with God through him.

Because we are a supportive, inclusive church, we affirm all loving relationships among people, and further affirm that love is found in friendships, parent-child relationships, heterosexual relationships, homosexual relationships, and families created by birth or by choice.

Because we are a Christ-centered church, we believe Christ when he said that in Christ there are only two commandments. We must love God with all our heart and soul, and love our neighbor, whether that neighbor is like or unlike us, as ourselves. We believe this commandment allows us to draw no boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable members of our church.

Because we are a United Methodist Church, we rejoice in our church's history of fighting injustice and oppression, of calling attention to the needs and rights of all persons. We challenge ourselves and our denomination to affirm in word and deed the fundamental spiritual principle that all people are children of God.

Because we are a people of faith, we believe that it is part of our ministry and God's plan to affirm the glorious diversity of our community, made up of people of different ages, abilities, races, ethnicities, genders, backgrounds, nationalities, and sexual orientations, and yet to affirm also the unity we experience in Christ. We pray that in so doing we will encourage all persons of faith as they work for God's Glory.

**We hereby affirm our commitment to the basic principles of our faith by declaring St. Paul's United Methodist Church a Reconciling Congregation, a congregation which welcomes gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals into the same community of faith into which all are invited. We pledge also to work for the day when society will welcome in the same way Christ welcomes.**



## For the Love of God and Neighbor

### A Common Witness to General Conference 2012

General Conference 2012 **could** be a pivotal point in the United Methodist Church as our global governing body convenes in Tampa, FL this April 24th through May 4th. The *Love Your Neighbor* is a Common Witness Coalition led by the Reconciling Ministries Network and the Methodist Foundation for Social Action. In sum, the legislative priorities (<http://gc12.org/legislation/>) of *Love Your Neighbor* call our church to align its priorities, actions, and Book of Discipline with the Great Commandments to love God and our neighbor. They emphasize actions to make the United Methodist Church fully inclusive of the entire body of Christ, work for justice and peace and steward more effectively our world. A number of legislative proposals will come before the General Conference to re-dedicate our church in action, word and spirit to the 'Wesleyan tradition as people of warmed heart, enlightened mind and extended hand'.

As a congregation we supported a number of resolutions to our Annual Conference this past year to make the United Methodist Church fully inclusive of all people regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. These resolutions now move forward to General Conference. You may ask why this matters when we at St. Paul's already are an inclusive and committed Reconciling Congregation where all means all. The actions of this General Conference matter **directly** to our congregation and members. Now, faithful LGBT members of our congregation are welcomed at St. Paul's, but not in the United Methodist Church as a whole. Now, a pastor of our church cannot remain ordained if openly gay, lesbian or bisexual. The discriminatory and punitive language in our Book of Discipline forbids it. Now, faithful members of our congregation who seek the sacrament of holy marriage can neither be married by their pastor, nor in their home church if they are same-sex couples. Again, the discriminatory language in our Book of Disciplines forbids it. We can change this through our prayer and action.

#### What can you do?

- Include the General Conference and our delegates worldwide in your prayers asking for their guidance and inspiration by the welcoming Spirit, the inclusive example of Christ and our God who loves **all** of God's children.
- Sign the *Love Your Neighbor* Common Witness available outside the sanctuary on Reconciling Sunday, February 5.
- Join a sewing bee to make rainbow prayer stoles for General Conference.
- Send a postcard to a delegate when the opportunity is offered through St. Paul's.
- Participate in a prayer vigil during the General Conference.

Our actions and prayers can make a difference – one that we hear God calling our United Methodist Church to make this year in Tampa.

## Adult Spiritual Growth Plans for Lent

### Invitation to the New Testament

Thursday evenings, March 1 through April 26

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Pam Carey, Facilitator



Invitation to the New Testament is an eight-week Bible study. It will be offered on Thursday evenings in March and April. Think of it as a commitment for Lent! If you have been considering reading your Bible but don't know how to get started, this is a good opportunity to delve into this fascinating book. The class will involve daily reading and a weekly class of video and discussion. Look for more information as we get closer to Lent.



### Opportunities for Noontime Lenten Reflections

Wednesdays, March 7, 14, 21 & 28

12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.

### Adult Retreat: *Journey to Healing and Wholeness*

Saturday through Sunday morning, March 17-18

With an optional Friday night stay

Light on the Hill Retreat Center

Rev. Jeff Shepardson, Retreat Leader



***Mark your calendars now and watch for details about these opportunities in upcoming bulletins and in the March newsletter!***

# Children's Ministries



**FAITH**

**EXPLORERS**

**(K-6th grades)**

“I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago.” *Psalm 77:11*

Thank you to all who are working on teaching/guiding the Miracles Unit!

Teachers:

Paul and Beth Jennette

Greg Eells

John Bradburn

Beth Mudge

Patty Sipman

Guides:

Andrea Russo

Michelle Eells

April Denman

Kayla Eells

Audrey Bradburn

Barb Eshelman, Barbara Wernham, and Sarah Crossgrove helped develop the exciting workshops.

In this unit, the children are studying 5 different miracles:

**Changing water into wine – A science lesson.**

*John 2:1-11*

**Catching a large number of fish – A fishing game.**

*Luke 5:3-10 and John 21:4-11*

**Calming the stormy sea – A drama activity.**

*Matthew 8:23-27, Mark 4:35-41, Luke 8:22-25*

**Feeding the masses – Helping prepare for coffee hour.**

*(Matthew 14:16-21 and 15:29-39, Mark 6:35-44 and 8:1-10, Luke 9:12-17, John 6:5-14)*

**Jesus heals the 10 Lepers -A lesson in prayer.**

*Luke 17:11-19*

Our memory verse is “I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago.” *Psalm 77:11*

We are always looking for adult volunteers for the Faith Explorers program. Roles large or small, on weekdays or Sundays, hands on or behind the scenes. Contact Laura Dolch ([lauradolch@stpaulsithaca.org](mailto:lauradolch@stpaulsithaca.org)) to learn more.

## **Under Construction...**

We greatly appreciate the flexibility of teachers and parents during the construction. Several of our classrooms are affected by all of the changes, so classes for both Faith Explorers and Faith Discovery Group may be moved around during the spring. More information about this will be forthcoming as the project unfolds!



### Children's and Youth Music Ensembles

The winter months bring more beautiful music from our children and youth. In January, the youth sang their own arrangement of "Down by the Riverside". The children sang a medley of African-American Spirituals. Coming in February, the Children's Music Group will share love themed music. Meanwhile, the youth will be busy working on their next original composition that will be performed in March. The youth will also be planning a mini-retreat to have an opportunity to work on improvisation and the fine tuning of their piece (as well as some time to hang out).

Whether you are new to Youth Ensemble or Children's Music Group or it's been a while since you've come, children and youth are always welcome!

Blessings,



Confirmation Class's Trust Walk



Creative Art

"How I see the Holy Spirit moving in my life or in the world"



# Youth Ministries

## Youth News

The Senior High Youth Group has been thinking about the remainder of the year and things they wish to accomplish. They have a goal to complete the painting and decorating of their room along with the removal of the old sound room that is currently in the space. This extra room will be great for our active youth, and they will finally be able to get their beautiful legacy vine hung again. Another hope is that we are able to go on a mini mission trip this spring or early summer, keeping faithful to Rev. Margie Mayson's desire to help those in the flooded areas of New York through our mission work. More news on their trip planning to follow!

Middle School Youth Group is focusing on prayer this coming semester. They discussed how they first learned to pray, what they pray for, and when they pray. They are going to experience different ways of praying through experiences with the labyrinth, as well as having a few guest speakers speak with them about meditation and prayer. They were a part of a service project in which they scrubbed down the walls of the gym so they were cleaner for the dedication of the labyrinth in memory of Pastor Margie Mayson.

## Confirmation Class

The confirmation class on the Holy Spirit, scheduled for November 19, 2011, did not meet, as it fell on the day of Pastor Margie's memorial service. Instead, many of our confirmands gave a powerful musical tribute to Margie during the service, walked the labyrinth in her memory, and helped with set-up and clean-up for the 500+ guests who joined our congregation to celebrate Margie's life and mourn her loss. I know all who were there felt the leading of spirit, and the gift of Margie's spirit in the life of our congregation and the lives of our young people, as we took stock of foundational questions of life, death, mystery, and faith in a very deep and personal way.

Our confirmation class did gather in December to explore the mystery and gift of the Holy Spirit in our life of faith. With Jeff, Rue, and myself as guides, we read the Bible, explored an obstacle-ridden trust walk (pictures to the left), and created three-dimensional representations of our experience or understanding of the Spirit. Many of you probably saw these evocative, resonant, and spirited symbols outside the sanctuary at St. Paul's during the Christmas season (pictures to the left).

Karen Kaufmann, St Paul's Lay Leader

## Youth Events for February

Senior High Movie Night WITH Lock-In February 3, 6:30 p.m. to February 4, 10:00 a.m.

Confirmation Class will meet February 11, 9:00 a.m. to Noon

Senior High Youth Group will meet February 12, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Middle School Morning Youth Group will meet February 5, 12, and 26, 9:45 -10:20 a.m.

Middle School Youth Group will have their Lock-in February 17 through 18

with a theme of "Winter" — time and more info to be announced!

Middle School Afternoon Youth Group will meet February 5 for a special candy making workshop and February 26 both from Noon to 2:00 p.m., with youth bringing bag lunches!

St. Paul's  
United Methodist Church,  
a Reconciling Congregation

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**Please pray for these members of our church family:**

Mary Boardman; Lenora Bradley and family; Tina Champion; Roy and Alma Coats; Jeanne Corbit; Docksta-der Family; Doug Dockstader; Dora Fratelli; Kay Fried-lander; Melissa Gould; Jessie Helton; Jean Hyde; Priscilla Lawrence; Jane Mazurek; Lucille McBean; Bonnie Meyerhoff; Ocello Family; Patricia Parke; Elsie Price; Sallie Pure; Bill Schoch; LaVerne Snyder; Andrea Downing Zheng



Bob & Emily Guion (Pam Lillard's parents); Julie Hughs' mother; Craig Kitchner and family (Lisa Harris' family); Jasmine LaMontain (Pam Gillow's daughter); John Lawrence (Priscilla Lawrence's brother); Larry Mayfield (Carolyn Longhouse's brother); Steven Mentel (Shirley Murray's brother); Edith Nantz (Josette Garrison's mother); Arthur Preston (George Preston's father); Christopher Quinlan (friend of Josette Garrison); John Saltsman (LaVerne Snyder's friend); Dorothy Schumacher (LaVerne Snyder's aunt); Vincent, Andrea and Raphael; Cathy Waddington (Susan Eyster's friend)

**Please pray for these members of our extended church family:**

Bill Arden (Tina Champion's friend); Alex Arnold (Ellie Phillips-Burdge's nephew); Margaret Arnold (Ellie Phillips-Burdge's sister); Jordan Boardman (Mary Boardman's granddaughter); Matt Boardman (Mary Boardman's son); William Deming (Melissa Gould's nephew); George Eberhardt and Larry R. (David McElrath's friends); Kip Flint and family (Kevin Flint's brother); Maria Isabel Garcia (Ellie Phillips-Burdge's great niece); Lloyd Georgia (Carolee Vink's father); Sheryl and Myranda Gillow (Pam Gillow's daughters);



**To add a name to the Prayer List**, call the church office at 273-5971 or email [info@stpaulsithaca.org](mailto:info@stpaulsithaca.org). Requests for prayers to be added to the **Prayer Chain** may be directed to **Elinor John at 273-0915**.

*"Bear one another's burdens....." Galatians 6:2*