

JANUARY 2025

# the EPISTLE



## A message from our NW District Disaster Coordinator

"I spent several days last week in Dade City, just a few miles north of Tampa. It is a high spot in the middle of broad flatlands, an area that is home to many small rivers and streams and the people who enjoy them. Then Hurricane Helene drenched the area as it skirted the coast. And Hurricane Milton really topped things off, raising inland water levels to record heights. The flooding would last for more than days or even weeks. It has been two months (TWO MONTHS!) and many residents are just now able to see what is left of their homes – if they have a four-wheel drive truck to get there. Our Annual Conference's Disaster Response Ministry has partnered with the Red Cross to get essential supplies into the area. But there just are not enough volunteers to go around, and I was there because I was needed. No, it wasn't convenient. Yes, I had to put some other things on hold. And it was *almost* a time when I couldn't go.

But you know what? Disaster doesn't care. No disaster ever showed up "just in time." And when disasters do show up the potential volunteers in that area are suddenly overwhelmed with the struggle to be survivors. Time passes, and while these people's lives are no longer in the "news cycle" they are still in crisis. So, when I heard I went. And I wasn't alone – I made several new friends as we labored together, figuring it out, making-do with the resources we had.

This is what disaster response ministry is all about – It is facing those days when the wind, the water, and other elements of nature demand attention, when disaster doesn't care about our plans.

The Southeastern Jurisdiction Disaster Academy (Fruitland Park, January 9-12, 2025) is a place where we can strengthen our readiness. Yes, it starts in the middle of the week. Disaster doesn't care. Yes, many of us already have a major event happening that Sunday. Disaster doesn't care. Be there if you can. Bring others with you if you can. And if you cannot (and believe me, I know what that is like!) encourage others to be there! Help recruit others to join us in this ministry.

I enjoy an orderly life, and am usually a careful planner.... But disaster doesn't care. Hurricane Idalia, Wind Storm Finn, the Tallahassee Tornados, Hurricane Debby, Hurricane Helene, Hurricane Milton.... Good grief, Charlie Brown! Let's show disaster what is what!

Disaster doesn't care. But I know you do. And I am thankful for each and every one of you.– Rev. Rich Wilson

## JANUARY CALENDAR

- |        |   |
|--------|---|
| Jan 3  | Crafty Crop, 4:00pm, Sanders Hall   |
| Jan 4  | Crafty Crop, 10:00am, Sanders Hall  |
| Jan 5  | Regular Sunday schedule resumes   |
| Jan 6  | Ed Wynn lunch, 10:30, Sanders Hall  |
| Jan 8  | Wednesday dinner/activities resume<br>Town Hall update, 6:00pm, Sanders Hall              |
| Jan 9  | MomCo Meeting, 9:30am, Sanders Hall   |
| Jan 13 | Congregational Care Meeting, 10:30am, Room 326<br>Core Ministries Meeting, 6:30pm, Parlor |
| Jan 14 | United Women in Faith, 10:00am, Sanders Hall  |
| Jan 16 | Circle of Support, 10:00am, Parlor  |
| Jan 18 | Manna on Meridian, 8:00am, Faith Presbyterian   |
| Jan 21 | Alzheimer's Lunch, 11:30am, Parlor  |
| Jan 23 | MomCo Meeting, 9:30am, Sanders Hall   |
| Jan 25 | Soul Food, 9:30am, Lake Ella  |
| Jan 27 | Governing Board Meeting, 6:30pm, Parlor   |

# CREATION *care*

## WHAT WILL YOU DO IN 2025?

As you ponder the past year and what actions you took to be a good steward of God's creation, celebrate what you have done, then challenge yourself to add new actions in the coming year. You have gotten tips from our team throughout this last year. Think before you buy, whether it's produce wrapped in plastic (or not) or new clothes versus ones from a thrift shop. With each decision you make daily, ask yourself, "Am I showing love for Mother Earth?" Start with the effort to go plastic and foam free 50% of the time, then build from there.



On a broader scale, here's a reminder that local and national practices that spoil the land or water affect people of color to a far greater degree than richer and whiter communities. Martin Luther King, Jr. stood against racism, including environmental racism. **Honor King's legacy** this month **by working for justice**, especially on behalf of people of color and indigenous tribes. Keep your eyes open to God's activity around us and join in acts of justice, according to how God has equipped you to make a difference in the world.

Thank you for supporting Creation Care at the alternative Christmas market with your generous gifts as we continue to grow hundreds of pounds of food to donate to Manna on Meridian food bank, provide outreach and education about nature and sustainability, and celebrate God's earth with outings in the community. Get outside on one of these crisp, clear, sunny days and hike one of your favorite trails, which we are so lucky to have in abundance in our county and state. It will do your mind and soul some good!

In the words of John Wesley.....

"Do all the GOOD you can, by all the MEANS you can, in all the WAYS you can, in all the PLACES you can, at all the TIMES you can, to all the PEOPLE you can, as long as ever you can."



# JANUARY events

## SUNDAY NIGHT WORSHIP EXPERIENCE

Join us every Sunday evening for our shared Contemporary Worship Service with Good Samaritan UMC, in Sanders Hall. This service begins at **6:00pm**. All are welcome to come.

## MEN'S READING COMMUNITY

The Men's Reading Group meets on Tuesday mornings at Ology Northside. They gather each **Tuesday at 9am**.

We are reading and discussing "The Christ Commission" by Og Mandino. This is a novel about a man who travels back in time to interview eye-witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus.

If you are interested in learning more about this group, please contact David Gill (davidmurraygill@gmail.com) or Nic Fugate (ndfugate@gmail.com)

## UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

United Women in Faith will be meeting on **Tuesday, January 14**, at **10:00** in Sanders Hall. Our speaker will be our very own Associate Pastor, MaryAnn Piccioni. All women of the church are invited to come and enjoy a morning of education, service, and fellowship. If you have questions, please contact Erma Sever at 850-510-5791 or [ermasever@comcast.net](mailto:ermasever@comcast.net).

## CRAFTY CROP

Crafty Crop kicks off the new year on **January 3 & 4!** Bring your projects and table space will be provided. The fellowship begins on **Friday at 4:00pm** in Sanders Hall. You may leave your projects all set up to continue the fun on **Saturday at 10:00am**. Any questions and/or to sign up, contact Jill Merryday (850-443-9428).

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- 1 Liane Giroux, Sylvia Walford, Kelly Warren
- 2 Kylea Verheyen
- 3 Sam Cavanaugh,
- 4 Mary Barber, Meagan Herndon
- 5 Francesca Johnson, Nancy Turner
- 6 Gene Chick
- 7 DeeDee Rasmussen
- 8 Margie Cash, Stephanie Corry, Kevin Cox
- 10 Larry Barlow, John Benton, Sharon Geiger, Henry Merryday, Patrick Peacock
- 11 Jackie Bowman, Thomas Fussell, Mackie Knight
- 12 Kevin Kline
- 13 Mark Woodward
- 16 Lindsay DeGraw, Ansley Wirth
- 18 Carol Ann Hays
- 19 Ethan Courtmanche, Rick Flaughner, Amelia Paulk
- 20 Claude Sellers
- 22 Jeff Beekman
- 23 Tammy Schubin, John Woodward
- 24 Kambea Chan, Erma Sever
- 25 Betty Blair, Beverly Kinloch, Charles Townsend, Alison Tully
- 26 Margaret Hardee, Sabrena Watson
- 27 Linda Champion, Audrey Clift, Robert Tully III
- 28 Judy Willis
- 29 Robin McCallister
- 31 Latricia Scriven

# MISSION ministries

## **MANNA ON MERIDIAN**

From Barbara Block...As of January Kevin Scott will be taking over as Saint Paul's Manna on Meridian coordinator. Kevin has been a dependable volunteer for the past year and will make an excellent leader. Kevin can be reached at 850-261-7900 or [kevingscott@yahoo.com](mailto:kevingscott@yahoo.com). There are many ways to get involved so give Kevin a call and he can help you find a slot that works for you.

From Kevin Scott...Manna on Meridian is a joint ministry between five local churches that Saint Paul's is a critical part of. Every month, we provide groceries, produce, and other essentials to hundreds of our food-insecure neighbors. If you would like to donate to this ministry, we always need regular-sized boxes of cereal and cans of soup. There are places to drop off these donations in either the church office or Room 308.

If you are interested in volunteering, there are lots of opportunities, including bagging groceries, preparing produce bags, or picking up donations from our retail partners. Help is always particularly needed at our large monthly distribution, which takes place on the third Saturday of the month from 8-10 am at Faith Presbyterian, just a mile north of Saint Paul's on Meridian.

## **SOUTHEASTERN JURISDICTION DISASTER ACADEMY**

Please contact David Gill ([davidmurrahgill@gmail.com](mailto:davidmurrahgill@gmail.com)) if you are interested in attending this event. Read all about it on page one.

## **RESIDING HOPE**

Thank you, Saint Paul's family, and friends for your amazing support of Residing Hope in 2024. For decades, you have been a constant provider of the Children's Home. Your outstanding response to the Christmas gift card drive was valued at \$1,200.00 in cards, all greatly appreciated and enjoyed. In 2025, I look forward to **Saturday, February 1st**, "The 10th Anniversary Celebration" for the Madison Youth Ranch. We can also look forward to our joyful "Noisy Offerings" (5th Sunday offerings) and videos about the youth and programs we support. The hope is that these children will see God's promises for themselves and renew their lives as they will be our future too. Thank you again for all you do to support this mission. God Bless you also.- Janet Clark

## **CAPITAL AREA JUSTICE MINISTRY UPDATE**

On December 10, the Research Kickoff Meeting was held at Jacob Chapel Baptist Church with 80+ people showing up. There were updates on next steps for our existing campaigns and brainstorming for the new campaign of Hunger/Food Insecurity which will be researched all of 2025.

We also laid the groundwork for the Nehemiah Action on March 31, 2025 at 6:30pm at the Old West Florida Enrichment Center (2344 Lake Bradford Rd) where we'll bring 1,000+ voices together to demand actionable change from our elected leaders. Please make sure to mark your calendars and invite others to attend this important meeting!

Next Steps – Keep the Momentum Going:

Be on the lookout for a Congregational Network Meeting early in 2025 to be scheduled where all CAJM Members of Saint Paul's should attend to discuss and organize prior to the upcoming Pep Rally and Nehemiah Action. Attend the January 28th County Commissioners Meeting at 3:00PM where there will be a presentation and vote on using tax dollars to support affordable housing in Leon County. Let the People Power be heard!

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practiced without neglecting the others" (Matthew 23:23, NRSV).

# MUSIC

## at Saint Paul's

### **MUSIC MINISTRY AT SAINT PAUL'S**

It's a new year and a great time to join a choir! We have a place for you!

#### **Covenant Chancel Choir:**

Sings for the 11:00 a.m. (and occasionally 8:30 a.m.) services.

This choir also presents and leads special seasonal services. We rehearse on Tuesday evenings at 6:15 pm in the choir room.

A nursery/childcare is provided. Contact Cynthia Prescott, Adult Choirs Director ([prescottc1360@gmail.com](mailto:prescottc1360@gmail.com))

#### **Se'lah:**

Se'lah is an ensemble of adults who love to praise God through song but can't commit to sing in worship every Sunday. This group rehearses Tuesday evenings at 7:30 in the choir room. They perform a variety of music and sing in a variety of places.

This group sings once a month in worship and occasionally with Covenant Chancel Choir for special occasions. They also present concerts. A nursery/childcare is provided. Contact Cynthia Prescott, Adult Choirs Director ([prescottc1360@gmail.com](mailto:prescottc1360@gmail.com))

#### **Handbell Choir:**

Rehearses on Sundays from 5:45-6:45. We play for our morning worship services approximately once a month during the school year, participate in music ministry seasonal offerings, and participate in community handbell events. Basic music reading skills are required for participation in this choir.

#### **Kids@Art:**

This is our worship arts program for children in Grades K-5. We resume this season on Wednesday, January 8, 6:00-7:00, in the Children's Music Room, #200. We focus on age-appropriate singing/choral skills, playing instruments, drama, and creating various forms of visual arts and crafts, building the worship leaders of the present and future. We sing for worship services often, present musicals during the Advent and Spring seasons, and participate in special music ministry offerings.

We'll begin work on our spring musical, "Malice in the Palace," soon. Contact Stephany Nystrand ([stephanymusictherapy@yahoo.com](mailto:stephanymusictherapy@yahoo.com))

#### **Preschool Music Group:**

This is a developmentally appropriate music program for children ages 3-4 which meets on Wednesdays, 5:10-5:30 pm in Room 200 of the Children's Wing. We incorporate singing, playing instruments, movement, and encourage healthy social development. Contact Gaye Herndon ([gaye@saintpaulsumc.org](mailto:gaye@saintpaulsumc.org))

#### **Youth Choir:**

Invites all who are in Grades 6-12 to join us. We rehearse on Wednesday evenings, 7:00-7:45 in the Music Room (200) in the Children's Wing. We prepare choral music to help lead our congregation in worship and take an annual trip to MUSIC CAMP! Contact Gaye Herndon ([gaye@saintpaulsumc.org](mailto:gaye@saintpaulsumc.org))

#### **Saint Paul's Dancers:**

A group of older elementary and youth with dance experience who meet seasonally to prepare for leading worship. Contact Stephany Nystrand ([stephanymusictherapy@yahoo.com](mailto:stephanymusictherapy@yahoo.com))

#### **Instrumental and Choral Ensembles:**

Are offered according to the particular gifts and talents of our members. Please let one of our music staff members know if you're interested in this ministry.

# WEDNESDAY nights

## WEDNESDAY NIGHT CLASSES

In 2025, Wednesday dinners and activities will resume on January 8th.

We will start off with a Town Hall update on Jan 8th (after dinner in Sanders Hall).

The following Wednesday, Jan 15th, will be a training night for those on Governing Board (after dinner).

On Jan 22nd, we will begin a new slate of adult classes. Please keep an eye on Weekly Notes for details and sign ups.

## WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNER MENUS

Wednesday Night Dinners will resume on January 8th. We are currently transitioning to a new chef, so the final menus are not available yet. Please check Weekly Notes for the sign up and menu information.

On Wednesdays, the doors open at 5:00 and we serve food from 5:15 until 6:00. The cost is \$8 for adults and \$4 for children 10 and under. Dinner includes a salad, drinks and dessert. Kids meals are chicken nuggets, fruit and a cheese stick.

# YOUTH rooted

## GREETINGS!

I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday and a relaxing time off of school. There are several fun things the Youth Ministry is looking forward to in the coming months. The Annual Youth Mission Trip **Chili-Cook Off** fundraiser will take place **Sunday, February 9th** right after the 11 o'clock service. This is a really fun, interactive event that we look forward to every year so bring your best chili recipe (the sign up link will be in the Weekly Notes). This spring we will be starting a Confirmation class. We will also be going to the confirmation retreat at Warren Willis in March. Thank you for your continued support of the Youth Ministry!

Blessings,  
Casey

## YOUTH PROGRAMMING

Youth Sunday School- Sundays- 9:45-10:45  
Study Hall- Wednesdays 3:30-5  
Wednesday Night Dinners- 5:15 (make sure to RSVP)  
Wednesday Night Rooted- 6-7  
Youth Choir- Wednesdays- 7-8  
Sunday Rooted- once a month





# FAMILY *events*

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES UPDATES

We have had such a busy Advent season. Starting with all our Kids@Art Performances, our children's choir sang in multiple worship services and performed in two different musicals this season. We also held Come to Christmas, where we got to celebrate all the preparations we make for Christmas with ornament-making and delicious treats. Dinner was phenomenal as well. Thank you to all the people who donated their time, talents, and money to one of our biggest community outreach events of the year! We will finish up the year with our Christmas pageant, an annual favorite, on December 22nd. This is always a fun and precious time to invite our children to act out the night of Jesus's birth. I hope we see you all in the new year. There will be just as much fun to be had in Children's Ministries in 2025, especially if it includes you!



## 2025 FLOWER SIGN UP

The sign up for alter flowers is now available in the main narthex of the Sanctuary. Please contact the office if you have any questions.

850-385-5146




1700 North Meridian Road  
Tallahassee, Florida 32303  
850-385-5146  
www.saintpaulsumc.org

### **SUNDAYS AT SAINT PAUL'S**

8:30am Worship  
9:45am Sunday School for all ages  
11:00am Worship  
6:00pm Contemporary Service

### **CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**

Monday - Thursday 9:00am - 4:00pm  
Friday - Closed

Find us on  at SaintPaulsUnitedMethodistChurch

### **OUR STAFF AND EMAILS**

#### **Senior Pastor**

Rev. Dr. Latricia Scriven  
latricia@saintpaulsumc.org

#### **Associate Pastor**

Rev. MaryAnn Piccioni  
maryann@saintpaulsumc.org

#### **Church Administrator**

Linda Fletcher  
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#### **Communications**

Amy Leach  
amy@saintpaulsumc.org

#### **Financial Assistant**

Melissa Edelstein

#### **Church Treasurer**

Timothy Scott

#### **Dir. Of Early Childhood Min.**

Beth Wilde  
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#### **Dir. Of Children & Family Ministries**

Leslie Scott  
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#### **Youth Director**

Casey Fernandes  
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#### **Dir. Of Music & Worship Arts**

Gaye Herndon  
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#### **Adult Choirs Director**

Cynthia Prescott  
prescott1360@gmail.com

#### **Kids@Art Choir Director**

Stephany Nystrand  
stephanymusictherapy@yahoo.com

#### **Sexton**

Jonathan Leach  
jonathan@saintpaulsumc.org

#### **Website Administrator**

WPTallahassee

#### **Video Coordinator**

Jay Wirth

#### **OUR BISHOP**

Rev. Tom Berlin

#### **OUR DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT**

Rev. Catherine Fluck-Price

#### **OUR MISSIONARIES**

Delbert & Sandy Groves,  
Zambia