****Paxton Pulse**

**P a x t o n United Methodist C h u r c h /January 2024**

Editor: RB Wilbur (717)-798-4384 | mamasue11@comcast.net | [www.paxtonumc.org](http://www.paxtonumc.org)

***From the desk of Paster Gary***

The New Year usually, for many people, is a time of new beginnings. At Paxton Church, it is a time of new beginnings too. With a new Sunday School starting, to new opportunities to learn more about what it means to be a Lay Servant, to new ways of serving God through helping others in need in our communities and across the world.

This year we have two opportunities to focus on as we begin 2024. First, is that I would like to make this a Year of Prayer. A new emphasis on prayer. Prayer will be a driving factor in all we do this year at Paxton. Not that it wasn’t before but we will focus on prayer this entire year. I believe that of all the Spiritual Disciplines we need to start first with prayer. You cannot truly commit to other Spiritual Disciplines without prayer.

Second, throughout the year you will be learning more about our new vision statement, that the people who gathered on November 11, 2023, discerned by listening to the way God was calling to lead the people of Paxton. That visioning statement is, “Paxton United Methodist Church exists to grow and share God’s love.” We will look at all we do at Paxton through the lens of this statement.

Cindy and I would like to invite everyone to an Open House at the parsonage on Sunday January 21st from 1PM to 5PM. It will be an opportunity for those who were unable to see the finished parsonage in June, and for those that did see the parsonage to see it with furniture (and Christmas Decorations). We will be serving light refreshments, and I am sure there will be plenty of conversations to enjoy as well. We look forward to seeing you.

 Happy New Year, Pastor Gary

***Gratitude and Opportunities***

Thank you to all those helped make **Christmas at Paxton such a joyous Season.** Those who decorated the sanctuary, provided poinsettias, ran the sound system, played the organ and our wonderful choir. A special thanks to those who presented the concert on Christmas eve.

***Sunday Bible study***. Advent reminds us about Joy, Love, Hope, and Peace. But what about kindness, faithfulness, goodness, gentleness, and self-control? Join us after worship on Sundays as Ruth Higbee & Jon Matter help us learn about the “***Fruits of the Spirit*** “(Galatians 5:22-23) through scripture and discussion. There is no book, but materials will be provided .

Sessions will run from January 7 through February 11.

Become a ***Lay Servant or Lay Speaker***. Learn to share time with others in a meaningful conversation about God’s love, grace, and mercy. Whether it is through Bible study, prayer or other spiritual practices. The Harrisburg district is offering three courses starting January 2024: 1) Leading Bible Study, 2) Leading Public Prayer and 3) Call to Preach. For more details, see flyer on the bulletin board or contact our Lay Leader Jon Matter at 717-571-2900.

***Upcoming Activities***

***Sunday Morning***

9:15 am Regular Services in the Sanctuary. **Worship is in-person and live on Facebook Live or anytime at www.facebook.com/paxtonumc.** Communion is first Sunday of each month.

A children’s nursery is available.

10:30 am Bible study each Sunday following the service, in Room 2 across from Pastor’s Office.

***Weekly Activities***

**AA Meetings** – 6:30 PM Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays

**Al Anon –** 6:30 PM, Tuesdays in Room 103**.**

**Dart ball –** 6:30 PM Tuesdays. Contact Skip Smith at 717-545-0652 for info.

**Book Study Group –** 10 AMWednesday at the Peach Tree Restaurant.

**Choir Practice** -- 7 PM on Wednesday

**Pilates** -- 4 PM Wednesday

**Sew for Peace** – 9AM Thursday.

***Monthly Activities***

***Golden Agers*** – 12:30 pm Tuesday, January 10th for dinner, bingo, and fellowship. Upcoming trips: **Sight & Sound’s Daniel** ( March 26, $130), **Magic & Wonder Dinner Theater** (April30, $95) and Williamsport Chocolate Lover’s Tour (June 4, $ TBD) Contact Dotty Sellers.

***Daystar –*** Dinner program for residents will be on hiatus during December and January.

***Staying in Touch, Getting Involved and Helping Others***

***Prayer Requests --*** George &Mel, Tina, Marley, Ray & Sue, Marissa, Donna & George, Don & Pat, Pat – end of life, Kari & husband and all those who suffer in silence. Pray the Lord will bring comfort, healing, and his love to all people.

A Prayer Chain process is being developed. Stay tuned for further information.

***Easter Eggs*** Paxton church has a long-standing tradition of making Easter eggs. It is fun, a great way to interact with people and help support the church financially. We will start Monday morning January 29th and run through March 25th. We would love to have you join us. Contact Bill Toner for details

The Lord has blessed us all and the people of Paxton have shared generously during 2023.

* **Mission Fund** – The gift card program was very successful raising $450 in December and $1550 for all of 2023. Proceeds support Paxton’s mission efforts including the recent trip to Camp Occohannock. Cards can be purchased at any time and used at grocery stores. See Nancy Toner.
* **Sew for Peace –**The group sewed a total of 1,634 items and gathered donations for those organizations that made requests. Meetings are held Thursday at 9:00 am. All are welcome.
* **Manna Food Pantry --**1,134 pounds of food were donated in 2023, The need continues for food and clothing. Donation bins are in the narthex hallway.

***Pastor Gary can be reached*** at 717-332-2743 and gallshouse@susumc.org. His normal office hours are 9 am to 3 pm Monday through Thursday. Please call ahead before stopping in to ensure he is available.