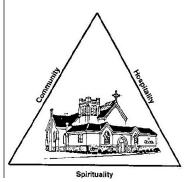
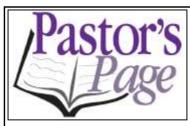
St. Paul's Epistle An Inviting Community of Christ's Disciples

St. Paul's United
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July is a time we celebrate the beginning of our nation, which includes carnivals, picnics, and fireworks. July is the month when my older sister gets another year older. July is the month we tell my mom we are celebrating Christmas, but really we

are having a wonderful family reunion. During all of this, we will finish up the Fruits of the Spirit Series, and then we will hear from Rev. Fred Shaw, a Native American minister from West Ohio, who is going to talk to us about Loving Anyway.

At the end of June, our Ad Council had a special meeting to discuss a few concerns that came from the Trustees Committee and how we will address them. If you have been behind the church and looked closely at our parking lot, you will have noticed it is well past a seal coat being helpful. The other area we are looking at is the basement windows, which are original to the building, and are showing the wear and tear of those years. We are wanting to replace the windows and pour a new parking lot, to do that, we are going to be running a capital campaign. We will get you the detailed information in the weeks to come.

The Brad Joseph Memorial Golf Outing, on July 9th, raises money for medical mission trips and supports the camping ministry of Elida St Paul's Church. Corinne Piper explained who Brad is to St Paul's on Sunday, June 12, during the announcements. If you don't know, I suggest you get on Facebook and check out the June 12th announcements. A special thanks to Brad's family for running this and to all the volunteers that make it happen.

I'll see you here in August and until then, keep the Faith.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Paul



Thought for the Month:

A life without love is like a year without summer.

—Swedish proverb

The Bradley W. Joseph Memorial Fund 14th Annual Golf Outing





Brad Joseph Memorial Golf Outing Fundraiser Saturday, July 9

At Colonial Golfers Club, Tee Time: 9:00 AM

If interested in being on a team, sponsoring a hole, or helping with the golf outing, contact Tim Piper.

There are also sign-up sheets on the bulletin board in the hallway.

July 3
'Coins for Communion'
to benefit the
Brad Joseph Memorial Fund



Upcoming Events for St. Paul's

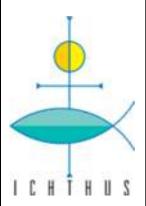
Newsletter deadline: the **20th** of each month

is published by St. Paul's United Methodist Church Subscription Rate: NONE Secretary Gail Fessler Organist Linda Holman Pianist Lois Cook Choir Director Judy Chaffins Custodian Dave Decker

Christian Symbol

FISH

The first letters in the Greek phrase "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior" spell ICHTHUS, or fish. Early Christians used the sign to convey their faith and avoid persecution. In the gospels, fish are part of several miracles. They also represent people who need to be "caught" for Christ. Today, a fish bumper sticker is a popular indicator of Christian faith





Food Pantry Sunday July 17

Five Loaves Food Pantry at The Church at Allentown

Family Promise Mission Friday, July 29

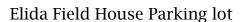
Help by providing food for families staying at Family Promise site on Gloria Avenue

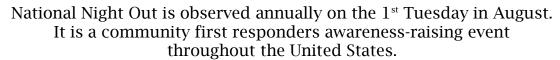
A signup sheet and information is be available at the media desk





National Night Out August 2, 2022 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM





St. Paul's, once again, will have a booth. Volunteers are needed.



ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS!

(ESPECIALLY METHODIST COOKS)





MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR SUNDAY, AUGUST 14TH!!

By now, I'm sure all of you have heard that **Marty, Kathy,** & AJ White will be leaving us soon and moving to Twinsburg, Ohio to be closer to their other sons. What you may not know, however, is that they are the ones who decorate our St. Paul's altar every single Sunday. We are not only going to miss them, but we are going to miss their talents and dedication as well. We would like to show them our love and support by having a Carry-In lunch after church on Sunday, August 14th. Drinks & table service will be provided. We have lots of wonderful cooks at St. Paul's – after all, we ARE Methodists! So bring your creations to share as we give the White's the send-off they deserve.

Annual Conference Summary

The 53rd Session of this year's annual conference was once again a virtual gathering of about 1600 clergy and lay members. Bishop Gregory Palmer presided over the conference with the theme, Becoming, rooted in the scripture 1 John 3:2. The theme focused on becoming more like Jesus, becoming a community, and becoming Spirit-filled.

Legislation consisted of eight recommendations. The following passed:

- 1. Changes to Structure, Procedure, and Rules------Annual Conference Rules and Policies.
- 2. Budget
- 3. Board of Pensions and Health
- 4. Equitable Compensation—The 2023 minimum salaries will increase 3%.
- 5. Number of Districts in the West Ohio Conference—Reduced to 6 beginning July 1, 2023.
- 6. Support for an Amicable Separation for Local Churches and Annual Conferences.

Recommendation #7 failed. This was a Call to West Ohio Conference to Recognize and Validate Persons' Calls to Ordination Without Prejudice Toward Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity. This recommendation was tabled last year.

Recommendation #8 was deemed out of order. This recommendation encouraged the use of paragraph 2548.2 for churches choosing to disaffiliate instead of the previous paragraph 2553 which became effective at the close of the 2019 General Conference. Bishop Palmer affirmed a request for a decision of law on the content of this recommendation. His ruling will be made available within 30 days and will be automatically reviewed by the Judicial Council.

Other annual conference business included an update on the Boy Scouts of America litigation and acknowledging the church's role in the harm some scouts experienced. The conference also voted on the closing of 8 churches, of which two were located in the Northwest Plains District.

It was reported that West Ohioans have contributed \$250,000 for humanitarian efforts in Ukraine. Congregations and individuals have given nearly \$7.5 million to the Light the Way Campaign which has helped establish 18 new faith communities and given financial support to over 40 existing congregations.

The conference affirmed the recommendation of the General and Jurisdictional Conference delegations' support of the Rev. Dr. Todd Anderson as an Episcopal candidate. (for a position of a bishop)

The conference celebrated the ordination of 12 elders and 4 deacons and commissioned 5 provisional elders and 3 provisional deacons. Fifty-four clergy retired. The 2023 West Ohio Annual Conference will be held June 1-4 at Otterbein University in Westerville, Ohio.

If you wish further explanation or clarification for anything in this summary please contact Linda Craft, lay delegate. If you feel you would like to look at the Book of Reports, go to https://www.westohioumc.org/ac2022 or let me know and I will lend you my copy. I did not include all of the agenda in this summary.



Brad Joseph

Bradley William Joseph December 27, 1976— September 17, 2007

I remember exactly what I was doing and where I was when I heard Brad Joseph had been killed in a car accident. Some people and events have that impact on one's life. Brad was that kind of person.

Fortunately, I also have many more memories of Brad Joseph than the end of his earthly life and they are memories filled with joy.

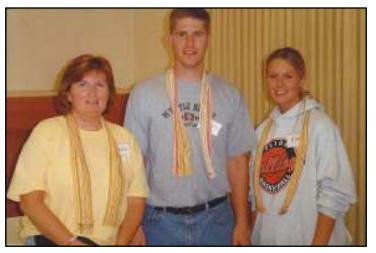
Brad was a beginning ONU college pharmacy major when he reconnected with a former teacher who happened to be a member of our congregation. Brad had some difficult years and this teacher helped him find joy and love and acceptance by Christ. Brad lived that joy within our church and the world. He started singing in the choir. He assisted his mentor as a youth leader, eventually taking over the youth group as his own faith grew. He took youth and adults water and snow skiing, to concerts, to Lakeside Institute, and on mission trips in West Virginia and Virginia. He guided both the youth and the adults to see how Christ could use them. When he graduated from ONU he started going on several yearly mission trips to Neuvo Progreso on the Mexico/Texas border. People from other congregations around Northwest Ohio who also went to Neuvo Progreso commented on how Brad could lighten the mood and make them laugh even after the most difficult days. His smile was contagious.

Brad's life ended much too early but those who knew and loved him continued sharing his faith and commitment to those in need. With the establishment of The Brad Joseph Memorial Fund, numerous students from Northwest Ohio have received scholarships to go on medical missions around the world. A "campership" fund for children and adults has been established here at St. Paul's to encourage us all to grow and mentor each other in our faith. Adults or children may apply for this scholarship through the Mission Team.

Many of you will not remember Brad Joseph, but I encourage you to contribute your time and money to The Brad Joseph Memorial Golf Tournament, and to live the life of Christian service that he lived, and to grow your own faith.

I hope you find and give the same joy he shared with us.







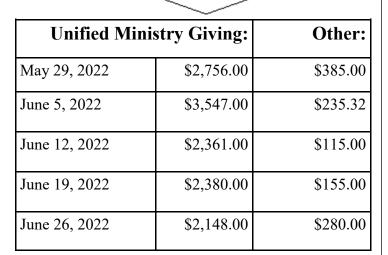
Faith In Action

Worship Attendance:

May 29, 2022	67
June 5, 2022	57
June 12, 2022	56
June 19, 2022	64
June 26, 2022	66

Financial Giving

Weekly Need for Unified Ministry Budget \$3,879.00



Sunday School Attendance May 29, 2022 4 June 5, 2022 6 June 12, 2022 8 June 19, 2022 8 June 26, 2022 3

Flower Calendar July 3, 2022 Jon & Chelsey Cook July 10, 2022 Larry & Shirley Moser July 17, 2022 Tim & Corinne Piper July 24, 2022 Lois Cook July 31, 2022 Jan & Jamie Wyant

Hospitality Center News

We are once again organizing to provide light treats for Sunday morning at our Hospitality Center. This summer, we initially have four volunteers to take turns one week per month. Judy Chaffins, Linda Holman, Corinne Piper, and Jan Wyant have each offered to provide treats and juice from June through September.

We plan on keeping the treats easy and simple. Store bought, but fun goodies, will be out on the table each week along with a bottle of juice of some kind. Food labels will be there in case you have dietary needs and need to check the ingredients.

Larry Moser has volunteered to make the coffee and we are adding a Keurig maker so if you prefer tea, hot chocolate, or other flavors of hot drink, you can quickly make a cup.

Please prayerfully consider how you might volunteer to help beginning in October and beyond. Many hands make light work. The goal is light refreshment and fellowship, not an elaborate spread. Thank you for your consideration in advance and come join us each Sunday.

Daily Bible Readings

Friday 7/1

Psalm 40, 51, 54

Ecclesiastes 5:1-7

Galatians 3:15-22

Matthew 14:22-36

Saturday 7/2

Psalm 55, 138, 139

Ecclesiastes 5:8-20

Galatians 3:23-4:11

Matthew 15:1-20

Sunday 7/3

Psalm 8, 24, 29, 84

Ecclesiastes 6:1-12

Acts 10:9-23, Luke 12:32-40

Monday 7/4

Psalm 56, 57, 64, 65

Ecclesiastes 7:1-14

Galatians 4:12-20

Matthew 15:21-28

Tuesday 7/5

Psalm 61, 62, 68

Ecclesiastes 8:14-9:10

Galatians 4:21-31

Matthew 15:29-39

Wednesday 7/6

Psalm 72, 119:73-96

Ecclesiastes 9:11-18

Galatians 5:1-15, Matthew 16:1-12

Thursday 7/7

Psalm 70, 71, 74

Ecclesiastes 11:1-8

Galatians 5:16-24

Matthew 16:13-20

Watthew 10:15 2

Friday 7/8

Psalm 69, 73

Ecclesiastes 11:9-12:14

Galatians 5:25-6:10

Matthew 16:21-28

Saturday 7/9

Psalm 23, 27, 75, 76

Numbers 3:1-13

Galatians 6:11-18

Matthew 17:1-13

Sunday 7/10

Psalm 34, 93, 96

Numbers 6:22-27

Acts 13:1-12, Luke 12:41-48

Monday 7/11

Psalm 77, 79, 80

Numbers 9:15-10:36

Romans 1:1-15, Matthew 17:14-21

Tuesday 7/12

Psalm 78, Numbers 11:1-23

Romans 1:16-25

Matthew 17:22-27

Wednesday 7/13

Psalm 81, 82, 119:97-120

Numbers 11:24-35

Romans 1:28-2:11

Matthew 18:1-9

Thursday 7/14

Psalm 83, 85, 86, Numbers 12:1-16

Romans 2:12-24

Matthew 18:10-20

Friday 7/15

Psalm 88, 91, 92

Numbers 13:1-30

Romans 2:25-3:8

Matthew 18:21-35

Saturday 7/16

Psalm 87, 90, 136

Numbers 13:31-14:25

Romans 3:9-20. Matthew 19:1-12

Sunday 7/17

Psalm 19, 46, 66, 67

Numbers 4:26-45

Acts 15:1-12, Luke 12:49-56

Monday 7/18

Psalm 89, Numbers 16:1-19

Romans 3:21-31

Matthew 19:13-22

Tuesday 7/19

Psalm 94, 97, 99

Numbers 16:20-35

Romans 4:1-12, Matthew 19:23-30

Wednesday 7/20

Psalm 101, 109:1-30, 119:121-144

Numbers 16:36-50

Romans 4:13-25, Matthew 20:1-16

Thursday 7/21

Psalm 105, Numbers 17:1-11

Romans 5:1-11

Matthew 20:17-28

Friday 7/22

Psalm 102, 107:1-32

Numbers 20:1-13

Romans 5:12-21

Matthew 20:29-34

Saturday 7/23

Psalm 33, 107:33-43, 108

Numbers 20:14-29

Romans 6:1-11, Matthew 21:1-11

Sunday 7/24

Psalm 118, 145, Numbers 21:4-35

Acts 17:12-34, Luke 13:10-17

Monday 7/25

Psalm 106, Numbers 22:1-21

Romans 6:12-23

Matthew 21:12-22

Tuesday 7/26

Psalm 121, 122, 123, 124, 125,

126, Numbers 22:21-38

Romans 7:1-12

Matthew 21:23-32

Wednesday 7/27

Psalm 119:145-176, 128, 129, 130

Numbers 22:41-23:12

Romans 7:13-25

Matthew 21:33-46

Thursday 7/28

Psalm 131, 132, 134, 135

Numbers 23:11-26

Romans 8:1-11, Matthew 22:1-14

Friday 7/29

Psalm 140, 141, 142, 143

Numbers 24:1-13

Romans 8:12-17

Matthew 22:15-22

Saturday 7/30

Psalm 104, 137, 144

Numbers 24:12-25

Romans 8:18-25

Matthew 22:23-40

Sunday 7/31

Psalm 111, 112, 113, 146, 147

Numbers 27:12-23

Acts 19:11-20, Mark 1:14-20

Prayer

Praying in Color: Mandalas

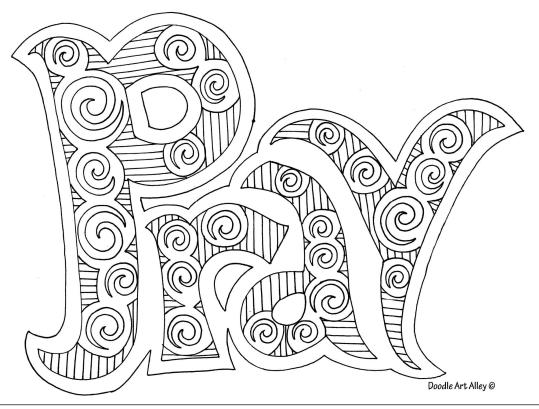
By Corinne Piper

Last month I wrote about <u>Praying in Color, Drawing a New Path to God</u> by Sybil MacBeth in which I stay focused on my prayer by doodling words and names making a picture reminding me of my thoughts throughout the day.

This month is about coloring during prayer but using a "mandala" or other picture as the focal point. Adult coloring books abound! There is one available for any topic that will keep your interest. The theory is that moving your hand while you color, choosing the colors to use, and viewing the finished picture, relax you. You are forced to only concentrate on what you are doing, rather than on all your rampaging thoughts. Hmmm—sounds like what we are trying to do when we pray.

Mandalas and other repetitive designs allow you to keep your body and mind busy, yet open, while you simply fill in the spaces. Pick a person or situation and focus on that topic while you choose your colors, while coloring, and listen to the silence. If you have prayed for a particular person, send the picture and your thoughts to that person. If you colored while listening to music or Bible texts, keep it in your Bible. If you have been praying for a situation, can also put the picture up where you see it and say an additional prayer each time it comes to mind.

I hope you are able to release your concerns and listen to God while you pray in color.



Hymn History

Blessed Assurance

"Then Sings My Soul", By Robert J. Morgan

1873

... Nevertheless I am not Ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that day. 2 Timothy 1:12

Frances Ridley Havergal and Frances (Fanny) Crosby never met, but they became dear pen pals—the two most famous hymnists of their age, the former in England and the latter in America. Havergal once wrote a poem about her American counterpart:

Sweet, blind singer over the sea, / Tuneful and jubilant! How can it be, /
That the songs of gladness, which float so far, / as if they fell from the evening star /
Are the notes of one who may never see / 'Visible Music' of flower and tree . . . /
Oh, her heart can see, her heart can see! / And its sight is strong and swift and free. . .

Another of Fanny's dearest friends was Phoebe Knapp. While Fanny lived in the Manhattan slums and worked in rescue missions, Phoebe lived in the Knapp Mansion, a palatial residence in Brooklyn, where she entertained lavishly. She was an extravagant dresser with a wardrobe full of elaborate gowns and diamond tiaras. Her music room contained one of the finest collections of instruments in the country, and fanny was a frequent houseguest.

One day in 1873, while Fanny was staying at the Knapp mansion, Phoebe said she had a tune she wanted to play. Going to the music room, she sat at the piano and played a new composition of her own while the blind hymnist listened. Fanny immediately clapped her hands and exclaimed, "Why, that says, "Blessed Assurance!" She quickly composed the words, and a great hymn was born.

Many years later, D. L. Moody was preaching in New York at the 23rd Street Dutch Reformed Church. The Moody/Sankey meetings had popularized Fanny Crosby's hymns around the world and had made the blind poetess a household name. But whenever she attended a Moody/Sankey meeting, she refused to be recognized, disavowing acclaim.

This day the church was so crowded she could find no where to sit. Moody's son, Will, seeing her, offered to find her a seat. To her bewilderment, he led her onto the platform just as the crowd was singing "Blessed Assurance." Moody, Sr., jumped to his feet, raised hand, and interrupted the singing. "Praise the Lord!" he shouted. "Here comes the authoress!"

Fanny took her seat amid thunderous ovation, humbly thanking God for making her a blessing to so many.



Crafty Creatures

On June 13th, the Crafty Creatures delivered 21 crocheted Octopi to the local hospitals. Lima Memorial Hospital received 11, and St. Rita's Medical Center received 10. Each little Octopus will be given to a baby in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. The baby can hold on to the tentacles of the octopi instead of pulling on their tubes and wires. The tentacles have a similar feel to the umbilical cord and helps to soothe and comfort the small premature babies.

0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0



The Crafty Creatures would like to send a **Big Thank You** to the many people that have donated items to our group. We have received donations of material and batting for the quilts and prayer squares that we make. We have received lots and lots of yarn for the prayer blankets, hats, mittens, scarves, and the baby Octopi. Because of COVID we have not had our Cookie and Treats Walk to raise money for our group, so the donations of these supplies has been a real blessing. You have helped us to bless so many people and to share God's love as they received a quilt, a shawl, hat etc... Again, Thank You, to everyone that has helped our group through your donations, Love and Prayers.





The Ministry of Quilting and of Mending Hearts

To sew is to pray. ... We mend ... turn things inside out and set things right. We salvage what we can of human garments and piece the rest into blankets. Sometimes our stitches stutter and slow. ... Other times the tension in the stitches might be too tight because of tears, but only we know what emotion went into the making.

—Louise Erdrich, Four Souls

Connecting With ...

CONGRATULATIONS!



May 29, Graduates Recognition Jane Wyant, introducing Brittany Scannell, High School Graduate David Scannell College Graduate







Pentecost Sunday June 5



Sunday, June 26 Blessing Quilts and Fleece Blankets



The People of St. Paul's

St. Paul's UMC. Thank you so much for the graduation card and gift! I really appreciate all the love and support!

> God Bless. **Austin Cark**

Hi St. Paul's Friends. Thank you for the vase of flowers after my hospital stay. They brightened my day.

Nancy Gesler



Recovering from Surgery or in the Hospital

Those in Need of Healing, Support, Strength & Encouragement

Carl Miller

In the Military & Missions

Nathan Stewart



St. Paul's Family,

Just wanted to say thank you for the flowers you sent me at the hospital when I first got ill in December! Also, for all the cards I've received, the phone calls and texts that have been sent! It all means SO much!!

Hopefully, I'm seeing light at the end of a long tunnel. I had appointments in Columbus a few weeks ago with 4 specialists, and all approved my open heart surgery, except for one. He wants guarantees from the Oral Surgeon that all infection is out of my system, and from the Gastroenterologist that there is no more internal bleeding anywhere. The plan is for a double by-pass and to replace two damaged valves.

Thank you so much for all your prayers and concerns!! Carl Miller

Our Biblical Purpose Statement: Elida St. Paul's United Methodist Church exists as God's people embracing His grace through humble service to all.

St. Paul's Vision Statement: Is for the Elida community to be led to Christ through words and deeds enabling youth to have purpose, families to be nurtured and supported, and senior citizens To feel valued.

Meetings

No PPR

July 5, 2022 **Trustees...7:00 PM**

No Worship Mtg

No Ad Council/Finance

JULY 2022

Tue Wed Thu Mon Sun Fri Sat

TBA Missions Mtg.							
Sundays Prayer9:30 AM Worship10:00 AM						1 Anika Bok Lucy Chaffins	2
July						Jenni Jankovsky Jean Thomas	
ANNIVERSARIES	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Doug & Ginger Fox July 6; 40 yrs.							
Mitchell & Kathy Furry July 8; 44 yrs.							
Travis & Julia Bok July 17	10 Don Holmes	11 Emma white	12	13	14 Gloria Brunk	15	16 Kim Crates
Tim L Corinne Piper July 17; 46 yrs.					Brady Emmons Jackson Lane Hayden McKee		
Bill & Marlene Weaver July 18; 71 yrs.					Drew White		
Tim A. Sue Theodore July 20 Denny A. Carole Grapner	17	18 Madeline Kuenzli Zachary Loose	19 Macy Chambers	20	21 Savannah Emmons	22 Travis Bok Carole Grapner	23
July 26; 59 yrs.							
Bill & Joyce Nichols July 27; 76 yrs.	24	25 Ian House	26	27 Ella Motzer	28 Katie White	29 Sharla	30 Jonathan
	31 Jan Wyant			Gretchen Woeller	Juniper Jankovsky	Murphy	Perry Ethan Thomas

Featured Recipes from St. Paul's Great Cooks

Sandy's Peanut Butter Dip				
		By Carole Grapner		
Ingredi	ents	Instructions		
2 cups	Peanut butter, creamy	Mix together.		
2 cups	Brown Sugar, firmly packed	Serve with honey wheat pretzels, fruit, graham crackers. Refrigerate or just cover.		
1 cup	Water	Tromingulate of Just Co vol.		
1 cup	Marshmallow fluff			
1 tsp.	Maple syrup, real			

Chocol	ate Eclair Dessert	
		By Mary Irvin
Ingredient	ts	Instructions
1 box	Graham Crackers	Line bottom of 9x13 pan with graham crackers.
2 (3 oz.) pkgs. 1/2 cup	French Vanilla Pudding, instant Chocolate chips, mini	In a large bowl combine pudding mix and milk; stir well. Mix whipped topping and mini chocolate chips into pudding mixture.
_	1	Spread half of mixture over graham cracker layer.
3 cups	Milk	Top with another layer of graham crackers and the
1 (8oz.)	Whipped topping, thawed	remaining pudding mixture.
1 (16 oz.)	Chocolate frosting,	Top all with final layer of graham crackers and frost with chocolate frosting.
1/4 cup	Butterfinger candy, chopped	Frosting: Place in microwave for about 25 seconds. Stir, then pour over top layer of graham crackers. Spread evenly, then sprinkle with chopped butterfingers.
		Refrigerate at least 2 hours before serving to allow the graham crackers to soften.

KIDZ KORNER

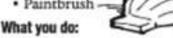
Make a scene with this fun summe craft you can create outdoors.



Play sand

うくくくくく

- Spoons
- · Empty jars
- · Powdered tempera paint
- Cardstock paper and pencil
- · Craft glue
- Paintbrush —



- 1. Pour a few tablespoons of sand into empty jars. (You need one jar for every color of paint you make.)
- 2. Add a small amount of powdered paint to the sand and then mix. Experiment with the amount, using more paint to create deeper colors.
- 3. Lightly sketch a design on cardstock.
- 4. Working in one small section at a time, paint an even layer of craft glue on the paper.
- Use a spoon to sprinkle colored sand atop the glue. Tilt the paper so extra sand falls off. Repeat to complete the entire design.
- 6. Let dry on a flat surface before displaying upright.

Solve this cryptogram puzzle, using the clues R=I and M=T, to complete Psalm 111:10, NIV.

 \overline{Z} \overline{C} \overline{M} \overline{Y} \overline{L} $\frac{C}{C}$ $\frac{1}{C}$ $\frac{0}{C}$ P Z Q N RV

 \overline{Z} \overline{C} HIDBFFBFD

> \overline{C} \overline{Z} \overline{P} \overline{P} \overline{Z} \overline{G} G Y 7

BOLTLBMV

 \overline{Y} \overline{O} \overline{K} \overline{L} \overline{D} \overline{Z} \overline{Z} \overline{N}

J F N I Q V M O F N B F D

YRU HLPZFDV

I M I 0 F 0 P \overline{B} \overline{Q} \overline{O} \overline{R} \overline{V} \overline{L}

PSALM 111:10, NIV

eternal praise. Psalm 111:10, NIV tollow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs Answer: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

105 E. Main St. Elida, OH 45807

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Our Web Address: www.elidastpaulschurch.org

Our Facebook page Elida St. Paul's Church

Twitter Account @ESPCHURCH



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Living Our Faith

Oxygen For Ministry

Flight attendants instruct airplane passengers that if oxygen masks are needed, we should secure our own before assisting someone else. Why? If we aren't getting enough oxygen ourselves, we can't help another person for long.

The Holy Spirit empowers Christians for ministry — the work of loving and caring for our neighbors and God's creation. But if we aren't Spirit-fueled on an ongoing basis, we will soon lack capacity to serve. This may manifest as burnout, cynicism, exhaustion or even lack of faith. So how to ensure we're breathing in the Spirit's energy and guidance instead of poor-quality "air"?

By taking part in corporate worship regularly, immersing ourselves in the Scriptures (devotional reading and Bible study), praying "continually" (1 Thessalonians 5:17, NIV) and spending time with Christian friends and mentors. Opening ourselves to the Spirit in these ways allows the Breath of God to flow into us, which in turn empowers us to reach out to others in love.

—Heidi Hyland Mann