



It doesn't seem possible but 2019 is quickly ending and soon we will be in a new decade. All of 2019's bills will have to be paid before December 31 as a new year's budget takes over on January 1st.

We continue to pray that our giving will catch up with our costs of keeping St. Paul's open for this year. But, our financial leadership has also been looking forward working on our new budget. A good financial plan creates a budget knowing what income to expect during the budget year. We all want to finish in the plus figures.

As we have looked at other churches and realized that we live in changing times it became clear that more people are paying their bills and giving to their churches through automatic payments.

So, in the next few days you will be receiving a "pledge card" in the mail asking you to commit to supporting St. Paul's ministries each month with a consistent offering gift back to God through our church. Most families start the year planning on giving a specific amount to church and automatic payments allow the church to know that the money we need to operate is going to come in.

As this 21st century church rooted in the tradition of more than 150 years of serving God moves forward we need to change with the times to survive financially. We are hoping that most of you will find this is an easy way of supporting the church. The letter that will be included with the "pledge card" will provide more information.

If you have questions see Pastor Dave.



During the ADVENT SEASON, Pastor Dave's sermon series is entitled "UNWRAPPING THE GLORY of CHRISTMAS." Last week we paused to remember GOOD FRIDAY just a few days after Black Friday. Today, the lessons from the Gospel took us to Mary's call to become the mother of our Savior.

Although the Scripture reading stopped at verse 38 of Luke 1, a few verses later is one of the most famous parts of Scripture, 'Mary's Song.' Luke obviously spoke with Mary as he wrote the Gospel to discover her reaction to being called by God. Luke carefully wrote what she told him: *"With all my heart I will glorify the Lord! In the depths of who I am, I rejoice in God my savior! He has looked with favor on the low status of His servant."* And, it continues.

1. **Mary was called by God as a teenager to become the mother of Jesus. What is the earliest age that you can recall sensing God wanting you to do something for God as part of your faith walk?**
 - a. **Did you take the action you thought God wanted you to do? If no, why not?**
2. **In our Old Testament reading we heard how Elisha refused to leave Elijah no matter how many times Elijah tried to tell him to stay back. Elisha wanted to get twice "Elijah's spirit." Has there been a person/leader in your life who you wished you could have twice their spirit? What was it that made him/her special to you? Do you think there is anyone who wished they could have twice the spirit of your faith?**