



ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
 400 North Market Street , Selinsgrove, PA 17870

THE MESSENGER

God is still speaking,

April 2020

"Never place a period where God has placed a comma." - Gracie Allen

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How to Be the Church During the CoVid-19 Epidemic

"For such a time as this!" - When Queen Esther faced the greatest challenge of her life, to protect God's people, her community of faith, she gets God's clear message, you were born for such a time as this; you are called for such a time as this! We, my friends, are called to **be the church for such a time as this!**

What are you made of? What are we made of? Facing reality, the current situation with its serious dangers, anxiety, and fear, has the potential to bring out the best in us. It will reveal what we are made of as people of God, as people of faith, as the church.

How to Be the Church? This scary situation does not keep us from being the church. We are actually called to be the church, to be the church at its best! Here are some ideas and suggestions how I think we can rise to the challenge and be the church at its best. It will take imagination, creativity, good will, commitment, financial giving to make things possible. I am asking for your support and for your commitment to help us be the church at its best!

You are the church! "I am the church, you are the church, we are the church together..." You remember the song. It means the church is not the building. The people are the church. You are the church. Wherever you are, you are representing the church.

You are a person of faith! - Jesus' core message is, "Do not be afraid!" It's the core message of the whole Bible. "Don't worry" and "Do not be afraid" appear 365 times in the Bible, one for every day. The positive side of, "Do not worry" and "Do not be afraid" is, trust God, live by faith, surrender to God in a positive way. Think of the Serenity Prayer, think of AA--we grow in faith when we trust God with all we've got. We are people of faith in relationship with Jesus. As someone said, "It does not matter as much **who** you are, as **whose** you are. "To me this means, we are God's, we are not on our own. Our relationship with Jesus is crucial. We trust Jesus' promise, "I will be with you always." It's who God is. It's who Jesus is. Emmanuel means, "God with us!"

We Call and Care! With the call for caution and physical distancing, many people, especially older adults are at a great risk of isolation. As people of faith we have a special responsibility for those who are at risk and confined to their homes. I need your help, the help of the great people of St. Paul's to call people. We will pair up persons who are at risk with those willing and able to make phone calls (think of it as the phone tree from years ago). For some, calling comes more easily; for others, it may be challenging. Remember, growing happens at the edge, when you are getting to the edge of your comfort zone. All those willing and able to call on fellow members and friends, please contact the church office and you will receive a name and phone number.

We worship online. We continue to worship on Sunday mornings at 10:30 AM and we added an additional brief worship service on Wednesdays at 7 PM. I encourage you to join us for these services online, via live-stream on St. Paul's Facebook page. If you are not able to participate online, you may be able to watch the sermon through our website when someone who has a smartphone or tablet can show it to you or play it to you over the phone.

“How to Be the Church” Continued

We continue to provide food for those who need it most through our Loaves and Fishes ministry - Local families in need depend on our food outreach ministry. I think it is vital to continue providing them with food, during our regularly scheduled monthly distribution days and times, the next ones being March 27th and April 24th. We are exploring how we can do that in as safe a way as possible. Instead of serving from the fellowship hall, we are planning for a curbside pickup/drive-up service. Clients can drive up, remain safely in their cars while volunteers place the bags of food into the clients' trunks, refraining from touching each other. We need many healthy volunteers (people who are not at risk and who are not directly connected with family members who are at risk). All volunteers will receive specific instructions on how to be safe and secure while helping. Many of the Loaves and Fishes clients are persons at risk. We will do everything we can to protect them and ourselves.

Church Communication and Monthly Newsletter - We will continue to create our monthly “The Messenger” newsletter. Those who do not receive electronic communication, rely on the print version of our monthly newsletter to receive the Good News, the messages of faith, hope, and love from St. Paul's. For those who receive electronic communication, those who have an email address, we will email you the electronic version of our monthly newsletter. If you have email but still want to receive the print version of our newsletter, please request it by contacting our church office.

We need financial gifts and online contributions - In order to be the best church we can, we need your and other people's contributions to continue. Church Council, our church's leadership encourages you, all members and friends of the congregation to give online via our new Breeze giving software. Online giving is the church's preferred way of receiving donations. It is easy to set up and secure. Go to St. Paul's website, www.saintpauls-ucc.org/give and click on “Give.” Also, if you are not connected electronically, Jevan Beaver can help you setup online giving. He can do it over the phone. All it takes is the account and routing numbers from your check. You can also give by credit card in the same way via our website or over the phone. Be assured that NONE of your account or credit card information will be stored at St. Paul's. It is encoded, safe and secure with the financial transaction company, Stripe. I can vouch for that. Giving by text from your phone is also an option for one-time giving. Text the word, “give” to [\(570\) 258-8158](tel:5702588158). It will ask you in a reply message, “how much would you like to give?” and you proceed from there.

My friends, we live in interesting times, in dangerous and scary times! I ask you to join me in rising to the challenge by trusting God, in living by faith, by praying, by joining us in worship online, by caring and calling on our fellow members and friends, and by being giving people. You and I are called to be the church for such a time as this.

Please email me or the church office, call or text me or the church office with any questions, suggestions, or concerns. You can always reach me at dietmar@saintpauls-ucc.org and (570) 541-0121. We are together in this. I am confident that we will rise to the challenge as people of faith, and thrive as people of God.

Thank you for your partnership in ministry!

The peace of Christ be with you!
Pastor Dietmar



From now on, our Sunday morning worship services will be live-streamed from our sanctuary. Please join us for worship via our Facebook page.

Special Worship Services in April

In order to keep all members and friends of St. Paul's safe and in order to prevent the spread of the corona virus, we will worship via live-streaming on St. Paul's Facebook page. Please spread the word and join us together with your family and friends in live worship for the following extra special occasions.

We added a Wednesday evening 7:00 PM worship service to our program. Why? During times of uncertainty we need the assurance that God is with us. We are

looking toward the scriptures to gain insight and comfort. We look for God to guide us through these challenging times. If you do not have the capability to join us online, maybe someone from your close family or a friend can help you participate through their electronic device. You can access the sermons/messages through our church's website. If you cannot do that, someone you know can play the message for you over the phone.

Please keep your heart open to God

and be receptive for God's Good News especially during this season.

Palm Sunday Worship - April 5 at 10:30 AM

Maundy Thursday Worship - April 9 at 7:00 PM

Good Friday Worship - April 10, 12 Noon

Easter Sunrise Worship, April 12 at 6:30 AM

Easter Celebration Worship, April 12 at 10:30 AM

Sophia provides special music during worship on March 8, accompanied by her mother, Jaime Namminga.



Jane sings a solo with the Joyful Noise Choir.

Rev. Darin Namminga leads worship on Sunday, March 8.



Youth Ministry News



To prevent the coronavirus from spreading, the children do NOT meet in person for Kids' Group for the time being. Youth Leader, Stacy Heinemann, provides parents and children opportunities for meaningful and faith-based activities electronically.

I am thrilled to let you know that our **Kids' Group for All** on Wednesdays continues to be fun for all! Every week we welcome a new friend, continue to get to know each other better, and learn

the lessons from the life of Jesus. We have been focusing on ways we can show respect, exercise good judgment and express love to all.

The kids brainstormed ways to show random acts of kindness, the value of good deeds, and worked out ways to show the community love. Don't be surprised if you find a beautifully painted rock hidden within the community! We painted a bunch of kindness rocks the kids have hidden around town! If you find one, be sure to post your find on Facebook with a #saintpaulsrocks hashtag! To follow along with all the fun we are having, be sure to check out our **St. Paul's Kids' Group for All** Facebook page.

If you would like to contribute to the kids, we are always grateful for donations of healthy snacks (fruits,

veggies, granola bars, goldfish crackers, pretzels, all-natural fruit juices). As always, many thanks to all who support our group by helping, inquiring, and participating!

As with all of the programs at St. Paul's, we need the support of our parents, family members and fellow congregants to keep the youth ministry going. If you have any questions or would like to become a Youth Ministry volunteer, please feel free to contact me at youth@saintpauls-ucc.org. It is because of the support of our church family that we continue to bring meaningful experiences to the youth of our community through the efforts of the Youth Ministry programs.

Stacy Heinemann
Youth Leader

Teen Group Update

The **Teen Group** had a wonderful experience at the Manor at Penn Village celebrating the March birthdays! We led games of bingo, roulette and blackjack at their Casino Night. It was wonderful to see the different generations interact and for us to get to know the residents better. There was laughter, fun and it was a truly joyous experience for

everyone involved.

We had another Teen Group meeting on Sunday, March 15th after worship service. We continued to discuss and schedule team events and service projects. We discussed our next service project, the spare change challenge, and other projects the Teens would like to do.

Be sure to visit our **St. Paul's Teen Group** Facebook page for all the lat-

est updates on what's happening and other interesting information. Many thanks to all who have come together to move this group forward. I continue to be excited as we get more events and projects scheduled for the teens!

Stacy Heinemann
Youth Leader

Hartman Center Summer Camp

The Hartman Center is already accepting applications for summer camp. If you are looking for something fun for your kids to do this summer, please check out their website (www.hartmancenter.com/summer-camp/) or Facebook page (facebook.com/hartmancentercamp/) for more information.

They have a wonderful variety of themed weeks you can choose from for all ages. I have program brochures available if you would like to see one.



Church Camp

The Hartman Center also offers adult seminars and events throughout the spring. I encourage you to explore what they have going on!

Stacy Heinemann
Youth Leader

Council Summary - March 10, 2020

In Attendance: John Fischer, Joanne Lauer, Carolyn Fairl, Pastor Dietmar, Jack Lewis, Stacy Heinemann, Ellen Miller, Richard Campbell, Donna Long, Susan Bolig.

Excused: Raven Rudnitsky, Lisa Krex, Ivana Lluveras, Peggy Peeler, Bev Heinemann, Marty Blessing, Robert Engel.

Minutes of Previous Meeting: The minutes from February 11th and the treasurer's report were approved.

Pastor's Report: Dietmar said Messy Church, Children's Choir, Sunday School, Youth Group are bringing people into the church. We have a new website, which will also help to bring in people. People should check out the website - <https://www.saintpauls-ucc.org/>. There is a link to our new church software "Breeze", which will allow you to do online giving.

Unfinished Business:

- Vision for St. Paul's and Long Range Planning - This will be looked at after Easter. There are people who have volunteered to serve on the committee.

- Green Team – Someone is looking at our building and will create a report stating how we can save energy in the building. There will be a workshop, March 29th, after church, with information about shopping locally, lunches, microfiber cloths, and growing things.

- Technology Upgrade - WiFi has been implemented throughout the church. The new internet speed has been installed. We will have two new computers coming for the office. We will be getting a new copier, which is cheaper to lease and will connect with several different devices.

- Visitation Minister - We will need a visitation minister to replace Pastor Penny, who is moving to Virginia. We are looking for a person who is willing to serve for several years.

- Establishing a PFLAG group in Selinsgrove – This project is moving along with the help of Darcy Decker from Shiloh UCC in Danville, who is leading their group.

- Update Membership List – We are going to vet our membership list. Anyone who hasn't been in attendance in two years will get a letter asking them to come back.

New Business:

- A motion was approved to authorize Marv Rudnitsky to represent St. Paul's in relation to the estate of Dianne Sheaffer. Dianne included St. Paul's in her will.

- The UCC Central Association Annual Meeting is Sunday, April 26th, from 2-5 PM at Dreisbach UCC in Lewisburg. We need two delegates to represent St. Paul's.

- Ministry Priorities - We are looking at dividing some office jobs differently, so that priorities of the pastor can be met.

- Paying for New Tables - We need one more table to replace the old, heavy wooden ones for the Social Hall.

Committee Reports:

Youth Group - Teen Group went to Penn Village Nursing Home and helped with Casino Night. There were 7 adults and 5 kids. It was a great experience.

Property and Grounds - Bridal Shop repairs are being looked into.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanne Lauer
Recording Secretary

Wilbur and Cheryl Reddinger received Ashes to God at the Selinsgrove Commons.



"The Three Musketeer" helpers at Loaves and Fishes: Roger Rathfon, Roy Swayze, and Russ Delp help distribute the "Senior Boxes."

Teen Group at The Manor at Penn Village - March 6



Youth Leader, Stacy Heinemann talks to residents at The Manor at Penn Village during the Birthday Party Celebration.



Hailey, Michael & Joseph prepare Bingo to play with the residents at The Manor at Penn Village.



Michael Zettlemyer, Maria Gonzalez, and several teens enjoy snacks during the Birthday Celebration at The Manor at Penn Village.



Birthdays

Nancy Wagner plays Bingo with fellow residents at The Manor at Penn Village.



St. Paul's Activities



Teens and adult helpers play Bingo with residents at The Manor at Penn Village during the Birthday Celebration.



Pat Namet talks with a resident at The Manor at Penn Village during the Birthday Celebration.



Creating Communion place mats at Messy Church are from left: Sarah, Linda, Jack, and Wanda.



Dr. Pat Bruno teaches children first aid at Messy Church.

Below:
Left: Juicing grapes at Messy Church.
Right: Kneading bread at Messy Church.





4/01 Wyatt Beaver
 4/02 Dorothy Deans, Cindy Frymoyer
 4/03 Stevie Marie Benner
 4/05 Ellen Berger
 4/06 Maggie Frymoyer, Henley Kranzel
 4/07 Jane Berger
 4/08 Owen Feiler
 4/09 Dakota Namminga, Jackie Naugle
 4/10 David Lauer, Sr.
 4/11 Meghan Hawk, Joshua Wagner
 4/12 Caroline Newman, Sarah Reed
 4/13 Larissa Gemberling, Charles Klingler,
 Jane Shaffer
 4/14 Jessica Smith
 4/16 Vivian Beaver
 4/17 Don Groner, Sharon Womer
 4/19 Eric Dahlmann, Shannon Hermann, Flo Hummel,
 Joe Williams
 4/21 Emma Herrold, James Smith, Jr.
 4/23 Vi Remaley, Jim Taylor
 4/24 Jason Martello, Jack Riegel, Andrew Womer
 4/25 Lauren Imhoof
 4/27 Justin Dively
 4/28 Robert "Bob" Drumheiser, Barbara Lewis
 4/29 Joe Erdley
 4/30 Brian Derr, Sarah Garbo

4/03 Dorothy & Al Deans
 4/21 Ann & Don Groner
 4/29 Beverly & Steve Sees, Shane & Tiffany
 Spriggle
 4/30 Jody & Sheila Sees

If your birthday or anniversary is in April and is not listed, please call the church office at 570-374-8749.

Thank You Notes

I want to share my deep appreciation to my wonderful faith family for all your calls, concerns, cards and prayers through my recent surgery. All your support carried me through a very successful surgery and excellent healing with outstanding progress!

Abundantly grateful,
 Randy Tanner

Thank you so much to Dietmar and my St. Paul's family for your cards, texts, thoughts, hugs and especially your prayers during this difficult time for my family. The loss of my dad was sad, but your care and concern is such a comfort.

Peggy Doak

Prayer List

Members: Judi Anselmo, Dot & Al Deans, Peggy Doak, Helen Hannah, Jimmy Kauffman, Jackie Naugle, Vi Remaley, Nancy Wagner, Allen Wetzal and family.

Friends: The family of Marie Beard, Rev. Dr. Gary Hackenberg & family, Harry, CJ & Christine Jaegers, Kim, People affected by Corona Virus in whatever way, Lea Strouse, The family of Wayne Wetzal. Special prayers for all those who are serving in the military, leaders of the world, those who are working for peace and understanding, and all the children of the world.

(PRAYER LIST POLICY: For us to honor Prayer Request cards please seek permission from the person you desire prayers for and include your name on the card. Names will be left on for 30 days. If you wish to have someone put back on the Prayer List, another Prayer Request card needs to be filled out. Prayer Request cards are available in the pew pockets, and in the Church Office.)

Wednesday Kids' Group and Messy Church

The Kids' Group enjoy painting their kindness rocks - #saintpaulsrocks and showing them off.



Left: St. Paul's Kids' Group participates with Linda Turner and Pastor Dietmar in the Ashes to Go on Ash Wednesday at the Selingsgrove Commons.



Right: Youth Ministry bulletin board offers gifts for the Lenten season to our congregation.

Right: Jack Lewis, Rick Campbell, and Marty Blessing serve the delicious meal at Messy Church.



Pastor's Report - February 2020

Our St. Paul's Mission is to grow spiritually, to worship God, to serve others, and to welcome all.

It's a delight to see children, adults, and seniors enjoy Messy Church. It is an amazing program where people of all ages engage a Biblical story through crafts, activities, games, and music. On February 9 the focus was on Jesus' message that we ought to build our house of faith on solid rock by doing God's word and not on sand by ignoring God's message. We had 66 persons participate in Messy Church on Feb. 9. I'm deeply grateful for all helpers with planning, crafts, meals, and the kitchen team. Several of the new families who joined St. Paul's in January stated how important Messy Church is to them.

I invested much of my time and energy into planning for our congregation-wide study and worship series for the coming Lenten season, "Sustaining Creation: Planting Seeds of Climate Hope." The climate crisis is real and it is human made; 97% of all scientists agree on this. We focus on, how we can approach this topic from a faith perspective. For me, caring for God's creation, living more sustainably, and preserving our planet for our children and grandchildren is one of the great moral challenges of our time, just like the abolition of slavery, the civil rights movement, and equal rights for women and LGBTQ people were and are.

It's a huge task to update our technology, hardware and software, at St. Paul's. Church Council decided to transition to Breeze, a new church management software. We extended WiFi in our building, upgraded our internet speed, and will purchase new computers. These upgrades will serve us well for years to come. I am deeply grateful to the tech team, Jevan Beaver, Joanne Lauer, Ivana Lluveras, and Sigrid Plajer for exploring what tech upgrades we need to function effectively and efficiently at the best price for St. Paul's. What is still to be accomplished and will be very demand-

ing and time consuming is to update our membership list which we have not done in many years.

How to become "greener" as St. Paul's and how to live more sustainably as individuals, as a congregation, and as a community were the focus of the Hot Topic Presentation by Shane Sanders, St. Paul's Green Team chairperson. Shane provides great leadership for the Green Team and for all of us at St. Paul's. You noticed the regular articles from the Green Team in the bulletin, eNews, and newsletter. We are moving toward becoming a Green Justice Congregation, a UCC designation for congregations who take caring for God's creation seriously and implement specific policies and practices to living more sustainably.

Our Day of Prayer on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 26, was deeply moving and meaningful. Our Worship Team set up three prayer stations in our sanctuary that introduced participants to the topic of creation care. Together with Selinsgrove area colleagues I offered "Ashes to Go" at the Selinsgrove Commons from 9 AM-5 PM with about 55 people stopping by. Many nailed personal concerns, worries, and frustrations to the big wooden cross that was set up in the center of town for the purpose of letting go, of handing over, and of surrendering to God. At our evening Ash Wednesday worship service we had 44 people participate, a big increase from last year.

There is always more work for me as pastor of St. Paul's than I can accomplish. Together with Pastor Parrish Relations, Personnel Committee and Church Council we evaluated our mutual ministries. One of the recommendations is that I will delegate more administrative tasks to our Office Manager, Sue Nentwig, and to church committees in order to prioritize Vision Building, Inclusive-Invitational Ministry, Greening St. Paul's, and Visitation/Caring for church members. The Office Manager will need to be relieved of some of her tasks if she is to take on more work from me. We are exploring how we can best accomplish that.

I participated in several UCC educational events on how we live in covenant as individuals, as congregation, association, conference, national UCC, and globally. As UCC we are a non-

hierarchical church, yet we relate to one another by covenant in mutual listening, sharing, and ministry. "Ministry in an Election Year" was an important workshop our UCC Conference Minister, Rev. Dr. Carrie Call offered.

Together with Raven Rudnitsky I participated in the Installation Worship Service for Rev. DiAnn Baxley at First UCC in Middleburg on February 23. First UCC's pastor, Rev. Alice Rauch, became the pastor of St. John's UCC in Lewisburg.

We mourn the death of Jerry Kissinger who passed away on January 29. I officiated at the memorial service for Jerry Kissinger on February 6. Family and friends gathered for a luncheon with time of fellowship and sharing in our fellowship hall. Thanks to all who made that possible.

I continue to visit people in the hospital and nursing homes, send out the weekly eNews, coordinate St. Paul's ministries with our church staff, edit and write for our "The Messenger" monthly newsletter, send pastor's notes, lead the Selinsgrove Ministerium, participate in the Rejoicing Spirits Ministry, participate in the UCC Central Association Ministerium, coordinate ministries with our church committees, serve on the UCC Penn Central Conference UEK Partnership Team, and meet with colleagues in a clergy support group.

Thank you for your prayers, your witness, your giving, your service, and your faithfulness to God and to our beloved St. Paul's. You are the hands and the heart of Jesus in action!

Pastoral Activities

February 1-29, 2020

Days Worked	23.5
Days off	05.5
Cont. Ed. Days	00
Vacation	00
<u>Holidays</u>	<u>00</u>
Total Days	29

Respectfully submitted,

Dietmar Plajer

Dietmar Plajer,
Pastor and Teacher



Worship Attendance for February & March

February	23	98	
February	26	44	Ash Wednesday
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March	1	99	1st Sunday in Lent
March	8	75	Rev. Darin Namminga
March	15	38	3rd Sunday in Lent
March	22		Online Service
March	29		Online Service

### Future St. Paul's Events

Apr	4	SACC Easter Basket Distribution
Apr	5	Palm Sunday
Apr	9	Maundy Thursday Service - 7:00 pm
Apr	10	Good Friday Service - 12 Noon
Apr	12	Easter Sunrise Service - 6:30 am
Apr	12	Easter Worship - 10:30 am
Apr	24	Loaves & Fishes - 9:00 am - 2:00 pm
Apr	26	Central Assoc. Annual Mtg. - 2:00 pm Dreisbach UCC
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May	3	Music Appreciation Sunday
May	24	Summer Worship Begins - 10:00 am
May	29	Loaves & Fishes - 9:00 am - 2:00 pm
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Jun	12-13	Penn Central UCC Annual Meeting



Assada and Anaia create votives at Messy Church as a reminder that God's light shines.



### Loaves and Fishes

Thank you to everyone who gives of their time to help with Loaves and Fishes. Help is needed with the **next distribution on Friday, April 24** from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Numbers for February 28, 2020:**

Total # of families	79
Total # of children	43
Total # of adults	79
Total # of elderly	61
<b>Total # of persons served</b>	<b>183</b>



### St. Paul's United Church of Christ

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Check it out on our website:  
[www.saintpauls-ucc.org](http://www.saintpauls-ucc.org)

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
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PERMIT NO. 12  
SELINGROVE, PA

### “God is Still Speaking”

Worship - Sundays            10:30 AM  
Worship - Wednesdays    7:00 PM

Change Service Requested

We thank God for...

The Joyful Noise Choir in worship.

