

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

THE MESSENGER

God is still speaking,

February 2020

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

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Messy Church - Sunday, February 9, 4:30 pm



Join us for a fun evening full of crafts, games, activities, celebration, music, and a meal all at no cost to you. We will focus on the Bible story of the man who built his house on a rock. It withstood the rains and the flood. The man who built it on sand saw it collapse. The story reminds us that we have choices about what we say and what we do and thus build a solid foundation or not for our lives. Messy Church is for all ages. Children bring their favorite adult. Come and join the fun!

Hot Topic on Creation Care - Sun., Feb. 23, 9:15 am

The Green Team of St. Paul's will offer a Hot Topic Conversation on Creation Care and Creation Justice in our fellowship hall. The presentation and conversation will help you tune into the "Sustaining Creation" theme and actions of our Lenten Season. Invite a friend and join us as we explore how we can become greener and more sustainable as individuals, as a church, and as a community.



Ash Wednesday Day of Prayer - February 26



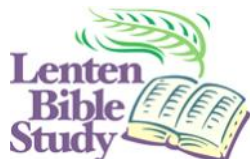
We invite you to stop by at the church and explore in 15 minutes three prayer stations in our sanctuary, which will focus on how we can grow in faith. This year we focus on Jesus' parables on seeds, soils, and sowers. Sign up for a 15 minute segment in between 7:00 AM and 6:00 PM on the bulletin board or by contacting the church office to reserve your spot and to explore through your senses, scriptures, and prayers ways how to grow in faith. We end the day with a worship service in our sanctuary at 7:00 PM.

Ashes to Go - Wed., Feb. 26 at The Commons

Join Pastor Dietmar for an hour in between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM as he and clergy colleagues from our sister churches in Selinsgrove will offer "Ashes to Go" for people in our community at The Commons, at the corner of Market and Pine Streets on Wednesday, Feb. 26. You can be a conversation partner for people who stop by.



"Sustaining Creation" - Lenten Group Study



Join one of our Lenten Study Groups for five weeks this Lent beginning with Ash Wednesday, February 26, and explore in conversation with fellow friends with the "Sustaining Creation" video series how our faith relates to caring for God's creation. You can sign up in the foyer or through the church office for one of the study groups which will be offered on Sundays and during the week and use it as an opportunity to connect, to learn and to grow in faith.

“Sustaining Creation – A Faith Journey for Small Groups”

I invite you personally, you, every member and friend of St. Paul's, to take this coming Lenten Season which begins with Ash Wednesday, Feb. 26, as an opportunity to explore from a faith perspective how God calls you and us as a congregation and community to grow, develop, and move forward in sustaining God's creation.

We will offer study groups on Sundays and during the week to give as many people as possible an opportunity to participate in person in our group conversation. If for whatever reason, you are not able to participate in person in a group, you can watch the video presentations online or from a DVD at home and participate in an online conversation.

Our Sunday Lenten Worship Series will pick up the “Sustaining Creation” theme. This is an additional opportunity for you to immerse yourself in discerning God's call for you. There is power in numbers. Together, we are more powerful and more effective.

This is how Rev. Dr. Terry Gallagher, the author of the series describes the Faith Journey: “As its name indicates, this series is all about journey. The Bible is filled with examples of journeys as the means necessary to transform people from unbelief to belief to action. Ranging from Jacob

to Moses to Jonah to Paul and even to Jesus, journey is the path they each took to wrestle with their doubts/demons/angels and ultimately to discern God's Call to action.



Right now, human civilization is on the brink of the greatest crisis that has ever been experienced. I'm talking about the destruction of the life systems of God's Good Creation and its cause is us, simply by the way our modern society has chosen to live. Here's the difficult truth: the next 10 years are a critical period in which we must change or the survival of billions of people and future generations to simply live is at risk. But this Creation Crisis is such a difficult truth to understand & accept that many of us have, like Jonah (and Paul), chosen to head in the opposite direction of what God is calling us to do. So, consider this an invitation for you to participate in a journey to discern how God would have us live.

Sustaining Creation: Planting Seeds of Climate Hope is a six-session series intended to guide Christians on an extended journey to a new understanding of our Call to live sustainably with all of God's Good Creation. Richly grounded in scripture, this series includes reflections, interviews with Creation Justice faith leaders, taps into the wisdom of noted authors, takes the audience on location to ponder the Climate Crisis and includes discussion time so that together we can seek to discern how God is calling us to respond. Included in the series are participant discussion guides and action steps to living sustainably.

Here is an overview of the six sessions of “Sowing Seeds of Climate Hope:

1. Our Current Reality
2. New Energy
3. Sustainable Lifestyles
4. New Transportation Systems
5. Earth's Life System
6. Summary on Climate Hope

You find more information at: www.sustainingcreation.org.

Thank you for participating in our faith journey towards sustaining God's creation!

Blessings,

Dietmar Plajer

Pastor Dietmar

The Youth Choir sings, “Great Is the Lord” in worship on January 12.



Youth Choir News



Whew! I can't believe the holidays are over! And with the new year we have some change...

Our accompanist, Kaitlyn O'Brien, is studying abroad in Ireland this semester and we will greatly miss her. Once again our amazing Jamie Namminga saved the day and recommended another Susquehanna University student to fill in as interim accompanist while Kaitlyn is away. Olivia Bodner has agreed to join us and we are thrilled. THANK YOU, JAMIE!!! THANK YOU, OLIVIA!!!

As far as our schedule goes, the choir will continue to rehearse together on Wednesdays from 6:15-7:15 pm in the Choir Room. New and/or returning members

are welcome to join us any time! As spring sports, dance, school music, etc. schedules ramp up, we will reevaluate our schedule if need be. Parents - please contact me if/when you see any conflicts arise and we'll do our best to adjust!

And now I need to make a suggestion...if you haven't attended one of the recent concerts at our area schools and churches, please consider attending at least one of the incredible local live music events coming up in the near future. Selinsgrove Area School District has a wonderful music program in place and most, if not all, of the young people in our congregation are participating in it. Beyond the school program, several of our youth are members of the Susquehanna Valley Youth Chorale. Here are the upcoming events I'm aware of at this writing (see you there!):

- March 23 - 5th Grade Band & Chorus Concert - 7 pm - Selinsgrove Middle School auditorium.
- April 3 - High School Band Concert - 7:30 pm - Selinsgrove Middle

School auditorium.

- April 26 - Susquehanna Valley Youth Chorale Concert - 3 pm - Selinsgrove Middle School auditorium.
- May 7 - High School Chorus Concert - 7:30 pm - Selinsgrove Middle School auditorium.
- May 14 - Middle School Band Concert - 7 pm - Selinsgrove Middle School auditorium.
- May 19 - High School Chorus Caberet Concert - 7:30 pm - Selinsgrove Middle School auditorium.

And while I'm at it, there are a few upcoming performances by the remarkable Susquehanna Valley Chorale, too:

- March 21 & 22 - The Times They Are A-Changin' - A Dylan Oratorio - Rusty Rail, Mifflinburg.
- May 8 & 9 - Pops Concert - The music of Queen - Weber Auditorium, Susquehanna University.

Best to you!

Beth Derr

570.809.3732 (call or text)
bweaderderr@verizon.net

Mission of the Month - February 23

Pastors don't just happen. Those who sense a call to ministry embark on a year-long process of discernment, faith formation and seminary training. It is a rigorous process. It takes money to do that. Textbooks, courses and seminars, meals, room and travel make it very expensive to study for ministry. Our "Mission of the Month" in February is to support the education of future UCC pastors through our UCC Central Association's "Church Vocation Fund." Pastor's don't just happen. Thank you for participating in our special "Church Vocation Fund" offering on February 23. You can use the envelope from this newsletter or one from the pews and make sure you designate "Vocation Fund" in the memo line of your check. Thank You!

Thank You Note

Dear Friends,

My dear wife, Sigrid and I are deeply moved and very grateful for your generous Christmas Gift for your Pastor Dietmar and his family. Your kindness and generosity touched our hearts. Thank you for sharing yourself so generously with us. We receive your gift as an expression of your love, your support, and your partnership in ministry. We are grateful to serve together with you, the members and friends of such a caring and kind congregation. We are excited about our ministries during this new year and about all our wonderful God has in store for us.

With deep gratitude,
Dietmar



Children's Sunday School - January 2020 Report

In December, Sunday school was in session on 3 of the 5 Sundays because children remained in worship during the Senior Choir cantata and during the Joyful Noise Choir program. Usual attendance is around 6 children, sometimes more, sometimes less. It is a guessing game for how many children I need to prepare crafts and worksheets, but so far we have managed well. December was fun with making ornaments and Christmas related crafts and learning about the Christmas story from the perspective of Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds.

In January, our focus is on Jesus:

- Jesus is Baptized
- Jesus Brings Good News
- Jesus Calls Levi
- Jesus Sends the Disciples

February will be about leaders of the community:

- Deborah
- David
- The Servant Girl
- Josiah

It is a short and intense time that we spend together in Sunday school with the children, and I am grateful for all the fearless volunteers who come and assist. It is a joy to see the children and to learn with them in Sunday school. Just showing up in church and in Sunday school is the best habit you can form this new

year.

Stacy and I decorated the bulletin board upstairs across from the coat room, and we received positive feedback on that. Appreciation was also expressed by various church members about the coloring clipboards provided for the children on the December Sundays without Sunday school.

Thank you for your support!



Messy Church - January 2020 Report



We sent out invitations for Messy Church in December, and we had a few more children and parents attend that had either never been there or only once.

Messy Church is always good fun, but the Journey to Bethlehem Obstacle Course in December was probably the most loved activity. We try to have one physical activity that does not involve crafting, especially for those kids that want to move a little bit and don't appreciate sitting still all the time. We had far fewer crafts in December than usual because the ones we had were very time intensive. Making the Advent calendar took a good time, and so did making the edible nativity and the button Christmas tree ornament. The families had the

option to take home coloring sheets to make ornaments and a paper nativity and a Christmas wreath with candles.

Messy Church in January was about Jesus separating the people like a shepherd separates sheep and goats. The sheep in our story are the ones who have generous and compassionate hearts for others. Goats are independent and do as they please. Our crafts and activities focused on doing good for others (bird feeder, dog pull toy, donation jar), thinking about which of our actions would make us goats or sheep, making a fun sheep mask, having a blast at playing the sheep/goat separating game, making a delightful snowman LED tea light magnet to let our light shine even in January, making an edible sheep, and a coloring poster that everyone could contribute to by coloring a part of it.

Next month because of the Super Bowl, Messy Church will be on the second Sunday of the month, February 9 at 4:30. February's Messy Church is about how we can show love and service to others in a real and meaningful way. The Bible story

is about the man who built his house on a rock and it could withstand rain and floods. The foolish man who built his house on sand saw his house collapse. The story reminds us that we have choices to make which influence the words we say, the things we do, how we respond to others and how they respond to us. In many ways, our choices form some of the foundations of who we are – like the foundations or lack thereof in the story.

It is a great team effort to get Messy Church organized every month, and I am amazed at how we all work together to make it happen. Thank you to all who come, whether as volunteers or as participants. Try to show up at a Messy Church this year if you haven't been. You will go home with a smile in your heart.

Sigrid Plajer

Youth Ministry News



FROM THE YOUTH DIRECTOR

As the new youth leader, I am really excited about working with the youth and teens of St. Paul's, their friends, family and other congregants in leading them in service within our community and assisting in their spiritual development.

Our Kids' Group continues to grow and evolve with new faces participating in our lessons, games and crafts. Each Wednes-

day we are here for kids in grades K-6 to come directly after school for a healthy snack, and lively chatter after a long day at school. We review and expand on the Bible lesson taught at that week's Sunday School with videos, thought-provoking conversation, fun games and lots of craft projects.

Our Teen Group met in January to discuss upcoming events and activities. We talked about a trip to New York City to attend the Night Watch program at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, scheduled a birthday celebration for residents of Penn Village in March and selected local nonprofits to help enrich their missions. We also discussed team-building events like going to an es-

cape room, snow tubing and a ropes course as the weather gets warmer. It's my hope that these opportunities enrich the relationships they have already established.

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. With your support, we can continue to bring meaningful experiences to the youth of our community through the efforts of the Kids' and Teen Group programs.

Youth Leader
Stacy Heinemann

Cooks Needed for Messy Church

Do you enjoy cooking? Would you be willing to supply part of a meal for Messy Church?

The program is growing by leaps and bounds; there were over 60 people at our January gathering. Because of the increasing attendance and because the core group of cooks deserves a well needed break, we are in need of more people to provide food.

Recipes are distributed in advance and I am available to answer questions. Please consider contributing to this fun and exciting ministry. You can phone me at (570)-374-9732, text or phone me at (570)-850-3295 or email me at jrlewis53@verizon.net

Thanks!!
Jack Lewis



Prayer Shawl



The Prayer Shawl Group is meeting on Tuesdays from 2-4:00 pm at the home of Lois Bruno, 105 Susquehanna Ave., Selinsgrove, PA. They welcome new members to join them.

If you have questions regarding their group or requests for shawls, please call 570-374-2544.

Enjoying the Children's Message
in worship on January 12.



Green Team News

Did you know?:

Reducing consumption of meat can help contain production of greenhouse gases that impact climate change. It can also help lessen the demand for precious environmental resources such as land, water, and energy. Livestock production creates more greenhouse gases than the entire transportation sector – all the cars, trucks, planes, and trains in the world – and uses 75% of the earth's agricultural land. Producing ONE quarter-pound of beef uses 425 gallons of water – enough water to fill 10 bathtubs – and uses up enough energy to power an iPhone for 6 months. Skipping one serving of beef every week for a year saves the equivalent emissions to driving 348 miles in a car.

“Meatless Mondays” is an idea that was first introduced during World War I as a way to reduce consumption to help the war effort and was revived in 2003 as a non-profit public health initiative. Consuming less red and processed meat and more plant-based foods such as vegetables, beans, soy, and nuts can offer many potential health benefits include improving heart

health and reduce the risk of heart disease. It can also help decrease your risk of getting type 2 diabetes and help you maintain kidney health and a healthy weight.



Action:

Consider participating in “Meatless Mondays” by making Mondays a meat-free day. Why Mondays? Research suggests that people are more open to trying healthy behaviors at the start of the week. Monday offers an opportunity to “reset” and get back on track after any lapses over the weekend and studies show people that get back on track at the beginning of the week are better able to maintain progress over time. Want more of a challenge? Maybe you can commit to a higher number of vegetarian meals or vegetarian days per week! Plan ahead while you're doing your weekend shopping so you can try

new vegetarian recipes. You could even meal prep some vegetarian options, such as vegetarian lasagna, or a nice pumpkin soup, that you have in your freezer ready for Monday lunches or dinners throughout a month. Think ahead of what you'll have for breakfast, lunch and dinner on Monday or your vegetarian day so when the time comes, you already know what you're going to have, and you don't fall back on your go-to meal that has meat in it.

Worried about protein? You probably don't need to be – Research by the USDA shows that most Americans eat 1½ times more protein than their recommended dietary allowance (RDA) each day. If you're concerned about your health, you should always check with your doctor before making any drastic changes in your diet – although removing meat only one day a week wouldn't be considered a drastic change – better safe than sorry.

For more information and tons of recipe ideas, visit www.meatlessmonday.com (which is also the source of all the fun facts above).

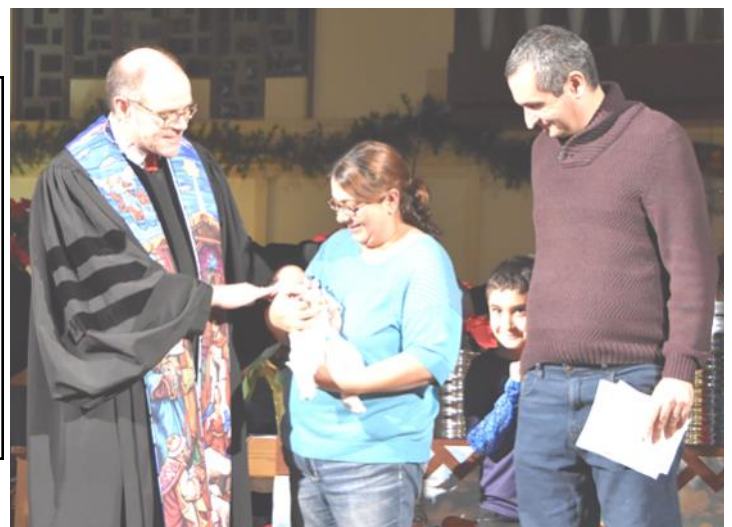


Left:

You are God's beloved! In worship we embraced that affirmation as we remembered our baptisms.

Right:

We celebrated the birth of Hanisa Yazeshni on Christmas Eve.





2/03 Nancy Mercer, Tara Spriggle, Laura Strawser,
Norah Witkop
2/04 Barbara Reed
2/05 Nathan Bingaman
2/06 Jerry Kissinger, James Radel, Jr., Stevie Sees
2/07 Christopher Feiler, Lamar Henise, Ruthann
Troup
2/08 Natalie Imhoof, Sophia Lybarger, Darlene
Newman
2/10 Joe Dubaskas, Jr., Stephanie Flynn, Susan
Henise
2/12 Sam & Jacob Hanson, Robert Rice
2/14 Tracey Wolfe
2/15 Michael Aurand, Mallory Baker,
Cheryl Gibson-Doyne
2/16 Lucille Cope, Ann Rising
2/17 Fritz Heinemann, Tom Peeler
2/18 Laura Fetterman
2/19 Heidi Beaver
2/21 Matthew Bingaman
2/22 Jeanette Dressler, Ronan McCabe,
Raven Rudnitsky
2/24 Michele DeMary, Brianna Smith
2/25 Judi Anselmo, Carol Dickinson, Gene Houck
2/26 Stephanie Burd, Pam Gemberling,
Blake Haddon, Jeffrey Rathfon
2/27 Kenda Dubaskas, Kayla Witmer
2/28 Shelly Myers, Jamie Shambach

2/01 Penny Dollar & Archie Passmore,
Courtney & Joshua Hanes
2/13 Rick & Susan Krex, Derick & Jamie
Shambach
2/14 Kathy & Fred Ulrich
2/22 Steve & Kim Campbell

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



Prayer List

Members: Ray Benner, Myia Brosius, Dot & Al Deans, Helen Hannah, Jimmy Kauffman, Ivana Lluveras, Gibby Mease, Robert "Bob" Rathfon family, Verlyn Smith, Nancy Wagner.

Friends: The family of Betsy Benner, The family of Charles Kauffman, Harvey & Deseree Kramer, Kay Minier. 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.)



Council Minutes - January 14, 2020



Lighting of the Christ Candle

Attendance: John Fischer, Raven Rudnitsky, Joanne Lauer, Carolyn Fairl, Pastor Dietmar, Susan Bolig, Jack Lewis, Stacy Heinemann, Marty Blessing, Bev Heinemann, Ellen Miller, Ivana Lluveras, Peggy Peeler, Richard Campbell, Robert Engel, Donna Long.
Absent: Lisa Krex.

Welcome New Council Members

Elections:

Council President – John Fischer nominated Raven Rudnitsky and Stacy Heinemann seconded it. All were in favor.

Council Vice President – Raven Rudnitsky nominated John Fischer and Susan Bolig seconded it. All were in favor.

Secretary – John Fischer nominated Joanne Lauer to be the Recording Secretary and Jack Lewis to be the Correspondence Secretary and it was seconded by Stacy Heinemann. All were in favor.

Council-Committee Liaison Positions - who will represent which committee on Church Council? The list was reviewed and names were picked.

Who will serve on Personnel Committee (two openings) – Reviewed and two names have been added.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting: Minutes from the meeting on December 10, 2019 were approved on a motion from John Fischer and seconded by Jack Lewis. Motion carried to approve.

Financial Report: Donna Long went over the financial reports. A motion was made by Jack Lewis

and seconded by Bob Engel to accept the Treasurer's report. Motion carried to approve.

Report of the Pastor: Report was emailed out to all. Pastor Dietmar spoke that this is an exciting time for the church. The nursery is key to getting young folks to come to church. Messy Church is also another important part. There are 15 new members joining the church.

Unfinished Business:

- Ministry Review - report from Personnel and Pastor Parish Committees (attached) - presentation and discussion – have been several meetings to this point to come up with this evaluation. Ask that Council review it and bring to next meeting with questions and concerns.

- Greening St. Paul's - progress report – Marty spoke of continuing to put information out of how to go green. Will have upcoming workshops. A Susquehanna University student will be helping out doing an energy audit.

- Security System Update - progress report – The side door buzzer is in place. Sue will buzz everyone in. Also a phone number there to call in case Sue is away from her desk.

- Visioning and Long-Range Planning - progress report – will discuss more at leadership orientation on Sunday.

- Establishing PFLAG Support Group - progress report – Jack reporting working on this. Putting up posters. Takes time.

- New Computers and faster Wi-Fi for the church - progress report (quotes are attached) – The two quotes attached are for new computer and Wi-Fi connection. Stewardship and Finance recommend proceeding with the work for this from Dan Renkel in the amount of approximately \$2,700. John Fischer made the motion to proceed with this recommendation and Jack Lewis seconded it. All were in favor. The next things that are needed is updated software and faster internet. Joanne Lauer reported on this.

Council asked that Joanne get quotes for these items.

- Coordinator for funerals and special occasions - "after hours" custodian - progress report – this is a work in progress. Still looking for a coordinator.

- New Members joining St. Paul's on January 26 – There are 15 new members joining. Provide cake and refreshments.

- Mentors for New Members - progress report – this has been done.

- Creation Justice, Creation Care - Group Study in Lent, starting after Ash Wednesday, Feb. 26 - please encourage everyone to participate! Pastor Dietmar discussed the study. It is a 5 week study in various groups.

- Visitation Minister - Visitation Ministry Coordinator - how will we find a qualified and committed person as Pastor Penny will move to Virginia – will discuss further.

New Business:

- Kitchen Team - help with funeral meals - how to coordinate efforts? – Putting together a small meeting to discuss.

- New tables to replace the old, worn, heavy wooden ones in fellowship hall – Would need to replace at least 14 of them. In need of a quote from Property and Grounds.

- Communication and Technology Coordinator - Currently this team consists of Joanne Lauer, Sigrid Plajer, and Jevan Beaver. Would like Council to mandate someone to lead this group and if need be to present to Council any ideas and/or issues. Ivana has also volunteered to join this group. A motion was made by John Fischer and seconded by Stacy Heinemann that Sigrid Plajer be in charge and lead this group and make final decisions. All were in favor.

(continued on page 9)

Council Minutes Continued

New Business continued:

• Choose annual date for Pastor Appreciation Sunday. A motion was made by Bob Engel and seconded by Ivana Lluveras to have it the second Sunday in October from now on. All were in favor.

• John Fischer discussed the Louise Long Trust Fund. It is in need of authorization signatures. A motion was made by John Fischer and seconded by Bev Heinemann to have John Fischer, Jack Lewis and Raven Rudnitsky be the signers. All were in favor. Also requested that the funds be invested in moderate balance fund at UCC. John Fischer made the motion for this investment and it was seconded by Bev Heinemann. All were in favor.

Committee Reports:

Stacy Heinemann gave a report on the youth groups. Planning on what events/activities that are coming up.

Jack Lewis reported that at the last Messy Church there were over 60 people in attendance.

Communications:

Pastor Dietmar gave a thank you note for the generous Christmas gift to him and his family.

Communion:

Sunday, February 2, 2020 – class of 2021

Serve – Marty Blessing, Susan Bolig, Stacy Heinemann, Jack Lewis, Raven Rudnitsky

Prepare – Susan Bolig

Important dates:

Installation of New Council Members - Jan. 12 in worship.

Birthday Bash - Jan. 19 after worship.

Leadership Orientation - Sunday, Jan. 19, 2-3 PM - New Members will participate.

Meals for Seals packing - Jan. 20, 6 PM at All Saints Episcopal Church.

New Members join St. Paul's - Jan. 26, 10:30 AM in worship.

Rejoicing Spirits - Jan. 26, 6:30 PM at Sharon Lutheran Church.

Loaves and Fishes - Jan. 31, 9-12 and 12:30-2:00 PM.

Installation of Rev. DiAnn Baxley at first UCC in Middleburg - Sun., Feb. 2, 3:00 PM.

Messy Church - Feb. 9 (second Sunday due to Super Bowl), 4:30 PM.

PFLAG Meeting - Feb. 13, 7:00 PM - Shiloh UCC, Danville.

Meals for Seals packing - Feb. 17, 6 PM at All Saints Episcopal Church.

Open and Affirming Winter Gathering - Saturday, Feb. 22.

Rejoicing Spirits - Feb. 23, 6:30 PM at Sharon Lutheran Church.

Ash Wednesday Day of Prayer - February 26, all day.

Ash Wednesday, Ashes to Go at the Commons - 8 AM - 5 PM.

Loaves and Fishes - Feb. 28, 9-12 and 12:30-2:00 PM.

Messy Church - March 1, 4:30 PM.

Palm Sunday - April 5.

Maundy Thursday - April 9.

Community Good Friday - April 10 at Sharon Lutheran Church.

Easter Sunrise - April 12, 6:30 AM.

Easter Celebration - April 12, 10:30 AM.

UCC Central Association Meeting - April 26 at Dreisbach UCC.

Pentecost - May 31.

UCC-Penn Central Annual Meeting - June 12-13 at SU.

Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, February 11, 2020.

Devotions: Ellen Miller.

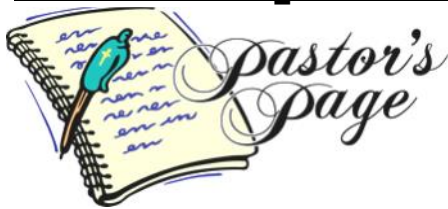
Lord's Prayer/Adjourn

Respectfully Submitted,
Rachael Rice – outgoing Council Secretary

We installed six new Council Members in worship on January 12. From left: Beverly Heinemann, Rick Campbell, Peggy Peeler, Ivana Lluveras, Bob Engel, and Ellen Miller.



Pastor's Report - December 2019



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

Messy Church on December 1st was a highlight of the season. We crafted Advent Calendars, created edible nativities, and made Christmas tree ornaments from buttons. The children loved "The Journey to Bethlehem" obstacle course. I'm deeply grateful to all who make Messy Church such a great success, the great planning team, the kitchen team, those who cook and provide fruit, veggies, and desserts, and the many helpers and volunteers.

Advent and Christmas is one of the most meaningful and moving seasons in the church year. By sending out personalized cards we invited members whom we are missing to join us for the most special services. We decorated the sanctuary to reflect the brilliance of God's light which shines in the darkness. I'm grateful to the Worship Team and all helpers, readers, and families who lit the advent wreath candles. They made our services extra special.

The Senior Choir presented "The Glory of Christmas" Cantata in worship on December 8 with many soloists, narrators, and the Youth Choir joining in the celebration. Director, Amy Caron is wonderful in bringing out the

best in the singers. We have such wonderful musical talent. I'm grateful to all who share their gifts so beautifully and generously.

The Advent Musical Skits of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love, "Jesus Will Break Forth" of the Joyful Noise Choir on December 15 was deeply moving and meaningful. Jaime Namminga inspires, encourages, and challenges the children. It was a delight to see how all cooperated and functioned as a team, the older children supporting the younger ones in their roles and singing.

We shared the joy of Christmas through music with people who are homebound and with those in nursing homes in the evening of Sunday, December 15.

The Loaves and Fishes food outreach ministry continues through the whole year. In December, coordinator Randy Tanner invited all volunteers to a Christmas covered dish dinner to express our heartfelt appreciation to all who make this ministry possible. It takes many helpers working for many hours to make Loaves and Fishes work smoothly.

Again this Christmas, we packed in our fellowship hall food baskets (banana boxes) with items to make a great Christmas possible for 145 local families in need. We gave gift certificates for shoes and clothes and toys which Rachael Rice made possible. We serve Jesus by serving those in need.

At our Annual Congregational Meeting on December 8 we elected six new Council Members: Rick Campbell, Bob Engel, Beverly Heinemann, Ivana Lluveras, Ellen Miller, and Peggy Peeler. We are grateful for

their willingness to serve in this leadership position. Also, we voted on the 2020 Mission Plan (budget) and an amendment to our congregational bylaws which defines how to use our income from St. Paul's endowment fund.

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.

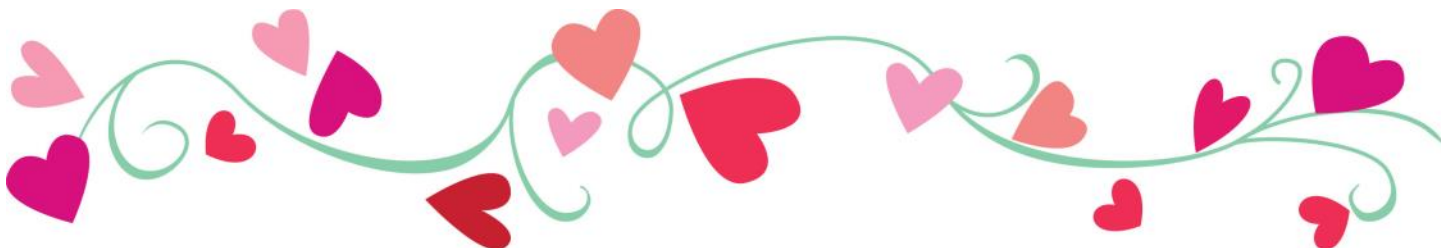
Thank you for your prayers, your witness, your giving, your service, and your faithfulness to God and to our beloved St. Paul's. You are the hands and the heart of Jesus in action!

Pastoral Activities December 1-31, 2019

Days Worked	15
Days off	03
Cont. Ed. Days	00
Vacation	11
<u>Holidays</u>	<u>02</u>
Total Days	31

Respectfully submitted,
Dietmar Plajer

Dietmar Plajer,
Pastor and Teacher



FEBRUARY

Worship Attendance for December & January

December	22	128	Fourth Sunday of Advent
December	24	245	Christmas Eve
December	29	53	Pastor Penny
~~~~~			
January	5	93	
January	12	130	Install New Council
January	19	84	



## Future St. Paul's Events

Feb	9	Messy Church - 4:30 pm
Feb	23	Hot Topic - 9:15 am
Feb	23	Rejoicing Spirits - 6:30 pm
Feb	26	Day of Prayer - 7:00 am-6:00 pm
Feb	26	Ash Wednesday Service - 7:00 pm
Feb	28	Loaves & Fishes Food Bank
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Mar	1	Messy Church - 4:30 pm
Mar	1	Lenten Study Groups Begin
Mar	22	Rejoicing Spirits - 6:30 pm
Mar	29	Loaves & Fishes Food Bank
~~~~~		
Apr	5	Messy Church - 4:30 pm
Apr	5	Palm Sunday
Apr	9	Maundy Thursday
Apr	10	Good Friday
Apr	12	Easter Sunday - 6:30 am & 10:30 am
Apr	24	Loaves & Fishes Food Bank
Apr	26	Central Assoc. Annual Mtg. - 2:00 pm



## 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, February 28** from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

### Numbers for December 20, 2019:

Total # of families	96
Total # of children	50
Total # of adults	114
Total # of elderly	81
<b>Total # of persons served</b>	<b>245</b>



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

400 North Market Street  
Selinsgrove, PA 17870  
Phone: 570-374-8749  
E-mail: [office@saintpauls-ucc.org](mailto:office@saintpauls-ucc.org)

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

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

### “God is Still Speaking”

**Adult Sunday School**            9:15 AM  
**Worship**                                10:30 AM  
**Children’s Sunday School** 10:30 AM  
**Wednesday Kids’ Group**    3:00 PM

Accessible

### Change Service Requested

We thank God for...

Celebrating the Birth of Jesus on Christmas Eve.



# Advent and Christmas Eve at St. Paul's



The Youth Choir sings on Christmas Eve.



Maya sings, "O Holy Night" in worship on Christmas Eve.



Emma Herrold and John Fischer play the trumpet in worship on Christmas Eve.

The Beaver Family lights the Advent Candles on December 22.



# Messy Church in January



God's good and caring sheep, Henry at Messy Church.



Kathy Ulrich and Shirley Varner craft at Messy Church on being God's good sheep.



Crafting edible sheep at Messy Church are Jace and grand aunt, Deb Burns.



Herding sheep and goats at Messy Church.



Crafting a snowmen tea light magnet at Messy Church.



We had 60 people participate in Messy Church on January 5. Thanks to all helpers who make it possible!