

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

THE MESSENGER

God is still speaking,

January 2020

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

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"Messy Church" - January 5 at 4:30 pm



Join us for Messy Church as we explore in fun, creative, and playful ways how we can belong to and behave like Jesus' good sheep. Jesus distinguishes in between the sheep that trust him as their shepherd, and goats, who disregard him and do their own thing. If you are an adult, we invite you to come and enjoy being in good company. Children, please bring your favorite adult with you. A family-style meal is included after our celebration and everything is free. See page 3 for more info.

Who Are You? - New Worship Series - Starting Jan. 5

Start the New Year with God and join us in worship as we re-assess the direction of our lives. Who are you? What are your priorities? What do you value? Beginning with January 5 we will explore in worship who we are, whose we are, and what we are here for. Make God a priority, start the New Year with Jesus and join us as we learn from him how to live fulfilled lives, every Sunday at 10:30 AM beginning with Jan. 5

Become a Prayer Partner in 2020

Prayer helps us focus on God and share what is close and dear to our hearts. It is special to know that one person will specifically lift you up in prayer throughout 2020. Will you become that person for someone else and at the same time have someone do the same for you? Find out how it works on page 3.



Birthday Celebration - January 19



St. Paul's will be hosting a Birthday Celebration on Sunday, January 19 right after worship to celebrate all the birthdays throughout the year. See page 3 for more details about the event.

Hot Topic Discussion - January 26, 9:15 am

You are shopping for groceries and notice an elderly person being verbally abused by a care-giver. Your child relays a story about witnessing a bullying incident in their school. What can we do as bystanders when we see bullying or abuse happen? What about social media? Christiana Paradis, OVW (Office on Violence Against Women) Program Coordinator, Adjunct Professor of Women's Studies from Susquehanna University will lead in a discussion about "bystander intervention". Learn what you can do to help others in a safe and helpful way. Our 2020 Hot Topic series begins Sunday, January 26th at 9:15 a.m. Please join us!

New Member Sunday - January 26, 10:30 am

We invite you, those who have been regularly attending St. Paul's, to consider joining our congregation in worship on Sunday, January 26. To prepare for membership, Pastor Dietmar invites you to participate in the New Member Orientation on Sunday, January 12 after worship and on Sunday, January 19, 2-3 pm in the fellowship hall. You will find more information on page 3.

“What Is Your New Year’s Resolution?” - Pastor’s Message

After the Christmas rush, I take time to reflect on what brings me joy, on what makes me come alive, on what makes life meaningful. I want to live more fully, wholeheartedly, with passion and purpose in 2020.

I deeply believe these three practices will make a huge difference in your life if you take them to heart and put them into practice.

Put God First: Jesus took time away to be refreshed and renewed in prayer, meditation, and communion with God. If this was important for Jesus, is it not for you, too? Our Holy Scriptures remind us, “Seek God with all your heart...” “Be still and know that I am God.” It’s like returning to the well of living water, to be refreshed and reenergized. You charge your cell phone. How about your soul? How do you put God first? Ten to fifteen minutes in the morning will do, when you wake up, use a devotional (you can have a UCC devotional arrive in your email inbox every morning if you sign up for it at www.ucc.org, or pick up an “Upper Room” devotional from the table in the foyer at the church). Any devotional will do. Be curious, open, pay attention to how God wants to reach you. Share what is on your heart, for what you are grateful, what you worry about, for what you need God’s help on this day. Open up and surrender, as the ageless prayer encourages, “God, give me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.” Putting God first means you meditate, devote, pray, commune, rest in God and worship. How will you put God first in 2020?

Pay attention to your attitude: What are you looking for? What do you focus on? What do you expect? There goes the story about a traveler who was asking a fellow traveler about what the people were like in the town where he was headed. The fellow asked him, “What are the people like in the town you come from?” He answered, “They are cold, judgmental, unkind, just plain awful!” Upon hearing that, the fellow traveler told him, “That is how you will find the people to be in this town, too.” As he walked on, the fellow traveler met a woman and when she asked what the people were like in the town she was headed for, the fellow asked her, “What are the people like in the town you come from?” She said, “They are warm-hearted, welcoming, kind, just wonderful people!” That’s when the fellow traveler told her, “That is how you will find the people to be in this town, too.” You see, what you are looking for is what you see. If you are looking for the bad in people, you will certainly find it. If you look for the darkness in others and in the world, you will see it. But if you look for the goodness, the kindness, the silver lining, the beauty in others and in the world around you, you will find it. What you pay attention to grows and multiplies. What’s your attitude towards other? What are you looking for, what do you focus on, makes all the difference in the world and in your life! Your attitude matters more than you can imagine.

Become a more giving person: Give others the benefit of a doubt. Give yourself a break. Forgive those who hurt you. Forgive yourself. Let go and embrace your imperfect life. There is wisdom in the statement, “Most people do the best with what they’ve got.” Be kind, for everyone is struggling in some way. Usually, until you walk in someone’s shoes, you do not understand. Jesus prayed, “Forgive them for

they do not know what they are doing.” I think that is true, often people are hurting people because they are not aware of what they are doing. If you do not deal with the pain you feel, you are likely to pass it on. If you do not deal with hurts, you are likely to become hurtful to others. As Jesus’ followers, we are called to bless people and to love them as we love ourselves. Jesus challenges us to love as God does, to love those who are hard to love; to love those who look, speak, act, vote, and behave differently than we do. Let us appreciate and affirm each other. Let us be friends and neighbors, God’s beloved community. I love the banner we put up on the Mill Street side of our building, “You are our neighbors. No matter who you vote for, your skin color, your faith, or whom you love, we will try to be here for you. That’s what community means. Let’s be neighbors.” My experience is, the world echoes what we do, how we live, and what attitude we have. When you bless other people, you will be blessed. When you love people, you feel loved. When you befriend people, you will have friends. As Jesus says (paraphrase), “When you invest your life in service to others, you will gain it, win it, live joy-filled, a blessed life.”

Reflecting on what truly matters in life, I make a commitment to God, to myself, and to you. I strive to put God first; I will pay attention to my attitude, choose to be positive; and I will work on becoming a more giving person. How about you? What is your New Year’s resolution?

Gratefully,

Dietmar Pfleger

Pastor Dietmar

Leadership Orientation - January 19, 2-3 pm

The Leadership Orientation is the best way for you to get an overview of St. Paul’s mission, vision, ministries, and how we function as an organization. In one hour you will receive all in-

formation you need to become a fully informed member of St. Paul’s. Besides all who are in leadership positions at St. Paul’s, this is also a great opportunity for those who may be interested in officially joining St.

Paul’s in the future. Join us on January 19 from 2-3 pm for one jam-packed hour of information on St. Paul’s.

Sheep vs. Goats - Messy Church on Sunday, Jan. 5, 4:30 pm

Join us for Messy Church as we explore in fun, creative, and playful ways how we can belong to and behave like Jesus' good sheep. Jesus distinguishes in between the sheep that trust him as their shepherd and feed the hungry, care for the sick, and help the hurting, and goats, who disregard him and do their own thing and not what he asks them to do. We will have a sheep and goat separating game, create bird feeders, edible sheep, and snowmen tea lights, make pull toys for dogs, and much more.

You can help by donating craft supplies: old jeans, t-shirts, fabrics (to create the dog pull toys), canning jar lids (to make the bird feeders), and (long) tubes from wrapping paper (to create the shepherd staffs for the game).

Messy Church is for all ages. If you are an adult, we invite you to come and enjoy being in good company. You can help us color our newest addition to Messy Church activities, a sheep coloring poster, for example. Everybody can pick which activities they would like to partici-

pate in. Children, please bring your favorite adult with you.

A family-style meal is included after our celebration and story time in the sanctuary. Everything is free.

Please share the word and join the fun at Messy Church on Sunday, January 5, at 4:30 PM.



Become a Prayer Partner in 2020

Everyone is invited to participate in this thoughtful exercise of faith and love, the Prayer Partner Program.

Here's how it works. Fill out the Prayer Partner form located in the foyer and place it in the box in the foyer by **Sunday, January 19**.

On that day, each person who placed his or her name in the box should likewise pick out a name

from the box. This person is your prayer partner for 2020.

Please remember that it only requires a card or note every now and then and on special occasions (especially the person's birthday) to let them know they are being thought of in prayer.

You simply sign your card or note with the words "Your Prayer Partner" and St. Paul's return address.

Then, next Christmastime make known to that person your identity with a gift.

Thank you for your focus on prayerfully lifting up each other.



Birthday Celebration - January 19, after worship



The Fellowship Committee will be hosting a "Happy Birthday" celebration on Sunday, January 19 right after church to celebrate everyone's

birthday throughout the year.

The Fellowship Committee will provide the birthday cake, drinks and place settings. They ask that all who attend please bring a covered dish to share.

Come, join, and celebrate mine,

yours and everyone else's birthday for the year 2020.

If you have any questions, please give Rachael Rice a call at 570-898-4037.

Invitation to Join St. Paul's as New Members

We ask you, those who have been regularly attending St. Paul's, to consider joining our congregation in worship on Sunday, January 26. In order to prepare for membership, Pastor Dietmar invites you to participate in two New Member Orientation gatherings. The first one right after our worship service on January 12. We will offer refreshments for that time. The second gathering will be on Sunday, January 19 from 2:00-3:00 PM

in our fellowship hall following our Birthday Bash Celebration luncheon to which you are invited, too.

On January 19 you will meet our church leadership for their annual Leadership Orientation. The purpose of the New Member Orientation is to give you a better understanding of who we are as a church, of our vision, mission, and our core values. We will clarify expectations and share on how joining St. Paul's can become both meaningful and

rewarding for both, you and for St. Paul's. Every new member will connect with a friendly mentor from St. Paul's who will be available to you for the coming year.

With questions, please contact Pastor Dietmar at di-etmar@saintpauls-ucc.org or text or call him at (570) 541-0121.

Thank you!

Children's Sunday School

It is a joy to teach Sunday school. On average, we have about 6 children in Sunday school each Sunday.

In November, we learned about Adam and Eve, Noah and the Flood, Daniel and the Lions, and Jonah and the Fish. All are beautiful Bible stories which I think is important to teach all of our children. If our children do not grow up knowing the stories of our faith, how can we expect them to feel at home in church, to feel like they belong to something bigger? Please encourage everybody you know to get up Sunday morning and come to church and bring your child to Sunday school.

In December, we focused on Advent and Christmas, and on the first Sunday in December we learned about Mary's story when the angel Gabriel visited her. December 8 and 15 were Sundays without Sunday school because of the Cantata and the children's program, but I ordered and prepared coloring pages and a children's bulletin for the kids to doodle in and maybe focus better on the whole worship experience while coloring. On December 22 and 29, we focused on Jesus' birth and the shepherd's story, and we incorporated parts of the missed two lessons into those two Sundays.

Thank you to all the fearless volunteers who assist every Sunday with Sunday school. A special thanks goes to Missy who helped me tackle successfully my ambitious lion project. Turns out that the kids were all not really into tying knots, so we both tied all the knots for what seemed like countless children, and then the kids stuffed the little lion pillows and drew the faces on the fleece that we then ironed on.

Children's Sunday School Teacher,
Sigrid Plajer

Messy Church News

Messy Church on December 1 was a good start to Advent. The weather thankfully cooperated, and we had very good attendance, and there was a beautiful Christmas spirit in the air. We made Advent calendars, a little Christmas tree ornament out of buttons, and an edible nativity. The activities were part of the theme how God uses normal people and small things to create something big and great through Jesus' birth. The kids also took home several coloring activities to make at home as time allows,

ornaments to color and put together, a paper advent wreath with paper candles, a nativity that they could cut out and play with, and an angel that waited to be decorated beautifully and then put together.

The Messy Church team met on December 3 and prepared for the January Messy Church. The theme will be goats and sheep, as in, don't be a goat and just do your own thing, but be more like a sheep and follow Jesus, our shepherd.

Messy Church would not happen were it not for all the people who show up, either with their families or

alone, either as participant or as helper. Thank you to all! It is a great project to get involved in and feel that you are part of something bigger than yourself and learn and grow in faith no matter in which capacity you are there. Come to Messy Church alone or with your family and invite others to join you!

Messy Church Coordinator,
Sigrid Plajer



Crafting an edible nativity at Messy Church on December 1.



Children & Youth Ministry News



In December the Kids' Group children were busy creating the Tree Fest tree, discussing the story of Mary, Joseph and the arrival of Baby Jesus. As we move into the new decade, we will continue to discuss Jesus' role in the community. We will explore our creativity with crafts and projects that echo the week's lesson introduced at Sunday School.

Plans for Teen Group events and service projects will be scheduled for the upcoming months. We look forward to organizing a trip to New York City to take part in the Night-watch Crossroads event at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Night-watch Crossroads is a Friday evening and overnight spiritual retreat for middle and high school age students and their adult chaperones. The group will have the opportunity to unplug from the distractions and stresses of daily life to connect with God and one another in the sacred space of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

We would love to have you be a part of our Youth Ministry. You are invited to come to Kids' Group on Wednesdays from 3:00-5:30 pm to

take part in our lively discussions and indulge your inner artist with our craft projects. Joining an event with the Teens is a great way to learn more about our younger congregants and be a part of their spiritual development. Stay tuned for dates and times of events.

As always, if you have any questions or would like more information regarding St. Paul's youth ministry, please feel free to contact me at youth@saintpauls-ucc.org.

Wishing you a new year filled with health, happiness, and love...

Youth Leader,
Stacy Heinemann

2019 Christmas Ministry Update

St. Paul's Church and the Community Kitchen Cupboard served 19 families for our Christmas Ministry. This included 47 children under the age of 18 for whom we gave \$50 Boscov's gift cards.

A total of 93 people were ministered to through the generosity of our congregation.

We would also like to thank all those who helped to deliver the Christmas Ministry items.

Thanks to all who make this ministry possible.



Prayer Shawl Ministry



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.

Cup of Fellowship - Your HELP is Needed!

Cup of Fellowship is a great opportunity to have a snack and a drink and to fellowship with your brothers and sisters in Christ.

We are planning to offer Cup of Fellowship when the Joyful Noise Choirs sings, when we receive New Members, for Baptisms, Confirmation and other special events.

The next time Cup of Fellowship is offered will be January 26 and February 23.

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP



All of this is possible through your generous contributions of snacks, baked goods and of course, your time.

If you are interested in helping with this outreach ministry, please sign up on the bulletin board outside the secretary's office.

If you have any questions, feel free to call Peggy Doak at 570-850-3268.

Thank you for your willingness to volunteer your time and gifts to this ministry.



How to Use Your 2020 Offering Envelopes



New Offering Envelopes

Giving is at the heart of being a person of faith. By giving we do what God does. We follow

Jesus' example when we give joyfully. Thank you for supporting God's work through St. Paul's ministries. Please pick up your offering envelopes from the table in the upper hallway.

On your regular envelopes you can designate part of your giving to "Our Church's Wider Mis-

sion," (OCWM) which supports God's work beyond our local congregation. A good guideline is to give 10% of your overall giving to OCWM. For example, when you give \$100 to St. Paul's you give \$10 to OCWM.

Our Stewardship and Finance Team encourages you to give electronically through eGive. This makes the work of the offering counters easier. Whether you want to make a one-time gift or give regularly, eGive is a great way to do it. You can click

on the eGive button in the *Ministry* section on our website www.saintpauls-ucc.org or contact our financial secretary, Cindy Martin at cindy3424@verizon.net or by calling (570) 898-7265.

If you are new to St. Paul's and want your own offering envelopes, you can also receive them through Cindy Martin or the church office. Thank you for your generous support of St. Paul's mission and ministries!



Lighting the Candle of Love in worship are Carolyn Fairl, Marty Blessings, Carolyn Patton, and Shane Sanders.



Lisa Krex and the McCabe family light the Candle of Joy in worship on December 15.



Joyful Noise Advent Musical



Presenting Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love are the children of the Joyful Noise Choir in worship on December 15.



Jane, Bradley, & Zack participate in an Advent skit on December 15.



Christmas is so much more than gift shopping - Children present an Advent skit in worship on December 15.



Joyful Noise Choir children share the message of Advent in worship during their musical presentation on December 15.

Nolan (center) sings a solo as part of the Advent Musical Skits on December 15.



Danika and Sophia sing with the Joyful Noise Choir in worship on December 15.



Sophia and Allie in share the Advent message in worship on December 15.

Ronan, Henry, and Owen sing with the Joyful Noise Choir in their Advent musical on December 15.



Thank You Notes

I want to thank our faith family for everyone's concerns and prayers throughout my recent elbow fracture, as well as my father's passing. The cards sent by the card ministry team, as well as the members of our church, were very uplifting and much appreciated.

Many thanks,
Verlyn Smith



On behalf of my family and the family of Ken Depew, I want to express our deepest appreciation for your thoughts, prayers, and condolences after the passing of my sister, Elaine Depew. Knowing that we have such sincere spiritual support means a great deal to all of us. I know I have found a church home and family with the UCC. Thank you all for your care and support.

Linda Turner

Pastor Dietmar presents the Christmas Story at Messy Church on December 1.



Sharing the Joy of Christmas with Terry and Vivian Beaver on December 15 are St. Paul's carolers.



1/01 Jaime Namminga
 1/02 Hailey Beaver
 1/05 Ryan Bolig, Peggy Doak, Allen Wetzel
 1/06 Jim Forster, Kay Moffatt
 1/07 Shelly Wolfe
 1/09 Barry Hayhurst
 1/10 Charles Dahlmann
 1/11 Max Leitzel, Derrick Mercer
 1/12 Raymond Adams, Andrew (Andy) Snyder
 1/13 Rachael Kelly
 1/14 Nancy Leitzel
 1/15 Charles Ruhl
 1/16 Kimberly Marshall, Isabel Proger
 1/17 Felix Plajer
 1/18 Kaley Long, Judith Lyon
 1/19 Cerene Dubaskas, Paige Spoons
 1/20 Debra Martello, William Proger
 1/21 Michelle Siegel
 1/22 David Hannah
 1/23 Megan Adams
 1/24 Melissa Bingaman, Leon Fetterolf
 1/25 June Straub
 1/26 Maddison Burd, Jessica Hawk, Kate Morse,
 Nancy Wagner
 1/27 Sue Minier, Jenelle Moyer
 1/28 Carolyn Iosue
 1/29 Lon Dietrick, Cheryl Reddinger
 1/30 Christine Beaver, David Imhoof, Caroline
 Kissinger
 1/31 Charlotte Barben, Terry Beaver, Dakota Brosius,
 Ella Hanes, Jan Riegel

1/01 Michele DeMary & Lee Fortier, Michael &
 Jeanette Dressler, Bruce & Flo Hummel
 1/02 Jason & Dione Mercer
 1/07 Carol & Robert "Bob" Drumheiser
 1/08 Susan & Michael Bolig
 1/11 Michael & Melissa Bingaman
 1/12 Ellen & Nick Berger
 1/15 Craig & Shelly Myers

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



Prayer List

Members: Ray & Betsy Benner, Brenda Campbell, Dot & Al Deans, Jan Garinger, Helen Hannah, Jimmy Kauffman, Gibby Mease, Pat Namet, Dianne Sheaffer, Kathy & Fred Ulrich, Nancy Wagner, The family of Mary Ann Weader.

Friends: Jill & Derrick Adair, Kelly & Daniel Adair, Suzan Beasley, Rev. Janet Berchner, Cheryl Gibson-Doyne, Alden Evans, Sr., Harry, The family of Gene Leitner, Jenn Merwine, The family of Becky Moll, Theda Sanner & family, The family of Linda Turner. 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

Council Minutes - December 9, 2019

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Attendance: Jevan Beaver, Rachael Rice, Pastor Dietmar, Lisa Krex, Stacy Heinemann, Jack Lewis, Joanne Lauer, John Fischer, Raven Rudnitsky, Bill Hockenbrock, Mike Proger, Marty Blessing, Susan Bolig, Donna Long. Absent: Pat Namet and Carolyn Fairl.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting: Minutes from the meeting on November 12, 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 John Fischer and seconded by Stacy Heinemann to accept the Treasurer's report. Motion carried to approve.

Report of the Pastor: Report was emailed out to all. Pastor Dietmar spoke about reaching out to those that have not been in church lately. Encourage if you see someone who has not been here for awhile to invite them back.

Unfinished Business:

- Whom will you invite to celebrate Advent and Christmas with us? Make a special effort to reach out.
- Stewardship Program - feedback and results - Greater response and the pledge response

was greater. More details to follow.

- Greening St. Paul's - progress report - Marty reported on this. Making plans for Lent. Have a couple of programs in the works. Will have various tables with different topics.
- Security System Expansion - progress report - Cameras installed. Lock on door being worked on.
- Visioning and Long-Range Planning for St. Paul's in 2020 - progress report - Pastor Dietmar spoke of focusing in the right direction.
- Initiative to establish a PFLAG Support Group in our area - progress report - Jack Lewis has a meeting coming up.
- New computers and faster Wi-Fi for Church office - progress report - waiting for a quote.
- Coordinator for funeral and special services/after hours "custodian" - conversation on current situations and needs - Ideas where discussed about how to handle this. Need to have someone or a committee to head this. Will be continued at next meeting.

New Business:

- Mentors for new members to join in January - Pastor Dietmar spoke of the importance of having someone mentor new members. Will be asking for volunteers.
- Creation Justice, Creation Care - plans for Lent beginning with Ash Wed., Feb. 26, 2020 - Will have groups again. Please encourage

everyone to join a group.

- Discuss the remaining Council position, including a discussion on the number of Council members we should have and the length of their terms. Many ideas were discussed. Right now going to try and find the 5th person. A motion was made by John Fischer and seconded by Marty Blessing to open council positions for family members to serve at the same time. Motion carried to approve.
- Results of the voting from the Annual meeting - The results of the voting were given.
- A great Thank You to outgoing council members for their faithful and dedicated service!

Committee Reports:

Stacy Heinemann gave a report on Christian Education and all that is happening and the plans she has for her groups. Sunday school is doing well.

Communications:

Several thank you notes were read.

Important dates:

- SU Candlelight Service - Weber Chapel - Dec. 10.
- PFLAG Meeting at Shiloh UCC, Danville - Dec. 12, 7:00 PM.
- Joyful Noise Advent/Christmas Musical - Dec. 15, 10:30 AM.

(continued on page 11)

Annual Congregational Meeting - December 8, 2019

The Annual Congregation Meeting was called to order by Council President Raven Rudnitsky. Raven presented the new Council members for 2020-2022 terms. They are: Ivana Lluveras, Bob Engel, Peggy Peeler and Ellen Miller, one more TBD. Rick Campbell will be finishing out a 2 year term. The mission plan was presented by treasurer, Donna Long. She went over the budget. The congregation was asked if there were

any questions. There were none. The third item was a bylaw change that Marv Rudnitsky reviewed. Church members were given ballots to vote on the three items. A motion was made and seconded to close the Congregational Annual Meeting. The votes were then counted. There was a total of 76 votes. On the slate of new Council members there were 73 Yes votes and 1 No with 2 not voting.

For the mission plan budget there were 70 Yes votes and 5 No votes with 1 not voting and for the Bylaw change there were 75 Yes and 0 No with 1 not voting.

Council Minutes Continued

Important dates continued:

Loaves and Fishes - Dec. 20, 9-12:00 and 12:30-2:00 PM.

SACC Christmas Food Baskets for local families in need - Dec. 21, 9:30-11:30 AM.

Christmas Caroling for Homebound - Dec. 15, 4:00 PM.

Christmas Eve Celebration Candlelight Worship - Dec. 24, 7:00 PM.

Messy Church - Jan. 5, 4:30 PM.

Installation of New Council Members - Jan. 12, 10:30 AM.

Birthday Bash - Jan 19 - right after church.

Leadership Orientation - Jan 19, 2-3 PM.

New Members Joining St. Paul's - January 26, 10:30 AM.

Ash Wednesday, Feb. 26 - Start of "Caring for God's Creation" group study.

Palm Sunday - April 5.

Easter Sunday - April 12

Communion Schedule:

Christmas Eve - All classes - 7 pm.

Serve - Stacy, Lisa, Jack, Susan, Joanne, John and Bill

Prepare - Rachael

Recycle - All of us

Sunday, January 5, 2020 - Class of 2020.

Serve - John, Joanne, Lisa, Marty and Carolyn

Prepare - Lisa

Recycle - All

Good of the Order:

Next Council Meeting: January 14, 2020 at 7:00 pm.

Devotions: Marty Blessing.

Lord's Prayer/Adjourn

Respectfully Submitted,
Rachael Rice

Green Team News

Did you know?:

The practice of growing your own vegetables has multiple benefits for your health and the environment. For example, eating something you've grown means you're avoiding heavily processed foods that aren't good for you. It lets you control when to harvest your food. Vegetables that ripen in the garden have more nutrients than some store-bought vegetables that must be picked early. The transportation of produce relies heavily on fossil fuels, which means that growing some of your own food would help reduce the reliance on this transportation that is harming the environment. Also, by growing your own food, you are not using chemicals or pesticides that can harm the environment. It gives you a greater connection to the earth and allows you to enjoy nature.

Action:

Think about growing some food this year. If you've never grown anything before, start small - a pot of tomatoes on the deck, some herbs to use for cooking, etc. If you've got the potted tomatoes down, maybe do a raised bed or garden in your yard and get ad-

venturous with growing something new!

January might seem a bit early to be thinking about gardening, but choosing what to grow, getting the seeds, maybe even starting them indoors, and getting your outdoor space ready can eat up the winter pretty quickly! If you're interested in growing food in your backyard, here are some tips:



- Start small and plant things you'd really like to eat.
- Pick a spot with at least 6 hours of good daytime light and access to water.
- Use contaminant-free soil.
- Consider using a raised garden bed, which allows you to control the soil and nutrient blend and makes gardening in smaller spaces or

even on different foundations possible. <https://savvygardening.com/preparing-a-raised-bed-garden/>

- Talk to farmers or other backyard gardeners in your area to get a sense of what grows well in your region and when.

- If you don't have space for a garden at home, a community garden is another option. There are a few in the area, including the East Snyder Community Garden. <https://www.facebook.com/escgpa/>

Source:

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/backyard-gardening-grow-your-own-food-improve-your-health-201206294984>.

Messy Church at St. Paul's on December 1

Katie and Will craft their personal Advent Calendars with the Christmas Story on it.



Crafting Christmas Tree ornaments from buttons at Messy Church.



Participating in the obstacle course, "The Journey to Bethlehem" at Messy Church on December 1.

The Wenrichs are crafting an Advent Calendar at Messy Church.



Celebrating Christmas at St. Paul's



Above:
Senior Choir Director, Amy Caron and Eve share "The Hope of Christmas" as part of the Cantata.

Top Right:
The Youth Choir joined in the Cantata with "Jesus is Born Tonight."



Above:
Isabel shares, "Child of Promise, Child of Love" as part of the Christmas Cantata on December 8.

Left:
Sharing the "Joy of Christmas" as a Quartet are Isabel, Maya, Michael Zettlemyer, and David Hannah as part of the Cantata.



Right:
St. Paul's Senior Choir presented the cantata "The Glory of Christmas" on Sunday, December 8.



Pastor's Report - November 2019



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

Grieving is an expression of love. In worship on All Saints Sunday, Nov. 3, we mourned the loss and celebrated the lives and legacy of those from St. Paul's who passed away during the last year. All Saints Sunday is an opportunity to express gratefulness for those people who pointed us to God through their faith, their love, and their service. Pastor Penny Dollar led the service while Pastor Dietmar was attending a conference.

To love means to give. We know this in our bones. Because we love our children, family, and friends, we devote our lives into them, time, talents, and treasures. Jesus demonstrates with his life and ministry that loving means giving. He offered himself, gave himself as a living sacrifice. By giving we imitate Jesus, we emulate God's very nature. I am deeply grateful for all who participated in this year's stewardship program and who made a commitment to God and to St. Paul's to give generously. We celebrated our love for God and for God's work in and through St. Paul's ministries on Stewardship Sunday, Nov. 10.

We grow in faith when we engage the message of God's love with all senses. That is happening at the Messy Church Program which we offer on the first Sundays of the month for community members, friends, and members of St. Paul's. We have a great group of young families who regularly participate in Messy Church. On Nov. 3, Jane Taylor provided the message. I

am deeply grateful to all, the many volunteers and helpers, who make Messy Church so very successful!

Becoming more green and more sustainable is part of our St. Paul's DNA. At our Hot Topic Conversation on Nov. 24, Derek Martin, the Sustainability Coordinator of Susquehanna University, presented and engaged us in conversation on how we can become better stewards of God's creation. I'm excited about the energy and passion of St. Paul's Green Team, a committed group of people who motivate us and challenge us to become a Creation Justice church. We want to become community leaders in sustainability and, dreaming big, we envision a church roof that is covered with solar panels and "shouts out" that we care for and protect God's creation, our "Mother Earth," the environment that sustains us and all life.

"Don't wait until you are happy to be grateful. Practice gratefulness and you will discover yourself to become happy." In worship on Thanksgiving Sunday, Nov. 24, we focused on how we can live gratefully and what an amazing difference that will make in our lives. My heartfelt gratitude goes to all on the Worship Team who plan, decorate, and make our services moving and meaningful.

Without St. Paul's, people in our community would literally go hungry! Loaves and Fishes and the SACC Holiday Food Basket ministry are vital. I am grateful to all, especially to Randy Tanner who coordinates the Loaves and Fishes food outreach ministry, and to Donnell Kelly who coordinates St. Paul's part of the food baskets, for doing what Jesus called us to do, to feed the hungry. I am proud to pastor such a caring and committed congregation and to serve together with such great volunteers and helpers in feeding the hungry in our community.

I participated in the Installation Service of Rev. Alice Rauch at St. John's UCC in Lewisburg on Nov. 10. Together with Lisa Krex, I participated in the Ecclesiastical Council for Pastor Gary Nottis in Milton on Nov. 17. I facilitated a workshop on stewardship at our Central Association Ministerium on Nov. 19.

Wendell Roush passed away on October 29 and Pastor Penny Dollar officiated at his service on Nov. 4 in our sanctuary.

I continue to visit people in the hospital and nursing homes, send out the weekly e-News, coordinate St. Paul's ministries with our church staff, edit and write for our monthly newsletter, "The Messenger", 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

November 1-30, 2019

Days Worked	19.5
Days off	08.5
Cont. Ed. Days	01
Vacation	00 (23 for 2019)
<u>Holidays</u>	<u>01</u>
Total Days	30

Respectfully submitted,

Dietmar Plajer

Dietmar Plajer,
Pastor and Teacher

JANUARY

Worship Attendance for November & December

November	24	81	Thanksgiving Sunday
~~~~~			
December	1	68	First Sunday of Advent
December	8	156	Cantata
December	15	157	Children's Musical
December	22	000	Fourth Sunday of Advent



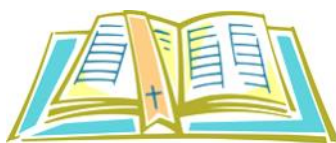
## Future St. Paul's Events

Jan	5	Messy Church - 4:30 pm
Jan	12	New Council Installation - 10:30 am
Jan	19	Birthday Celebration - after worship
Jan	19	Leadership Orientation - 2-3:00 pm
Jan	26	Hot Topic - 9:15 am
Jan	26	New Members Join - 10:30 am
~~~~~		
Feb	2	Messy Church - 4:30 pm
Feb	23	Hot Topic - 9:15 am
Feb	26	Ash Wednesday Service - 7:00 pm
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Mar	1	Messy Church - 4:30 pm
Mar	22	Hot Topic - 9:15 am



## January Lay Lectors

January	5	Sally Lauer
January	12	Michael Zettlemoyer
January	19	Wendy Mull
January	26	Bill Bowers



## New Access to St. Paul's Facility

During office hours, on weekdays from 9:00 am - 2:30 pm, please use the side door (Mill St.) and ring the bell to gain access.

After office hours, you can use the side entrance as you have always done, unlocking it with your key and locking it again after your event/meeting.

## 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, January 31** from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

### Numbers for November 22, 2019:

Total # of families	99
Total # of children	35
Total # of adults	106
Total # of elderly	73
<b>Total # of persons served</b>	<b>214</b>



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

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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)

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### “God is Still Speaking”

<b>Adult Sunday School</b>	<b>9:15 AM</b>
<b>Worship</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>
<b>Children's Sunday School</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>
<b>Wednesday Kids' Group</b>	<b>3:00 PM</b>

Accessible

### Change Service Requested

We thank God for...

The Joyful Noise Choir with director, Jaime Namminga present their Advent Musical Skits in worship on December 15.

