



THE MESSENGER

OUR MISSION IS TO GROW IN FAITH, TO WORSHIP GOD, TO SERVE OTHERS, AND TO WELCOME ALL.

OPERATION RESTORATION
MENDING GOD'S WORLD

Sign up for VBS!

Kids entering grades 1 - 6

July 10 - 14; 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Hymn Sing

SUNDAY, JUNE 18 AT 10 A.M.

YOU ARE WELCOME TO

POOL PARTY

JULY 30, 1:00 - 4:00 PM
AT THE RUDNITSKYS (108 SUSQUEHANNA AVENUE)



GOD IS LOVE - LOVE IS LOVE STICKING WITH LOVE

What a blessing to have eight new members join St. Paul's on Pentecost Sunday! You heard how much these new members value St. Paul's as an Open and Affirming congregation that fully includes and affirms all LGBTQ+ persons. For me this is who we are. It is the heart of the gospel. It is what Jesus taught and stood for. It is what we are called to do, to love unconditionally! No matter what.

During this PRIDE month we celebrate Love - God's love for all and our love for all. Being Open and Affirming and fully LGBTQ+ inclusive means we love like Jesus does. It is the core of the gospel, the heart of the Bible. Jesus says, "Love God with your all. And love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang the law and the prophets." (Matthew 22:37-40).

PFLAG is a support group for LGBTQ+ people and their loved ones. When our son, Felix, came out as transgender, PFLAG was a great help for me. It was a safe place where I felt loved and cared for in and through the transition. I could grieve the loss of our daughter. I heard about other parents' and people's struggles, joys, and frustrations. I felt supported all along the way. PFLAG was the

place where I felt understood, loved, and cared for.

PFLAG is a non-profit organization that functions like other support groups like Weight Watchers, NAMI, and Cancer and Grief Support Groups. PFLAG is so valuable and effective because it meets people in their need, when they are vulnerable, when they hurt. Like other support groups, PFLAG is not a religious organization and not a church group. But we, as St. Paul's, support PFLAG like we do other community groups. Our mission as an Open and Affirming congregation aligns with PFLAG's mission "to create a caring, just, and affirming world for LGBTQ+ people and those who love them." I invite you to come to one of the monthly PFLAG meetings and experience first-hand what it is about. It is an amazing group of people who care, love, support, and affirm each other.

Being and Open and Affirming congregation means we love extravagantly, we love all, we love you for who you are. We love like Jesus. And we never take that back!

I know it makes some people uncomfortable to talk about LGBTQ+ matters.

The question is what do you do with that feeling? Do we reject the person or topic that makes us feel uncomfortable? Or do we remain curious, open, and willing to learn and grow? I believe we are growing to the degree we are willing to ask questions and become uncomfortable. Being curious and willing to learn is the best antidote to worrying and the fear of the unknown. There is so much fear out there. I remember a mentor and friend asking me when I was worried, "What are you afraid of, Dietmar?" It was helpful for me to name the fear. What are you afraid of?

For me being an Open and Affirming congregation boils down to am I willing to love as much as God does? Am I willing to love unconditionally? Am I willing to love persons for who they are? Am I willing to love every person, especially those who are different from me?

God is love. Love is love. Let's stick with love. As people of faith and as followers of Jesus, we never want to take that love back. We love, welcome, and embrace as Jesus does. That is for me something to celebrate (June is Pride month), something to be "out there" about with our rainbow flag. Let's love like Jesus, extravagantly!

If you are concerned and have questions about this or any other topic, please email, text or call me. I'll gladly listen to you with an open mind and open heart. I want to hear and understand you.

Yours faithfully,

Pastor Dietmar

FROM TORRI STARK, OUR YOUTH LEADER



KIDS NIGHT OUT

The last KNO was a great success. Many thanks to Kathy Ulrich for helping! KNO will return in September - have a great summer!

SUNDAY SCHOOL

The last Sunday School was a fun celebration - you may have seen the sidewalk art the kids created. Sunday School will resume in September with a whole new Holy Moly curriculum!

TEEN GROUP

Teen Group is for all students in grades 6 - 12. We will meet again in September and hope to see you then!

OPERATION RESTORATION VBS JULY 10 TO 14 FROM 5:30 TO 7:30 P.M.

Operation Restoration is Monday, July 10 through Friday, July 14 from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. each evening. All children entering first through sixth grade are welcome to participate and bring a friend. We will be mending God's world by exploring a different theme each day: feed, heal, forgive, pray, and rest. Please submit the Vacation Bible School 2023 form found [here](#). If you are interested in helping, please submit the Volunteer Registration VBS 2023 form found [here](#). Hope to see you there!



YOU CAN HELP WITH SOME DONATIONS FOR VBS

For a service project during Vacation Bible School, we are going to make "Paramedic Pamper Kits" for our local Dauntless Hook & Ladder Fire Company. This is a wonderful opportunity for our youngest members to thank the volunteer firefighters and EMTs by decorating and assembling these kits so they can rest, relax, and rejuvenate after helping with emergencies. Two of our members, Stacy & Jacob Koch, are volunteers at the fire company

and will talk to the kids about their work and help distribute the kits to the volunteers. If you are able to donate supplies, please see the list below. Thank you in advance!

Paramedic Pamper Kit Donations:

- Water bottles
- Drink mixes
- Snacks
- Cooling neck wraps
- Johnson & Johnson hand/face

wipes

- Gum
- Squirt guns
- Gift certificates
- Little Debbie's
- S'mores kits
- Shoe boxes

Other craft supplies for VBS:

- Birdseed
- Old crayons (without paper)
- Small stickers

PRAYER LIST

Jackie Barto
 Braxton Beaver
 Ray Benner
 The Family of Lois Ely
 Jim Ferguson
 Gail Fischer
 Cindy Martin
 George Morton
 Amy Pfluger
 Wilbur Reddinger

John Rothermel
 Tony Saylor
 The Family of Brent Sprenkel
 Buddy & Lela Strawser
 Danni Werner
 Andy Womer
 Erin Yatsko

All who keep working in critical situations, especially the health care workers
 All who are grieving
 Those in leadership positions
 Our country - for peace, respect, understanding
 Those who are dear and close to our hearts and those not named above
 The people of Ukraine and all those suffering from the raging war

JUNE & JULY



ANNIVERSARIES

- 6/01 Sharon & Andrew Womer
- 6/02 Stacey & Rick Hawk
- 6/03 Linda & Ray Adams
- Darin & Jaime Namminga
- 6/05 Fritz & Beverly Heinemann
- Kyle & Jennifer Kelly
- 6/06 Tami & Michael Long
- 6/08 Jim & Jane Taylor
- 6/09 Kara & Jason Taylor
- Corey & Ruthann Troup
- 6/17 Mary Ann & Bill Weader
- 6/18 CJ & Christine Jaegers
- 6/20 Sally & Barry Hayhurst
- 6/22 Helen & David Hannah
- Stacy & Jacob Koch
- 6/25 Casara & Nathen Beaver
- Michael & Cheryl Gibson-Doyne
- 6/27 Angela & Jeremy Brouse
- 6/28 Sue & Lamar Henise
- 6/29 Lois & Pat Bruno
- 6/30 Sharon & Charles McCuen
- Sue & Allen Wetzel
- 7/08 Bob & Dolores Bressler
- 7/12 Gene & Wendy Houck
- 7/20 Steve & Kelly Feiler
- 7/21 Jeffrey & Lisa Taylor
- 7/22 Janeen & Joe Longer

THANK YOU NOTES

Dear St. Paul's Church Family,

We are grateful for all the hard work everyone did to have Mary's Celebration of Life Service at the church. We appreciated Dietmar's heartfelt message, Sigrid and Linda in the sound booth, and Kathy and Marty greeting at the door. The

many cards, kind words and prayers meant a lot to us too. Having the organ music played by Gail was also heartfelt. Thank you so much.

Blessings,

Susan & Michael Bolig and all of Mary's family.

I want to thank Dietmar and the congregation of St. Paul's for their recognition of the community service that Loaves & Fishes provides. The ongoing devotion of our congregation and community volunteers is integral to our mission.

Thank you all and God Bless,
 Randy Tanner,
 Volunteer Coordinator



Dear friends at St. Paul's,

My family would like to thank Dietmar for all his prayers and notes to the Adair family. Also to friends of St. Paul's who sent cards. My

heartfelt gratitude to the members of St. Paul's.

God Bless,
 Kay Moffatt & Family

Dear Church Members,

I am overwhelmed with gratitude for the outpouring of love and support you have shown me during my recovery from surgery. Your thoughtful cards, gifts, and gestures have lifted my spirits and brought me so much comfort during this time.

community. Your kind words and deeds have made all the difference in my healing journey, and I will always cherish your thoughtfulness.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your love, prayers, and well wishes. I am forever grateful to have you all in my life.

With sincere appreciation,
 Sigrid Plajer

I am truly blessed to be a part of such a caring and compassionate

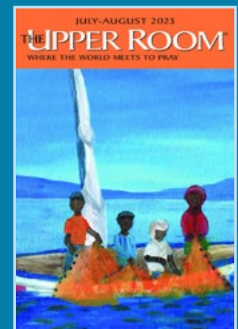


JUNE & JULY BIRTHDAYS

| | | | |
|------|----------------------|------|------------------------|
| 6/01 | Lauren Shambach | 7/05 | Landyn Lukens |
| 6/02 | Michael Bingaman | | Becky Phillips |
| 6/03 | Robert Drumheiser | 7/06 | Danika Burd |
| 6/04 | Diane Spoons | 7/08 | Erin Smith |
| 6/05 | Donnell Kelly | 7/09 | Carolyn Fairl |
| 6/07 | Edna Gingrich | | Henry Lewis |
| | Clema Kline | | Jacob Smith |
| 6/08 | Michael Proger | | Candice Hinckley |
| 6/09 | Ivana Lluveras | 7/10 | Beverly Brown |
| 6/10 | William Weader | | Brenda Campbell |
| | Juliana Walter | 7/11 | Angela Brouse |
| | Lilliana Walter | 7/12 | Daria Richline |
| 6/12 | Lori Kershner | 7/13 | Russ Delp |
| 6/13 | Bill Bowers | | Riley Rebecca Hermann |
| | Patty Erdly | 7/15 | Dan Herrold |
| 6/14 | Nolan Derk | | Kathy Rising |
| | Dietmar Plajer | | Bev Sees |
| 6/15 | Bob Bressler | 7/16 | Stacey Hawk |
| | Ellen Miller | 7/17 | Sam Edmiston |
| 6/18 | Magnolia McCabe | | Duane Rigel |
| | Rebecca Wilson | | Sara Wenrich |
| | Jon Stante | 7/19 | Bryan Lybarger |
| 6/19 | Chyrl Gemberling | | Jared Roush |
| | Suzanne Radel | 7/21 | Timothy Reed |
| 6/22 | Stacy Koch | 7/22 | Janeen Longor |
| 6/25 | Beverly Heinemann | 7/24 | Peter Namet |
| 6/26 | Chris Burd | 7/25 | Susan Bolig |
| | Don Sears | | Mary Ann Weader |
| 6/27 | Trevor Garbo | 7/26 | Debra Witkop |
| 6/28 | Wilbur Reddinger | | Michael A. Zettlemoyer |
| 6/30 | Tanya Loss | 7/29 | Noah Derr |
| 7/01 | Robyn Carper | | Wendy Houck |
| | Angela Hoot | | Troy Frymoyer |
| 7/02 | Bruce Burkhart | 7/30 | Gavin Taylor |
| 7/03 | Mason Beaver | 7/31 | Liam Williard |
| | Daniel Brian Herrold | | |

UPPER ROOM

You can pick up the Upper Room Devotional at the church on Sunday when you come to worship, and on Tuesday to Thursday from 9-2. If you cannot pick up your copy, please call the church office at 570-374-8749.



ST. PAUL'S COUNCIL MEETING MAY 9, 2023

In Attendance: Pastor Dietmar Plajer, Sigrid Plajer as guest, Allen Wetzel, Randy Tanner, Linda Turner, Kim Burkhart, John Fischer, Malcolm Derk, Mary Dahlmann, Shane Sanders, Sara Adams.

Excused: Josh Wenrich, Amy Caron, Michael Zettlemoyer.

Minutes of April Meeting: The April meeting minutes were approved with no changes.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Dietmar sent his April report in advance of the meeting and briefly highlighted the current worship series and the visioning sessions.

Financial Report: The April Financial Reports were sent out in advance of the meeting and were approved as submitted with no concerns.

Visioning & Strategic Planning: The meeting in April was well attended and, with Rev. Dr. Carrie Call facilitating, we were able to focus on future goals. Pastor Dietmar reviewed highlights of the plan and will be emailing an updated document to Council.

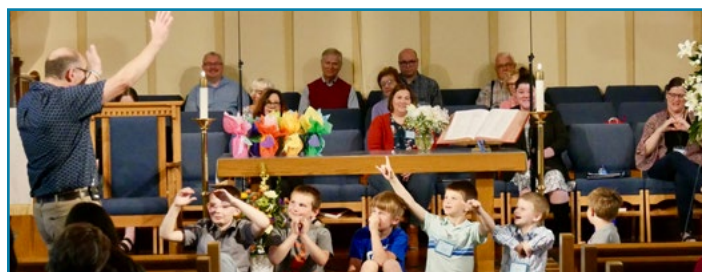
Block Party, September 10: Pastor Dietmar advised we will need a committee for the block party in September. Allen Wetzel-hot dogs; Shane Sanders-something from the Green Team; Randy Tanner-bingo. Will also need to plan for food, the raffle, and music. Messy Church will provide arts & crafts.

Visitation Ministry Coordinator: Pastor Dietmar advised that Susan Bolig and Mary Peterhaensel will share the duties of the Visitation Ministry. Susan will organize/coordinate and Mary will provide pastoral care/visits. Job descriptions and compensation need to be addressed and Mary Dahlmann will take the lead.

Associate Pastor: Pastor Dietmar advised that he is working with the Pastor/Parish Team and with Michael Gibbs to identify needs and responsibilities and to develop a job description. Once finalized, Personnel, as well as a Search Committee, will be involved in selection of this person.

United Church Funds: Stewardship & Finance have interviewed several financial advisors to determine if and where the UC funds should be transferred.

Council Members: John Fischer brought up Fritz Heinemann as a candidate for Council. After discussion, Fritz was confirmed as a candidate and John will pass that information along and invite him to the June Council meeting.



Property & Grounds: Mike Proger will give a 5-minute presentation to the congregation on May 21st regarding the required concrete repairs to the church. Randy Tanner found someone to remove the old kitchen range. Since we no longer prepare and provide community meals, a residential range is all that is needed. Options will be researched and a recommendation will be made in June. The furnace, after repair, worked throughout the winter; however, it is questionable whether it will make it through another winter. Allen Wetzel will get in touch with Mike Proger to begin soliciting quotes.

Church Safety Plan: Nothing new to report on the written plan. John Fischer mentioned locking the front doors during church services. To do that, push bars would need to be installed for fire and safety reasons. Mike Proger has been asked to research installation of the push bars.

Meet & Eat: These are being well attended and the next one will be in the Fall.

New Member Orientation: The second New Member Orientation will be on May 21st, with new members joining on May 28th. The Hospitality Team will organize a reception after the service for new members.

Nursery Attendant: Dara Tuttle has accepted the position of Nursery Attendant. She is local and will start in June. Christian Ed recommended that the second candidate who is also local be hired as a substitute. There would be no additional cost for a substitute; however, it was recommended that, should the candidate accept the position, she come in to observe, train, and meet the children 2-3 Sundays. Council approved the recommendation pending approval by S&F of the additional cost for those 2-3 Sundays (less than \$100 total). Linda Turner will email S&F for approval.

Personnel: Sigrid Plajer is having surgery on May 17 and it is a 6-week recovery. The two weeks she will not be at church, Jevan Beaver will prepare the slides for the service and Linda Turner will prepare e-News.

Communion June 4: Class of '25 will serve - Mary Dahlmann, Malcolm Derk, and John Fischer. Randy Tanner and Linda Turner volunteered to serve with them. Malcolm Derk, as captain, will coordinate. Linda Turner, in advance of the meeting, emailed guidelines on serving communion and the document will be posted in the Communion prep room.

Penn Central Conference Annual Meeting: Two representatives are needed for the annual meeting being held June 9-10 in Lancaster. Representatives can attend via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Turner
Council Secretary

PASTOR'S REPORT APRIL 2023

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

Holy Week from Palm Sunday through Easter has been moving and meaningful for all of us with five different services. With Easter Sunday, April 9, we started a new worship theme "The Heart of the Matter." We explore what is at the heart of our faith. Both Easter worship services (Sunrise and Celebration Service) with trumpet, bells, violin, and choirs were heartwarming and fulfilling.

Messy Church on April 2, focused on Easter and Holy Week. With 75 persons participating, it had the most so far since Sigrid and the Messy Church Team started this ministry in January 2019. It is a delight to see people of all ages engage and explore faith in fun ways. Kids Night Out organized by our Youth Leader, Torri Stark, continues to be a highlight for both children and parents. The children explore biblical stories through crafts and games while the parents get a night off. I am deeply grateful for all who support these vital ministries!

We continued with our Visioning and Strategic Planning process with our Conference Minister, Rev. Dr. Carrie Call, on April 11 and focused on the most promising future-oriented and actionable goals to accomplish. We have so much positive energy and good will to

challenge ourselves to grow, thrive, and become our best in loving God and in serving God's people. All information is available on our website.

I continue to participate in the visioning process of our UCC Central Association (CA) which includes 36 UCC churches in our area and in the planning of the CA's Annual Meeting that took place at St. Paul's on April 29 with the theme of "Fanning the Flames: Fully Alive!" St. Paul's Hospitality Team with Susan Bolig and the Tech Team (Sigrid Plajer and Jean Beaver) did a wonderful job in making the meeting great! Linda Turner and Randy Tanner represented our congregation at the meeting.

We recognized the Loaves and Fishes volunteers/helpers from St. Paul's in worship on April 30. Randy Tanner, as coordinator, is doing an amazing job in organizing, planning, ordering, and accounting for this key ministry. Randy invests many hours each month to make sure it's done properly and works smoothly.

Mary Bolig, a long-term member of St. Paul's passed away on April 23 at her home. We celebrated her life and legacy with a service in our sanctuary on April 26. Her love and legacy live on in all whose lives she touched.

We baptized Brynley Marlene Long

(connected to the Kreitzer and Burd families) in worship on April 16. It's always moving and meaningful to remember with a baptism that we belong to God, that God loves everyone unconditionally, and that we never take that promise back.

Meet and Eat, the wonderful fellowship lunch after worship on April 30 was a great success. We built new relationships and deepened existing ones while sharing around the tables in the fellowship hall. I am deeply grateful to Peggy Peeler, Beverly Heinemann, and Christine Jaegers for spearheading this effort and to all who contribute home cooked dishes and home baked deserts.

Thank you for your prayers, your witness, your giving, your service, and your faithfulness to God and to God's work through St. Paul's. I see God at work in and through you!

April 1-30, 2023

| | |
|----------------------|----|
| Days worked | 18 |
| Days off | 04 |
| Continuing Education | 01 |
| Vacation days | 07 |
| Sick Days | 00 |
| Holidays | 00 |
| Total Days | 30 |

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dietmar Plajer



ST. PAUL'S COUNCIL MEETING JUNE 13, 2023

Because of the timing of the newsletter publication, these newsletter minutes are not the official, approved minutes. After the minutes have been approved at the next meeting, the final minutes are available upon request.

In Attendance: Pastor Dietmar Plajer, Sigrid Plajer as guest, Allen Wetzel, Randy Tanner, Linda Turner, Kim Burkhart, John Fischer, Malcolm Derk, Mary Dahlmann, Shane Sanders, Sara Adams, Amy Caron, Michael Zettlemoyer, Fritz Heinemann. Guests: Susan Bolig and Pastor Mary Peterhaensel.

Excused: Josh Wenrich.

Welcome New Council Member: Fritz Heinemann was welcomed as the newest member of Council and provided a brief background of his work history and his involvement in community projects.

Visitation Ministry: Mary Dahlmann reported that the Personnel Committee was recommending the two Visitation Ministry positions be filled by Susan Bolig as Visitation Ministry Coordinator and Pastor Mary Peterhaensel as Visitation Ministry Pastor. Both Susan and Mary introduced themselves and afterwards left. Upon motion duly made and seconded, Council approved hiring Susan and Mary with the budgeted compensation being shared between the two (\$2,400/year for each).

Minutes of May Meeting: The May meeting minutes were approved as submitted with one change: PA UCC Conference should read Annual Meeting of the Penn Central Conference.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Dietmar sent his May report in advance of the meeting and invited any questions from Council.

Financial Report: The May Financial Reports were sent out in advance of the meeting and were approved as submitted with no concerns.

Strategic Planning: Pastor Dietmar forwarded the updated Strategic Plan prior to the meeting. Discussion is tabled to the July meeting.



Associate Pastor: Council members received information in advance of the meeting from the Pastor-Parish Committee, the Personnel Committee, and Council leadership. The goal is to have funding for 5 years for the position (salary plus benefits). To date we have raised \$300,000. Upon motion duly made and seconded, Council approved going forward with the process, including developing a church profile, forming a search committee, and presenting to the congregation.

United Church Funds: Stewardship & Finance, after interviewing three financial advisors, recommended moving our investments from UC Funds to Northumberland Bank. Factors used to select an advisor included fees charged, historical returns, customer service, and easy access to reports. Upon motion duly made and seconded, Council approved the transfer of funds to Northumberland Bank. John Fischer will ask Marv Rudnitsky to write thank you notes to the other two institutions.

Property & Grounds: Allen Wetzel shared an email from Mike Proger with updates on the concrete and foundation work (waiting to hear back from Rocky Baer), boiler quote(s) (Eaton has backed out of doing the work), and the grease trap inspection report (late in submitting). The old kitchen industrial stove has been removed and we are looking at replacing it with a residential stove. Allen reported that Jack Lewis is going to check with Hobart to see if there are any restrictions on what we buy (do we need to replace it with an industrial stove or, given we do not do community dinners, can we use a residential stove?). Upon motion duly made and seconded, Council approved up to \$2,500 for a new stove if we can use a residential rather than industrial stove.

Emergency Plan: Randy Tanner and Linda Turner presented the Emergency Plan with recommendations on what was needed. Jacob Koch has agreed to review the plan and then meet with Randy and Linda in July.

Block Party, September 10: Shane Sanders agreed to head a team to plan the block party. Linda Turner and Randy Tanner agreed to be on the committee with Shane.

Communion July 2: Class of '23 will serve - Shane Sanders (captain), Sara Adams, Amy Caron, Linda Turner, Michael Zettlemoyer. Michael will be out of town and Kim Burkhart offered to switch with him.

Devotions for July 11 meeting: Shane Sanders

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Turner
Council Secretary

Strategic Plan 2023-2024 - St. Paul's United Church of Christ

*The mission and vision of this plan are established for staff and officers of the church for 2023-2024.
The goals, objectives and responsibilities will shift as we move through the tasks each year.*

Mission Statement: Grow spiritually, worship God, serve others, welcome all.

Vision: We will live our call through passionate engagement, authentic welcome, spiritual growth, and faithful service.

| Vision Element | Goal | Objectives | Responsibility | Assessment | Details/Progress |
|------------------------------|--|---|--|---|------------------|
| Passionate Engagement | Increase engagement | Meet & Eat; Block Party- Sept. 10, 2023 | Peggy Peeler, Chris Jaegers, Bev Heinemann and helpers; Block Party Planning Team and many helpers | How many people show up, how is the atmosphere? | |
| | New Forms of Worship | Worship experiences with a different configuration and age groups | Worship Team and Pastor; Generation Z persons | Feedback form | |
| | Kind Cafe event to reach new populations | Two by the end of 2024 | | | |
| Authentic Welcome | Hospitality before worship | Have good coffee or tea sustainably/BYO travel mugs | Chris Jaegers with the Green Team and helpers | Try it in the Fall of 2023 | |
| Spiritual growth | Additional staff | Explore options for staff, full-time or part-time, time frame, etc. | Council and Pastor | | |
| | Connection with God and St. Paul's in someone's life | Article in newsletter following a template of 3 questions | Jared Roush and Pastor | Each month in the newsletter; maybe video 4x/year | |

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|--|--------------------------------|
| | First Nations Bible study | Collaborate with the church in Brooklyn, NY on this | Shane Sanders and RuthMary Shaffer | | |
| Faithful Service | Offering specifically for SU students (Adulting 101) | | Green Team and Right Relations Team | | |
| | SU connection | Transportation of US students to and from St. Paul's on Sundays | RuthMary Shaffer is contact persons; volunteers | | |
| | Angel tree or similar simple mission project in the area | Marty Blessing and helpers | As in so many tags on the tree and so many taken... | | Needs to be reviewed quarterly |

2023-05-01

PASTOR'S REPORT MAY 2023

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

Eight new members joined St. Paul's on Pentecost Sunday, May 28: Brian Heckman, Timothy Moultrie, Candice Hinckley, Stacy and Jacob Koch, Rev. RuthMary Shaffer, Jared Roush, and Chanin Wendling. This is a wonderful group of dedicated "partners in ministry" who are sharing their gifts and talents in our various ministries. I'm very grateful for how the new members participated in the visioning and strategic planning process and are committed to seeing it come to fruition. Pentecost Sunday was exciting and energy filled with new worship music offered by Micah Earl. You could feel the Spirit moving among us! A great thank you to the worship team for setting up an amazing reception for the new members!

Our faith and ministries are a matter of the heart. That was the worship series we concluded in May. The magnificent heart in the foyer reflects the connection of our heart to the heart of God through what people shared in worship. The worship team, under the leadership of Carolyn Fairl, made the heart and love of our faith visible. I am deeply grateful for the worship team and all their creative expressions! We observed Mother's Day on May 14 and Graduate Recognition Sunday on May 21.

Messy Church on May 14 was the last of the season and focused on the en-

ergy and movements of the Holy Spirit. Fewer participated than normally, but the spirit and atmosphere were, as always, uplifting. The Messy Church Team takes a break for June and July. Messy Church Coordinator Sigrid Plajer and the Messy Church Team are planning for a special Messy Church in the Park on August 13. The last Kids Night Out of the season took place on May 6 and the children's Sunday school concluded on May 21. Youth Leader Torri Stark does a phenomenal job with the educational ministries. We recognized the Christian Education volunteer helpers in worship on May 21.

Music Appreciation Sunday on May 7 was a highlight of the season. I'm deeply grateful for all musicians, choirs, directors, soloists, accompanists, and the tech team with all volunteers who, Sunday by Sunday, inspire us and lift our spirits. We praise God in worship with heart, mind, spirit, body, and soul through amazing music!

I continue to cooperate with St. Paul's ministry teams and committees, like Worship, Messy Church, Christian Education, Stewardship and Finance, Church Growth and Membership, Property and Grounds, etc. I am regularly meeting with guests and community members over coffee. I visit homebound persons and people in nursing facilities. I serve on the UCC Central Association Executive Committee and on the "Winds of the Spirit" Visioning Team. Together with

Barb Lewis, who serves on the Central Association Committee on Ministry, I attended the ordination of Rev. Jeff Hauck at St. Peter's UCC in Lewisburg. I continue to serve on the Selinsgrove Ministerium, comprised of area churches and clergy colleagues, and participated in the National Day of Prayer service on May 4.

I took part in a UCC Clergy Convocation focusing on clergy wellness and wholeness in Lancaster on May 2-3. Together with guest presenters we explored with UCC clergy colleagues from all of PA how to improve vocational, spiritual, emotional, and financial wellness.

Charlotte Barben passed away on May 11 and we celebrated her life and legacy with a funeral service at St. Paul's May 16. The Hospitality Team under Susan Bolig's leadership was great in providing everything the family needed.

Thank you for your prayers, your witness, your giving, your service, and your faithfulness to God and to God's work through St. Paul's. I see God at work in and through you!

May 1-31, 2023

| | |
|----------------------|------|
| Days worked | 20.5 |
| Days off | 06.5 |
| Continuing Education | 03 |
| Vacation days | 00 |
| Sick Days | 00 |
| Holidays | 01 |
| Total Days | 31 |

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dietmar Plajer



WELCOME PASTOR MARY PETERHAENSEL AND SUSAN BOLIG!

Finally, we found the right persons to coordinate and lead our congregation's Visitation Ministry Team. Pastor Mary Peterhaensel will function in the pastoral role of the Visitation Ministry Team, training and supporting those from our congregation who visit homebound persons and those who reside in care/nursing facilities. Pastor Mary will, on occasion, also visit homebound persons and provide home Communion. But the wide majority of actual visits will continue to be done by volunteers. Susan Bolig will coordinate the ministry, keep track of all homebound persons, their families, and those who visit. She will help recruit persons who are willing to visit and explore new ways how we can better care for those who are not able to come to church. Currently, we have a list of 25 persons who are homebound, semi-homebound, or living in nursing facilities. We still need a few persons willing to "adopt" and visit one of those persons one time per month. Please contact Susan Bolig directly or through our church office if you are willing to try out this ministry. We will gladly show you how it works and have written guidelines and "best practices." We continue to hear how much people who visit gain, are blessed, by visiting homebound persons. Pastor Dietmar will continue to be responsible for visiting with people in the hospital and through major life transitions.

Welcome together with us, Pastor Mary as Visitation Ministry Pastor and Susan Bolig and Visitation Ministry Coordinator.

Blessings,
Pastor Dietmar



Mary Peterhaensel

Pastor Mary Peterhaensel is a retired Lutheran pastor who resides in Kreamer. She continues to serve a small church, Trinity Lutheran Church, on Ridge Road in Northumberland. Years ago, Pastor Mary served as missionary in Liberia (West Africa). She went to Gettysburg Seminary and was ordained in the ELCA (the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America). She is part of the Selinsgrove Rotary Club and has a great love for animals. Pastor Mary cares deeply and has a great love for all of God's people.



Susan Bolig

Susan Bolig served in recent years on church council and as council president. Before the pandemic, Susan coordinated the Rejoicing Spirits Ministry which provided worship and fellowship opportunities for people with special needs and the community at large. Susan is married to Michael and together they have Ryan who needs special care. Susan has two adult children, Tommy and Laura Strawser and six granddaughters whom she loves dearly. Susan manages the Strikers Bowling team for youths with special needs and their families. She has a big and wide open heart and cares deeply for all of God's people.



MOVING FROM PLAN TO ACTION



This past spring, the St. Paul's Church Council led an open and inspiring visioning process to develop a strategic plan to guide the work of the church for the next several years. The planning work was initiated as Council, along with the input of several dozen members of the congregation, began by affirming our mission statement - "to grow spiritually, worship God, serve others, and welcome all". Then, through a series of collaborative brain storming sessions, we focused on building a plan that will allow us to continue to fulfill this mission in new and exciting ways. Our enthusiastic brain storming was kept centered and focused through the expert facilitation of Rev. Dr. Carrie Call as we developed a [strategic plan](#) that focuses on four related elements of our vision for St. Paul's. Those elements are Pas-

sionate Engagement, Authentic Welcome, Spiritual Growth, and Faithful Service. For each element, we've identified several achievable goals and objectives, and have begun to identify what groups or individuals might lead our efforts to bring those goals to life.

As exciting as the plan is on paper, it is now important to move from planning to action. And like all good plans, we will need resources beyond our current levels in order to successfully achieve those goals. Perhaps the most important resource we have at St. Paul's is the leadership of Pastor Dietmar, and it is clear that in order for us to successfully implement our strategic plan, we will need additional pastoral leadership. As Council, we recognize that the addition of an Associate Pastor would both

support the essential current work of the church as well as allow us to move forward with the exciting new initiatives outlined in the strategic plan.

The addition of an Associate Pastor will be a significant investment for St. Paul's, but we believe it is an essential element to ensuring we can continue to move forward as a church, helping God's work happen through our hands. We invite your input. Please read the strategic plan and prayerfully consider how you can contribute to its success. Then share your ideas and feedback to the members of Council, or with Pastor Dietmar, and help us move our vision forward into action.

On behalf of Church Council,
John Fischer (Council President)



HONORING OUR GRADUATES

On May 21, we recognized in worship those from our congregation who graduated this year from high school. We are proud of their achievements, bless them, and wish them Godspeed for the next steps on their journey. This year's graduates are Blake Had-don, Emma Herrold, Carolyn Proger, Emerson Voss, and Aubryana Zettlemoyer.



HYMN SING SUNDAY JUNE 18

Hymn Sing Sunday - June 18, 10:00 a.m. - Choose your favorite hymns during worship for us to sing together. There are so many wonderful hymns we do not get to sing throughout the year. This is your chance. We will explore together "Why We Sing." Wendy Mull will present the Children's Message, Sophia Namminga will share her special gift of music and Jaime Namminga will play the piano. Invite a friend and join us!



MESSY CHURCH AUGUST 13

We invite all to Messy Church in the Park on August 13 (rain date August 20) from 4 - 6 p.m. at the East Snyder Park (875 University Avenue in Selinsgrove). More info and signup link are following closer to the date.

SNYDER COUNTY CHILDREN & YOUTH BACKPACK PROGRAM



Items needed are:

- Backpacks for High School and Elementary students (boys and girls)
- Pencil pouches (3-ring binder style)
- Pencil boxes
- Book covers
- Pencil sharpeners (non-electric)
- Glue bottles
- Scissors (safety scissors and regular)
- Construction paper
- Pocket folders (with clasps inside)
- Rulers
- Tissue packets
- Vinyl folders
- Trapper keepers
- Highlighters
- Notebook paper
- Calculators
- Colored pencils
- Washable markers
- Notebooks - single subject

Snyder County Children & Youth is preparing for its 14th annual Back to School Fair, on August 9th, by providing backpacks filled with school supplies to local children in need. You can help by donating any of the following no later than July 20, 2023:

A collection box is outside the Church Secretary's office and a copy of the list be-

low is also posted on the bulletin board. Items will be delivered to C&Y on July 20th, so please be sure to drop your donations into the collection box prior to that date.

If you have any questions, please email Linda at office@saintpauls-ucc.org or call the church office at 570-374-8749.

POOL PARTY

JULY 30 FROM 1 - 4 PM

Come for a time of sunshine and fellowship and swimming in the Rudnitsky's backyard on Sunday, July 30, after lunch from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Drinks and snacks will be provided. Bring a friend or neighbor and a lawn chair. This will be a great opportunity for us to get to know each other better. We also have plenty of room to sit inside if you want to avoid the sun... and the bugs. If it's pouring down rain, we'll try again next year! Sign up [online](#) or contact the church office at 570-374-8749 so we know how many will be attending. We hope you have a wonderful summer!

Raven and Marv Rudnitsky

WE WHOLEHEARTEDLY WELCOME ST. PAUL'S NEWEST MEMBERS



RuthMary Shaffer returns to St. Paul's as her home church. She grew up in Selinsgrove. She is an ordained UCC pastor with a Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary. She is a licensed psychologist. RuthMary is very intentional about "loving out loud." She is building bridges with many community organizations and Susquehanna University student organizations. She keeps inviting SU students to St. Paul's. RuthMary is specifically interested in Bible and group studies and wants to function as lector and sharing her faith.



Jared Roush felt the extravagant welcome of St. Paul's expressed in the welcome statements in our pews. He was surprised by how many people from St. Paul's he already knew through Rotary, the community and his work at Northumberland National Bank. Jared sings in the choir, serves on Stewardship and Finance Team, and is interested in Bible and group studies. He is willing to help with Messy Church and to function as greeter.



Chanin Wendling has come to St. Paul's for about three years. She joined St. Paul's because it is LGBTQ+ inclusive. Chanin will be serving on the Stewardship and Finance Team and as Lector. She is married to Carl Voss and they have two children, Calli in college and Emerson who just graduated from high school and will attend Whitman College in the fall.



Stacy and Jacob Koch felt welcome since they first came in October. Our Youth Leader, Torri Stark, invited them. Stacy helps with Messy Church, Sunday school, VBS and serves on the Christian Education Team. Jacob helps, and is willing to help, with any and all "hands on" ministries like Habitat for Humanity, in the kitchen, on the Property and Grounds Team, and the like. Jacob volunteers with Selinsgrove DH&L and the Fire Police force.



For Brian Heckman and Timothy Moultrie, St. Paul's feels like family. They feel loved for who they are. Brian wants to help in the kitchen with Messy Church and Timothy wants to sing in the choir.



Candice Hinckley returns to St. Paul's after some years away. She is very grateful to live close to her grandson, Odín, whom she brought to Messy Church. Candice will participate in the Card and Care Ministry Team and on the Visitation Team. She is willing to provide rides to and from church and to doctor appointments.



"FAN THE FLAME - FULLY ALIVE" WELCOME BACKPACKS

At its Annual Meeting, the UCC Central Association introduced a new ministry to support the work of Church World Services with their "Welcome Backpacks." Church World Services helps people around the world that are forced to leave their home and begin a new life in various parts of the US. Most come with very few possessions and Church World Services provides them with a "Welcome Backpack." Visit <https://cwsglobal.org/donate/welcome-backpacks> for more information about the project. All UCC Central Association churches were asked to help and St. Paul's committed to providing the following. Items need to be in the Church Office no later than September 14, 2023.

Item 1 17" Backpack

Item 2 1 Gallon Ziploc bag filled with:
5 fruit leather strips
4 protein bars
10 granola bars
6 fruit and grain bars
4 trail mix pouches - 1.75 oz.

Item 3 2.5 Gallon Ziploc bag filled with:
2 bottles of hand sanitizer - 2 oz.
1 Chapstick
10 hair ties
1 small travel hairbrush
4 toothpaste/toothbrush packs
3 packs of tissues
10 disposable masks
1 travel deodorant
10 tampons
10 sanitary napkins
1 pack of cleaning/baby wipes



Won't you help out? Please email Linda in the church office at office@saintpauls-ucc.org or call the office at 570-374-8749 and let her know which of the above 3 items you would be willing to provide (and you can provide more than one item). While the items are not due until mid-September, Linda will need to have an estimate of what we will provide so she can notify the Central Association.



We thank our dedicated Loaves and Fishes volunteers who, under the expert leadership of Randy Tanner, work diligently every month to distribute food to people in need. THANK YOU!

MAJOR REPAIR PROJECT

Major Repair Project - Please watch the [video](#) of Mike Proger (Property and Ground Chair) explaining the repairs that need to be done. These are major repairs on the alley side and behind the office building and sanctuary where water is seeping in, busted concrete, and the sanctuary exit from the balcony to the outside is deteriorated. The staircases from the alley into the fellowship hall need fixing and concrete slabs which are tilted towards the building, replaced. This is a very big project that needs to be done and we want to do it right to last for many years. We are working with Strosser Baer Architects from Sunbury to describe the project and to put it out for bidding. We expect this project to cost between \$100,000-200,000. We ask you to support this project however generously you can with a special gift to St. Paul's Major Repair Fund.

Thank you!
Your Church Council





St. Paul's United Church of Christ

400 North Market Street, Selinsgrove, PA 17870

Tel 570-374-8749

office@saintpauls-ucc.org

saintpauls-ucc.org

Worship Sunday at 10:00 AM

(until September 3)

also on Facebook, YouTube, and our website

"God is Still Speaking"

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

We thank God for...



Pictures from our May Messy Church. Messy Church will be back in August!