



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

# THE MESSENGER

## God is still speaking

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

March 2020

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## Sustaining Creation Group Study - Starting Now

We invite you to focus during this Lenten Season on caring for God's creation. You have the wonderful opportunity to explore in six sessions how you and we together can make a difference in addressing the climate crisis. Over and over the Bible reminds us that the earth is God's precious creation. How do we treat it? How do we care for it? The DVD based study developed by Rev. Dr. Terry Gallagher is a wonderful resource to engage in meaningful conversations in the comfortable setting of a small group. We invite you to participate in one of the following groups:

1. Sundays at 9:15 AM (starts March 1st) - Mixed Adult Group with Dr. Bob Engel in the Council Room.
2. Sundays at 9:15 AM (starts March 1st) - Culture and Christianity Group with Lois Bruno and Raven Rudnitsky in the Meeting Room.
3. Sundays at 9:15 AM (starts March 1st) - Parents, singles, etc. in the Parlor.
4. Tuesdays at 10:30 AM (starts March 3rd) - Women's Group with Sally Lauer, Nancy Leitzel and Pastor Penny.
5. Tuesdays, 2-4 PM (starts March 3rd)- Prayer Shawl Group at Lois Bruno's home, 108 Susquehanna Ave.
6. Wednesdays at 5:30 PM (starts March 4th) - Barb and Jack Lewis, Meeting Room.
7. Thursdays at 9:30 AM (starts March 5th) - Women and Mom's Group with Stacy Heinemann at Stacy's home, 523 8th St.
8. Thursdays at 10:00 AM (starts March 5th) - in the Meeting Room with Marty Blessing.
- 9.&10. Mondays eve, 7-8:30 PM and/or Thursdays eve, 7-8:30 PM and/or Tuesdays breakfast, 7:30 AM and/or Thursdays lunch 12-1PM with Pastor Dietmar in the community, at SU, or at St. Paul's (TBD.)

## Messy Church - March 1 - 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 Eutychus, the man who fell asleep while Paul preached and fell out of the window. Messy Church is for all ages. Children bring their favorite adult. Come and join the fun!

## Sustaining Creation Worship Series - Starting March 1

Faith gives us hope and courage to face the most challenging situations in life as individuals and as a community. We invite you to make worshipping with us in March and April a priority as we wrestle with the climate crisis and how we as people of faith can face the reality, address the challenges, and make a difference. Join us on Sundays at 10:30 for a dose of faith, courage, and hope.

## Go Green With Us - March 29, after worship

Join us for a free lunch and for hands-on activities that will show you how you can make a difference in caring for God's creation. Do you want to build a box to start a raised garden bed this spring? Do you want to learn how you can save heating and cooling costs by insulating your windows and doors? Do you want to learn how you can prepare a yummy meat-free meal? We offer these and additional activities and information how you can make a difference. Spread the word and join us on Sunday, March 29 right after worship (11:45 AM) in the fellowship hall.

## **“Sustaining Creation: Planting Seeds of Climate Hope”**

There are TWO books of God, said St. Francis, the Bible and God’s Creation and both are holy. Our Holy Scriptures of the Hebrew (“Old”) Testament and of the New Testament are sacred witnessed of people who experienced the living God as creator of the universe, as liberator from slavery, as sustainer through challenges, as savior, healer, and prophet in Jesus, and as giver of hope and new life beyond death.

Jesus points us to pay attention to God’s Creation and to its message and wisdom. In the parable of the sower, the seeds and the soils, Jesus challenges those who have ears to listen, whether they are receptive for God’s message, or whether worries choke and smother their faith. Jesus tells us, look at the birds; look at the lilies. They don’t worry. God cares for them. God cares for you. Why do you worry? Jesus

compares our faith to a mustard seed that grows beyond our wildest imagination. God’s creation is holy and precious, a sacred gift of God.

What would we be without God’s good creation? What would we do without “Mother Earth” who nourishes and sustains us? Our Jewish sisters and brothers in faith regard ALL creation as infused by God’s Spirit and by God’s holiness. ALL is God’s. It’s all GOD’s. When our Jewish sisters and brothers pray over a meal, they do so knowing that they take and receive from God’s bounty. And so do we. It’s all God’s sacred body, sacred gift to behold, to treasure and to delight in.

Albert Schweitzer reminds us to practice deep reverence for ALL life. God’s holy creation is sacred, alive, infused with God. The way we treasure, treat or abuse God’s creation we treasure, treat or abuse God.

During this Lenten Season we will focus in worship and in our small group studies on God’s sacred and

holy creation and how we can sustain it. We open our hearts and minds to become more aware of the climate crisis and how we can plant seeds of hope. The climate crisis is real. Ninety-seven out of 100 scientists agree on this. Our global house is on fire. What are we going to do about it?

I ask you to make it a priority to join us in worship for the “Sustaining Creation” series beginning with March 1st. Also, please join one of our small study groups listed on page 1 to explore in the comfortable setting with fellows and friends what we as individuals and what we as a faith community can do to avert the worst, to plant seeds of hope, and to return to treasure and treat Creation as God’s sacred gift. I’m counting on you!

Blessings,

*Dietmar Plajer*

Pastor Dietmar

## **Update From the Tech Team**

Church Council has approved the switch to Breeze, a church management software program. The first obvious change already implemented is that our online giving will now go through Breeze. If you use eGive, please go to our new website as soon as possible and make the switch. Breeze Online Giving is a much easier and more pleasant experience and is safe. No credit card or direct debit info is stored on Breeze or our website; it is all processed very safely and securely through Stripe (but through the Breeze “portal.” On our website, you will find links for both setting up the new Breeze Online Giving and for canceling eGive under the menu Give. Giving electronically can really help St. Paul’s and make the money counters’ life easier

by giving electronically. Try it! Jevan Beaver is our online giving “ambassador.” He will sit down with you and help you set things up, if you’d like his help.

Breeze will do much, much more for St. Paul’s. Kids can be checked in electronically and receive a printed name tag. Attendance at various events is much easier to track through Breeze. Volunteers can receive timely reminders. Best of all, this program can be used by many people in our church to communicate, organize, keep track, follow up, etc. We will finally be able to use our data effectively.

Anyone who wants a Breeze account can email Sue for an invitation to set it up. At this time, you can manage your recurrent Breeze Online Giving through your Breeze account and look at the info that we have stored about you and check it for correct-

ness. Once we have completed the huge task of cleaning up the membership list, we will use Breeze as an online directory just like we use our printed directories. We will also be able to print out directories through Breeze. YOU will always be able to see a whole lot of YOUR own info and only YOUR OWN giving information. With the online directory in Breeze, you would be able to look up another members contact info in the future.

Breezy times ahead! We are excited to embark on this new future.

## **Easter Shoe Ministry**

The Ministry Committee will be gathering names of families needing help with food for St. Paul's Easter Ministry. Gift cards will also be given to families with children under 18 and are distributed along with the food boxes. Thank you for your help!



## **One Great Hour of Sharing - Please Give Generously - March 22**



Our beloved United Church of Christ, together with partners in ministry, helps those who face hardships, disasters, and tragedies. We ask you to join together with our sisters and brothers in faith to help those who need it most.

Recovery is challenging enough for people with means, but hundreds—including people with fixed incomes, the ill, elderly, and disabled—simply lack the resources to rebuild on their own. With generous contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS), the United Church of Christ, with the help of volunteer work teams from around the country, who have given thousands of hours, have restored close to 200 homes in Florida.

A 70-year-old disabled Navy veteran said, "Having a roof that was leaky and falling in was very difficult for me. I did not know what I would do." His Volusia County, Florida home lost most of the roof's shingles to Hurricane Irma's winds (2017). The storm opened the way to major leaks, which destroyed much of the ceiling in the main living area and bedroom.

UCC Disaster Ministries partnered with Volusia Interfaiths/Agencies Networking in Disaster (VIND) to help the most vulnerable disaster survivors. VIND helped the veteran obtain a loan to pay for a new roof, and deployed a volunteer work team from Altoona (Pennsylvania) United Church of Christ to complete the interior repairs in his home. "The volunteers...did it with such love and compassion, taking the job under their wings and making it perfect," the veteran said. "My health was deteriorating due to breathing in particles and debris from the water damage in my home, but it is improving now. I have a new outlook and I am no longer depressed." Thanking

VIND and the volunteers, he said, "You have changed my life."

Needs are being met in Florida with support from OGHS. Volunteer work teams, a construction supervisor, and over two dozen UCC congregations have volunteered to help repair homes.

"While progress has been made in Florida over the last year in recovery, there are still significant unmet needs," said Ken Skalitzky, UCC Disaster Recovery Specialist for the Eastern Region. "Please support disaster recovery with your work teams, donations and prayers," Skalitzky said. "Our ability to support long-term recovery in Florida is but one example of our living the gospel of Christ."

Thank you for your generous support of the One Great Hour of Sharing offering!

## **Will You Sponsor a New Table for Our Fellowship Hall?**

Our old, super-heavy, wooden and chipped tables in the fellowship hall need to be replaced with new, lighter, and easy-to-handle ones. Are you willing to sponsor a new table for the fellowship hall for \$80/table? We need 14 new tables. If we receive more contributions than for the 14 new tables, do you consent that your contribution goes toward the purchase of the two new computers which we need

to purchase for our church office and finance staff?

If you want to contribute, please clearly mark "new tables" in the memo line of the check you make out to St. Paul's UCC.

If you are interested in getting one of the old, heavy wooden tables which we are retiring for your own use or know of someone who may want one, please let our custodian, John Rothermel, know by contacting the church office. Once we purchase the

new tables you will be able to pick yours up.

Thank you so much!



## Children's Sunday School



In February, we focused on Leaders in the Community: Deborah,

David, the Servant Girl, and Josiah. March will be about Observing Lent in the Community. In January, our average attendance

was 11 children each Sunday, which was very exciting. I hope to see that trend continue in February. Showing up is everything! I enjoy learning with the children and preparing a meaningful Sunday School lesson for every Sunday.

Thank you to all helpers who come to be the extra hands and eyes

every Sunday. Our St. Paul's kids are delightful and it is a joy to get to spend time with them every week!

*Sigrid Plajer*

## Messy Church

Thank you to our lovely volunteers who answer the call every month and show up. It is because of them that Messy Church is a monthly success.

In January, we had the most participants so far. February's theme was Loving and Serving, and we focused on how to build a strong foundation in faith, like the man who built his house on the rock. Bird feeders, string art hearts, sun catchers, a calendar placemat with suggestions on how to brighten someone else's day, a

little fun with yummy food, paper bag houses, a relay ski race, and more guaranteed a fun time!

Looking to March, we are focusing on the probably little-known story of young Eutychus, who fell asleep sitting in a window while Paul was talking "still longer" and fell out of the window from a great height. Too everybody's relief, he was miraculously alive, and the community broke bread together. There will be a great egg drop, bread making, votive candleholder decorating, making a first aid kit, and much

more. We will also talk about communion and maybe have a Messy Church communion together.

Thank you for supporting Messy Church!

*Sigrid Plajer*



## Enjoying Messy Church



## Youth Ministry News

I don't know if you've heard, but...the kids and I are having a BLAST on Wednesday afternoons!! I'll be honest, I was reluctant taking this position, but now that we've hit our stride, I could not be happier with the decision. Each week, the kids and I are having really good thought-provoking conversations based on the lessons we are learning. We are taking those lessons and applying them to real-life situations. The games we play reflect the main idea of each week's concept and enables them to get to know each other better, strengthens their team-building skills and well, we just have FUN! Our group is growing and we continue to see new faces each week.

If you would like to know more about our group and the activi-

ties we do, check out our Facebook page, [St. Paul's Kids' Group for All](#).

The Teen Group is now actively underway, kicking off with our trip to The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine's Nightwatch event. We are hosting a birthday celebration for the residents at Penn Village this month and we continue to discuss and schedule team events and service projects.

I would love to get a group of teens together over the summer for a mission trip experience, so please join us for our next meeting on Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup> immediately after the worship service. We have created a [St. Paul's Teen Group](#) Facebook page, so please check it out for all the latest updates on what's happening and other interesting information.

As with all of the programs at St. Paul's, we need the support of our parents, family members and fellow congregants to keep the youth ministry going. If you would like to support our Kids' Group, we could use donations of healthy snacks (goldfish crackers, pretzels, granola bars, cheeses, fresh fruits) or all-natural juices. If you have any questions or would like to become a Youth Ministry volunteer, please feel free to contact me at [youth@saintpauls-ucc.org](mailto:youth@saintpauls-ucc.org). It is with the support of our church family that we continue to bring meaningful experiences to the youth of our community through the efforts of the Youth Ministry programs.

*Stacy Heinemann*  
Youth Leader

## Hartman Center Summer Camp



The Hartman Center is already accepting applications for summer camp. If you are looking for something fun for your kids to do this summer, please check out their website

([www.hartmancenter.com/summer-camp/](http://www.hartmancenter.com/summer-camp/) or Facebook page ([facebook.com/hartmancentercamp/](https://facebook.com/hartmancentercamp/)) for more information.

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

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

*Stacy Heinemann*  
Youth Leader

Barbie Reed presented the Children's Message with her therapy dog Brew. Barbie visits prisons and nursing homes with Brew to brighten the lives of the residents.



## 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.



## Kitchen Cupboard Sunday - March 29



Kitchen Cupboard Sunday will be held on March 29 at St. Paul's.

At the present time we are in need of the following items:

Spaghetti/Pasta  
Spaghetti sauce  
\$10 grocery gift cards

Items can be placed in the foyer on March 29 or at the Mill St. entrance at any time.

If you would like to make a monetary donation, please make your check payable to: Selinsgrove Area Kitchen Cupboard. Thank you for your donations to help those in our community who find themselves in need of food.

## Green Team News

### **Did you know?:**

When asked what action each individual should do, personally, to fight the climate crisis, Greta Thunberg always responds with the same answer; "Inform themselves and try to understand the situation." The Swedish climate activist started the "Fridays for Future" climate strike movement as a 15-year-old sitting alone outside the parliament building in Sweden. She sparked a worldwide movement among young people to fight for their future. She understands that the true solution is education – the more people understand the climate crisis, the more they will mobilize for change.

Ben Eller, as an Environmental Studies major at Susquehanna University, also understands the value of education on the subject. Ben has decided to complete his senior capstone by working with St. Paul's Green Team throughout

this spring semester. He will be helping us with an updated energy audit, then a green energy plan for our church, and with educational opportunities the Green Team is planning for our community as well. We are so happy to have him working with us as we move forward in our mission.



### **Action:**

Strive to better understand what is happening to our planet by reading, listening, and exploring different sources:

• Participate in our Lenten series: **Sustaining Creation: Planting Seeds of Climate Hope**, 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.

• Explore the UCC's Creation Justice page on their website to learn more about the [UCC Council for Climate Justice](#).

• Visit <https://350.org/science/> to learn more about what's going on with our planet.

• Listen to a few Ted Talks or podcasts about the climate crisis – which can be found through a simple Google search.

• Attend St. Paul's **"Go Green With Us"** workshop day on **Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>**.

• Join us for Messy Church on **April 5<sup>th</sup> at 4:30** to learn more about the climate crisis while doing fun activities and crafts.

Shane Sanders,  
Green Team Chair

"This Little Light of Mine..." Raven Rudnitsky presents the Children's Message.



# Thank You Notes

## Thank you for your continued support!

The volunteers of the Selinsgrove Area Kitchen Cupboard would like to thank you for your continued support of the Emergency Food Pantry.

In addition to the shelves that we keep stocked with your donations throughout the year, we are able to assist the Selinsgrove Area Christian Council with supplies to help pack and deliver S.A.C.C. food boxes to those in need during the Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

The Emergency Food Pantry serves an average of two to three individuals and/or households per month throughout the year who find themselves in unexpected circumstances through no fault of their own and who might otherwise go hungry. In addition, we helped pack and deliver 384 S.A.C.C. food boxes right here in the Selinsgrove School District during the 2019 holiday season.

You can be assured that your donations are gratefully appreciated. Nothing is discarded before we assist the Selinsgrove Meals for Seals, Loaves & Fishes or other agencies that request our help.

We are grateful for all the donations we receive from our local churches, Boy Scouts, private clubs and local businesses, as well as so many generous individuals.

Again, thank you for your continued support!

Selinsgrove Area Kitchen Cupboard Volunteers

We want to take this opportunity to express sincere thanks to everyone who sent food, flowers, donations, visits, calls, and any and all expressions of sympathy in the loss of our Jerry.

Special thanks to the Funeral Committee volunteers for all their dedication and kind acts shown our family at this time. Your kindness and support are much more than words can express.

Blessings,  
The family of Jerry Kissinger



Director Beth Derr brings out the best in the Youth Choir Singers.





3/02 Luke Lybarger, Kara Taylor  
 3/03 Gabrielle Kelly  
 3/04 Linda Adams, Bill Bowen, Jim Campbell  
 3/05 Casara Beaver, Maria Kline, Dan Namet  
 3/06 Mary Bartlett  
 3/07 Sigrid Plajer  
 3/08 Erin Doak Carroll, Courtney Hanes, Max Plajer,  
 Renee Wagner  
 3/09 Craig Myers  
 3/11 Karen Athey, Rachael Rice  
 3/12 Scott Bernstein, Alexander Siegel  
 3/13 Lucas Beaver, Kelly Feiler  
 3/16 Jennifer Bernstein, Marty Rhoads  
 3/19 Leslie Imhoof, Eric Witkop  
 3/20 Jim Widmaier  
 3/21 Joanne Lauer, Pat Namet  
 3/22 Amy Caron, Karen Teisher  
 3/23 Kathy Ulrich  
 3/24 Craig Stark  
 3/25 Parker Derr, Quinn Hoot Kranzel  
 3/26 Erin Reed, Molly Snyder, Jeffrey Taylor  
 3/28 Bode Burkhart, Laurie Derr, Matthew Smith  
 3/29 Joan Wagner  
 3/30 Justin Smith, William Weader, IV  
 3/31 Debra Smith, Margaret Weirick

3/10 Max & Ann Leitzel  
 3/12 David & Leslie Imhoof  
 3/16 Bill & Chris Burd  
 3/17 Jim & Linda Forster  
 3/25 Bill & Linda Bowers  
 3/26 Bob & Rachael Rice

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

## **Turn Your Clocks**

**Daylight Saving Time begins on March 8. Don't forget to turn your clocks ahead 1 hour before retiring on March 7.**



## **Prayer List**

**Members:** Mary Dahlmann, Dot & Al Deans, Helen Hannah, Jimmy Kauffman, Caroline Kissinger & family, Jackie Naugle, Randy Tanner, Nancy Wagner.

**Friends:** Candy Adkins, Cheryl Gibson-Doyne, Nancy Everett & family, David W. Hannah (son of Dave Hannah), Hilda Hahn, Harry, The family of Jerry Kissinger, Bill Palmer, Jenny Peeler, The family of Pat Smith, Jean Weidler & the family of Rev. Dennis Weidler, Wayne Wetzal. Special prayers for all those who are serving in the military, leaders of the world, those who are working for peace and understanding, and all the children of the world.

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



## Council Summary - February 11, 2020



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

**Excused:** Susan Bolig.

**Minutes of Previous Meeting:** The minutes from January 13<sup>th</sup> and the treasurer's report were approved.

**Pastor's Report-** Pastor Dietmar mentioned how well Messy Church, Youth Groups and Sunday School are being received.

**Long Range Planning** – This topic will be discussed in a smaller group and then brought to the congregation.

**Group Study** - Starting February 26, there will be a church wide group study "Sustaining Creation". We have several facilitators and group meeting times.

**Green Team** - There will be a "Greening for St. Paul's Team Workshop" on March 29<sup>th</sup> after church. Lunch will be provided. A student from SU will be working with the team for his capstone project and will do an energy audit for us. There will be several presentations and activity tables.

**Technology Upgrade** - The new internet contract was approved and signed, and the new modem should arrive soon. Dan Renkel and Mike Proger have done the work to allow internet coverage in the downstairs areas.

Two new computers will be purchased for the office secretary and for the financial personnel. A new software program "Breeze" has been assessed to replace "Church Windows". It has many features we did not previously have and is very user friendly. Each church member can have an account, and electronic giving will be available. Jevan Beaver will help people with accounts. This software will be \$50.00 a month as was approved by both Council and the Stewardship and Finance Committee.

**Visitation Minister** - We will need a visitation minister to replace Pastor Penny, who is moving to Virginia.

**PFLAG** - Jack Lewis reported that establishing a PFLAG support group is in progress.

**Funeral Coordinator** – Mary Ann Weader will be the coordinator for funeral meals held at St. Paul's. Kay Moffatt and Bill and Linda Bowers will help with these meals. We can also accommodate caterers.

**Table Replacement** - We will be replacing the old, heavy and worn wooden tables in Fellowship Hall with lighter weight ones. We will need 14 tables at a cost of \$80 a table. We are looking for people who might like to sponsor a table.

**Additional Items** - Council members discussed their priorities for St. Paul's.

Church members should make sure that Pastor Dietmar is aware of people in the hospital, so that visitations can be made.

### **New Business:**

**Nursery Attendant** - A motion was approved to hire a nursery attendant due to the resignation of Ivana Lluveras.

**Membership List** - Growth and Membership will be updating the membership list by looking at those who have moved or not attended in some time. We will send them a letter encouraging them to come again

if able.

**Easter Breakfast** - Easter breakfast will not be provided this year. In lieu of this, there will be an opportunity to meet at a local restaurant after the Easter dawn service.

**Summer Worship** - Summer worship time beginning with Memorial Day Weekend, May 24<sup>th</sup>, will begin at 10:00 AM again.

**Pastor's Vacation** – March 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> were approved as vacation days for Pastor Dietmar.

**Senior Choir Accompanist** - A motion was approved to seek an accompanist for the Senior Choir. A motion was approved to hire the Youth Choir accompanist, Olivia Bodner as the Senior Choir accompanist. She will still serve the Youth Choir.

**Church Envelopes** – A motion was approved to buy church envelopes early to save money.

**Summary of Minutes** – A motion was approved to simplify the newsletter minutes to save paper. If desired, a copy of the full minutes may be obtained in the church office.

### **Committee Reports:**

The Christian Ed. committee reported that things are going well with the Kids Groups and with Sunday School. A Nightwatch Service trip to New York is planned, as well as other activities. Messy Church has had 160 different people in attendance since its inception.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Lauer  
Recording Secretary

## Pastor's Report - January 2020



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

Messy Church continues to be a great success with 67 people participating on January 5. The theme was on sheep and goats. Either we trust Jesus and follow him like good sheep or we disregard Jesus' call to care and to be compassionate and do our own thing (goats). The evening included lots of fun crafts, activities, games, music, Bible story, and a free meal. I'm deeply grateful to all who make Messy Church happen. It is a delight to see people of all ages enjoy church.

Together with Jack Lewis and Randy Tanner, I participated in a Teen Suicide Prevention workshop at the American Legion in Sunbury on January 6. Most importantly, every child and teen needs a stable relationship with at least one caring adult to make it through challenging situations. A panel of counselors, law enforcement officers, EMTs, and leaders of community organizations, like the United Way, presented information and facilitated the conversation.

Several of our new members joined us for the beautifully planned Birthday Celebration in the fellowship hall on Sunday, January 19. Rachael and Bob Rice did wonderful in preparing for the event and in making all feel comfortable and enjoy the event.

We gathered for our annual Leadership Orientation with the

newest members of St. Paul's joining the event following the birthday celebration. We explored mission, ministries, how we function as an organization and what makes things run smoothly at St. Paul's. Thanks to all who share their time and talent in furthering God's work and ministries.

We had fifteen new members join St. Paul's in worship on January 26, many of them young families who came and returned to St. Paul's because of personal invitations to Messy Church, to the Joyful Noise Choir, to Kids' Group, and to Children's Sunday school. It is crucial that we offer professional nursery care. Here are the names of St. Paul's newest members in alphabetical order: Sara Adams and Morgan Lewis with their children Henry and Nathan; Malcolm Derk and Erin Goedegebuure with sons Nolan and Teddy; Lori Kershner with children Soren and Sienna; Joyce and George Mensch; Erin and Justin Smith with sons Owen, Rory, and Finn; Torri and Craig Stark with sons Zach and Jack; Jeff Taylor with Louise; Linda Turner; Kelsey and Ben Williard with son Landon.

As part of the Hot Topic Conversation series I presented on January 26 "On Dreams and Faith," how exploring one's dreams can help one grow spiritually. I continue studying the subject on eight weekends with the Philadelphia Jung Seminar.

The Green Team is leading the way in helping us all live more sustainably as individuals, as a congregation, and as a community. I am very grateful for how the Green Team members share every week information and practical steps toward living more sustainably.

Elisabeth "Betsy" Benner died on December 30 and we celebrated her life and legacy with a service in our sanctuary on January 4. Dianne Sheaffer died on January 7 at her Grayson View apartment. I officiated

at the interment service on January 29 in Orchard's Hill Cemetery.

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

January 1-31, 2020

Days Worked	24
Days off	05
Continuing Education	00
Vacation	01
<u>Holidays</u>	<u>01</u>
Total Days	31

Respectfully submitted,

*Dietmar Plajer*

Dietmar Plajer,  
Pastor and Teacher



**Worship Attendance for January & February**

January	26	120	New Members Join
~~~~~			
February	2	108	
February	9	85	
February	16	109	



**March Lay Lectors**

March	1	Susan Bolig
March	8	Marty Blessing
March	15	Rebecca Wilson
March	22	Robert Engel
March	29	Helen Hannah



**Future St. Paul's Events**

- Mar 1 Messy Church - 4:30 pm
  - Mar 1 Lenten Study Groups Begin
  - Mar 6 Teens at Penn Village - 6:30 pm
  - Mar 10 Deadline for Newsletter Articles
  - Mar 15 Teen Group Meeting after Worship
  - Mar 22 Rejoicing Spirits at Sharon - 6:30 pm
  - Mar 29 "Go Green With Us" Event after Worship
- ~~~~~
- Apr 4 SACC Easter Basket Distribution
  - Apr 5 Messy Church - 4:30 pm
  - Apr 9 Maundy Thursday Service - 7:00 pm
  - Apr 10 Good Friday at Sharon Lutheran - 12-3:00 pm
  - Apr 12 Easter Sunrise Service - 6:30 am
  - Apr 12 Easter Worship - 10:30 am
  - Apr 26 Central Assoc. Annual Meeting
  - Apr 26 Rejoicing Spirits at Sharon - 6:30 pm
- ~~~~~
- May 3 Music Appreciation Sunday
  - May 3 Messy Church - 4:30 pm
  - May 24 Summer Worship Begins - 10:00 am
  - May 24 Rejoicing Spirits - 6:30 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, March 27** from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Numbers for January 31, 2020:**

Total # of families	103
Total # of children	50
Total # of adults	125
Total # of elderly	74
<b>Total # of persons served</b>	<b>249</b>



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

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### “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

### Change Service Requested

We thank God for...

Accessible

Fifteen new members joined St. Paul's in worship on January 26.



# Welcoming New Members to St. Paul's



Ben & Kelsey Williard with their son, Landon. Both, Ben and Kelsey work for Family Practice, Kelsey as Physician Assistant and Ben as accountant. We will baptize Landon in worship on March 22.



Sara Adams & Morgan Lewis stand with their children as new members. Sarah works in the music department at SU and Morgan as journalist/writer from home. Henry loves Messy Church and sings in the Joyful Noise Choir.



Jeff Taylor stands with Louise, and Haitian girls for whom him he and his wife, Lisa, care. Jeff is a Pediatrician with Geisinger, treasuring children who have cancer. Jeff has been on many mission trips and will share about his experience at the Hot Topics on May 17.



Erin Goedegebuure & Malcolm Derk with their sons, Nolan and Teddy. Erin is a therapist with Courtyard Counseling Services and Malcolm works in the Grant Alumni Department at SU. The whole family loves Messy Church and Nolan sings in the Joyful Noise Choir.



Craig and Torri Stark stand with their teenage sons, Zach and Jack. Craig teaches in the Communication Department at SU and Torri works in the Registrar's Office. Craig helps with Loaves and Fishes and Torri supports the Youth Ministry.

# New Members Joining St. Paul's



Joyce and George Mensch transferred their membership from First UCC in Middleburg. Over and over, they bring goodies for children and place them on the table in the foyer. Joyce has been knitting hats for St. Paul's children for this cold season. Linda Turner (the mother of Craig Stark) loves and supports the Kids' Group, volunteers at Loaves and Fishes, and participates in the Card and Care Ministry.

Lori Kershner (on the left) with Soren and Sienna  
Lori is married to the Chaplain of SU, Rev. Scott Kershner. She is an artist and teacher part time at SU. Soren loves Sunday school and the whole family enjoyed Messy Church very much!  
Justin and Erin Smith with Owen, Rory, and Finn.  
Justin supervises dozens of workers on various construction sights in Harrisburg and beyond. Erin teaches in the Psychology Department at SU. All of the family enjoy Messy Church very much and Owen loves Sunday school and sings in the Joyful Noise Choir.



# Having Fun at Messy Church

