



THE MESSENGER

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

MUSIC APPRECIATION SUNDAY
MAY 2, 2021
AT 10 AM

ZOOM
Messy Church
May 16, 2021 at 4 PM
[CLICK TO REGISTER](#)

GRADUATE RECOGNITION
MAY 16, 2021

5 GRADUATION SUNDAY

We celebrate our graduates and their accomplishments. Well done!

5 PENTECOST SUNDAY

Our Conference Minister, Rev. Dr. Carrie Call, will deliver the sermon. Welcome!



ON WHERE AND HOW TO EXPERIENCE GOD'S SPIRIT

Can anything top the Easter resurrection experience of Jesus rising from the grave and Jesus raising us to a new life? He defeated the doom and gloom of the tomb raising us into the light, infusing us with hope eternal.

Yes, there is! The next step of our faith journey leads us into experiencing the fire and flame of God's Spirit. While the risen Christ has been seen and experienced in person by the women and his disciple friends back in Jerusalem and its surroundings 2,000 years ago, God's Spirit is universal, transcending space and time.

We can feel the creative power of the Spirit in our lives here and now, in our congregation and in our community as breath of life, in love relationships, as bridging divides toward understanding, as passion for justice and peace.

The Bible talks of various expressions of the Spirit. The breath of life is one of them. As God breathed life into Adam and Eve, as God's Spirit hovered over the waters of creation, God's Spirit is alive in us. When you relax and pay attention to your breath you realize that it's not you making yourself breathe. Your body breathes without you willing it, whether you are awake or asleep. The Bible calls it breath of life, God's Spirit breathing in us, making us come alive. Where and how do you take time to pay attention to your breathing, to God's Spirit breathing in and through you?

The Pentecost story describes God's Spirit as flames and fiery tongues infusing the community of Jesus' disciple friends with new life, energy, and pas-

sion. They are fire and flame, so radically infused with Spirit, that they share the great works and wonders of God with their whole beings. They come fully alive, praising God and carrying the message of God's Spirit Power through the ages. The Spirit's movements reverberate through the ages into our own lives and reality.

The Letters of the Early Church describe our gifts and talents as fruits of the Spirit. Singing, drawing, caring, writing, giving, understanding, you name it, they are gifts. We do not make them happen. They are deeply seated in us. We can embrace and further our given gifts and talents and become better and excel at them or not. In what way are you gifted and how do your gifts and talents find expression in your life? That is how the Spirit is alive and moving in and through you.

When you see someone being used or abused, taken advantage of or treated unfairly, you may notice anger rising in you. The heat and anger over injustice and inflicted pain and suffering are expressions of the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Life. From the prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures to today, people moved by the Spirit expose injustice and unfairness. "No justice, no peace," you heard it expressed. In the United Church of Christ we have a vision towards just peace, meaning, if you want peace, work toward justice, fairness, equality, and inclusion. Justice extends beyond our human relationships to all creation. Working toward Creation Justice, means we care for God's creation as we do for one another. God's

justice extended beyond you and me to all human beings, no matter who they are, and to all creation. In the power of the Spirit we become advocates for justice, compassion, and peace.

You may experience that time flies when you immerse yourself in a craft, hobby, or activity. You can get so wrapped up and excited that you forget yourself in the process. Artists and athletes call it being in the flow, in sync. You may get so excited and come so fully alive in an activity that you forget yourself, your ego. That can be an expression of Spirit. Children are in touch with this more than grownups. They can dance in the rain, forget everything around them as they play, just be without keeping track of time.

Is there something greater to experience than Easter? Yes! God's Spirit powerfully at work in our lives and community right here and now. God's Spirit inspires, moves, imbues us with gifts and talents, comes alive in us when we stand up for things that matter, when we care and lose ourselves in an activity or in service to others.

I invite you during this May to take time to tune into the Spirit's movements that you may come fully alive, fire and flame for God's creation, justice, and peace.

Faithfully yours,

Pastor Dietmar



VIRTUAL HUGS OF GRATITUDE FOR OUR YOUTH LEADER, STACY HEINEMANN

day afternoons in Fellowship Hall for Bible stories, crafts, food and fun. When COVID-19 struck, Stacy utilized her creative talents to plan virtual programming for all ages. Social media, Facebook, websites and zooming all became vehicles for exciting Advent and Lenten Sunday School gatherings as well as the Illustrated Earth curriculum.

and Easter with children and adults cast and costumed as everything from sheep to angels. Stacy, Joanne and Sigrid's hard work brought those sacred stories alive for us in wonderful new ways.

May 30, 2021 will be Stacy's last day as the Youth Leader at St. Paul's. Stacy has done an amazing job as our Youth Leader during a very difficult time. We are so grateful for all the time, energy and love that she has devoted to her work. Before the pandemic, Stacy and her faithful helpers met with the girls and boys from St. Paul's and their friends Wednes-

Christmas trees for the library were decorated and Stacy was featured by the library reading the book she and the children had chosen. Last summer she created a terrific virtual Vacation Bible School and set up five weeks of Compassion Camp in Burkhardt's back yard. It was great fun for all involved. And we can't forget the Pageants for Christmas

Stacy poured her heart and soul into being our Youth Leader and mere words feel inadequate in expressing our gratitude and appreciation. Stacy has new challenges and opportunities in her life now to which she needs to give her full attention so we ask God to bless and guide her in all her future endeavors. And we say "Thank you" from the bottom of our hearts.

Raven Rudnitsky, Chair of Christian Education

ZOOM
Messy Church
May 16, 2021 at 4 PM

Join us for our next Zoom Messy Church on May 16 at 4 PM. Sign up [here](#). We will focus on Pentecost and the fruits of the Spirit. As always, we will deliver your goodie bags directly to your house. Join us for an hour of fun, crafts, games, and Bible stories. We are looking forward to seeing your smiling faces soon!
— Sigrid and the Messy Church Team

MAY



BIRTHDAYS

- 5/01 Mark Minier
- 5/02 Camden Smith
Aubryana Zettlemoyer
- 5/03 Lyle Mercer
- 5/04 Linda Bowers
Ann Leitzel
- 5/05 Finn Smith
Jane Taylor
- 5/06 Ann Groner
- 5/07 Charlie Hermann
Shirley Varner
- 5/08 David Wetzel
- 5/11 Erin Goedegebuure
- 5/12 Malcolm Derk, III
Soren Kershner
- 5/13 Rick Krex
Darin Namminga
- 5/14 Gail Fischer
- 5/17 Connie Erdley
Lucy Wenrich
- 5/19 Debra Brown
Hunter Carper
Shannon Walter
- 5/20 Kim Campbell
Reed McCabe
Grayson Taylor
- 5/22 Wendy Mull
- 5/23 Jillian Haddon
- 5/24 Matthew Kelly
Jan Sears
- 5/25 Randy Laniewski
Kyle Martin
- 5/26 Bradley Berger
Jeremy Brouse
Rev. Penny Dollar
Lorene Eaton
Sienna Kershner
- 5/27 Carisa Kreitzer
Anna Long
John Probst
Linda Turner
- 5/28 Carol Drumheiser
- 5/29 Cullen Straub
- 5/30 Sally Lauer
Eveline Straub
- 5/31 Davie Lauer

PRAYER LIST

Members:

- Ryan Bolig & his parents, Susan & Michael Bolig
- Alex Brouse
- Kim Burkhart
- Al & Dot Deans
- Helen Hannah
- Brenda Hockenbrock
- Dolly Klingler and her family
- Davie Lauer
- Gladys Luckenbaugh
- Lori Rathfon
- Allen Wetzel

Friends:

- Candy Adkins
- Beth
- The family of Robert Luckenbaugh

- Baby Jackson
- The family of Jean Musser
- Diane Rearden
- Kathy S.
- Martha Shuman
- Becky Steffen
- Parents and children affected by Covid-19
- All who lost their jobs
- All who keep working in critical situations, especially the health care workers
- Those who live in abusive relationships
- All who are grieving
- 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.

FROM THE MINISTRY COMMITTEE

On Saturday, April 3, a food distribution was held at our church. Along with the food, our congregation made it possible to donate 17 \$30 gift cards for Bosco's.

Donnell Kelly

Loaves and Fishes Jan. 29

- Families - 70
- Children - 39
- Adults - 71
- Seniors - 66
- Total - 176

Loaves and Fishes Feb. 26

- Families - 64
- Children - 29
- Adults - 53
- Seniors - 57
- Total - 139

Loaves and Fishes March 26

- Families - 56
- Children - 25
- Adults - 52
- Seniors - 55
- Total - 132

MAY



ANNIVERSARIES

- 5/01 Missy & Jake McCabe
- 5/06 Joe & Mindy Martin
- 5/10 Talisha & John Probst
Jack & Jan Riegel
- 5/13 Jacob & Angela Smith
- 5/14 Justin & Erin Smith
- 5/18 Craig & Victoria Stark
- 5/22 Matthew & Heidi Beaver
Jeff & Debra Smith
- 5/24 Lori & Scott Kershner
- 5/29 Dan & Tami Herrold
William & Brenda Hockenbrock



PENTECOST SUNDAY MAY 23

We are excited to welcome our UCC Penn Central Conference Minister, the Rev. Dr. Carrie Call, PhD, to worship with us and to deliver the sermon on Pentecost Sunday, May 23. Since August 2019 Rev. Call serves as the Conference Minister and is entrusted with the spiritual health and wellbeing of 178 congregations, members, and pastors. Rev. Call holds MS and PhD degrees in sociology and education from Cornell University and a Master of Divinity degree from Colgate-Rochester Divinity School. Before serving as Conference Minister, Rev. Call served at Lancaster Seminary, as Associate Conference Minister in the Indiana-Kentucky Conference, and as Pastor of Old First Church in Middletown, NJ. She authored, "Spiritual Healthy Divorce: Navigating Disruption with Insight and Hope" in 2010. She is married to Dr. Ran-

dall Zachman who is Professor Emeritus of Reformation Studies at the University of Notre Dame and currently teaches Church History at Lancaster Seminary. Please welcome the Rev. Dr. Carrie Call together with me on Pentecost Sunday!



THANK YOU NOTES

A Big Thank You to the Easter gift bag team: Barb Lewis, Barbie Reed, Bev Heinemann, Carolyn Fairl, Dietmar Plajer, Jack Lewis, Linda Turner, Lisa Krex, Sigrid Plajer, Stacy Heinemann, Bob Engel, Lois Bruno, and Raven Rudnitsky. Your help was so appreciated from deciding what went in the bags, to decorating them,

creating the name tags, creating the Holy Week pamphlet, bagging the sea glass, filling the bags and the big task of delivering 178 of them to our local church families. I know I had a good time with this project. Great job everyone.

Many Blessings,
Susan Bolig

Want to "Thank You" to all you people that stand out in the heat to give us our food. I am so thankful to you that we have people so willing to do all this so we can eat for a few more weeks. You are a blessing to us old people.

May God keep you in good health in these trying times.

Very thankful,
Mina Royer and Harriett Gray



GRADUATE RECOGNITION SUNDAY MAY 16

We are planning to honor and recognize St. Paul's graduates in worship on May 16. Please join us in person or online as we celebrate these young and accomplished graduates and their great achievements. We will invite them to share a little on what brings them joy, what makes them come alive, and on some of their next steps on their journey.



THANK YOU!

A great thank you to Shelly Myers for creating and gifting the church an amazing Easter Wreath. The wreath itself reminds us of the vine and the branches from John 15, how we can bear fruit when we are rooted and connected with Jesus. The twelve white roses symbolize the twelve disciples of Jesus and how we as followers of Jesus shine and reflect God's beauty. The three purple tulips stand for the Trinity, the three manifestations/persons of God as Creator, Christ, and Sustainer (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), and the four tulip leaves symbolize the cross on which Jesus expressed his eternal love for us all. Thank you, Shelly for expressing your faith and love of God through this wreath which adorns our sanctuary front.

On behalf of St. Paul's, Pastor Dietmar

St. Paul's Council Meeting April 13, 2021

In Attendance: Sara Adams, Marty Blessing, Susan Bolig, Rick Campbell, Amy Caron, Bob Engel, Beverly Heinemann, Stacy Heinemann, Jack Lewis, Ivana Lluveras, Peggy Peeler, Pastor Dietmar & Sigrid Plajer, Shane Sanders, Linda Turner, Kathy Ulrich, Michael Zettlemoyer.

Minutes – A motion was made by Kathy Ulrich and seconded by Linda Turner to approve the minutes from March 9th. The motion was approved.

Financial Report – Bill Hockenbrock reported. Bob Engel made the motion to accept the financial report, Rick Campbell seconded. The motion was approved.

Pastor's Report – Included in newsletter.

Unfinished Business & New Business:

- **Worship in person, via internet and by phone - How do you feel it is going? Any suggestions or concerns?** Sigrid reported: In-person and live-streaming is going well. Phone calls are consistent as well – 5-7 people join by phone every Sunday.
- **Messy Church** - April 18. Sigrid Plajer reported: 33 people are signed up for this coming Sunday. Generally it's 40-45 people attending. The theme is Caring for Creation this week.
- **Children's Sunday School/Youth Ministry, Easter Pageant** - Stacy Heinemann reported: Everyone seemed to enjoy the pageant – it got rave reviews. Sunday School is back to the Illustrated Earth program.
- **Leadership Orientation Zoom Meeting** - March 21 went well, nice attendance.
- **Easter Gift Bags** -178 gift bags delivered. Pamphlet for Holy Week devotions plus a short video on Facebook – it was

very well received and went well.

- **Palm Sunday:** 32 attended. **Maundy Thursday:** 13 attended. **Easter Service:** 46 attended.
- **More greeters now that people are getting vaccinated?** The Council discussed the possibility that some more people will be returning to in-person worship now that vaccines are more widely available. Since we will be continuing social distancing protocols, we discussed having one person at the entrance to the sanctuary to help the newly returned with seating. Susan Bolig will email Church Growth and Membership about that.
- **Hospitality Team:** Susan reported: an email was sent to members asking to be on the team.
- **Pastor Dietmar and Sigrid were on vacation.** Sally Dries was on call and responded to one call that week. Rev. Darin Namminga did the worship service. Pastor Dietmar expressed his appreciation for their help.
- **UCC Central Association Annual Meeting - Sunday April 25 at 3:00pm via zoom.** Need 2 representatives from St Paul's - Bob Engle volunteered. Who else would be available? Marty Blessing volunteered to attend. Sue will email the link out to them.
- **Wireless microphones update.** Sigrid reported: They have not been ordered yet as we did not want any issues during Holy Week and Easter – it is on the agenda for the coming week.
- **Creation Care** - When and how will we continue to learn, explore, act and advocate for Creation Care and become a more sustainable congregation? Green Team leader - Shane Sanders reported: Hoping to have the Green Team meet this summer so we can plan for the fall – maybe planning something for Earth Overshoot Day in late summer. If there

is anyone interested in joining the Green Team, please reach out to Shane.

- **Property and Grounds** - Rick Campbell reported:
 - **Church Roof Repair** - Mike Proger met with the roofer.
 - **Replacing windows on the office wing and future of the Bridal Store** - Discussing a start date – and Mike arranged for a mason to look at the concrete work needed and is awaiting an assessment/estimate. Also waiting for advice about the large windows.
 - When the grease trap was attended to by Roto Rooter it was discovered that the grease trap will need to be replaced. Mike is recommending not to use the sinks in the kitchen because they're not draining correctly.
- **Dare to Dance Again - Rising with Jesus to a New Life Series** - New series from Pastor Dietmar from now until Pentecost (May 23rd). He would like to invite our Conference Minister Carrie Call for Pentecost Sunday.
 - **Summer Bible School plans?** Unfortunately, we don't have anyone to plan it. Who would be willing to take that on? The same company that created last year's is revamping Compassion Camp and that's what they're putting out for this summer.
- **2021 Graduates** – The Council discussed whether it would also be for 2020 grads, as well as hosting it both virtually and in-person. We could also split it between a couple of Sundays.
- **Summer Worship Hours:** They will not change from the current 10am worship time.
- **TOPS** – The group has requested to start using the meeting room again. The council discussed that with our current social distancing guidelines, it's too small for 10 people, so we'd like to hold off on that until at least another 6 weeks.

• **Personnel Report** - Beth Derr, Youth Choir Director, resignation. Marty Reported: On the treasurer search - Linda reviewed the hiring and exit policy - Stewardship & Finance is revising the job description and gave the Council a suggested salary range to approve so they can move forward with the search. Jack made a motion to approve those terms, Marty seconded, and it was approved by the Council.

The Youth Leader position will be discussed at the next Christian Ed meeting.

• **To be addressed in the coming months:**

- **Fellowship Committee:** Focus on events - then get a group for each in-

dividual event, instead of having one group that does everything. It's easier to find someone who will volunteer for one thing more than someone who would sign up for being responsible for all things. Would it be possible now that it's warmer, to have some summer events for families?.

- **What is St. Paul's Vision?**

- **Visitation Ministry Coordinator** - Search is ongoing.

Next council Meeting: May 11, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

Shane Sanders, Council Secretary



You can pick up the Upper Room Devotional at the church, Tuesday to Thursday, 9-2, right inside the Mill St. door. If you cannot pick up your copy, please call the church office at 570-374-8749.



The Strengthen the Church Offering furthers the work of our conference and the national UCC as we work together to strengthen and renew existing congregations, fund leadership development, and provide exciting new programs for youth and young adults.

As we celebrate Pentecost in 2021 we reflect together how can we move from a mindset of scarcity to a mindset of abundance. Covid-19 got us reflecting so much on what we are not able to do. But how about exploring together what we can and what we are called to do? Like

other UCC conferences, our Penn Central Conference is organizing conversations in order to help church leaders move toward a shift in their mindset. Participants explore questions like, What has been the most challenging aspect of the pandemic so far? Where do I see hope amidst it? And what have I learned about myself that I want to hold onto moving forward? These questions of challenge, hope, and learning can help church leaders reflect on the experience of the last year in a way that moves them from scarcity to abundance, toward exploring new ways of being church.

In addition to providing funding for conversations like this one, Strengthen the Church offers grants to congregations for special ministries.

Please join me in strengthening and renewing congregations through our Strengthen the Church offering which we receive on Pentecost Sunday, May 23. You can give online via [saintpauls-ucc/give](https://saintpauls-ucc.org/give) or use an offering envelope.

Thank you so much!
Pastor Dietmar

Pastor's Report - March 2021

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

Creating and distributing the Easter Gift Bags for local church members and friends has been a wonderful project. We received much positive feedback. Thank you to Susan Bolig for initiating this project and to all who contributed to bring it to fruition. I created the Holy Week Devotional and our Media, Technology, and Communications Coordinator (MTCC), Sigrid Plajer, transformed it into an appealing format that we used via all platforms of communication, website, social media, email, and print copies.

"Walking with Jesus through Holy Week" from Palm Sunday to Easter, March 28 to April 4, was our focus in worship and meditation. I created a brief video for every day of Holy Week as an introduction to the focus and meaning of each day of Holy Week. It was an invitation to follow Jesus step by step and explore the message and meaning for each day. Again, our MTCC, Sigrid Plajer became the key figure in filming, editing, and adapting each video for use.

We concluded our "Holy Vessels: A Season of Recovery" worship season during Holy Week. We were invited to go into the grieving, pain, and brokenness of our communal and personal experiences during this Covid-19 pandemic. Like shattered glass we experienced the sharp edges of loss and grief, inviting God's grace and healing to wash over us, to sand off sharp edges and create pieces of beautiful beach glass. I'm

grateful to all who provided Children's Messages during March: Jane Taylor, Peggy Peeler, and Wendy Mull, and to those who functioned as lectors: Linda Turner, Missy McCabe, Daria Kaminskyj, and Shane Sanders.

Our Music Ministry continues under the challenging conditions of the pandemic. I am deeply grateful to Maya Caron for directing a Bell Ensemble during this Lenten Season and to all ringers who participated to make our season special and meaningful. Our Senior Choir members continue to offer virtual anthems for special occasions under the leadership of Amy Caron. Soloists contributed their special gifts through recordings and Carolyn Patton and Jaime Namminga inspire and move us on the piano. I'm very grateful to Joanne Lauer for functioning as Hymn Leader on so many occasions.

Messy Church on March 14 focused on planting seeds of faith and on decorating a cross in the context of our Lenten and upcoming Easter season. I am grateful to all on the great planning team who help children, families, and adults experience faith hands-on through arts, crafts, story, and games.

Thanks to Lisa Krex for inviting us to the "Faith in Action" event on gun violence prevention. One of the four panelists was our UCC Penn Central Conference Minister, Rev. Dr. Carrie Call. Initiated after the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting tragedy, "Moms Demand Action: For Gun Sense in America" has become a great organization that works toward preventing gun violence within

the parameters of the Second Amendment. To be SMART about guns (Secure all guns, Model responsible behavior around guns, Ask about unsecured arms, Recognize suicide risks, and Tell peers to be "SMART").

I'm grateful to all who participated in our Leadership Orientation on Sunday, March 21 at 2 PM as we explored matters of faith from personal experience and reviewed resources about how we function effectively as an organization.

Our Loaves and Fishes food outreach ministry continues to be a key support to local families in need. I'm grateful to our coordinator, Randy Tanner, and all volunteers who support this vital ministry!

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. You are the hands and heart of Jesus in action.

March 1-31, 2021

Days worked	24
Days off	07
Continuing Education	00
Vacation days	00
Holidays	00
Total Days	31

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dietmar Plajer

THANKS TO ALL WHO MADE OUR EASTER PAGEANT POSSIBLE





St. Paul's United Church of Christ
an Open and Affirming congregation

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www.saintpauls-ucc.org

Worship Sunday at 10:00 AM
either on Facebook or our website

“God is Still Speaking”

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

We thank God for...



Thank you to Becky Wilson and Rick Campbell for their dancing!