



# THE MESSENGER

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



"Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God." 1 John 4:7



When trees shimmer in red, orange, and yellow in gorgeous sunshine, we get easily touched and amazed by their beauty and filled with gratitude.

When we sit around the dinner table sharing a scrumptious meal with a yummy-yummy dessert, it comes easy to be grateful.

When we listen to our favorite music or watch our favorite TV show cozily cuddled on a comfy couch, we are grateful and forget for a while our worries and concerns.

But what about when we feel how deeply divided people are about politics, throwing courtesy, kindness, and common decency out the window? How can you ever feel grateful?

When the Covid-19 infections keep rising again and we are limited and, depending on our risk-factors, confined to our homes or apartments, when seniors are becoming more and more isolated, that is not a reason for being grateful.

The Bible teaches us that practicing gratefulness does not depend on feel-

ing comfortable and satisfied. When Paul and Silas were locked up in a rat-hole prison, they gratefully praised God. When Paul looks back at all his hardships, suffering and pain, he still expresses gratefulness. How come? Why can he do that?

The stars shine brightest in the night. When our hearts break, they can break open to God. With less of us and of our comfort we have the opportunity to let more of God in, the God who surrounds us with love and care, ready to bless us in the mess.

I invite you to practice gratefulness. When you wake up in the morning, what are you grateful for? Be specific. When you go to bed, count your blessings. Be specific. You can start small. Do you have running water, heat, enough to eat? Do you have eyes to see, ears to hear, ...

When you look for bright spots, when you look for goodness and name the blessings, they multiply. If you do this regularly, religiously, you will discover that in the



## WHY PRACTICE GRATEFULNESS?

midst of Covid-19, through the fierce political campaigning with all its insults and low points, you will feel blessed.

How come? Because gratefulness goes deeper, right to the heart of who we are. Storms, winds and waves on the ocean can be dangerously turbulent. But the deeper you go, the calmer the ocean gets. It's the same with your heart and soul. The deeper we lean into God and God's goodness and blessings, the calmer you get.

I invite you to be intentional especially during this Thanksgiving month with all its trials and tribulations, to practice gratefulness, to count your blessings. If you make it a habit, it will change your life!

Gratefully yours,

*Pastor Dietmar*



Wilbur and Cheryl Reddinger observed their 30th Wedding Anniversary in St. Paul's sanctuary on September 2nd. Together with Pastor Dietmar they reflected on their love and blessings through the years. They expressed their deep gratitude to God and to one another and recommitted themselves to God, to love, and to each other.



# RE-CREATION

**THE MUSIC:**  
Traditional Hymns! Praise & Worship!  
Children's Songs! Dramatic Pieces!  
Strong Message! Exceptional Variety!  
Original works by: Mary & Jay Muller

**THE WORSHIP SETTING:**  
Vibrant Vocals! State-of-the-Art Sound!  
Respectful Movement! Considerate Dress!  
Sing-A-Longs! Free-will Offering!  
Professional Tour for over 42 years!

**THE MISSION:**  
Founded in 1976!  
National Reach to Vets Homes & Hospitals!  
Each Veterans Show...a Gift!  
Each Re-Creation Cast Member...a Volunteer!  
Remarkable Young Missionaries!

**Sunday, November 15, 2020**  
**7:00 pm Eastern Time**  
**YouTube Channel: Re-Creation USA**  
**Hosted by: St. Paul's UCC, Selinsgrove, PA**



## ALL SAINTS SUNDAY NOVEMBER 1, 2020

Join us for a deeply meaningful worship service on November 1, 2020, at 10 AM, where we celebrate the lives and legacy of members and friends of St. Paul's who passed away during the last year.



# YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS FROM STACY

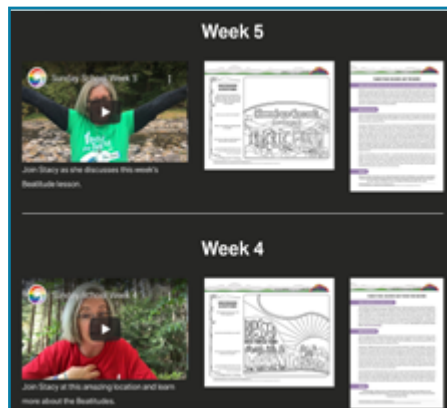


It has been an absolute pleasure bringing the Sunday School program, The Beatitudes, to life for the children, youth and young-at-heart of St. Paul's. The lessons start with a quick question to ponder and discuss at home followed by a 20-second exercise session in which we "climb" a mountain. Each Sunday, I come to you from a different location within Pennsylvania, share my hike and provide a panoramic look at the view before settling in for the lesson.

The first two weeks were an overview of the Beatitudes within the Sermon on the Mount. We learned how the kingdom of God is a reflection of the way the world works when we create communities of love and justice. We discussed the structure of a beatitude, which comes to us as a blessing and a promise. These first two lessons provided us the opportunity to contrast a mentality of scarcity with the reality of abundance and to take the time to consider different areas of our lives that we view as mundane or unfortunate and how God sees those areas differently.

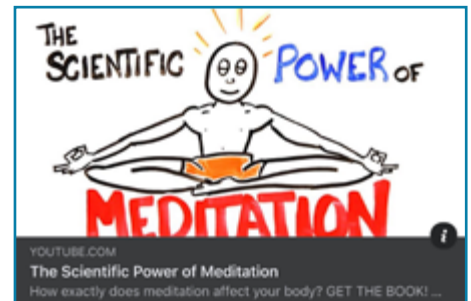


The successive lessons delve into the blessings and promises of each beatitude. We have explored the meaning of "poor in spirit" as it relates to physical poverty and emotional burdens. We have identified ways in which we feel sadness and comfort and the importance of being connected to all of our emotions. We have talked about striving to be better about caring for the earth and how that is relevant to showing gentleness to ourselves and others. We have explored the metaphor of "hunger and thirst" for righteousness and learned a functional meaning of what righteousness is - justice, fairness, what is right and true. We have, so far, imagined a world where all people have what they need and are treated fairly.



I invite you to join me as we continue our journey through the remaining lessons which will be brought to you from more beautiful PA locations! Each Sunday, a new lesson is posted on the St. Paul's website with a coloring page and family lesson guide (<https://www.saint-pauls-ucc.org/beatitudes>).

Kids Group for All is still on hiatus as we take a cautious approach to gathering together. It has been a difficult discussion for the Christian Education Committee, but we hope to have an alternative plan for the community's youth for the upcoming year.



There are weekly Teen Topics posted on our Facebook page for parents and teens to watch and discuss, links to Sunday School, and additional resources for families to exercise their faith at home. If you have not followed our Facebook page yet, what are you waiting for? <https://www.facebook.com/groups/st-paulskidsandteens>



Keep your eye out for information regarding Advent and special holiday programming - we have some exciting plans in the works to finish off this extraordinary year with lots of fun, festivities, and faith!

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at [youth@saintpauls-ucc.org](mailto:youth@saintpauls-ucc.org). I deeply appreciate all of the support and encouragement you continue to provide the Youth Ministry at St. Paul's.



## WILL YOU JOIN ME IN LOVING EXTRAVAGANTLY?

Beloved, love! That is the essence of our faith, to recognize that we are God's beloved, loved beyond measure, and to share that very love through our actions, gifts, and contributions. I imagine God as the never ending source of love and life, like water in a river. It flows constantly and never ends. By loving, we connect to the river of life, God's love that flows in us and through us. By sharing God's love we participate in the very nature of God. Our purpose is to channel God's love.

I invite you to explore the depth and breadth of God's love. It's amazing, beyond our imagination. And I invite you to join Sigrid and me in spreading that very love of God in and through St. Paul's mission and ministries. On the cover of this

newsletter you get a glimpse of the vibrant ministries we will return to in 2021 with your help.

On Sunday, November 22nd, we celebrate God's eternal and never-ending love. We call it Love Sunday, because we join together in expressing our love for God through our giving and our financial commitment to God's work through St. Paul's.

I ask you to open your heart to God's message of love and generosity, as 1 John 4:7 reminds us to do, "Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God."

Pray about your love and giving commitment to St. Paul's. Generous giving is always proportionate giving. What percentage of your income do you give to God? How does your monthly giving compare to your mortgage, your car payment, or your cell phone plan? How does your yearly giving compare to your net worth?

Sigrid and I grew in our faith immensely as we increased our giving in support of God's work through St. Paul's. We tithe, give 10% of our income to God's work through St. Paul's. Putting God first has been incredibly rewarding! We never lack! You can do it, too. Experience the incredible rewards of becoming extravagantly generous!

I am asking you to join Sigrid and me in making a financial commitment to God's work through St. Paul's for 2021. Please pay close attention to the stewardship mailing you will receive in the coming weeks. In it, the leaders of our congregation, Council members and Stewardship and Finance team will share from the heart why they love St. Paul's, which ministries and experiences are their favorites, and why they support the church financially. Also, open your heart to the sharing of our witnessing stewards in worship on November 8th, 15th, and 22nd.

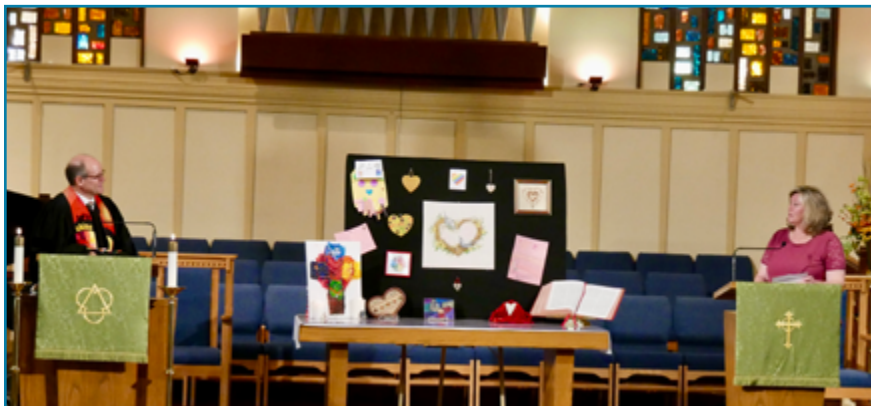
I am NOT asking to you to do what is easy. I am challenging you, asking you to do what is hard, to take God's call of growing in faith and of loving extravagantly seriously, to give sacrificially, in proportion to your income, and to join me in making a giving commitment to St. Paul's.

I hope and pray you will join me in loving extravagantly!

Faithfully,

*Pastor Dietmar*

# THANK YOU NOTES



Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your kindness, caring, love, and genuine appreciation you expressed to us on the occasion of Pastor's Appreciation Sunday, which we observed on the second Sunday in October. We received 19 cards and letters of appreciation, with gift cards and generous gifts. We will invest the \$200 Amazon gift certificate in books, and art/pottery/craft supplies. We appreciate your partnership and support in ministry very much. As our programs remind us, we are ALL ministers and we would not be the church we are, the Body of Christ, accomplishing the mission and ministries if it would

not be for you, the dedicated, caring, and committed servants you are. On behalf of both of us, a great Thank You!  
Gratefully, Pastor Dietmar and Sigrid Plajer

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Dear Members & Friends of St. Paul's,

I wish to thank everyone for their prayers, visits, phone calls, cards, flowers, goodies and snacks, and other acts of kindness during my 1 year+ stay at The Manor. A special thank you to Pastor Dietmar for his prayers, calls, and visits.

St. Paul's is a very caring congregation.

In Christian Love,  
Nancy Wagner



## CARD SHOWER FOR ETHEL FOOR

Ethel is moving closer to her daughter Corinne in Elizabethtown after Thanksgiving. We would like to send her off with a card shower. Please send cards to: Ethel Foor, 200 Charles Avenue, Selinsgrove, PA 17870.



## UPPER ROOM

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



## CHRISTMAS BELL CHOIR

Stay tuned for a little Bell Choir music for the Christmas season! We are exploring how to best make that happen for Christmas. If you would like to participate, please let Gail or Amy know.

# THANKSGIVING AND CHRISTMAS MINISTRY



Fred and Donnell Kelly are delivering food baskets.

## Are You Willing to Help Deliver Food Baskets?

Together with our sister congregations from the Selinsgrove area, we support local families in need with food baskets for Thanksgiving and Christmas. We are looking for helpers to deliver these food boxes to persons in and around Selinsgrove on Saturday morning, November 21st. It takes 30-45 minutes to accomplish this task. If you are willing to help, please contact Donnell Kelly at [dnfkelly3@ptd.net](mailto:dnfkelly3@ptd.net) or call the church office at (570) 374-8749. Thank you!

## PRAYER LIST

### Members:

Terry Beaver  
 Willard "Bill" Bowen  
 Al & Dot Deans  
 Carol Dickinson  
 Ethel Foor  
 Helen Hannah  
 Jimmy Kauffman  
 Pat Namet  
 Janet Siegfried  
 Rev. Jack Snook  
 June Straub  
 Nancy Wagner  
 Margaret Weirick

### Friends:

Mary Anne Britton  
 Ginny Lloyd  
 Nancy Moore  
 Asher Noll  
 Becky Steffen  
 Pat Snook  
 Don & Maddie Walter  
 The family of Sandra Warmoth  
 All government & campaign officials who tested positive for Covid-19  
 The President and The First Lady of the US who tested positive for Covid-19

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.

## BIRTHDAYS

- 11/01 Al Deans  
Harry Derr  
Kathy Straub
- 11/02 Jimmy Kauffman  
Scott Kershner
- 11/03 Rick Campbell  
Owen Smith
- 11/05 Kelsey Williard
- 11/06 Carey Napp
- 11/07 Myia Brosius
- 11/09 Marty Blessing  
Bill Burd  
Brenda Hockenbrock
- 11/10 Missy McCabe  
Linda Thomas  
Anna Mary Wetzel
- 11/15 Pat Bruno
- 11/16 Benjamin Hanes
- 11/17 Samantha Bernstein  
Freya Probst
- 11/19 Ethan Kelly  
Michael T. Zettlemoyer
- 11/21 Ray Benner  
Jackson Lybarger
- 11/22 Jody Sees
- 11/23 Mike Dressler
- 11/25 Linsley Gentile  
Owen Spriggle
- 11/26 Stephen Groner  
Charles Siegel  
Angela Smith
- 11/29 Ann Aurand
- 11/30 Sharon McCuen

## ANNIVERSARIES

- 11/06 James & Suzanne Radel
- 11/08 Kim & Bruce Burkhardt  
Wendy & Bill Mull
- 11/17 Joseph & Kenda Dubaskas, Jr.
- 11/20 Dennis & Darlene Attig
- 11/23 Fred & Donnell Kelly
- 11/24 Denise & Roger Haddon
- 11/29 Malcolm Derk & Erin Goedegebuure

# St. Paul's Council Meeting October 13, 2020

**In Attendance:** Joanne Lauer, Pastor Dietmar, Raven Rudnitsky, Bev Heinemann, Robert Engel, John Fischer, Sigrid Plajer, Carolyn Fairl, Marty Blessing, Lisa Krex, Richard Campbell, Jack Lewis, Ivana Lluveras, Stacy Heinemann, Susan Bolig, Kathy Ulrich, Peggy Peeler.

Kathy Ulrich was welcomed to Church Council.

**Minutes** – A motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the September minutes.

**Financial Report** – A motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the financial report.

**Pastor's Report** – The pastor has been counseling people. People are being attracted to our Open and Affirming flags. Young people will check out our website. He continues to connect with the interfaith community in Sunbury. Each of the colleagues are from different traditions and backgrounds. They have an outreach program. Thank you to all who gave him Pastor Appreciation cards, and thank you to Carolyn Fairl, who acknowledged him on Sunday in the service. Jevan Beaver is appreciated, as is Sigrid, for being there on Sundays to help with the technical aspects of the service. Jevan has been there every Sunday.

## **Unfinished Business:**

**Worship in Person** – Things are going smoothly. We have a 25 people limit in sanctuary. We may need to rethink this for all Saints Day on November 1st. We can include the upper room for an increased seating capacity.

**Technology Upgrade and Live Streaming** – Sigrid reporting – We have all the

technology equipment now. We are still working with the audio to make it work correctly. Things are going well. We are trying hard to make it all work. We need to get some others trained to use the equipment, but we will probably need either Jevan or Sigrid there due to the complexity of making it all work right.

**Solar Panels and Roof Repair** – We have no new information beyond what we have so far. Mike Proger was back in touch with the company. The long term goal is to move toward sustainability. We need new windows to achieve our goal. We are gathering more and more information.

**Visitation Ministry Coordinator** – We are still searching for this position.

**Adult Group Study (Sunday School) on Wednesdays at 7 PM** – Raven Rudnitsky reported – Sunday School has been going very well. There are between 12 and 16 people who attend each week. We are doing the Rob Bell Nooma series. The videos can be viewed in advance. The sessions are from 7 PM to 8:30 PM. We will try to do a hot topic once a month. We are looking for videos to show. Anyone can join the group by clicking on the link provided in the email. To be placed on the email to obtain the information, contact Sigrid Plajer at tech@saintpauls-ucc.org to be added to the list.

**Children's Sunday School** – Stacy Heinemann reported – She has been scouting out places to hike and filming from these locations about the Beatitudes. The videos are posted on Sunday for the week on <https://www.saintpauls-ucc.org/beatitudes> and on Facebook. Parents are sent an email each week with the information they need to log on.

**Youth Group** – Youth Group is on hold until something is worked out for this group, since they are busy and already spend a lot of time online. We will try to come up with a Christmas pageant. We will have Advent lessons with hands on things to do.

## **New Business:**

**"Beloved, let us love!" Stewardship Program** – Stewardship Sunday will be November 22nd. We will express our love for God, our community and for each other. A letter will be sent out to the congregation. We want to be able to bring back our ministries when the pandemic is over, such as Messy Church, the Children's Choir, our Senior Choir and other things we have had to put on pause due to the pandemic.

**Finding New Council Members for 2021-2023 term** – We need five new council members for the year 2021. Please let Raven know if you are interested in serving. Meetings will be held via Zoom until it is safe to meet in person.

**Committee Members** – New members will be needed to fill the vacancies on the Committees for 2021. The Committee Support Team (Jack Lewis, Joanne Lauer, Barb Lewis) will look into getting new members. If interested in a committee, please notify one of the people on the Committee Support Team.

**2021 Mission Plan** – Budget Preparation – The Stewardship and Finance Committee is creating a budget for 2021.

**TOPS** – TOPS will hold a Christmas Gathering in the fellowship hall on December 4th. They regularly meet in the Fellowship Hall on Fridays.



**Hosting Re-Creation Concert** – We will support Re-Creation’s virtual concert by advertising and inviting our congregation and the community to join in the live stream concert they will do to support their mission of supporting veterans throughout the United States.

**“Blue Christmas” Worship Service** – This year we have a unique opportunity to observe a quiet and meditative service for all for whom Christmas is not a joyous season, those who do not feel like celebrating with “Joy to the World”. It

might be held on December 20th in the evening. This service might be held at St. Paul’s.

**How are we going to do Christmas Eve** – We might have two services and clean the sanctuary between services. Prayer partners will have to deliver gifts to people’s houses.

**Vacation Pastor Dietmar** – A motion was made, seconded and approved to provide vacation time for Pastor Dietmar for Nov. 4-7 and Nov. 16-21.

**Important Dates** – Pet Blessing at the Rec Center in Selinsgrove on October 19th at 5 PM.

**Good of the Order** – Friends Helping Friends October 14 and 15 at Boscovs. A percentage of the sale goes to St. Paul’s.

**Next Council Meeting** – November 10th

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joanne Lauer, Recording Secretary

## Pastor’s Report September 2020

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

“The Heart of the Matter” is the theme for our worship series which we started on Kickoff Sunday, September 13. Each Sunday we focus on one way how we connect with God through our hearts and how we can embody God’s love in our lives and service. Members and friends submitted Heart Art to display in our sanctuary. We continue to receive electronic Children’s Messages and submissions of special music. Lectors provide the scripture readings in person or electronically. I am very grateful to Mary Dahlmann and Jack Lewis for functioning as greeters and ushers, reflecting God’s welcome and care in all they do. I am deeply grateful to all on the worship team and contributing members who make our worship services moving and meaningful!

Our monthly “The Messenger” newsletter appears in color in a new format that is more appealing and makes our ministries more visible and tangible. Every week we email our Friday eNews to about 230 recipients. The Friday eNews provides information and invitations to join our Sunday worship services and various ministries, provides updates on prayer

concerns and giving and keeps members and friends current on what’s going on at St. Paul’s. Our church website is amazing and provides all ample information on mission, ministries, giving, and how to get involved and participate. Every week we provide an Announcement Sheet to all who worship in person with us with info on worship theme, upcoming ministries, prayer concerns, and giving. It is also published on our website.

We are in the process up finishing the technological upgrades with cameras, sound board, live-streaming equipment, computers, and new software in our sanctuary. It has been a huge task to get it all installed and working smoothly. Our tech gurus, Jevan Beaver and Sigrid Plajer, improve constantly and continue exploring how to enhance the presentations and transmission. Challenges abound.

I provided pastoral counseling and care to people in challenging situations from our congregation and beyond. I officiated the Celebration of Life for Jerry Anselmo with family and friends on September 5th. Cheryl and Wilbur Reddinger celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary in our sanctuary on September 2nd. I met over coffee with a young couple who are new to our community. I write and send

out many handwritten notes to people on our prayer list.

I am deeply grateful to all who keep providing opportunities for adults, children, and families to grow in faith, hope, and love. Twelve to 14 persons meet regularly on Wednesdays at 7 PM to explore matters of faith and life based on the Nooma series by Rob Bell. Raven Rudnitsky and Lois Bruno facilitate the group conversations. Youth Leader, Stacy Heinemann, provides an amazing video based children’s study for our younger families on Jesus’ beatitudes. Also, Stacy provides Facebook posts to engage teenagers.

I invest much of my time in cooperation with the various committees and ministry teams, in planning for church programs, and in administration. I continue to participate in a clergy support group, consult with colleagues on best practices, and on how we can improve our overall ministries. I continue to engage in the inter-faith dialogue in our valley, participate in the mission of the United Way Council for Diversity and Inclusion.

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



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

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[www.saintpauls-ucc.org](http://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...



The Interfaith Pet Blessing on October 19 at the REC was a moving event.