



THE MESSENGER

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



02

LEARNING TO PRAY WORSHIP SERIES

We continue to explore prayer on Sundays at 10:30 AM.

October 10 at 4 PM
at St. Paul's in the Fellowship Hall
MASKS REQUIRED



03

COME TO MESSY CHURCH ON OCT. 10

Sign up at saintpauls-ucc.org to let us know you're coming!



Kids Group

03

KIDS GROUP AND SUNDAY SCHOOL

All children are invited to Sunday School and Kids Group. Join the fun!

Arrival: 3:00 - 3:30
Program: 3:30 - 5:15
Pick up by 5:30



05

NEW STUDY GROUP STARTS OCTOBER 7

Raven will lead us in discussion via Zoom. Let her know you're interested!

St. Paul's United Church of Christ
400 N. Maple St. Selmsgrove
saintpauls-ucc.org



WHY AND HOW TO PRAY

Prayer Beads are a tangible tool to explore and practice prayer. Each bead has its own meaning. It is to help us get in touch with one specific aspect of prayer. What breathing is to the body, prayer is to the soul. It's life giving. It connects us to God.

The soul part in us is already connected with God and praying. Yet often we get distracted, lose focus, and forget to return to our souls and to God. Think of your cell phone running out of juice. You need to recharge it. Similarly, we need to reconnect to the source of life.

God is close by, as close as our own heartbeat. That is how Jesus describes God's realm; it is in our midst, in us and among us. Same from Paul: "We live in God, move in God, and have our being in God." God is like the ocean in which we swim; like the air which we breathe; like the brine in which we are pickled.

At times I feel like the little fish in the ocean, looking around and asking, "Hello, hello, anyone here who can show me where the ocean is?"

God close by, like your own heart, is very different from how we may imagine

God beyond the clouds and heaven as the far beyond, unreachable until we die.

The Worsip Team decorated the sanctuary to perfection for this prayer series. The candle installation on the communion table is another invitation to prayer. From ancient times, candles have been symbols of prayer. Burning, shining, light giving. One single candle can dispel the darkness. During our offertory time in worship we invite you to light a candle and offer your personal prayer to God as you do this.

In the pew pockets we have papers on which you can write your personal prayers and attach them to the prayer cross in the back of the sanctuary. The cross is a symbol of Jesus' presence. We can share with Jesus all that is on our hearts, what weighs us down, what gives us joy, our frustrations, our gratitude, our longing and need for help. Hand it to Jesus! Let go and let God are meaningful ways to practice prayer.

Outside, on our front lawn we have an installation of prayer ribbons attached to a fence. We invite the community to join us in offering prayers and have the wind spread them. It's a 24/7 prayer sta-

tion. I invite you to join us in adding your prayers in the form of ribbons to the installation. Stop by at any time. You find a clip board with prayer prompts, "Thank you for...; I need help with...; "I am feeling..." You can write your personal prayer on a ribbon and tie it to the fence. The wind will spread it into the community.

Prayer beads, candles, prayer cross, and prayer ribbons are four specific ways how you can join us in focusing on prayer, on practicing prayer, and on connecting more deeply with the living God. If you have not done so yet, I invite you to join us in person or online to experience the amazing power of prayer to refresh your soul, to renew your spirit, and boost your energy.

Will you pray with me this season? I hold you in my heart!

Yours,

Pastor Dietmar



Kids Group

Kids Group is our Wednesday after-school program for students in grades K-5. We are using a new curriculum called Holy Moly! It is designed to engage the kids' imagination as they learn about stories from the Bible. Snacks, games, activities, and engaging videos make learning about God and building lasting friendships fun. I invite you to bring your children where they can explore faith in a

fun and safe environment. Want to be involved even if you don't have kids? We are looking for volunteers who are available at 3:00 on Wednesdays to help. If interested, please contact Torri at youth@saintpauls-ucc.org. I do all the preparation and teaching - all you have to do is have fun with the kids!

Torri Stark,
Youth Leader



Children's Sunday School

Sunday School is for students in grades K-5 and meets during church after the Children's Message. We are using a new curriculum called Spark: Activate Faith. This fun, engaging series focuses on stories from the Old Testament during the fall and the New Testament in the spring. Every week the children receive a family page with talking points and activities related to

the lesson. Please encourage your child to join us and parents are always welcome, too!

We are looking for volunteers to help. If you are interested, please contact Torri at youth@saintpauls-ucc.org. I do all the preparation and teaching - all you have to do is have fun with the kids!

Torri Stark,
Youth Leader

October 10 at 4 PM



at St. Paul's in the Fellowship Hall
MASKS REQUIRED

Messy Church

Join us on Sunday, October 10, at 4 PM for Messy Church in our fellowship hall. We will explore the story of blind Bartimaeus. On the surface this appears to be a story of physical blindness and healing, but a deeper look reveals it to be a story of persistence, compassion, and new beginnings. There will be plenty of fun activities: an obstacle course, creating a megaphone, a grab bag, reading by touching (like Braille), Bartimaeus in a bag, and which animals see at night and during the day. In order to keep all safe, we require everyone to wear a mask. Instead of the family style meal we will offer everyone to take home a bag with healthy snacks. You can sign up at www.saintpauls-ucc.org/messy-church-signup. Hope to see you there.

PRAYER LIST

Members:

Mary Bolig
 Al & Dot Deans
 David Hannah
 Helen Hannah
 Verlyn Smith

Friends:

The family of Mahlon Boop
 The family of Ina Davis
 Pam Feltenberger
 Francie Glowatski
 Tunde Ogunnaike
 Our community
 The family of Kathy Showers
 Bill Wenrich

All affected by Covid-19
 All who lost their jobs
 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

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.



OCTOBER



BIRTHDAYS

- 10/01 Stacy Heinemann
- 10/02 Maya Caron
- 10/04 Mary Ruhl
Evelyn Smith
- 10/07 Austin Imhoof
Lori Rathfon
- 10/08 Cindy Smith
- 10/09 Sally Krouse
- 10/12 Nicole Lukens
- 10/16 Kim Haizlett
- 10/17 Isabelle Snyder
- 10/20 Tami Herrold
Lori Proger
- 10/21 Katie Proger
- 10/22 Fred Kelly
Becky Namet
- 10/23 Lisa Krex
Jeremy Napp
- 10/25 Alex Brouse
Timothy Reed
Jake Ulrich
- 10/26 Lisa Taylor
- 10/29 Karen Koppenhaver
Carolyn Patton
- 10/30 Megan Campbell
- 10/31 Kyle Kelly
Randy Tanner

THANK YOU

Thank you so much for all the cards and well wishes during the loss of my sister and illness. They were very much appreciated. Thank you all, my church family.

Blessings,
 Chyrl Gemberling



Loaves and Fishes July

Families 47
 Children 22
 Adults 39
 Seniors 48
 Total served 109

Loaves and Fishes August

Families 53
 Children 25
 Adults 48
 Seniors 50
 Total served 123

OCTOBER



ANNIVERSARIES

- 10/01 Robert & Lori Rathfon
Duane & Kim Rigel
- 10/03 John & Gail Fischer
- 10/10 Michael & Lori Proger
Don & Jan Sears
- 10/15 Joe & Cerene Dubaskas
Charles & Michelle Siegel
Grant & Diane Spoons
- 10/16 Bob & Debra Brown
Matt & Taleisha Burd
- 10/17 Page & Bryan Lybarger
- 10/20 Barry "Buzz" & Janet Siegfried

New Zoom Study Group begins Oct. 7

For ten weeks beginning THURSDAY, October 7th we will meet via Zoom from 7:00-8:30. We will skip Thanksgiving Day November 25th and have our last gathering on December 16th. A day or two before each session all who wish to participate will receive the Zoom link, and we will all view the 20-30 minute DVD together for the first time each Thursday.

One of the presenters is Diana Butler Bass in a series entitled "Embracing Spiritual Awakening". She will help us explore what Christianity may look like "beyond religion and beyond the church" during what she believes is another of history's "great awakenings". The other five sessions entitled "Embracing An Alternative Orthodoxy" are facilitated by Richard Rohr, a Franciscan priest. He will guide us in exploring a Christian faith informed by contemplation, mysticism, compassion, justice and centuries of rich Christian history.

I hope all the "old timers" and lots of new people will join us for what I know will be interesting, thought provoking discussions and wonderful fellowship. Please let me know directly if you are interested in being part of this group or call (570-374-8749) or email the church office (office@saintpauls-ucc.org).

Peace and blessings to all, Raven



Joyful Noise

It's good to be back here at St. Paul's! I'm already enjoying seeing lots of familiar faces and meeting new friendly ones as well. It reminds me of the many charms of small-town life, and makes me very happy to be here again.

I am purposely referring to our Joyful Noise times as "meetings" and not "rehearsals", because with children, I think the music-making should be process-focused. When we meet, we are not rehearsing towards a certain product, but coming together to develop our musical and social skills in a fun, creative, and kid-centered way.

Another feature of our meetings is that even though Joyful Noise has been known as a "choir", I as director am treating it more like a music class where we play instruments, move to music, and sing. I am using an approach that I learned this summer in an intensive training I received called Orff Schulwerk. In Orff-Schulwerk music experiences are very hands-on, where kids not only sing, but accompany themselves as they sing with body percussion, unpitched percussion, and pitched percussion, including small xylophones, metallophones, and glockenspiels.

Students tend to have a genuinely positive response to this approach because THEY are the music-makers. THEY are the musicians. We will share some of these musical adventures with the congregation once per month!

With the kids playing instruments so much, we still sing, but not as the main focus. This approach works especially well right now with the pandemic going on, because participants are socially distanced, wearing masks, and mainly playing instruments with a little singing on the side. For parents who are concerned about singing, I can say that it's pretty minimal.

With all this instrument focus, we need instruments and are seeking donations as they are a bit pricey! We are hoping to purchase an Orff Soprano Xylophone and an Orff Alto Metallophone. Currently, we are borrowing some instruments from Susquehanna University's Music Department (thanks, SU!), but it is important these are returned asap. If you are interested in contributing to this endeavor, please talk to Pastor Dietmar about it!! Thanks everyone!!

Julie Long, Joyful Noise Director

St. Paul's Council Meeting - September 14, 2021

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

Excused: Ivana Lluveras.

Minutes: A motion was made by Jack Lewis and seconded by Rick Campbell to approve the minutes from August 13th. The motion was approved.

Financial Report: Courtney Hanes reported, presenting the financial reports sent to the council ahead of time. The 2022 budget is being created, so Courtney sent out budget requests to the various committees – if you should have gotten that and didn't, reach out to her. Linda Turner motioned to accept the financial report as read, Kathy Ulrich seconded, and the motion was approved.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Dietmar sent the report to the Council members ahead of time and started out with a big thanks to everyone who made the Block Party such a success!

Unfinished Business & New Business:

- **Worship in person, via internet and by phone- How can we improve?** Things are still going well as a hybrid of both in-person and online, as well as on the phone, although it seems that the phone participation has decreased from 4-5 persons to 2-3 persons. The Tech Team would always welcome more volunteers who want to learn how to run the system! The TV in the foyer had a system installed that will have the TV with a changing slide show and will turn itself on and off – it is now up and running! If anyone has any ideas of slides or things they think should be added, please let Sigrid know! One tech issue that needs to get fixed; there is a lighting panel that is difficult to work, as the touch screen is quite old. Sigrid will be putting the feelers out about replacement/repair costs and report back to the Stewardship and Finance committee.
- **“Learning to Pray” Worship Series - Planning for the Fall Program Year:** Pastor Dietmar reported, thanking the Worship Committee for having everything set up for the

start last Sunday (Prayer Cross, Candles up front, Prayer Fence outside, Prayer Beads)

- **Worship Committee:** Acolytes, Children's Messages, Lectors, etc. Bev Heinemann reported. Sally Lauer is taking over the Acolytes. Lois Bruno will continue to do the Children's Messages. Carolyn Fairl will continue finding lectors.
- **Adult Sunday School classes - Sunday AM with Lois Bruno and Marty Blessing, Thursday Evenings with Raven Rudnitsky:** The first was held last Sunday morning with Lois, using the book “Holy Troublemakers & Unconventional Saints”. Thursday evenings will be with Raven, although those will not start until October 7.
- **New Youth Leader - Torri Stark started!** Pastor Dietmar reminded everyone that she will need the support of church members as it is as if she was building from the ground up, since there hasn't been anything for over a year.
- **Stewardship Program:** Pastor Dietmar requested that the Council members write down a few thoughts about where and how you see how St. Paul's makes a difference. The Council has first-hand knowledge of how our different ministries touch people. We will need a few speakers, as well as help with mailers. Nov. 14th is Stewardship Sunday.
- **Music committee:** Amy Caron reported that there was one wonderful rehearsal, but with the COVID situation, it has gotten a bit off track, but practices are a go! Singer masks have been ordered for the choir, so they may be able to be singing in church with those masks. Joyful Noise did meet on Sunday – Sara Adams' children were there and had a ton of fun!
- **Block Party w/Messy church:** Sigrid reported that the volunteers were spectacular, especially when needing a few last-minute additions. Everything went well. She was a little worried that Messy Church was the main attraction, but it went really well. The huts need to be finished, so we will hopefully be able to have an “adult” painting party sometime next week to finish them before the next Loaves and Fishes. Bingo was a great attraction. Messy Church will continue every 2nd Sunday at 4pm – no sit-down meals because of COVID, but takeaway goodie bags will be provided.
- **Confirmation Group for the Fall:** Pastor Dietmar reported that there are 5 youths who started this Sunday. A big thanks to Linda and Torri for being mentors.
- **Green Team:** The “Living into Right Relations” committee needs potential members, so Shane will send out some feeler emails – the committee would focus on a variety of

issues connected to social justice, moving creation justice (Green Team), as well as future “Hot Topics” under its umbrella. If anyone is interested in being a part of that committee, please reach out to Shane.

- **New council Members for 2022, keep at 15 or go to 12?** Members of the council will all start thinking of a list of people who might be interested in joining. The Council discussed the size of the Church Council, what it would entail to reduce the size, the length of terms and whether that length deters people from serving. That will have to be researched a bit, looking at the bylaws and such. Those whose Council terms are ending: Susan, Marty, Rick, Stacy, & Jack.
- **Personnel Committee:** All new hires now have their clearances on file. It would be nice to have a list of people who already have state clearances on file, just in case we need someone a little last minute. Marty made the motion to temporarily hire Ivana for the 2nd nursery position, seconded by Bev Heinemann, and the motion was passed by the Council. The Visitation Ministry Coordinator search is ongoing.
- **Finance Committee:** Five signers on St. Paul’s account are needed to be officially added/confirmed with the bank – currently the following are proposed: Susan Bolig, Bill Hockenbrock, Sally Lauer, Peggy Peeler, Allen Wetzel. Linda Turner made the motion to approve these five members to

be added on the account as check signers. The motion was seconded by Kathy Ulrich and the motion was passed.

- **Property and Grounds Committee:** Rick Campbell reported.
 1. Parking lot resurfacing finished.
 2. Red outside shed has new wood siding and red barn paint finished.
 3. Garage new roof and siding finished.
 4. Grease traps appear to be finished, waiting on inspection before they can be used.
 5. Center basement island faucet needs replaced.
 6. Roofers have started on northeast side of Sanctuary roof.
 7. Old large heavy church front door and windows have been taken apart making smaller lighter pieces to be removed from garage.
 8. No change in concrete work, window replacement, and boiler replacement.

Next council Meeting: Tuesday, October 12, 2021 @ 7PM.

Peggy Peeler will provide devotions.

Respectfully submitted,
Shane Sanders, Council Secretary

We ask you, the members of St. Paul’s to volunteer to serve on Church Council and/or submit names of people who might be good to serve on Church Council to the church office by October 11. Thank you!



Pastor's Report - August 2021

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

The Worship Team has been terrific in planning for our new worship series about "Learning to Pray." The purpose of this series is to help us explore why we pray and how to pray and to practice personal and communal prayer. The worship team is planning four ways to make this series meaningful and engaging for the friends and members of St. Paul's: A candle installation on the communion table (altar) for people to light candles during the service, a prayer cross for people to attach their personal prayers to in the back of the sanctuary, an outside prayer ribbon installation for the community to join us in this season of prayer, and prayer beads with individual beads reflecting the theme for each Sunday beginning with Back to Church Sunday, Sept. 12. I am grateful to all on the worship team for creating engaging, meaningful, and moving worship services.

A Picnic and Pool Party for all friends and members of St. Paul's was held at the Rudnitsky residence in the afternoon of August 8. It was a delight to see so many join us for a time of fun, food, and fellowship, reconnecting with each other in person after a long pandemic season. It feels great to be together in person. I am very grateful to the Rudnitsky family for hosting this event and for all who made it a great experience.

The Christian Education and Music Teams have been planning for our "Back to Church" fall season with Sunday school for children and adults, Kids Group, Senior Choir, and Joyful Noise Choir to resume their ministries. These teams together with the Personnel Com-

mittee interviewed Torri Stark and hired her as new Youth Leader. Torri Stark is amazing, trained as a teacher with 8+ years of experience as director in children and youth ministry at her previous church. I am excited to have her as new Youth Leader serving at St. Paul's. I am planning for teaching a Confirmation Class this fall through June 2022. The Music Committee interviewed Julie Long and Adam Dietz and Council hired them as Joyful Noise Choir director and Senior Choir accompanist respectively. We have excellent new staff at St. Paul's for which I am very grateful.

We continue to live, worship, and serve as hybrid church as the Covid pandemic persists. It's challenging to keep the right balance in between being as safe as possible and not allowing Covid to take over our lives. We continue to follow CDC guidelines to prevent the spread of Covid and simultaneously face our fears and concerns in faith. In and through all these challenges we trust, do our best, and know that God is good, that God provides and guides, and that God will see us through.

I officiated at Marti Bowen's interment service on her birthday, August 4. It became a beautiful and meaningful celebration of her life and legacy of love and caring. We keep surrounding hus-

band Bill Bowen with prayers and love. Also, we gave thanks for the life and love of Becky Moll, the sister of Brenda Campbell and daughter of Ruth Hermann, on August 7. It was a meaningful celebration of her life and legacy as many family members and friends met outdoors to share memories in gratitude for Becky Moll.

I am grateful to Rev. Dr. Thomas Martin and Rev. Sally Dries for leading our worship services on Aug. 22 and 29 as I was on vacation. Rev. Amelia Price was available for pastoral care emergencies.

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!

August 1-31, 2021

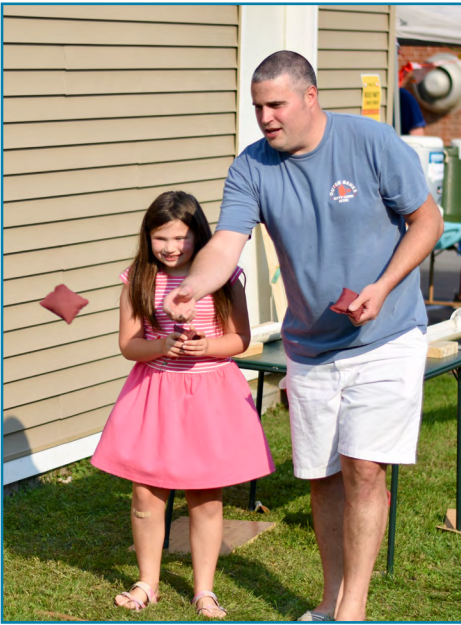
Days worked	13
Days off	04
Continuing Education	00
Vacation days	14
Holidays	00
Total Days	31

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Dietmar Plajer



BLOCK PARTY - THANK YOU



The Block Party with Messy church was a great success. We are so glad you came to have a good time and to fellowship with one another. The crafts were great, the activities and bingo were a lot of fun, the raffle items were amazing, the music was entertaining, and the pizza and ice cream were yummy! Thank you to everyone who donated an item or basket for the raffle. I would like to thank Rachael Rice for her guidance, Dietmar for his support, and the team of volunteers who helped make this day possible.

Messy church group - Sigrid Plajer, Terry and Deb Burns, Peggy Peeler, Lisa Krex, Linda Turner, Torri Stark, Jane Taylor, Joanne Lauer, Sara Adams.
 Raffle table group - Barbie Reed, Pat Barnes, Ivana Lluveras.
 Bingo group - Randy Tanner, Lisa Krex.
 Food crew - Stacy Heinemann, Jack Lewis, Kathy Ulrich, Connie & Joe Erdley, Shirley Varner, Raven Rudnitsky, Kimmie Burkhart.
 Hut painting group - Shane Sanders, Carolyn Fairl.
 Music - David Hannah.
 Celebration story - Pastor Dietmar.

Set up/cleanup crew - Rick Campbell, Roger Rathfon, Jevan Beaver, Michael Bolig, Tony Sandler, Allen and David Wetzell and to all of you who pitched in to help each other wherever you were needed.

This event could not have happened without you!
 Many Blessings for our St Paul's members.

With great appreciation,
 Susan Bolig

On behalf of all of St. Paul's and personally, I extend our heartfelt gratitude to Susan Bolig for spearheading the planning and organizing of our Block Party.

Susan did a fabulous job in getting all helpers and volunteers on board to make our Block Party a great success. We saw many smiling faces, laughing children and people from the community participate.

Thank you, Susan!
 Pastor Dietmar





St. Paul's United Church of Christ

400 North Market Street, Selinsgrove, PA 17870

Tel 570-374-8749

office@saintpauls-ucc.org

www.saintpauls-ucc.org

Worship Sunday at 10:30 AM
either on Facebook or our website

“God is Still Speaking”

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

We thank God for...

