



THE MESSENGER

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

MEET & EAT OCTOBER 1

Messy Church

ALL TOGETHER NOW

Grandpa Grandma Mother Father Sister It's Me Brother Grandpa Grandma

October 8 at 4 p.m.

Moving Out of Scare City

New worship series beginning October 15

Meet & Eat

OCTOBER 29



WHY CHURCH?

We asked in worship on Sunday, Sept. 3, why people come to church and what the purpose of church is. Below you find the responses from those who shared. Why do you come to church? What keeps you coming? There are so many good reasons!

- ◇ It is God's house and I feel I can ask Him for forgiveness and have fellowship with His children. The safe haven to ask and it shall be given. Seek and ye shall find.
- ◇ To understand God and Jesus better and how to emulate Jesus' life.
- ◇ Celebrate the glory of God. To worship God. To give thanks for God's many blessings.
- ◇ It is good for the community to gather to get strength to worship when we leave.
- ◇ Community. To learn more about God. To learn and grow with a community that works together to do good things.
- ◇ To celebrate God's love with those I love and care for. To find peace in a chaotic world. To feel refreshed and renewed for the coming week. The beautiful music and Dietmar's message.
- ◇ To provide a 'constant' in my life when there is so much beyond my control. All is in God's hands. He can use everything for His good, His plan. I need to have His help in remembering God is good. To remember I am a child of God.
- ◇ To worship God. To learn about the Bible. To feel connected to God and Jesus. To be respectful of God.
- ◇ Show our love. Learn about things in the Bible. Get closer to God and Jesus. Follow our religion. Live better. Improve our spirits and lives. Show our love to God and his son Jesus. Meet with people who share the same religion.
- ◇ For me church is like feeding your mind spiritually because this is a place we can all meet to share the Word of God.
- ◇ I return to church to again hear God's Word and experience His love and forgiveness.
- ◇ It's an inspiration to be a little more God-like for the period.
- ◇ I come to church to connect with my community, learn God's Word, and to be refreshed/reset for the week.
- ◇ Being together to sing, pray, embrace the music and to listen with our hearts to God's words.
- ◇ To intentionally connect with God and community. To be reminded of grace and goodness. To rest from the busyness of the world. To worship God. To remember who we are and whose we are. To remember we are not God. To remind us that we are forgiven and need to forgive others. To love and be loved.
- ◇ Fellowship. Community of faith. Learning about God/Jesus and their crucial importance in today's world. Music. Re-energizing spiritually. Reaffirming faith.
- ◇ I come to church to be rejuvenated from my busy life. I come to show God how much I love Him. I come to church to ask God to forgive me my sins and keep me on the path for the glory of God.
- ◇ To feel closer to God and feel the Holy Spirit's touch. To meet with believers and enjoy the fellowship. We can always learn something new in our spirit.
- ◇ I need the weekly service to stay connected to God and how I should be living my life. Without it, it's too easy to stray. If I don't go, something is missing.
- ◇ Friendship.
- ◇ To be spiritually renewed. To think about and be reminded of what is important in life. Fellowship and reflection. To be closer to God. To be part of a world bigger than one's self.
- ◇ To quiet my heart to worship God and to worship in community.



MESSY CHURCH OCTOBER 8 FROM 4 TO 6 P.M.

Please sign up for our Messy Church on October 8 at 4 p.m.! We will explore the Old Testament Story of Joseph. It's a story with many twists and turns, and Joseph's relationship with his family is pretty rocky at times, but in the end, they work together and help each other.

the lessons of those who came before us to help us move forward. He reminded us of the wisdom of the people who came before and how, when we use that wisdom, we can have fuller, richer lives.

Join us as we experience faith through hands-on (slightly messy) activities and games. We will end our time together with a celebration time and a delicious family-style meal. We can't wait to see you!

Jesus came to remind us that we are all a family: God's family! Joseph made sure that his family had a place to live and food to eat. Jesus came to make sure that we could care for each other and remember

Sigrid and the Messy Church Team

“ Jesus came to remind us that we are all a family: God's family!



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
- 10/12 Nicole Lukens
- 10/13 David Klingler
- 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
- 10/24 Brian Carper
- 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

ANNIVERSARIES



- 10/01 Robert & Lori Rathfon
Duane & Kim Rigel
- 10/03 John & Gail Fischer
- 10/10 Don & Jan Sears
Michael & Lori Proger
- 10/15 Joe & Cerene Dubaskas
Grant & Diane Spoons
- 10/16 Bob & Debra Brown
Matt & Taleisha Burd
- 10/17 Page & Bryan Lybarger
Jim & Missy Ferguson
Troy & Cynthia Frymoyer
- 10/20 Barry "Buzz" & Janet Siegfried
- 10/21 Andrew & Cindy Wagner

PRAYER LIST

The Family of Kay Deans
 Carol Dickinson
 Patty Erdly
 Isaiah Gruenberg
 The Family of Ted Hendricks
 Darlene Howard
 Fred Kelly
 Duane Koch
 Joe Longer
 Sigrid Plajer
 Wilbur and Cheryl Reddinger
 Linda Waite & Family

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

THANK YOU NOTES

St. Paul's Family, we thank you for the prayers and thoughts from St. Paul's while Andy was recuperating from being

in the hospital and visits from Dietmar.

Thanks again, Andy & Sharon Womer

I would like to thank everyone for the prayers and cards I received during my time off for my broken ankle. It was really nice to have such kind people caring about me.

Randy for checking up on me while I was recuperating. That was so kind of you both.

Thank you again everyone for everything you have done. It brought sunshine into my life when it was needed most.

I would also like to thank Linda for filling in for me while I was gone. You are wonderful.

Cindy Martin

I would also like to thank Dietmar and



We express our heartfelt gratitude to all of you faithful friends, for your generous donations toward the Welcome Backpacks we collected during the last couple of months. Joanne Lauer, Jared Roush, Randy Tanner, Kathy Ulrich, and Pastor Dietmar packed 35 Welcome Backpacks together with other members of our UCC Central Association at First Reformed UCC in Sunbury on Saturday, Sept. 16 (see pictures). These Welcome

Backpacks will benefit children and families that are forced to leave their home and begin a new life in various parts of the US. The Welcome Backpacks will be delivered to Church World Service in October to benefit those who need them most. Thank you so very much for your support for this meaningful way of sharing and serving! You are the hands and heart of Jesus in action!

Income/Expense Month of August and YTD as of August 31, 2023

2023 Budget \$350,718.08

8 months percentages of budget should be 66.7%

Income

Month of August	\$24,560.91
YTD August 31	\$228,316.75
	65.1% of budget (under budget)

Expenses

Month of August	(\$8,357.01)
YTD August 31	\$2,324.33
	64.4% of budget (under budget)



FROM OUR UCC PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE

Our national United Church of Christ is shrinking. Every week, three UCC churches in the country are closing their doors. I hope, pray, and work hard that this will never happen to our beloved St. Paul's. And I invite you to do the same

Due to declining membership and resources, our UCC Penn Central Conference is considering merging with the three other UCC conferences in Pennsylvania (South East, North East, and West). "Together we are stronger," is the reason why the four Pennsylvania Conferences are considering to unite and share resources, ministries, and staff.

A Keystone Working Group comprised of representatives of all four Pennsylvania UCC Conferences has been meeting since fall 2022 to explore if and under what circumstances such a merger is feasible. Much information is available at www.psec.org/keystone. Our Penn Central Conference is looking for input from our local UCC congre-

gations during various Town Hall Meetings this fall.

There are three dates on which we as members of St. Paul's can participate in listening, providing input, and asking questions of the Keystone Working Group: Wednesday, Oct. 11 at 6:30 p.m. at St. John's UCC in Lewisburg (in person); Wednesday, Nov. 1 at 6:30 p.m. (via Zoom); Saturday, Sept. 4 at 9 a.m. at our UCC Central Association fall meeting via Zoom.

I invite you, the members of St. Paul's, to consider joining me in one of the meetings mentioned above. A stronger UCC Conference will support us in becoming a better, more vibrant and effective St. Paul's.

Please indicate your interest in participating in one of the town hall meetings to our church office.

Blessings and peace,
Dietmar

Updates about the Search Committee for an Associate Pastor

Church Council is pleased to share the names of the individuals who will serve on the committee to lead the search and call for our new Associate Pastor. The committee chair will be Peggy Peeler, and regular members will be Marty Blessing, Jared Roush, Raven Rudnitsky, Shane Sanders, Randy Tanner, and Chanin Wendling. In addition, Malcolm Derk and Sara Adams will serve as auxiliary members, representing our families with small children. We are confident that this group will serve as excellent representatives of St. Paul's, and we pray that God will guide their work in this important endeavor. Church Council followed the guidance of the congregation in asking persons to serve on the Search Committee. Those who received more nominations from

the congregation in worship on Kickoff Sunday, Sept. 11, were asked first to serve. We have a great team of long-term and newer members, younger and older ones, and female and male representatives of the congregation. The Search Committee members will be officially installed into their role during a worship service in October.

The first task of the committee will be to develop a profile of St. Paul's to be shared with potential candidates, and they will be seeking input from the congregation to aid them in this project at our worship service on Sunday, October 29. The Search Committee will update us regularly as the search proceeds.

ST. PAUL'S COUNCIL MEETING SEPTEMBER 12, 2023

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

In Attendance: Pastor Dietmar Plajer, Sigrid Plajer as guest, Allen Wetzel, Randy Tanner, Linda Turner, Malcolm Derk, Mary Dahlmann, Shane Sanders, Sara Adams, Fritz Heinemann, John Fischer, Kim Burkhardt, Amy Caron, Peggy Peeler as Guest. Excused: Josh Wenrich, Michael Zettlemoyer.

Associate Pastor: Peggy Peeler joined the meeting to discuss candidates for the Search Committee. The committee will consist of six members plus Peggy as chair. At the September 10th worship services, members were asked to recommend people who might serve on the committee and, from this list, Council agreed on guidelines for contacting people to serve. Linda Turner will email Council members and keep track of the call list. Peggy Peeler then left the meeting.

Minutes of June Meeting: The August meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Dietmar sent his report out in advance of the meeting. He expressed his thanks to all those who decorated the church for the "Quest: The Adventurous Traveler" worship series, to those who helped organize the block party, and to all who participated by donating items for the welcome backpacks program

Financial Report: The August Financial Reports were sent out

in advance of the meeting and were approved as submitted with no concerns.

Strategic Planning: Pastor Dietmar gave a brief update on items from our Strategic Plan. Shane Sanders is leading a First Nations Bible Study group on Sundays at 9:15a.m. Other items on the Strategic Plan are on hold pending additional staffing.

Property & Grounds: Allen Wetzel reported that the person who removed our old cooking range was interested in purchasing the mixer for \$300. Council approved the sale of the mixer. This person said he also would be willing to haul away the old boilers free of charge. Property & Grounds is recommending selection of Shaffer's Plumbing & Heating as the contractor for the boiler with an estimate of \$72,500 for the work and Council approved Shaffer's as the contractor pending approval of the cost by Stewardship & Finance. Allen reported that Property & Grounds will get quotes for the replacement of the upstairs hallway water fountain and that Shaffer's will offer a quote. Another project being worked on is the oak tree out front which is causing the sidewalk to buckle and needs to be removed.

Emergency Plan: Linda Turner reported that the AED unit is now in a box and has been mounted on the wall at the top of the stairs leading from the foyer to the lower level. She will be budgeting for a second AED unit in 2024 as there should be one on each level. The sign for the bathroom off the kitchen has been installed. Crash bars at the main entry are still recommended and P&G has been asked to research.

Children and Youth Ministries: Mary Dahlmann reported that the search for a Youth Leader has not been fruitful. Chris-

Moving Out of Scare City

New worship series beginning October 15

New Worship Series begins October 15

"Moving Out of Scare City" will be our new worship series beginning with October 15. We live in scary times. Many people feel anxious and overwhelmed. The sense that there is not enough drives greed and our clinging to material possessions. We live in "scare-city" afraid there is never enough. We will explore together how to face our fears and scarcity with faith and love. The Gospel news is clear, "Do not worry about anything, but in prayer and thanksgiving make your requests known to God." God provides. With God there is more than enough to go around. With God we live a life of abundance, joy, and generosity. We will learn how we can move out of scare-city towards God's abounding grace. Invite a friend and join us in person or online for worship on Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m.

tian Ed met and is discussing the possibility of breaking out the position into several positions. Sunday School is covered with volunteers through November 12th and, until someone is hired, we will continue to need volunteers. Mary is also looking for people to volunteer as back-up in the Nursery when one or both of the attendants cannot be there. Julia Dudek has been hired as Joyful Noise Director.

Stewardship Program: The tentative theme is “Embracing Our Vision” and Stewardship Sunday is November 12th. Program is in the planning stages.

2024 Budget: Linda Turner reminded those who chaired committees that budget requests were due and should be sent to her no later than September 14th. Information was shared from Property & Grounds that the renovation project may cost between \$250,000-\$300,000 and would require funding.

Personnel Committee: Our By-Laws currently state that members of the Personnel Committee need to be Council members and the rotation on and off the committee does not provide continuity for the tasks required. The By-Laws will be reviewed to determine whether Personnel can be a standing committee rather than a rotating committee.

Communion October 1: Class of '23 will serve – Shane Sanders (captain), Sara Adams, Linda Turner, Michael Zettlemoyer. Amy Caron will not be available to serve.

Next Council Meeting October 10, 2023, 7p.m.

Devotions for October 10th Meeting: Mary Dahlmann

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Turner
Council Secretary



Are You Interested in Serving on Church Council?

Or do you know of someone else who is willing to serve on Church Council? We are looking for dedicated and committed persons who have been members of St. Paul's for at least 6 months, who have the best interest of St. Paul's at heart to serve for a three year term beginning with January 2024. People serving on Church Council should support our Church's Mission to “grow in faith, worship God, serve others, and welcome all.” Council members should be future oriented and support the vision and the strategic plan of the congregation (you can review that on our website). Council meets every second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. for about 1.5 hours. Church Council is the governing body of the congregation and cooperates closely with the various committees, ministry teams, and Pastor Dietmar. Church Council makes decisions that affect the whole congregation and approves spending. The members of Church Council

are responsible for preparing and serving Holy Communion. For more information on how Church Council functions and how you can support our overall St. Paul's by serving on Council you can ask any of the current Council members (Sara Adams, Amy Caron, Shane Sanders, Linda Turner, Michael Zettlemoyer, Kim Burkhart, Randy Tanner, Joshua Wenrich, Allen Wetzel, Mary Dahlmann, Malcolm Derk, John Fischer, and Fritz Heinemann) and/or any previous Council members. Church Council needs to know your suggestion of candidates or your personal interest in serving, by Tuesday, October 10, at 12 noon in the church office. If you suggest someone else to serve on church council, please ask the person whether they are willing to serve. Thank you for considering to participate in our church leadership!

Your Church Council

PASTOR'S REPORT AUGUST 2023

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

We continued with our worship series "Quest: The Adventurous Traveler" in August. We explored together how our faith and life journey relate to our traveling experiences. We are invited and challenged to trust Jesus' guidance, to open up to new experiences, to remain curious and to be changed through the encounters we have while traveling. Traveling does not need to be physical in the outward world. We can also explore new territory inwardly. I appreciate Shane Sanders sharing on "The Importance of Traveling" and the Worship Team for making our worship series visible and tangible through decorations and a lovely exhibition of travel-related items and books in the sanctuary. I'm inspired by those who provide Children's Messages, those who function as lectors, and those who share their special gift of music in worship. St. Paul's worship services are moving, meaningful and memorable.

We had a wonderful Messy Church in the Park on Sunday, August 13, 4-6 p.m. on the theme of Noah's Ark with a total of 54 persons participating including all children, families, and helpers. As always the crafts and games have been highlights and the fellowship heartwarming. Thanks to a terrific Messy Church Team led by Sigrid Plajer for making Messy

Church a wonderful experience for the community and for us.

"You Matter!" was the focus of our Blessing of the Backpacks in worship on August 20, the Sunday before the first day of school in Selinsgrove. Children received blessing tags for their backpacks: "May you be curious and kind, gentle and strong, brave and loving! You are loved and cared for by St. Paul's UCC."

I invest much of my time and energy in working with St. Paul's committees and ministry teams to further our mission. In August I coordinated and met with Christian Education, Property and Grounds, Church Growth and Membership, Personnel, Music, Stewardship and Finance, Worship, and Church Council. I'm very grateful that we found and hired Julia Dudek, a Susquehanna University student, as new Joyful Noise choir director. Julia comes highly recommended by our church musicians and parents of Joyful Noise children.

I have been visiting homebound persons and those residing in nursing facilities together with Pastor Mary Peterhaensel and Susan Bolig (the Visitation Team Leaders) and supporting them in sharing Home Communion. It is deeply meaningful and moving to commune tangibly with people who are declining in their physical and mental abilities. Singing the good old hymns like "In the Garden"

draws people out of their isolation. I'm very grateful to all who participate in the Visitation Ministry Team. I continue to be on call 24/7 to visit people in the hospital and to provide spiritual care for people who experience heart-wrenching life altering challenges.

Fred Ulrich passed away unexpectedly August 1, and we celebrated his life and legacy with a special service at St. Paul's on August 7. It was beautiful to have so many firefighters, EMS volunteers, and community members participate in the service. I'm grateful for the Hospitality Team, led by Susan Bolig, for organizing, planning, caring, unlocking, and cleaning and closing up after special services in our sanctuary.

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

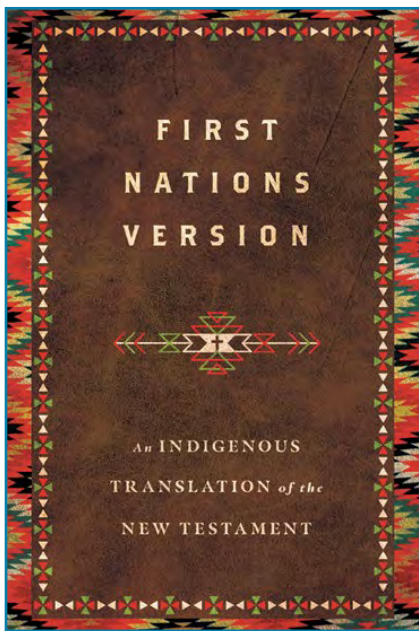
August 1-31, 2023

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

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dietmar Plajer



First Nations Version Bible Study Sundays at 9:15 a.m.



We get a deeper and better understanding of some of our most familiar Bible stories by exploring them through the First Nations Version (FNV) translation of the New Testament in a Bible Study that Shane Sanders is leading on Sunday mornings in our Council Room. You can participate in person or via Zoom on any Sunday.

In September we focussed on the Lord's Prayer and the parables of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son. We shared some land acknowledgments of native tribes we are aware of. For example, Susquehanna University adopted the following: "We acknowledge the Susquehannock tribe whose name we bear. It means those who

live in a place where water is heard grating on the shore, commonly known as river people because they lived in unanimity and balance with the river and land. This campus rests on their un-surrendered territory, and we strive to honor their memory by being mindful stewards of this beautiful place."

In addition to people from St. Paul's, we have had people from All Saints Bethlehem Church in Brooklyn, NY and friends and relatives from Delaware participate via Zoom. We are grateful to Shane Sanders for leading this Bible Study. It gives those who participate a new and better understanding of key passages of the New Testament.



Our Meet and Eat events are back! Come join us for a good meal and great conversation on October 29 in the Fellowship Hall right after the worship service. Please sign up [here](#) so we know how many people we're preparing for. You can also let us know on the signup form if you're bringing a dessert item to share.



It is once again time for Bosco's Friends Helping Friends fundraiser to benefit our Messy Church ministry. For a \$5.00 donation to St. Paul's, you can shop at Bosco's on Wednesday, October 18, 2023 and get a 25% discount on most purchases (15% and 10% on certain items) that day. Passes will be available from Linda Turner in the church office, from Randy Tanner, from Shirley Varner, and from me (Jack Lewis). You can contact me through the church office. I will even deliver the passes to your door. Please help support the Messy Church ministry.

Jack Lewis



St. Paul's United Church of Christ

400 North Market Street, Selinsgrove, PA 17870

Tel 570-374-8749

office@saintpauls-ucc.org

saintpauls-ucc.org

Worship Sunday at 10:30 AM

also on Facebook, YouTube, and our website

"God is Still Speaking"

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

We thank God for...

