



THE MESSENGER

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



Back to
CHURCH
Sunday
September 10



Everyone is invited to St. Paul's
Block Party & Messy Church
SEPTEMBER 10, 4-6 PM

Worship Service time returns to 10:30 a.m. on September 10

FALL BIBLE STUDY

BIBLE STORIES FROM THE FIRST NATIONS VERSION

SUNDAY MORNING AT 9:15 A.M.



Come to the Table...

7 NEW WORSHIP SERIES BEGINS SEPTEMBER 10

We gather at the table, in community, in the name of God's love and grace.



WHY WORSHIP? WHY CHURCH?

I'm smiling and looking into the eyes of many clients of our Loaves and Fishes food outreach ministry. This last Friday I asked a sweet lady, "What keeps you going?" It was visible in her face that she was in pain. From the brief conversation with her I got a good sense of her struggling on various levels. "What keeps you going?" She was quick to respond, "The Good Lord keeps me going!" The tone in her voice indicated the depth of that statement. "When I get up in the morning, I thank God that I'm alive and able to move. God helps me through the day when I am hurting. And I know that God is with me through the night." I confirmed, "So you live by faith!" "Yes! Faith keeps me going. One day at a time. And whenever the time comes, I know I'll be with God and see my loved ones again. That's what keeps me going!"

We are about growing in faith at St. Paul's. Our souls are fed. Our spirits are nurtured. Our hearts are wrapped in love. We are sustained when the going gets rough. Faith does not make the heartbreak go away. Faith does not wipe away our challenges. Faith does not take away the hurting, grieving, and suffering. But faith helps us in and through it. We grow in faith when we come together to worship, study, fellowship, and serve.

I've met people struggling with addictions who were ready to get off drugs.

One of the key recommendations of their counselors is, "You can not do it on your own. And you gotta find different people, new friends to hang out with." A good support group like AA is key. New friends with healthy habits. People who lift you up rather than tear you down. Friends who care, listen, and cheer you on. Soulful people of faith who rally around you. We say good company rubs off. That is who we are and what we do at St. Paul's - great friends, good fellowship, spirit-filled community!

That's what we are about. We grow together in faith! That's why we worship. How does that happen in worship? We are moved. We listen deeply with our hearts. We understand. We are inspired, encouraged. We sort things out. We set priorities. We focus on what matters in life. We open our hearts and souls to God. We learn from Jesus how to become better persons. We are loved and forgiven when we mess up and miss the mark. We soak in the good news!

How do you feed your soul and nurture your spirit? How do you grow in faith? How do you make God a priority? Moving, meaningful, and memorable worship does that. For me, singing in the choir helps. The special music and the good old hymns are key. Hearing the good news in fresh ways. Participating in

the Sunday school group study with the First Nations Version of the New Testament helps. Helping with Loaves and Fishes does it. Hanging out with you, the great people of St. Paul's helps!

I invite you to make growing in faith a priority! I invite you to join us on "Back to Church" Sunday, September 10. Come in the morning at 10:30 a.m. to worship with us, and come back to church from 4 to 6 p.m. to enjoy our wonderful Block Party. If you are not yet involved, I ask you to consider getting engaged in ONE area of ministry: Messy Church, the Tech Team, Habitat for Humanity, the Card and Care Team, Sunday School/Bible Study, sing or ring bells in a choir, help as greeter, help on our Hospitality Team, or volunteer with Loaves and Fishes. We have many opportunities for you to grow in faith. And for worship we have online streaming options via Facebook and YouTube and via phone by calling (570)-225-9545.

I hope to see you on Back to Church Sunday, September 10, at 10:30 a.m. and/or at 4 p.m.!

In faith, hope, and love,

Pastor Dietmar



JOYFUL NOISE CHOIR

The Joyful Noise program was something I got to witness first-hand last spring and I am beyond thrilled to get to work with the kids. My goal is to use this program to not only train young voices in good singing practices but to provide a firm musical foundation and a welcoming community where kids can build confidence and form lasting friendships. I intend for Joyful Noise to be a place where they feel welcomed and challenged simultaneously.

As a current and former chorister myself I understand that choir is about so much more than just music. While music is what brings us together, choir encourages team-building and creative thinking, coordination and much more. The mathematical aspects of music quickly come to light, along with text and lyric analysis and human physiology. The subjects are introduced subtly but encourage kids to grow in their understanding of many, many topics beyond the music itself.

If you are a parent of kids who love to sing or simply would enjoy the opportunity to be around their peers, please consider joining us this year. Rehearsals are once a week on Sunday mornings before church, beginning Kick-Off Sunday, September 10th. I can't wait to see you there!

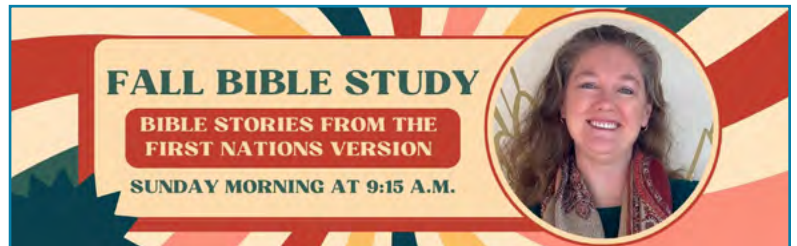
My name is Julia Dudek and I'm delighted to greet the congregation of St. Paul's for the 2023-2024 season of Joyful Noise, our choir program for kids ages 5-12.

I am a sophomore Music Education major at Susquehanna University. My primary instrument is violin, but I started choir at age seven and have continued ever since. I'm passionate about singing and very excited to be a part of helping the children at St. Paul's give praise to God!



CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Children's Sunday School is starting again on September 10. This year, it will be led by our enthusiastic volunteers. As usual, the children will go downstairs to the Christian Ed classroom after the Children's Message. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer, please contact Sigrid through the church office. We welcome visitors and helpers.



SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Everyone is welcome to join us in exploring familiar Bible stories through the unique lens of the recently published First Nations Version. The FNV is a dynamic equivalence translation that captures the simplicity, clarity, and beauty of Native storytellers in English, while remaining faithful to the original language of the New Testament. We will meet on Sunday mornings from 9:15 - 10:15 to deepen our understanding of the most well-known elements of the New Testament. During this 10-week study that starts on Kick-Off Sunday (September 10th), we will start with the Lord's Prayer, and then continue with The Good Samaritan, the Parable of the Prodigal Son, and others using a curious and comparative approach to the First Nations Version. Each week will stand alone in its approach, so people can come to one or all, or any in-between. Reach out to Shane (through the church office) with questions and/or access to the Zoom link.

SEPTEMBER



BIRTHDAYS

- 9/01 Tom Dahlmann
Jason Taylor
- 9/02 Matt Burd
- 9/03 Dolores Bressler
Mary Dahlmann
- 9/04 John Fischer
- 9/06 Melissa Laniewski
- 9/07 Jamie Gentile
- 9/09 Joe Cabe
Ella Stante
- 9/11 Daisy Thomas
Wyatt Smith
- 9/13 Beth Derr
Kathleen Gunning
Jack Stark
- 9/14 Page Lybarger
- 9/15 Jodi Cope
- 9/16 James Cope
Beth Deckard
Dick Marshall
Sophia Namminga
- 9/17 Abigail Wolfe
- 9/19 Daniel Brouse
Theo Feiler
Stella Gentile
- 9/20 Hailey Bingaman
Eve Caron
Olivia Lybarger
Shane Spriggle
- 9/21 Barry Siegfried
Joshua Wenrich
- 9/22 Roger S. Haddon, Jr.
- 9/23 Derek Wolfe
- 9/24 Tami Long
Anthony Martello
- 9/26 Ashley Smith
Steven Sees
Bruce Witkop
- 9/27 Rick Hawk
William Hockenbrock
- 9/28 Jevan Beaver
- 9/29 Bill Mull

PRAYER LIST

Steve Arnold
Robin Colyer
Carolyn Giltzow
Yvonne & Dennis Henkle
Duane Koch
Linda Lehman
Joe & Janeen Longer
Karen Koppenhaver
The Family of Tom Pickering
Wilbur Reddinger
John Rothermel
Verda Schmidt & Family
Tammy Schuck
Ruth Mary Shaffer
The Family of Mary Truschel

Valerie and Herb Vankirk
Allen Wetzel

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

Dear church family, our family thanks you for cards, food, acts of kindness and prayer support during Bill's passing. Thank you to Pastor Dietmar for your support, prayers and visits.

Mary Ann Weader & Family

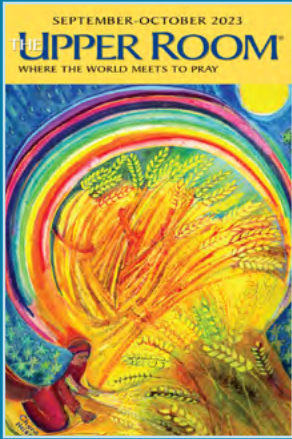
To my church family, thank you so very much for cards, phone calls and visits to all. It certainly makes my days a bit brighter. I'm still testing and waiting for results. The prayers are certainly working. God is great. Much love to all.

Patty Erdly

Thank you St. Paul's Church for all the prayers and cards everyone has sent to my husband and I. They meant so much.

Janeen & Joe Longer





UPPER ROOM SEPTEMBER/ OCTOBER

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



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, 2022 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

SEPTEMBER



ANNIVERSARIES

9/02	Wilbur & Cheryl Reddinger Randy & Tracey Wolfe
9/03	Sara Adams & Morgan Lewis, Jr.
9/04	Tom & Mary Dahlmann
9/05	Randy & Melissa Laniewski
9/06	Lyle & Nancy Mercer
9/10	Beth & Harry Derr
9/12	Jenelle & Ben Moyer Charles "Charlie" & Jane Ruhl
9/14	Brian & Laurie Derr Matthew & Melisa Kelly
9/16	Jevan & Christine Beaver Brian & Amy Caron
9/18	Justin & Betsy Womer
9/20	Carey & Jeremy Napp
9/22	Michael & Ann Aurand
9/24	Scott & Jennifer Bernstein
9/25	Max & Pam Gemberling
9/27	Keith & Sue Minier

Bethany Children's Home - September Special Mission Offering

Children and youth who experienced various forms of trauma, loss, and abuse are being welcomed and treated at Bethany Children's Homes. For many years, our United Church of Christ Penn Central Conference has partnered with Bethany to provide care and opportunities for healing and wholeness for children and youth of all ages. Initially founded as an orphanage, Bethany has transitioned to become a residential treatment facility where children and youth live in group homes and receive therapeutic and spiritual care. The goal for all children and youth is to be reintegrated in the community. Your gift will aid Bethany Children's Home provide hope and healing for children and youth toward a brighter future. Please pray for all residents and staff at Bethany for guidance, healing, and wholeness as they further God's mission. We appreciate very much if you are willing and able to support Bethany's mission with a special donation. Please designate your special offering in the memo line of your check as "Bethany Homes." You can use offering envelopes for the pews or give online through our website saintpauls-ucc.org/give On behalf of the children and staff, thank you for your support! It makes a big difference!



ST. PAUL'S COUNCIL MEETING AUGUST 8, 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, Michael Zettlemoyer, Kim Burkhart.

Excused: Josh Wenrich, John Fischer, Amy Caron.

Minutes of June Meeting: The July meeting minutes were approved with one minor change to Block Party paragraph (see Block Party below).

Pastor's Report: Pastor Dietmar sent his report out in advance of the meeting. He read a note written by first-time visitors who did not feel they received a warm welcome from anyone except Pastor Dietmar. He asked all to, in the future, seek out and welcome new faces.

Financial Report: The July 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. Meet & Eat will start up in the fall with two planned meals. Church Membership & Growth is looking into starting some type of hospitality prior to worship services and having small group ministries once a month. Shane reported that she and Ruth Mary Shaffer continue to research options for a collaboration with a church in Brooklyn NY to do a First Nations Bible study. If a collaboration is not possible, Shane will lead a study group beginning Kick-Off Sunday from 9:15-10:15 am.

Associate Pastor: Pastor Dietmar reported that he will be meeting with Peggy Peeler as Chair of the Search Committee to begin the process which includes organizing a Search Committee and completing a church profile.

Property & Grounds: Allen Wetzel reported that two quotes have been received for the boiler project and more information is needed to assess the quotes. Randy Tanner reported that research is being conducted into companies that can replace the hydraulic lift from the alley door into the fellowship hall. The water fountain in the upstairs hallway needs to be replaced and it was suggested that it be replaced with a water fountain that also includes a bottle filling station. Allen Wetzel will communicate all to Mike Proger.

Emergency Plan: Linda Turner reported that Susquehanna Fire Equipment was in on August 8th and inspected all of the fire equipment, along with the AED unit. Two fire extinguishers needed to be replaced and an additional extinguisher was in-

stalled at the front entry. All extinguishers are now wall mounted. The AED needed a new battery and works fine. Susquehanna Fire is ordering a box to mount on the wall to hold the AED.

Block Party, September 10th: Shane Sanders reported that Jack Lewis and Allen Wetzel will cook hot dogs, Barbie Reed will handle the raffle, Sara Adams the music, Messy Church the crafts. Shane, Randy Tanner, and Linda Turner will meet within the week to determine what is needed for the event.

Children and Youth Ministries: Mary Dahlmann reported that an ad was in the Daily Item the prior weekend, Snyder County Times will run ads the next 2 weeks, the job is on our website and Facebook page. So far she has not received any response. The plan is to use volunteers if no one can be found prior to Kick-Off Sunday and until we do hire someone. She is reviewing the job description to determine if it can be broken down into more than one position. She also is considering using volunteers in the Nursery as back-up to the paid attendants. The Joyful Noise Choir Director also remains open.

"Come Back to Church" invitations and banner for Kick-Off Sunday. Sigrid Plajer reported that the banner is on order and asked about postcards being sent out. It was agreed that postcards would go out that would include information on the Kick-Off Sunday service, Block Party, First Nations Bible Study and a QR code to access all information. Sigrid will design the postcard.

Guest Musician Compensation Policy: The policy was sent out in advance of the meeting and was approved as submitted with the deletion of the note in parentheses in #3.

Stewardship: Dietmar Plajer reported from the Stewardship & Finance meeting that we are looking at three strategies – 1) yearly giving commitment, 2) encouraging recurring online giving and 3) every month make visible how giving makes a difference.

Purchase of Tables: S&F is recommending the purchase of 6 additional tables for the fellowship hall and the purchase was approved up to \$600. Allen Wetzel will get in touch with Mike Proger.

Oven and Pots/Pans: The new oven has been purchased for \$1,359 which is \$1,141 under the approved amount of \$2,500. The new oven is glass top and requires flat-bottom pots and pans. S&F recommends the purchase of new pots and pans not to exceed \$1,141. The recommendation was approved by Council.

Line of Credit at Fulton Bank: Linda Turner reported that we currently have a \$25,000 line of credit with Fulton Bank which appears to have been opened in 2004 (which was then Swineford Bank). Linda talked to the bank and is unable to get any information as she is not authorized on the LOC. The bank re-

quires a motion by Council naming new authorized persons. Council discussed and approved the President and Secretary/Treasurer (John Fischer and Linda Turner) as authorized persons, approved termination of the LOC, and approved the President and Secretary/Treasurer to sign the request to terminate. **Communion September 3:** Class of '25 will serve – Malcolm Derk (captain), Mary Dahlmann, and John Fischer. Mary will be out of town. Linda Turner and Randy Tanner agreed to be the

3rd & 4th servers.

Next Council Meeting September 12, 2023, 7pm.

Devotions for September 12th Meeting: Kim Burkhardt

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Turner
Council Secretary



“Come to the Table” - New Worship Series begins September 10 at 10:30 a.m.

It's not just about food when we gather at the table. Over a meal we share joy, peace, and love. When we eat together our mind and souls are fed, too. We meet Jesus in the people we invite to share a meal with us. We are fed and become living bread for others. Join us for a season of meaningful, moving, and memorable worship as we explore together how Jesus feeds us and how we can join him in welcoming, peace-making, loving, joy-sharing, and feeding those around us. During this series you will learn how to share Christ's feast of plenty. You will be motivated to take action, to join Jesus in feeding those around you. Invite a friend and join us on Sundays at 10:30 a.m.



PASTOR'S REPORT JULY 2023

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

Our "Operation Restoration" Vacation Bible School from July 10-14 was a smashing success! Children and adults learned about how to feed, care, heal, forgive, pray, and rest as Jesus did. We are the hands and hearts of Jesus in action. The Bible stories, crafts, and music were outstanding. Thanks to our Youth Leader Torri Stark and all helpers (we had so many), for an amazing VBS!

How will our Children and Youth Ministries continue? Torri Stark's last day as employed Youth Leader will be August 18. Who will pick up and provide the loving and caring learning opportunities through Sunday school, Kids Night Out, and activities for teens? Who will schedule and cover for nursery care? We met combined as Christian Education and Personnel Teams in July to explore all options. While we will advertise via all channels, casting our net wide to find a Youth Leader, we will also need to prepare to continue our children and youth ministries with volunteer teachers and helpers. Our children and youth ministries are vitally important for our congregation!

We started a new worship series "Quest:

The Adventurous Traveler." Our faith is a journey as we travel with Jesus, following in his footsteps. So many of our Biblical stories invite us to trust, let go, and follow God's guidance toward the future, just as Abraham and Sarah were called to leave their home and their family for the promised land. What holds us back? What helps us lean into God's dream for us, the shining city on the hill? How can we work toward God's beloved community here among us? We can travel outwardly, but also inwardly. I'm grateful to the Worship Team for making our services visible and tangible. I'm grateful to all who provide engaging Children's Messages. I hope and pray you will make worshipping with us in person a priority and invite others to join us together with you!

I am deeply grateful for all who participate in the Visitation Ministry, regularly caring for and visiting with people who are homebound and residing in care facilities, and their loved ones. Susan Bolig and Pastor Mary Peterhaensel share in this ministry. Susan coordinates and supports the visitation team, and Mary provides home communion and more. The Visitation Ministry Team met on Sunday, July 16 after worship.

I invested much of my time and energy in pastoral care in July visiting with fami-

lies in the hospital, at home and in nursing facilities. I am "on call" 24/7. That is very demanding for me.

We gave thanks for and celebrated the life of Jack Riegel in worship on July 2. Jack had passed away peacefully at home on June 27. Dr. William "Bill" Weader passed away at home surrounded by his loving family on July 7. We celebrated his life in St. Paul's sanctuary on July 29. 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!

July 1-31, 2023

Days worked	19
Days off	04
Continuing Education	00
Vacation days	07
Sick Days	00
Holidays	01
Total Days	31

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dietmar Plajer



SEARCH AND CALL FOR AN ASSOCIATE PASTOR



Peggy Peeler has been appointed by Church Council at its July 11 meeting as Chair Person of the Search Committee for an Associate Pastor. We are grateful that Peggy took on this responsibility. In the article below, she outlines some of the next steps of the search process for an Associate Pastor. Peggy will report to Church Council as the process unfolds and will keep the congregation informed. Please contact Peggy with any and all questions. You can reach her through the church office.

I am honored and excited to lead the search committee to bring an Associate Pastor to St. Paul's! We have received guidance from the Penn Central Conference regarding how we will conduct the search, and I'd like to share some information about the process.

The first step will be to form the official search committee. On Sunday September 10 (Kickoff Sunday) we will invite the congregation to submit recommendations for individuals who are highly trusted and will make excellent representatives of the St. Paul's community.

Council will then consider these recommendations as it selects the members of the search committee. Once the committee is formed and commissioned by Council and the congregation during worship, our next task will be to create a profile of St. Paul's that will be submitted to the Conference to be shared with interested ministerial candidates. The search committee will be seeking additional input from the congregation as we develop the profile, and our recently completed visioning process will certainly aid us in this process. In addition, candidates will also be able to learn a lot about St. Paul's from visiting our informative website.

Once the search committee begins to receive and review applications, the process will remain confidential as we read ministerial profiles, screen candidates, conduct interviews, and check references. The goal is to select a final candidate who will then be recommended to the entire congregation to be elected in a unified way. While the search process may be time consuming and lengthy, we will prayerfully work to ensure that we find the person with the right skills and gifts to join St. Paul's and help us move forward on our spiritual journey together. The search committee will provide regular updates as to where we are in the process, and I ask for your prayers that we remain open and receptive to God's direction as we embark on the search and call for an Associate Pastor.

Peggy Peeler



MEET & EAT OCTOBER 1 & 29

Our Meet and Eat events will return this fall! They will take place on Sunday, October 1, and Sunday, October 29, in the Fellowship Hall right after the morning service. Please save the dates and come join us for a good meal and great conversation. And are you someone who enjoys cooking? We are especially looking for people interested in sharing their favorite chili recipe for the meal on October 1, but welcome contributions of baked goods, salads, or other tasty items that you like to make. Please email Peggy Peeler (through the church office) to let her know what you'd like to make and bring!





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 a.m.
also on Facebook, YouTube, and our website

"God is Still Speaking"

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

We thank God for...



WHOM WILL YOU INVITE?

A personal invitation is incredibly powerful. Research shows that 75% of first-time guests come to worship, because someone they know invited them. Our Back to Church Sunday, Sept. 10 with 10:30 a.m. worship and 4-6 p.m. Block Party is a wonderful opportunity to invite your family, neighbors, colleagues, and friends to St. Paul's. Our worship will be meaningful and moving with extra special music and message. Our Block Party will be fun and engaging for all ages with crafts, music, games, food, bingo, and a raffle. Let's get back into the swing and join us on Sundays. Whom will you invite to join us on September 10?