

**ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**Sunday, December 29, 2024**



Abram Nagle - 9



**1235 Summer Hill Road, Auburn, PA 17922**  
**Pastor:** Rev. Ken McDowell, cell phone: 610-207-4783  
**Church Office Phone:** 570-754-7225  
**Office Hours:** Monday – Thursday 9am–2pm; Closed Friday  
**Church Email:** [summerhillucc@gmail.com](mailto:summerhillucc@gmail.com)  
**Website:** [www.summerhillucc.com](http://www.summerhillucc.com)  
**Livestream:** [www.facebook.com/summerhillucc](http://www.facebook.com/summerhillucc)

**First Sunday After Christmas**  
**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Offering (Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry)**

Rev. Ken McDowell, Pastor

Music Director- Rae Ann Borger  
Organist- Jacob Challenger

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

This morning we remember in prayer **Friedens, Hegins** from our Schuylkill Association Prayer Calendar.

Please read the announcements that are in this downloadable bulletin, as well as those we post on our Facebook site, our emails, and our phone calls, and then help spread the word to those who do not have access to any of those messages.

INVOCATION

**GATHERING FOR THE WORD**

PRELUDE

*The congregation may stand.*

SOLEMN DECLARATION.....Sung "Amen"

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: We gather this morning ready to listen.

**People: Open our ears, Lord.**

Pastor: We gather this morning ready to learn.

**People: Open our minds, Lord.**

Pastor: We gather this morning ready to love.

**People: Open our hearts, Lord.**

Pastor: We gather this morning ready to worship.

**People: Open our spirits to receive you, Lord.**

Pastor: We gather to praise the Lord Almighty! Amen.

OPENING HYMN NO. 191....."It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

CALL TO CONFESSION

CONFESSION OF SIN (Unison)

**God of love, we long to hear your voice, but sometimes block our ears to the true words of love you speak into our lives. You offer words of love and acceptance, but we find reason to ignore them or withhold them from others. Be tolerant and forgive us in your love. For we yearn to find your perfect bond of unity in our relationships with one another and with the world. Amen.**

MOMENT OF PERSONAL CONFESSION

KYRIE

Pastor: Lord, have mercy upon us.

**People: Lord, have mercy upon us.**

Pastor: Christ, have mercy upon us.

**People: Christ, have mercy upon us.**

Pastor: Lord, have mercy upon us.

**People: Lord, have mercy upon us.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: When we repent, we are forgiven by God for the wounds we inflict upon ourselves and others, so let us be people of forgiveness, mercy, and grace.

**People: And may all the world know we are Christians by our love. Amen.**

THE GLORIA PATRI

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, it is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*

*The congregation may be seated.*

**ENGAGING THE WORD**

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

READING OF THE WORD.....Lector, Mike Fessler

Old Testament: 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26 (Page 235)

Psalm: Psalm 148 (Page 546)

Lector: Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!

**People: Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!**

Lector: Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars!

**People: Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!**

Lector: Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created.

**People: He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.**

Lector: Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps,

**People: Fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!**

Lector: Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!

**People: Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!**

Lector: "Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!"

**People: Young men and women alike, old and young together!**

Lector: Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven.

**People: He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful, for the people of Israel who are close to him. Praise the Lord!**

Epistle: Colossians 3:12-17 (Page 1027)

Gospel: Luke 2:41-52 (Page 890)

Lector: This is the Word of God for the people of God.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE.....“Let Thy word abide in us, O Lord.”

SENIOR CHOIR ANTHEM.....“Sing We Now of Christmas” by Russell Mauldin

SERMON.....“How Quickly They Grow Up”

**RESPONDING TO THE WORD**

*The congregation may remain seated.*

*Ushers will receive tithes and offerings at this time.*

HYMN OF REFLECTION NO. 221.....“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”

*The congregation may stand.*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH.....Heidelberg Catechism: Questions 1, 31, and 34

Pastor: What is your only comfort in life and death?

**All: That I am not my own, but belong with body and soul, both in life and in death, to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from all the power of the devil. He also preserves me in such a way that without the will of my heavenly Father not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, all things must work together for my salvation. Therefore, by his Holy Spirit he also assures me of eternal life and makes me heartily willing and ready from now on to live for him.**

Pastor: Why is he called Christ, that is, the Anointed One?

**All: Because he is ordained by God the Father and anointed by the Holy Spirit to be our ultimate prophet and teacher, who fully reveals to us God’s secret council and will concerning our redemption, and also to be our sole high priest, who has redeemed us by the one sacrifice of his body and ever intercedes for us with the Father, and also to be our eternal king, who governs us by his word and spirit, and defends and sustains us in the redemption he has gained for us.**

Pastor: Why do you call Him our Lord?

**All: Because, not with gold or silver but with his precious blood, he has redeemed and purchased us body and soul from sin and the power of the devil to be his own.**

*The congregation may be seated.*

PASTORAL PRAYER

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Let us pray.

SILENT PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

PRAYER RESPONSE

*Hear our prayer, O Lord; Hear our prayer, O Lord; Hear our prayer, O Lord, And grant us Thy peace. Amen.*

CALL TO OFFERING

*The congregation may stand.*

OFFERING RESPONSE & DEDICATION.....DOXOLOGY

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

OFFERING PRAYER

**GOING WITH THE WORD**

COMMISSION

Pastor: As Samuel and Jesus before us, may we grow in wisdom and stature each day.

**People: With Hannah and Mary as examples, may we dedicate what we love most back to God.**

Pastor: In the spirit of the psalmist, may we praise God with the sun and the moon; may we shine God's glory with the stars;

**People: And may we share God's good news with the world.**

BENEDICTION

THE THREEFOLD AMEN.....*Amen. Amen. Amen.*

CLOSING HYMN NO. 218....."Go, Tell It on the Mountain"

SILENT MEDITATION

POSTLUDE

\* \* \* \* \*

*Portions of today's worship resources were reproduced or adapted from the UCC's Book of Worship, and the 2024 Abingdon Worship Annuals edited by Mary J. Scifres and B. J. Beu.*

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-The altar flowers are in Honor of Our Savior by the Guers Family.

-The bulletins are in memory of Edna, Mary, Willie, Butch, Elsie and Henry by Carol Ann.

-Offering on Sunday, December 22, 2024: \$3,924.00

-Weekly envelope & plate budget for 2024: \$3,243.09

**- The December Communion Offering is designated to Samaritan's Purse. The January 2025 Communion Offering is designated to Women in Crisis.**

**-The 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Offering TODAY is designated to the Schuylkill Haven Council of Churches Food Pantry.** Special envelopes are available or you can just make a note on any regular offering envelope.

**-As the winter weather is upon us, and the possibility exists for service cancellations, it is important that we have your most up to date phone number and email address for our automated call out system. Please contact the church office to be sure your information is correct.**

**-Help will be needed to remove and store away Christmas decorations next Sunday following worship.**

**-There will be a Board of Christian Education Meeting on Tuesday, January 7 beginning at 7pm.** All are invited and encouraged to attend.

**-The Installation of Consistory Members and Delegates will take place on Sunday, January 12, 2025** during the 10:30am Worship Service.

**-Fellowship Time: Join us for conversation, along with a cup of coffee and light refreshments following our 10:30am worship service on Sunday, January 12, 2025.** We will gather in the rear of the Sanctuary the second Sunday of each month. Catch up with old friends, make new ones, and stay up to date on everything happening at St. Paul's. And best of all, it's free of charge!!

-The **Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry** is in great need and accepts all non-perishable food items and paper products. Items can be dropped off at the church during the week or placed in the shopping cart at the back of the sanctuary. **NO OUTDATED FOOD PLEASE. We will be helping on Monday, January 13, 2025** at 8:30am and **Friday, January 17, 2025** at 12pm. Please speak to Verna Ebling or the church office if you would like to help or donate items.

-**The Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet the second Tuesday of each month** from 10am-12noon in the conference room. The next meeting **January 14, 2025**. If you are interested in knitting and/or crocheting, we can hook you up! If you know of someone who could use a prayer shawl, please contact the church office.

-**2024 Annual Report Info. Needed: Please have all information for the 2024 Annual Report to the church office by no later than Sunday, January 19, 2025.** The Annual Report will be available early in February prior to the **Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, February 23, 2025**. Please email your articles to the church office at [summerhillucc@gmail.com](mailto:summerhillucc@gmail.com), or put them in the secretary's mailbox. Please contact Kelly at the church office if you have any questions.

-**If you are CPR/AED certified, please contact the church office.** We are updating our church certification list for our AED machine on site here at the church.

-**Sunday School Raffle: Every week that our youth participate in Sunday School, they will get a raffle ticket that will be entered into a drawing for a prize.** Drawings will then happen quarterly at the Youth Group Events. (winners do not need to be present) Please speak to Laura Carll (484-269-4405) for more information.

-Following many natural disasters, **Clean-Up Buckets** provide those affected with the essentials to begin getting their lives back in order. The Schuylkill Association, working with the UCC Disaster Ministries, helps provide these kits through Church World Services anywhere they are needed, to include right here in Schuylkill County. Our Association currently has over sixty empty five gallon buckets that need to be filled. **If you would like to help in this ministry by coordinating the filling of some of the buckets or can donate materials or money to buy the required materials, please contact the church office.** Learn more at <https://cwskits.org/>.

-**Our members, friends and visitors give their offerings and donations to the church in many different ways,** to include electronically via apps like [Tithe.ly](https://www.tithe.ly) and bank transfers. To help accommodate the varied ways of giving, we have an offering box in the narthex as well as offering plates by the pews in the rear of the sanctuary to place Sunday morning offerings as you enter or leave the sanctuary. However, we have heard that some forget to drop their offerings off, while visitors may be unaware of the remote offering collection. **The Consistory has decided that we will continue to have the offering box and plates to drop off your offering before or after the service, but we will also have two ushers accept offerings during the Hymn of Reflection after the sermon as another option.** Thank you for your financial support of the ministries of St. Paul's and your faithful giving in response to what God has given us!

-**In an effort to keep our records up to date,** please contact the church office if you have had a change to any of your information, to include phone or cell phone numbers, email or home addresses, or any family updates.

-**Sound Board help is needed!!** If you are good with computers, please see Craig Borger or call the church office.

-**When you or a loved one is sick or in the hospital for an extended stay,** do not assume that the pastor will know you are there. Please call or email the church office so that Pastor Ken can provide you with spiritual care!

-**Our church services are livestreamed on Facebook!** When you can't join us in person, please join us online!

**-Prayer is Powerful!** Please call or email the church office with your prayer concerns. We believe in the power of prayer and want to pray for you. **We have a prayer concerns email group for anyone interested.**

PRAYER CONCERNS: All those earnestly seeking God's help in difficult times, Military personnel & National leaders, **Ernie Jones**, Jacob, Tom Kunkle, Dale Kunkle, Norma Koperna, Donald Rubinkam, Janice Arnold, Ida Wildermuth, Michael Wilson, Helen Michelson, Nick Reading, Jerry Moyer, Harold "Sammy" Marburger, Parker Kristoff, Gavin Umberger, victims of hurricane Milton, victims of Hurricane Helene

CANCER PATIENTS: Boone, Marie Bleu, Cindy Boyer, Karen DiCamillo, Alex DuVee, John Eckert, Yvonne Edling, Glennis Eifert, Joanne Forbes, Thomas Galligan, Meg Goodwin, Rebecca Henderson, Sherri Jo Jennar, Deb Kemmerling, Joan Krause, **Lori Krug**, Carol Mallory, Tom Nagle, Rich Nickel, Judy Ohl, Pat Reading, Jim Thompson

**FOR THE WEEK OF SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29**

**Sunday, December 29 \*5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Offering (Schuylkill Haven Council of Churches Food Pantry)**

**Tuesday, December 31 \*New Year's Eve**

**Wednesday, January 1 \*New Year's Day \*Church offices closed**

**Sunday, January 5**

9:15 AM -Sunday School

10:30 AM -Worship with the Sacrament of Holy Communion

-Undecorate the church following worship

**\*Lectionary Readings for next week:**

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Psalms 147:12-20 or

Wisdom of Solomon 10:15-21

Ephesians 1:3-14

John 1:(1-9), 10-18