

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Sunday, January 5, 2025



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
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Livestream: www.facebook.com/summerhillucc

**Second Sunday after Christmas/ Epiphany Sunday
The Sacrament of Holy Communion**

Rev. Ken McDowell, Pastor

Music Director- Rae Ann Borger
Organist- Colin Andrew

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

This morning we remember in prayer, from our Schuylkill Association Prayer Calendar, **the Epiphany of Jesus Christ.**

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.

(Communion note: This morning, as some of us are gathered together here at church while many are gathering with us virtually from their homes, we all are invited to the same table. Those present this morning are invited to pick up a bag of individually prepared elements from the table in the narthex, as we will not be distributing the elements during the service. Those at home may gather bread and drink and partake as we do when we are gathered together.)

INVOCATION

GATHERING FOR THE WORD

PRELUDE

The congregation may stand.

SOLEMN DECLARATION.....Sung “Amen”

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of God’s goodness and grace has risen upon you.

People: We come like the Magi, following the star of the Christ child.

Pastor: Arise, shine, for your moment has come, and the glory of God’s love and mercy flows through you into the world.

People: We come like Paul, to share the good news that Christ lives among us.

Pastor: Arise, shine, for you are called to be God’s people, and to bring good news and great joy to a world that yearns for wholeness and peace.

People: Let us worship the God who calls us. Amen!

OPENING HYMN NO. 231.....“Arise, Your Light is Come!”

CALL TO CONFESSION

CONFESSION OF SIN (Unison)

Christ Jesus, we yearn for your grace to fill our lives. We yearn to accept your love so fully that our hearts might overflow with love for your world. Gift us, not just with your mercy and grace, but with an openness and confidence to receive your gift of forgiveness. Shine through our hearts, our lives, and our actions, that others may find in us generous friends of grace and love. May our prayers and our actions bring your light and love to 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: In Christ’s grace, we can boldly embrace God’s love.

People: **In Christ’s mercy, we can confidently proclaim that God’s love is enough.**

Pastor: In the name of Christ you are forgiven. Glory to God. 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, Brook Koch-Guers

Isaiah 60:1-6 (Page 639)

Psalm: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 (**Read Responsively**)

Lector: Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a king’s son.

People: May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice.

Lector: May the mountains yield prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness.

People: May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor.

Lector: May he live while the sun endures, and as long as the moon, throughout all generations.

People: May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass, like showers that water the earth.

Lector: In his days may righteousness flourish and peace abound, until the moon is no more.

People: May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles render him tribute, may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts.

Lector: May all kings fall down before him, all nations give him service.

People: For he delivers the needy when they call, the poor and those who have no helper.

Lector: He has pity on the weak and the needy, and saves the lives of the needy.

People: From oppression and violence he redeems their life; and precious is their blood in his sight.

Ephesians 3:1-12 (Page 1018)

Matthew 2:1-12 (Page 835)

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.....“Just One Star” by Brad Dixon

SERMON.....“The Gift That Keeps on Giving”

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

The congregation may remain seated.

Ushers will receive tithes and offerings at this time.

HYMN NO. 233.....“We Three Kings of Orient Are”

The congregation may stand.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Unison)The Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:
And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

The congregation may be seated.

PASTORAL PRAYER

Pastor: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Pastor: Let us pray.

SILENT PRAYER

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

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation:

Pastor: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Pastor: Lift up your hearts.
People: We lift them to the Lord.
Pastor: Let us give thanks to God Most High.
People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

The Communion Prayer:

The Seraphic Hymn

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full, are full of the majesty of Thy glory, Hosanna, Hosanna, hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!

The congregation may be seated.

Words of Institution:

Pastor: Holy are you, and holy is your child, Jesus Christ.....And so, in remembrance of your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we proclaim the mystery of faith.
People: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Prayer of Consecration:

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.

Breaking of the Bread:

Lifting of the Cup:

Call to the Supper:

The Sharing of the Elements:

Blessing of the Children:

The congregation may stand.

The Prayer of Thanksgiving (Unison):

O God, who in Jesus Christ called us out of darkness into marvelous light, enable us now strengthened by this meal to declare your wonderful deed. Thank you, O God, for your steadfast love and may we praise you now and forever with heart, mind, soul and strength. Amen.

GOING WITH THE WORD

COMMISSION

Pastor: Arise; shine!

People: The world needs our light.

Pastor: Go forth with grace and love.

People: Every person needs our grace and love.

Pastor: Go forth with the gift of Christ's presence.

People: Christ's presence will save us all. Amen.

BENEDICTION

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

CLOSING HYMN NO. 236....."As with Gladness"

SILENT MEDITATION

POSTLUDE

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Portions of today's worship resources were reproduced or adapted from the UCC's Book of Worship, Worship Connection by Nancy C. Townley on MinistryMatters.com, and by Mary J. Scifres from the 2025 Abingdon Worship Annuals edited by Mary J. Scifres and B. J. Beu.

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-The altar flowers are in memory of Mr. Paul Clauser Sr. by the family.

-The bulletins are in loving memory of Kenneth Kreager by Linda Clauser and Arlene Kreager.

-Offering on Sunday, December 29, 2024: \$2,528.35

-Weekly envelope & plate budget for 2025: \$3,285.91

-The January 2025 Communion Offering is designated to Women in Crisis.

-Help will be needed to remove and store away Christmas decorations TODAY following worship.

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

-The Installation of Consistory Members and Delegates will take place next 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 next 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, or put them in the secretary's mailbox. Please contact Kelly at the church office if you have any questions.

-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.

-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 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, *family and friends of Vita Valenti, family and friends of Spencer Holbrook, family and friends of Lee Moyer, Ardith Moyer, family and friends of Jack DiMaio,* Ernie Jones, Jacob, Tom Kunkle, Dale Kunkle, Norma Koperna, Donald Rubinkam, Janice Arnold, Ida Wildermuth, Michael Wilson, 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, JANUARY 5

Sunday, January 5

-Undecorate the church following worship

Monday, January 6 *Epiphany

Tuesday, January 7

7:00 PM -Board of Christian Education Meeting

Wednesday, January 8

7:00 PM -Senior Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, January 12

9:15 AM -Sunday School

10:30 AM -Worship with the Service of Installation and the Celebration of Baptismal Anniversaries

-Fellowship Hour following worship

***Lectionary Readings for next week:**

Isaiah 43:1-7

Psalm 29

Acts 8:14-17

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22