

**ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**Sunday, March 16, 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](mailto:summerhillucc@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.summerhillucc.com](http://www.summerhillucc.com)

**Livestream:** [www.facebook.com/summerhillucc](http://www.facebook.com/summerhillucc)

**Second Sunday in Lent**

Rev. Ken McDowell, Pastor

Music Director- Rae Ann Borger  
Organist- Colin Andrew

**CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH**

This morning we remember in prayer **St. John’s, Orwigsburg** 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.

**LENTEN CANDLES**

Pastor: God created people to give him glory.

**People: And he created a perfect place for them—a place that reflected his glory.**

Pastor: He gave them everything they could need or want for happiness.

**People: But they listened to God’s enemy.**

Pastor: They didn’t really believe God’s gifts to them were enough for them.

**People: So they turned their backs on God,**

[Extinguish one candle. Do not light it again until Easter]

Pastor: and they lost their perfect place to live and their perfect friendship with God.

**People: Now, they could see pain and futility and death in their future.**

RESPONSIVE HYMN NO. 354.....“Just as I am” (verse 2)

*Just as I am, and waiting not to rid my soul of one dark blot,  
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot, O Lamb of God, I come, I come!*

**INVOCATION**

**GATHERING FOR THE WORD**

**PRELUDE**

*The congregation may stand.*

SOLEMN DECLARATION.....Sung “Amen”

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Pastor: God, our light and our salvation, calls us to worship.

**People: We gather in faith, confidence, and praise.**

Pastor: Come; seek the face of God.

**People: God’s face shines upon us with grace and love.**

Pastor: Be strong, my friends, for God is here.

**People: Thanks be to God for this wonderful gift. Amen.**

OPENING HYMN NO. 264.....“In the Cross of Christ I Glory”

**CALL TO CONFESSION**

**CONFESSION OF SIN (Unison)**

**Holy God, we often feel scattered and lost, separated from you and from one another. Gather us in. Comfort us in our loneliness. Dispel our fears. Correct our wayward feet and strengthen our faith, that we might hear your voice, trust your promises, and stand firm in your ways. In your light and love, we pray. 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: Be strong and take heart.

**People: God is with us here and now.**

Pastor: Christ’s love is saving us, now and always. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. 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

Psalm: Psalm 27 (Read responsively)

Lector: The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

**People: When evildoers assail me to devour my flesh—my adversaries and foes—they shall stumble and fall.**

Lector: Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war rise up against me, yet I will be confident.

**People: One thing I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.**

Lector: For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will set me high on a rock.

**People: Now my head is lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the Lord.**

Lector: Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud, be gracious to me and answer me!

**People: "Come," my heart says, "seek his face!" Your face, Lord, do I seek.**

Lector: Do not hide your face from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger, you who have been my help. Do not cast me off, do not forsake me, o God of my salvation!

**People: If my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up.**

Lector: Teach me your way, O LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.

**People: Do not give me up to the will of my adversaries, for false witnesses have risen against me, and they are breathing out violence.**

Lector: I believe that I shall see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

**People: Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!**

Epistle: Philippians 3:17-4:1 (Page 1024)

Gospel: Luke 13:31-35 (Page 907)

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.....“Holy Place” by Keith Wilkerson and Hal Wright

SERMON.....“Until the Time Comes”

**RESPONDING TO THE WORD**

*The congregation may remain seated.*

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

HYMN OF REFLECTION NO. 458.....“O Jesus, I Have Promised”

*The congregation may stand.*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH.....Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.**

**Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven:**

**by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**

**With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. 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

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: Be strong and take heart.

**People: God goes before us on the road of life.**

Pastor: Go as beloved children of God.

**People: We will bring love to all of God’s children.**

BENEDICTION

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

CLOSING HYMN NO. 118.....“Lord of the Dance”

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 and bulletins are in memory of Beatrice Kreager by Linda, Dick, Christopher and Amy Clauser.

-Offering on Sunday, March 9, 2025: \$1,683.00

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

**-The March Communion offering will support the Palisades Fires impacting California. The April Communion offering will support the Schuylkill Association General Fund.**

**-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 tomorrow, **March 17** at 8:30am and this **Friday, March 21** at 12pm. Please speak to Verna Ebling, Bill Reber or the church office if you would like to help or donate items.

**-The Consistory will meet this Tuesday, March 18** at 7:00pm in the conference room.

**-Wednesday evening Lenten services continue each Wednesday evening through April 9** at 7pm in the sanctuary. Please join us as we journey with Jesus to the cross.

- You're invited to the Everybody's Birthday Party this Friday, March 21** from 6-9pm. It will be a pot-luck style, so you may bring a dinner choice and/or a dessert choice. Come for fellowship and fun!!
  
- An outdoor grounds clean up will be held this Saturday, March 22** beginning at 8:00am. ALL HANDS ON DECK! Children would be great. Please bring gloves, rakes, shovels, wheelbarrows.
  
- There will be an Acolyte training session following worship next Sunday, March 23** for any youth that may be interested. If you have any questions, please speak to Laura Carll.
  
- Easter is Sunday, April 20! This year we are offering a variety of beautiful Easter flowers.** (Prices: Easter Lily- \$15.00; Tulip- \$12.00; Daffodil- \$12.00) Order forms are available on the bulletin table. Orders and money may be given to Ardith Moyer or dropped/ mailed to the church office. Money is due at the time you place your order. **The Final deadline for ordering is Sunday, March 30.**
  
- A sign-up sheet is located on the table by the bulletin basket to sign up for a **Heart Association CPR, AED and First Aid Certification Class offered here at the church on Saturday, April 5** from 9am-12 noon. The class will be instructed by John Borchick and should last approximately 3 hours. The cost is \$20 per person, and the certification is good for 2 years. Please speak to the church office for more information.
  
- Pastor Ken has begun a Lenten Study, "Message of Jesus: Words that Changed the World"** by Adam Hamilton during the 9:15am Sunday School Hour. In this study, pastor and best-selling author Adam Hamilton explores six of the most important themes in Jesus's teachings, why they matter and how they speak to us today. The study takes place each Sunday in the downstairs room B1. There is no cost and all are encouraged and welcome to attend.
  
- On Sunday, March 30, we will receive the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering.** OGHS, the refugee, relief and development offering of the UCC, transforms lives through health, education, agricultural, and emergency relief initiatives in 138 countries. Special envelopes will be placed on the bulletin table prior to that Sunday.
  
- The fifth Sunday Offering on Sunday, March 30 is designated to the Pastor's Emergency Relief Fund.**
  
- There will be a Sunday School Egg Hunt on Sunday, April 13** that will take place during the 9:15am Sunday School hour. **There is a plastic egg donation sign-up sheet on the table by the bulletin basket. PLASTIC EGGS ONLY- please no real eggs.** They may be filled or not, and can be placed in downstairs room B-1 by **Sunday, March 30.**
  
- There will be a Vacation Bible School Planning Meeting on Tuesday, April 1** at 7:00pm in room B1. Anyone interested in helping at VBS, which will be held June 17-21, is invited to attend. Please speak to Bill Reber for more information.
  
- Please remove any arrangements from the cemetery that you want to keep for future use before Sunday, April 6.** After that date any outdated or worn arrangements will be removed.
  
- The Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet the second Tuesday of each month** from 10am-12noon in the conference room. **The next meeting will be held Tuesday, April 8.** 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.

-A **Palm Sunday Service, with the Blessing of the Palms, will be held on Sunday, April 13** at 10:30am. On **Maundy Thursday, April 17**, at 6:00pm, we will gather in the fellowship hall for our version of the **Seder meal**. A **Good Friday Tenebrae Service will be held on April 18** at 7:00pm. **Easter Sunday, April 20:** We will rejoice and celebrate Christ's resurrection beginning with our Sunrise Service at 6:30am on Easter morning. An Easter Breakfast will be held in the fellowship hall at approximately 7:15am followed immediately by a worship service with Holy Communion around the breakfast table (8:15am). Sunday School will be held at 9:15am, followed by the 10:30am Easter Worship Service with Holy Communion.

**-Please note: During periods of inclement weather, please check the church Facebook page, emails or phone messages for cancellation notices.** We will strive to make the decision to cancel church activities as soon as practical and in the best interest of the safety of our members.

**-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. 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.

**-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!

**-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, *Angie Kutz, family and friends of Kyle Cleary*, Tom Saunders, Brandon Wright, Mary Maurer, Margot Evans Carey, Alvin Spirko, Brian Moyer, Dick Clauser, Ronald Blue, Nancy Shellhammer, Charlie Heim, Chris Berger, Jim Reibsane, Joe Maurer, Ardith Moyer

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

**FOR THE WEEK OF SUNDAY, MARCH 16**

**Sunday, March 16 \*Second Sunday in Lent**

4:00 PM -Cub Scout Meeting

**Monday, March 17 \*St. Patrick's Day**

8:30 AM -Help at the Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry

**Tuesday, March 18**

7:00 PM -Consistory Meeting

**Wednesday, March 19**

4:30 PM -Scout Sale Pick-up

7:00 PM -Lenten Worship Service

-Senior Choir Rehearsal following worship

**Thursday, March 20**

6:00 PM -Confirmation Class

**Friday, March 21**

12:00 PM -Help at the Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry

6:00 PM -Everybody's Birthday Party/ Potluck Meal

**Saturday, March 22**

8:00 AM -Outdoor church grounds clean up

**Sunday, March 23**

9:15 AM -Sunday School

10:30 AM -Worship (Third Sunday of Lent)

-Acolyte training following worship

4:00 PM -Cub Scout Blue and Gold Dinner

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

Isaiah 55:1-9

Psalm 63:1-8

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Luke 13:1-9