

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Sunday, March 9, 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

**First Sunday of Lent
Celebration of Baptismal Anniversaries**

Rev. Ken McDowell, Pastor

Music Director and Pianist- Rae Ann Borger

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

This morning we remember in prayer, from our Schuylkill Association Prayer Calendar, the **One Great Hour of Sharing** offering.

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 the universe—everything seen and unseen.

People: He created the breeze that calms us and the hurricane that terrifies us.

Pastor: All of it is to show us what he is like, to display his glory and personality.

People: But, people have let themselves be blinded to the truth.

Pastor: Some take all of God’s creation for granted and say it just got there somehow—no need for God.

People: Others worship the things that were created and don’t see God behind it.

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

Pastor: They exchanged the truth about God for a lie.

People: And they worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

RESPONSIVE HYMN NO. 354.....“Just as I am” (verse 1)

*Just as I am, without one plea, But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidd’st me come to Thee, 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: Welcome home, beloved children of God!

People: Gathered in God’s arms, we come to worship.

Pastor: Sheltered in God’s love, we come to grow in love.

People: Abiding in God, we seek solace and comfort.

Pastor: Even as God sends us on wilderness journeys,

People: we trust that God is with us, guiding and protecting our days. Amen!

OPENING HYMN NO. 252.....“Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days”

CALL TO CONFESSION

CONFESSION OF SIN (Unison)

God of our weary years, lift us up and guide us forward, when we are tired beyond words. Pour your grace into our souls, when we give in to temptation and stray where we were never meant to go. Shepherding God, guide us back to you and show us the path home. In hope and gratitude, 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: All who call on the name of the Lord will be saved.

People: We trust the promises of God and believe in Christ Jesus with our whole heart.

Pastor: Confess what the Spirit has done for you and you will abide in life everlasting. 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, Trevor Smith

Old Testament: Deuteronomy 26:1-11 (Page 174)

Psalm: Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16 (Read Responsively)

Lector: You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,

People: will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust."

Lector: Because you have made the LORD your refuge, the Most High your dwelling place,

People: no evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent.

Lector: For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.

People: On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.

Lector: You will tread on the lion and the adder, the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot.

People: Those who love me, I will deliver; I will protect those who know my name.

Lector: When they call to me, I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble, I will rescue them and honor them.

People: With long life I will satisfy them, and show them my salvation.

Epistle: Romans 10:8b-13 (Page 985)

Gospel: Luke 4:1-13 (Page 892)

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

People: Thanks be to God.

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

SENIOR CHOIR ANTHEM.....“O Most High” by Scott Jeffries

SERMON.....“A Wandering Aramean”

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

The congregation may remain seated.

Ushers will receive tithes and offerings at this time.

HYMN NO. 451.....“Be Still, My Soul”

CELEBRATION OF MARCH BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARIES

Kylah Leigh, daughter of Charles and Kayla Ferguson

Kaycee Layne, daughter of Charles and Kayla Ferguson

The congregation may stand.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH.....Apostles Creed in the form of a Litany

Pastor: Do you believe in God?

People: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Pastor: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

People: I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Pastor: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

People: I believe in the Holy Spirit, 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

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 you leave this place, abide in the shadow of the Most High.

People: God is our refuge and our strength.

Pastor: As you wander through the wilderness, put your trust in the Holy One.

People: Christ is our shelter in times of temptation and fear.

Pastor: As you face times of trial, call on the name of the Lord and be saved.

People: The Comforter leads us safely through. Go with God's blessing.

BENEDICTION

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

CLOSING HYMN NO. 254.....“Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley”

SILENT MEDITATION

POSTLUDE

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Portions of today’s worship resources were reproduced or adapted from the UCC’s Book of Worship, 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 loving memory of Kenneth Kreager by Linda, Dick, Christopher and Amy Clauser.

-Offering on Sunday, March 2, 2025: \$2,505.00

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

-The March Communion offering will support the Palisades Fires impacting California.

-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 back of the bulletin and also 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: 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.

-Join us TODAY for our monthly fellowship time- conversation, along with a cup of coffee and light refreshments following worship. We will gather in the rear of the Sanctuary. Catch up with old friends, make new ones, and stay up to date on everything happening at St. Paul’s.

-The Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet this Tuesday, March 11 from 10am-12 noon in the conference room. 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.

-Wednesday evening Lenten services will begin this Wednesday, March 12 and continue through April 9 at 7pm in the sanctuary. Please join us as we journey with Jesus to the cross.

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

-You're invited to the Everybody's Birthday Party on 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 on 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 on Sunday, March 23 for any youth that may be interested. If you have any questions, please speak to Laura Carll.

-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 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.

-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.**

-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, *family and friends of Thelma Brensinger, Tom Saunders, Brandon Wright, Mary Maurer, Ryan and Heather Carey on the birth of their daughter Margot Evans*, Alvin Spirko, Brian Moyer, Dick Clauser, Ronald Blue, Nancy Shellhammer, Charlie Heim, Chris Berger, Jim Reibsane, Joe Maurer, Ardith Moyer

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, Nick Reading, Pat Reading, Jim Thompson

FOR THE WEEK OF SUNDAY, MARCH 9

Sunday, March 9 *First Sunday in Lent *Daylight Savings Time Begins

-Fellowship Hour following worship

4:00 PM -Cub Scout Meeting

Monday, March 10

7:15 PM -Boy Scout Meeting

Tuesday, March 11

10:00 AM -Prayer Shawl Ministry Meeting

Wednesday, March 12

7:00 PM -Lenten Worship Service

-Senior Choir Rehearsal following worship

Friday, March 14 *Pastor Ken's Birthday!!

Sunday, March 16 *Second Sunday in Lent

9:15 AM -Sunday School

10:30 AM -Worship

4:00 PM -Cub Scout Meeting

***Lectionary Readings for next week:**

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

Psalm 27

Philippians 3:17-4:1

Luke 13:31-35

Luke 9:28-36 (37-43a)

Easter Flower Order Form

Easter is Sunday, April 20!

This year we are offering a variety of beautiful Easter flowers.

	<u>Prices</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Total</u>
Easter Lily	\$15.00	_____	\$ _____
Tulip	\$12.00	_____	\$ _____
Daffodil	\$12.00	_____	\$ _____
Total Cost			\$ _____

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.

Final deadline for ordering: Sunday, March 30

Name _____

Phone No. _____

Placed in memory/honor of _____

Placed in memory/honor of _____
