

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Sunday, April 6, 2025



1235 Summer Hill Road, Auburn, PA 17922

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Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 9am–2pm; Closed Friday

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**Fifth Sunday in Lent
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 **St. John’s, St. Clair** 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.

(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.)

LENTEN CANDLES

Pastor: God wants people to be happy. And the only way we can be happy is by following his instructions.

People: So he gave us his Word, his written Word.

Pastor: The Word revealed where our life comes from and how we can keep it.

People: But again and again we think our ideas are better than God’s. And we turn from life to death.

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

Pastor: The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul.

People: Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward. (Psalm 19:7a, 11)

RESPONSIVE HYMN NO. 354.....“Just as I am” (verse 5)

*Just as I am, Thou wilt receive, wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
because Thy promise I believe, 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: When we have been hurt and lost,

People: God brings us laughter and joy.

Pastor: When our lives reach a dead end,

People: God opens a way forward.

Pastor: When the rivers of our lives dry up,

People: God sends living water to quench our thirst.

Pastor: God has done great things for us!

People: Let us rejoice! Amen.

OPENING HYMN NO. 479.....“Near the Cross”

CALL TO CONFESSION

CONFESSION OF SIN (Unison)

Compassionate God, we do not always see the harvest of joy that we sow from our tears. Some losses take hold of us and we dwell in disappointment and grief. We don't always know what to think of you. We want to embrace new life, hope, and joy, but don't always know how. Bless us with your merciful help, that we might walk from our tombs like Lazarus, and sit by Jesus' side, eating and laughing. Help us kneel at Jesus' feet in love and commitment, as we celebrate our new lives. Come to us, healing God, and renew us and our love for you. 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

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: Isaiah 43:16-21 (Page 624)
Psalm: Psalm 126 (Read responsively)

Lector: When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.
People: Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."
Lector: The LORD has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.
People: Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like the watercourses in the Negeb.
Lector: May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.
People: Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

Epistle Lesson: Philippians 3:4b-14 (Page 1023)
Gospel Lesson: John 12:1-8 (Page 936)

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..... "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" by Tom Fettke

SERMON..... "What Lies Ahead"

RESPONDING TO THE WORD
The congregation may remain seated.

Ushers will receive tithes and offerings at this time.

HYMN NO. 123.....“Fairest Lord Jesus”

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: Luke, the evangelist, wrote of our risen Savior, who at the table with two of the disciples took bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. Their eyes were opened, and they recognized the risen Christ in the breaking of the bread.

People: In company with all believers in every time and beyond time, we come to this table to know the risen Christ in the breaking of the bread.

Pastor: This table is for all Christians who wish to know the presence of Christ and to share in the community of God's people. 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: We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, Jesus took bread.....we proclaim Christ's death, celebrate Christ's resurrection, and await Christ's coming again.

People: Amen. Come, Christ Jesus!

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):

Thank you, Triune God, for feeding us abundantly from the storehouse of your mercy in Jesus Christ. You restore us, body and soul. You make us whole. Now send us forth into the messiness of our lives, as living witnesses of your renewing love that brings hope and wholeness today, tomorrow, and for generations to come. Amen.

GOING WITH THE WORD

COMMISSION

Pastor: We leave this gathering, knowing that Christ Jesus has made us his own.

People: We take the fruits of our worship into the world, bringing joy to those who weep,

Pastor: God is doing a new thing.

People: Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

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

CLOSING HYMN NO. 66.....“To God Be the Glory”

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 Rebecca Guadino 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 Beatrice Spotts and Lurda Reber by the family.

-The bulletins are in memory of Beatrice Spotts and Lurda Reber by the grandchildren.

-Offering on Sunday, March 30, 2025: \$2,790.00

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

-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, April 7** at 8:30am and **this Friday, April 11** at 12pm. Please speak to Verna Ebling, Bill Reber or the church office if you would like to help or donate items.

-The Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet this Tuesday April 8 from 10:00am-12 noon. If you are interested in knitting and/or crocheting, we can hook you up! Please speak to Nancy Dewald for more information. If you know of someone who could use a prayer shawl, please contact the church office.

-There will be a Boy Scout Troop 651 Dining Out fundraiser at the Friedensburg Country Restaurant this Tuesday, April 8 all day. The troop will receive 20% of your total bill. Tickets are available on the bulletin table or by contacting Lorna Palerino.

-There will be a **Lenten Worship Service this Wednesday, April 9** at 7pm in the sanctuary. Please join us as we journey with Jesus to the cross.

-There will be a Sunday School Egg Hunt next Sunday/ Palm Sunday, April 13 that will take place during the 9:15am Sunday School hour. There will be goody bags after the egg hunt, so please make sure you get one from Amy Zimmerman.

-A Palm Sunday Service, with the Blessing of the Palms, will be held next Sunday, April 13 at 10:30am. We will also be recognizing the 50th Confirmation of the class of 1975 and the Celebration of Baptismal Anniversaries.

-Join us for conversation, along with a cup of coffee and light refreshments following our 10:30am worship service next Sunday, April 13. 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. We have been having a wonderful response to our monthly fellowship times! Donations of treats (cookies, brownies, cupcakes, muffins, etc.) are welcome and very much appreciated. Please speak to Lori Moyer if you would like to help.

- There will be a Consistory Meeting on Tuesday, April 15 at 7:00pm in the conference room.

-On Maundy Thursday, April 17, at 6:00pm, we will gather in the fellowship hall for our version of the **Seder meal.** Seder is a transliteration of the Hebrew סדר, which means 'order' or 'procedure'. The name also expresses the conduct of the meal, all the dishes, the blessings, the prayers, the stories and the songs, written in the Haggadah, a book that determines the order of Passover and tells the story of the Exodus from Egypt. To help in the food preparation, there is a sign-up sheet by the bulletin basket on the table in the narthex. Help is needed to prepare food during the day. If you are able to help, please speak to Pastor Ken.

-A Good Friday Tenebrae Service will be held on April 18 at 7:00pm. Tenebrae is the Latin term for shadows. It is a service of lessons accompanied by the gradual extinguishing of lights to represent the death of Jesus Christ.

-Please join us for one or all of our services on 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. There is a sign-up sheet for the breakfast located on the bulletin table. You do not have to sign up to attend, but it helps in the meal planning.

-It's soon mowing season! Volunteers are needed to mow the church lawn- a zero turn mower is provided. A sign-up sheet is on the table in the narthex. Please contact the church office for more information.

-St Paul's UCC is having a YARD SALE on Saturday, May 3 from 8am to 1pm. There will be indoor and outdoor spaces available for members of the church and their friends. Spaces will cost \$10 and can be paid to Trevor Smith or the church office. In addition, we will also be having a small concession stand and bake sale. We are kindly asking for donations of food items and baked goods, as well as volunteers to help in the kitchen. Sign-up sheets are located in the narthex for vendors as well as food donations/volunteers. Flyers will be available for advertisement. **The deadline to sign up will be Sunday, April 27th.**

-The 2025 Spring Meeting of the Schuylkill Association of the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ will gather Sunday, May 4 at 3pm at First United Church of Christ, 110 Route 61 South, Schuylkill Haven. Registration will begin at 2:30pm.

-Anyone interested in learning more about our Sunday School program is welcome and invited to attend the Board of Christian Education Meeting on Tuesday, May 6 at 7pm. The meeting will take place downstairs in room B1. Please speak to Laura Carll, any Sunday School teachers, Pastor Ken or the church office for more information.

-There will be a Schuylkill Haven Council of Churches blood drive on Thursday, May 8 at Jerusalem Lutheran, Schuylkill Haven from 1-6 PM. Please give!

-Mark your calendars for Vacation Bible School ("True North- Trusting Jesus in a Wild World") which will be held here at St. Paul's **June 16-20** from 6-8:30pm each day. Please save the date and share with all your relatives, friends and neighbors. Please speak to Bill Reber at 570-754-7225. ALL ARE WELCOME!!

-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://tithely.com/) 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 AND also a prayer phone call chain for anyone interested.** Please contact the church office.

PRAYER CONCERNS: All those earnestly seeking God's help in difficult times, Military personnel & National leaders, *family and friends of Rich Nickel, Alex Krammes and twins*, Kenneth Smith, Roxann and Kevin Sweigert, Aiden Rodriguez, Angie Kutz, Tom Saunders, Brandon Wright, Mary Maurer, Margot Evans Carey, Alvin Spirko, Brian Moyer, Ardith Moyer

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

FOR THE WEEK OF SUNDAY, April 6

Sunday, April 6

2:00 PM -Eagle Scout Court of Honor

Monday, April 7

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

7:15 PM -Boy Scout Meeting

Tuesday, April 8

10:00 AM -12noon -Prayer Shawl Ministry Meeting

Wednesday, April 9

7:00 PM -Lenten Worship Service

-Senior Choir Rehearsal following worship

Friday, April 11

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

Sunday, April 13 *Palm/ Passion Sunday

9:15 AM -Sunday School/ Easter Egg Hunt

10:30 AM -Worship with the Blessing of the Palms, Recognition of the 50th Anniversary of the Confirmation Class of 1975 and Celebration of the Baptismal Anniversaries

-Fellowship time following worship

4:00 PM -Cub Scout Meeting

***Lectionary Readings for next week:**

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Luke 19:28-40

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm 31:9-16

Philippians 2:5-11

Luke 22:14-23:56

Luke 23:1-49