



# THE MESSENGER

OUR MISSION IS TO GROW IN FAITH, TO WORSHIP GOD, TO SERVE OTHERS, AND TO WELCOME ALL.

**MUSIC**  
**APPRECIATION**  
**SUNDAY**  
**MAY 5, 2024**

We are grateful for all who collaborate to enhance our worship services with beautiful and meaningful music, sound, and video, elevating our spirits in celebration.

*Mother's Day*

*May 12, 2024*

**PENTECOST**  
**SUNDAY MAY 19, 2024**

WITH RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS  
 AND RECOGNITION OF GRADUATES

*god speaks  
 my language*

**Messy Church May 19 @ 4p**





Walking by the river on the Isle of Que does me good. Recording and reflecting on my dreams feeds my soul. Taking a stained-glass class together with my wife Sigrid is special for me. When we immerse ourselves in creating art, we forget everything else. We enjoy playing board games with our sons Max and Felix whenever they come home or we visit with them in Connecticut. And soon I'll be planting a garden again. We have a competition going on with Bill, our neighbor from across the street, who grows the best tomatoes. Relaxing into the grace of God does me well. And watching a British murder mystery with Sigrid after a long night's meeting at the church helps too.

All of these activities help me connect with the living God. I can feel the movement of the Spirit, calming, nurturing, and feeding my soul. But what I forgot

to mention is our beloved St. Paul's and how God touches my souls through our services, our music, and our ministries. It is a sacred time for me to worship together with you on Sundays even when the microphone squeals and I get stuck while offering the message. It felt like a big yikes - but we made it through feeling awkward and truly human. I treasure singing in the choir, planning for meaningful and moving services, and helping with Loaves and Fishes. It is holy time together with you.

Saint Francis offered deep wisdom when he said, we have TWO books of God. One is our Bible and the other one is God's Creation. Both feed my spirit. Hiking at R.B. Winter State Park and our soulful worship services. I need both to keep me centered and grounded. During this month we have plenty to celebrate

and to lift our spirits here at St. Paul's. I can't wait for an amazing Music Sunday on May 5 and for the moving and meaningful Mother's Day service on May 12. We will celebrate Pentecost really big on May 19 with new member joining, with recognizing our St. Paul's graduates, and Messy Church. You don't want to miss that - the Spirit of God is moving in us and among us!

What feeds your soul? What activities lift your spirit? I hope you will join us here at St. Paul's as we experience together the power of the Spirit moving in us and among us.

Blessings and peace,

*Pastor Dietmar*



## NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER - THURSDAY MAY 2, AT 7 P.M. AT WESLEY UMC

Join our Selinsgrove area churches, colleagues and friends in observing the National Day of Prayer with a worship service at Wesley United Methodist Church on Rhoads Avenue. We will pray together for the various aspects of our lives: government, military, media, business, education, church, and family. We will sing and share brief messages and refreshments will be offered after the service. This is a wonderful opportunity to come together as people of faith in prayer.



# VBS

In lieu of a traditional VBS week this summer, the Christian Education Team is planning two family-style days. The first event will be on Saturday, June 8, from 5 - 8 p.m. at the McCabes' place. There will be outdoor activities, a cookout, and a campfire! The second event will be on Sunday, July 14, from 12 - 3 p.m. at the Rudnitskys' house. There will be water olympics, a picnic, and of course - swimming! Both events will be for the entire family and will include a Bible story/lesson. More information and sign-ups are coming soon.

**Mark your calendars!**

**June 8, 5-8 pm**  
at the McCabes'

**July 14, 12-3 pm**  
at the Rudnitskys'

**VBS**



## Sunday School News

The final Sunday School class will be on May 19. We will take a break for the summer but hope to see you at the VBS days in June and July! Sunday School will resume in the fall after Labor Day - have a great summer!



## MAY BIRTHDAYS



- 5/01 Mark Minier  
RuthMary Shaffer
- 5/02 Camden Smith  
Aubryana Zettlemoyer
- 5/04 Linda Bowers  
Ann Leitzel  
Gail Carl
- 5/05 Finn Smith  
Jane Taylor
- 5/06 Ann Groner
- 5/07 Shirley Varner
- 5/08 David Wetzel  
Roger Bowersox
- 5/10 Caroline Frantz
- 5/11 Erin Goedegebuure
- 5/12 Malcolm Derk, III  
Soren Kershner  
Ray Kammerer
- 5/13 Rick Krex  
Darin Namminga
- 5/14 Gail Fischer
- 5/17 Connie Erdley  
Lucy Wenrich
- 5/19 Debra Brown  
Shannon Walter  
Jacob Koch
- 5/20 Kim Campbell  
Reed McCabe  
Grayson Taylor
- 5/21 Amanda Stante  
Erin Yatsko
- 5/22 Wendy Mull
- 5/23 Jillian Haddon
- 5/24 Matthew Kelly  
Jan Sears
- 5/25 Randy Laniewski
- 5/26 Bradley Berger  
Jeremy Brouse  
Rev. Penny Dollar,  
Lorene Eaton  
Sienna Kershner
- 5/27 Carisa Kreitzer  
John Probst  
Linda Turner
- 5/29 Cullen Straub
- 5/30 Sally Lauer  
Eveline Straub  
Davie Lauer, Jr.

## PRAYER LIST

Pat Cline  
The Family of Bill Dell  
Doug  
Tanner Fasold  
Isaiah Gruenberg  
Tom Horan  
Christine Jaegers  
Nelson Kahler  
Charles Klingler & family  
The Family of Donna Fenstermacher  
Knouse  
Katelynn Thompson

All who keep working in critical situations, especially the health care workers  
All who are grieving  
Those in leadership positions  
Our country - for peace, respect, understanding  
Those who are dear and close to our hearts and those not named above  
The people of Ukraine and all those suffering from the raging war  
The people of Israel and Gaza  
We pray for peace

## THANK YOU NOTES

### *Clean Out Thank You*

On behalf of all of us at St. Paul's, our church leadership, and personally, I extend a heartfelt thank you to all who helped with the clean out and clean up at St. Paul's. You brought a breath of fresh air to every nook and cranny you helped unclutter. We had an amazing display of "treasures for the taking" in the fellowship hall and generated more than

\$1,400 toward our Major Repair Fund from donations for the items. Linda Turner, Dan Namet, and Sigrid Plajer went the extra mile to make it happen by working for many hours in the background. Jacob Koch organized the overall clean out and all from the Property and Grounds team and so many volunteers helped.

Thank you, thank you!  
Pastor Dietmar

## LOAVES AND FISHES

### January 2024

Total families 97  
Children 20  
Adults 55  
Seniors 108  
Total served 183



### February 2024

Total families 92  
Children 28  
Adults 60  
Seniors 99  
Total served 187

### April 2023

Total families 79  
Children 18  
Adults 41  
Seniors 89  
Total served 148



## MAY

### ANNIVERSARIES



- 5/01 Missy & Jake McCabe
- 5/10 Talisha & John Probst
- 5/13 Jacob & Angela Smith
- 5/14 Justin & Erin Smith
- 5/18 Craig & Victoria Stark
- 5/22 Matthew & Heidi Beaver  
Jeff & Debra Smith
- 5/23 Amanda & Jon Stante
- 5/24 Lori & Scott Kershner
- 5/29 Dan & Tami Herrold  
Bill & Brenda Hockenbrock





# RENEWING ST. PAUL'S RENOVATION PROJECT

As I approached the rear entrance of the church for a meeting one evening in April, I saw orange temporary fencing surrounding part of the grassy area on the side of the church. To my left I could see the construction equipment occupying space in the parking lot. As I approached the door, I was greeted by cones indicating I needed to be careful where I walked. I thought, isn't the mess wonderful!

It was a blessing to see so many people stay after the 10:30 a.m. Easter Service on March 31 to officially kick off the Renewing St. Paul's renovation project. We ceremonially used golden shovels to make the first digs in the earth. But that of course was not going to get us very far. Seeing the

equipment and the upturned dirt and the orange barriers means that we are on our way to Renewing St. Paul's.

A week or so later, I came back to the church for another meeting. The path of the new sidewalk had been laid, and some of the concrete poured. I could see the area of a small ramp to facilitate accessibility in the church. I started to wonder how the stairwells would look after the repairs. I pondered how the church staff and Property and Grounds Committee might feel after the drainage is fixed and they don't have to worry about potential damage after a heavy rain. I imagined new windows and railings brightening the church interior. I pictured the happy faces of the Loaves

and Fishes volunteers placing grocery bags on the elevator from Fellowship Hall to the street level, saving them from the strain of carrying 500 bags up the stairs.

As the staff and many volunteers helping with the recent church clean-up project know, the mess can be the first sign that something wonderful will emerge. I am ecstatic that we are in the mess. "Let Us Rise Up and Build" (Nehemiah 2:18), because in so doing the beauty of St. Paul's will once again be on display for all to see.

Chanin Wendling  
Campaign Co-chair



# ST. PAUL'S COUNCIL MEETING APRIL 9, 2024

*Because of the timing of the newsletter publication, these newsletter minutes are not the official, approved minutes. After the minutes have been approved at the next meeting, the final minutes are available upon request.*

**In Attendance:** Dietmar Plajer, Sigrid Plajer as Communications Coordinator, Linda Turner as Treasurer, Randy Tanner, Joanne Lauer, John Fischer, Allen Wetzler, Kimmie Burkhart, Jon Stante, and Malcolm Derk.

**Excused:** Ellen Miller, Carol Miller, Lisa Krex, and Jacob Koch.

**Minutes of February Meeting:** The March meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor Dietmar reported that the church clean out has been incredible and was thankful for everyone who helped - especially Linda for all her organization and hard work throughout the process. Dietmar also expressed his gratitude to Dan Namet who has been working hard on the renovations of the Associate Pastor's office. He also said that Holy Week was amazing but incredibly hectic between the five services, church clean out, and the groundbreaking/renovation.

**Financial Report:** The March financial reports were sent out in advance of the meeting and were approved as presented.

**Strategic Planning:** Pastor Dietmar talked about new member orientation - about 10 people will join on Pentecost Sunday. He also shared there is a small group ministry planned for the fall.

**Associate Pastor:** Pastor Dietmar shared that the search is in a quiet phase. This means the search committee is working behind the scenes but won't present a candidate to the congregation until one is selected. The process could take the better part of two years.

**"Renewing St. Paul's" Renovation Project:** Property and Grounds recommended two additional windows for the secretary's office and associate pastor's office at a cost of \$11,520. Stewardship and Finance approved the recommendation, and Council voted to approve the additional cost that will be covered by the Major Repair Fund. The committee also recommended additional concrete work, and it was moved and passed that up to \$15,000 of the contingency money can be used as needed to cover additional contract work. Another motion was approved to spend up to \$1,000 (including installation) for a new residential dishwasher to be added to the kitchen after the major renovation is over.

**Spring Clean Out:** The final phase of the clean out is Thursday, April 11 at 5:30.

**Safety Plan:** Sigrid put instruction stickers on the security bars in the Fellowship Hall and Linda reported the AED is still on backorder.

**Youth Leader Search:** No update.

**Nursery Coverage:** Still looking for someone to coordinate coverage for the nursery.

**Capital Campaign Committee:** John Fisher reported that about \$62,000 has been raised of the \$140,000 needed for the renovations with an August 31 deadline. The committee will meet again and continue to contact individuals. A church-wide campaign will also be announced soon.

**Christian Ed Committee:** Sigrid and Torri reported that in lieu of a traditional week-long VBS this summer, there will be two different VBS family-style days. The first event will be on Saturday, June 8, from 5:00-8:00 p.m. at Jake and Missy McCabes' place. There will be outdoor activities, a cookout, and a campfire! The second event will be on Sunday, July 14, from 12:00-3:00 p.m. at the Rudnitskys' house. There will be water olympics, a picnic, and of course - swimming! Both events will be for the entire family and will include a Bible story/lesson. More information and sign-ups will be posted in May.

## **Personnel Committee:**

- At the recommendation of the Property and Grounds Committee and the Personnel Committee, the Church Council approves changing the title of the "Secretary" position to "Office Manager" and to revise the job description to include "supervision of the custodian" as an added responsibility. The revised title and job description will not impact compensation for the Office Manager position currently; however, the Stewardship & Finance and Personnel Committees chairs, along with Pastor Dietmar will review the position description, complete an annual review of the position, and may make a recommendation to adjust compensation in light of performance and job responsibilities.
- At the recommendation of the Property and Grounds Committee and the Personnel Committee, the Council approves the continuation of the cleaning services agreement with Buddy's Cleaning Services to provide cleaning services as needed. Council further authorizes the Personnel Committee and Property and Grounds Committee to continue to monitor all cleaning services and to empower



# ST. PAUL'S COUNCIL MEETING

## APRIL 9, 2024 cont'd

the committees to direct the custodian and contracted cleaning services and make necessary adjustments.

- At the recommendation of the Music Committee and Personnel Committee, the Council affirms advertising the Senior Choir Director Position. The compensation will be commensurate with candidate qualifications. The council approves extending Amy Caron's current contract through the end of May 2024 to complete a project to digitize choir music. A recommended level of compensation will be advanced by the Personnel, Music, and Stewardship and Finance Committees after carefully reviewing candidate qualifications, budget parameters, and reviewing the compensation of other music positions at St. Paul's.

**New Member Orientation:** Pastor Dietmar will be holding meetings after worship on April 28, May 5, and May 12. New members will join officially on Pentecost Sunday (May 19).

**Summer Worship Time:** Sunday services will begin at 10 a.m. from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend.

**Communion:** May 12 (second Sunday) - Class of '25 - Malcolm Derk (captain), John Fischer, Joanne Lauer, Ellen Miller.

**Pastor Vacation:** Pastor Dietmar will be on vacation from April 15-22. Rev. Darin Namminga will lead worship on April 21.

**Next Council Meeting:** May 14, 2024 @ 7 p.m.

**Devotions for May Meeting:** Allen Wetzel.

Respectfully submitted,  
Torri Stark, Council Secretary



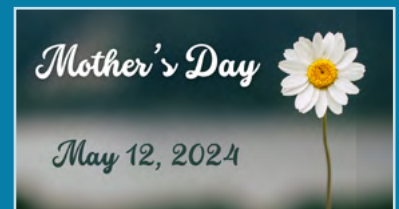
### MEET & EAT APRIL 28

The last Meet and Eat before the summer will be on Sunday April 28 right after the morning service. We are planning a spring picnic lunch with hot dogs, cold fried chicken, various salads, lemonade and iced tea. And we greatly appreciate all of you who bring such yummy desserts to share! Please use the [sign-up link](#) so we know how much food to prepare.



### NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION APRIL 28, MAY 5, & MAY 12

If you're interested in officially joining St. Paul's in our mission and ministries on Pentecost Sunday, May 19, I invite you to join us for our New Member Orientations. Please [email Pastor Dietmar](#) if you're interested in participating. More info for New Members can be found [here](#).



### MOTHERS' DAY MAY 12

Mother's Day Sunday - Join us for worship on May 12 at 10:30 a.m. as we honor and recognize those who mothered us.



Confirmation Class Orientation meeting on April 7, 2024



# PASTOR'S REPORT - MARCH 2024

Our St. Paul's Mission is to grow in faith, to worship God, to serve others, and to welcome all.

We continued to connect with the deep meaning of the Biblical stories of Holy Week in our Lenten worship series "Entering the Passion of Jesus." We followed Jesus into his suffering. We connect with and learn from Jesus in and through our own pain and suffering when we become aware of our wounds and brokenness. The decorations for the services were stunning thanks to the Worship Team!

The Spring Cleaning Out of St. Paul's has been a huge undertaking. We uncovered treasures from decades ago. We displayed all items in the Fellowship Hall for members and friends to browse through. We officially decommissioned the items during our Palm Sunday worship service. Most of the items have been put to good use. The Mustard Seed, the Haven Ministries Homeless Shelter, Amish and Mennonite families, and many individuals benefitted from what we did let go. We generated more than \$1,400 toward the Major Repair Fund from people's donations. We have had an amazing group of people helping with the cleaning out, displaying, and repurposing of the items. Linda Turner was a driving force and went above and beyond with the clean out. She did phenomenal! My heartfelt gratitude goes to her and all who made this possible. The cleanout was overdue and necessary to

create office space for our new Associate Pastor. Dan Namet worked for many hours toward this office in our former Music Room taking out a wall, a closet, cabinets and the carpet. Thank you, Dan!

Our Easter Messy Church on March 10 was awesome. The crafts, games, message, music and meal bring families, children, youth, and grownups together to explore faith in fun ways. We have a terrific Messy Church Team and many volunteer helpers who make it happen. I'm deeply grateful for all of them.

Holy Week was amazing! Our Palm Sunday Hosannah Celebration was magnificent. This year the Senior Choir and congregation participated in the Palm Sunday Procession which gave me chills. We could feel Jesus' self-giving love through his foot-washing, communion, and suffering on Maundy Thursday. We joined together with our Selinsgrove Ministerium for the Good Friday Community Service at Sharon Lutheran Church on March 29. We rose for a deeply moving sunrise service starting at the Easter Fire. We joined in a spirit lifting Easter Celebration at 10:30 am with trumpet, organ, piano, choir, duet, and solo music. Following the service, we broke ground for our Renewing St. Paul's renovation project.

St. Paul's music ministry is the best in town. I'm deeply grateful for ALL musicians. They inspire, move, encourage,

comfort, and boldly proclaim God's good news of joy and love for all. Music speaks to our souls and connects us with the living God. We are so very blessed and thankful for those who share themselves, heart, mind, and soul through music!

I continue to visit members and friends of St. Paul's in the hospital and in nursing homes. And I'm deeply grateful for all who participate in the visitation ministry. Through their visits they share God's love, care, presence, comfort, and joy with those who are homebound and residing in nursing and senior living facilities. These faithful visitors are the hands and heart of Jesus in action!

Thank you for your prayers, your witness, your giving, your service, and your faithfulness to God and to God's work through St. Paul's. I see God at work in and through you!

March 1-31, 2024

Days worked	22
Days off	08
Continuing Education	01
Vacation days	00
Holidays	00
Total Days	31

Respectfully submitted,  
Pastor Dietmar Plajer







# WE'RE HIRING A SENIOR CHOIR DIRECTOR

After 19 years of directing our Senior Choir, Amy Caron will retire from the position at the end of May. We are grateful for Amy's many years of directing. Amy is planning to join the choir in a new role by singing in the Soprano section.



**Senior Choir Director**

**WE ARE HIRING**

Learn more about the position at [saintpauls-ucc.org/jobs](http://saintpauls-ucc.org/jobs)



St. Paul's UCC in Selinsgrove is looking for a musician to fill the position of Senior Choir Director who can experience the choir before the summer break. This adult ensemble rehearses weekly and sings twice a month during the Sunday morning worship service. Occasionally

additional evening worship services are required, such as Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday and Christmas Eve. Please see the job description [here](#) for more info. Anyone interested, please email [jobs@saintpauls-ucc.org](mailto:jobs@saintpauls-ucc.org).

## United in Song - Music Fest at First Reformed in Sunbury, May 5, 3 pm

Join us for an afternoon of special church music on Sunday, May 5 at 3 pm at our sister congregation, First Reformed UCC in Sunbury on Chestnut Street. St. Paul's Senior Choir will be part of this United in Song music fest. Six church choirs will sing and ring handbells. All participants will tune in with a hymn sing and all church musicians will present a Mass Choir piece, "Canon of Praise." It will be an amazing afternoon of music and celebration. A free will offering will benefit Haven Ministries, the Sunbury homeless shelter, and the church will offer refreshments after the event. Invite a friend and join us for this special music fest.



### GRADUATE RECOGNITION MAY 19

We will honor members of our congregation who are graduating from high school and college this year at our Pentecost Sunday worship service. Come celebrate the graduates, acknowledge their accomplishments, offer blessings, and wish them success on their future endeavors.



### PENTECOST SUNDAY, MAY 19

Please join us in wearing something red, orange, or yellow on Pentecost Sunday as we delve into the fire, energy, and power of the Holy Spirit who fills our hearts, motivates us, and sets us on fire to be witnesses of the living God. Additionally, we are excited to welcome a group of new members to St. Paul's during this service.



### 10 A.M. SUMMER WORSHIP TIME STARTS MAY 26

Summer Worship Time 10 a.m. beginning with Memorial Day weekend until Labor Day weekend when we will return to our regular 10:30 a.m. worship time.





## Pentecost Messy Church on May 19 at 4 p.m.

Join us at Messy Church on May 19 at 4 p.m.! Sign up [here](#) so we can prepare for you. This session will revolve around Pentecost, and we have a variety of enjoyable activities lined up. Every individual is distinct, with their own background, perspective on the world, cultural influences, and unique way of interacting with others. During Pentecost, we witness how God's Spirit embraces these differences to help each of us understand and experience God's love in our own special way.











## St. Paul's United Church of Christ

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[saintpauls-ucc.org](http://saintpauls-ucc.org)

**Worship on Sunday at 10:30 a.m.**

also on Facebook, YouTube, and our website

*"God is Still Speaking"*

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

We thank God for...

