

St. Paul's United Church of Christ
626 Williams Grove Road
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
Phone: 717-766-7931

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AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST!

The Epistle

is a monthly publication of St. Paul's UCC.

Comments, suggestions, and submissions are welcome!

Please wear a mask inside.

Live stream services on St. Paul's Facebook Page & YouTube Channel.

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST STAFF

Pastor.....The Rev. John J. Ward-Diorio
Pastor/CE & Youth Director..... Allyssa A. Boyer
Administrative Assistant.....Renee E. Durbin
Director of Music.....Eric R. Dundore
Chorister' Director.....Jonneke A. Dundore
Assistant Music Director.....Mark A Dundore
Organist.....Sarah A Myers
Assistant Organist.....Patrice G. Miller
Audio & Video.....Jeffrey A. Dundore
Sexton.....Michael W. Hatz
Consistory President.....Sherry Spencer
Pastor Emeritus....The Rev. Dr. Thomas E. Herrold
Ministers.....The Entire Congregation of St. Paul's

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00-4:00 ♦ Office email: stpaulstaff@outlook.com

Phone: 717-766-7931

Rev. John's email: revjohnwd@outlook.com

Allyssa's email: allyssaboyer@outlook.com

Eric's email: ericdundore@outlook.com

Web Address: www.saintpaulsucc-mech.org

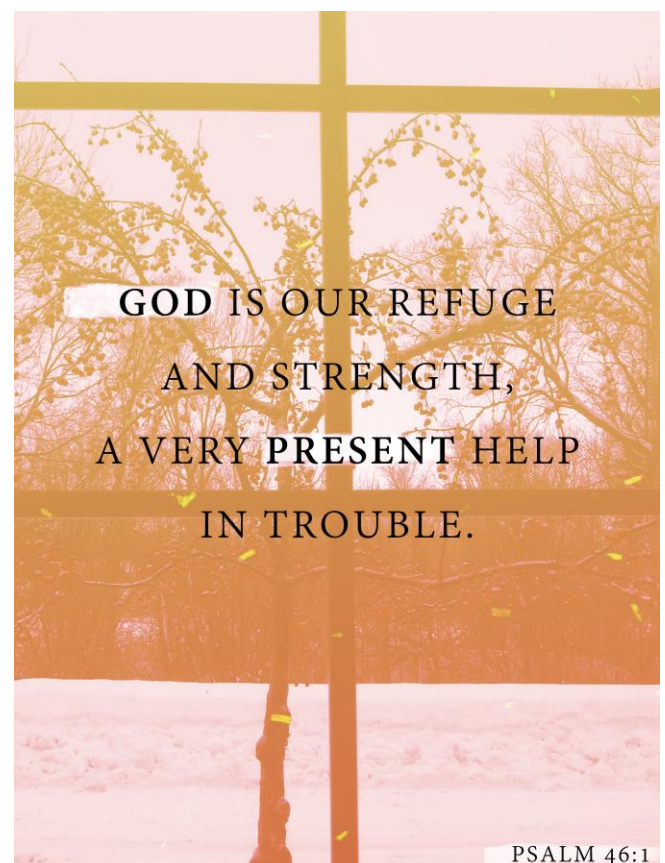
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stpaulsuccmechanicsburg/>

FROM THE PASTOR

It has been 23 months since our lives were upended by the COVID-19 pandemic. In all that time, our lives, and the lives of our neighbors around the world, have changed dramatically. The way we work, the way we go to school, the way we socialize, the way we worship; it seems as though every aspect of our lives together has been altered in some way because of this disease. Our congregation responded, and continues to respond, to the hardships and disruptions caused by COVID-19. In a time of great anxiety and loneliness, you have helped us to weather the storm. You adjusted to changes in nearly all of our ministries. You persevered, knowing that the work we do together as the Body of Christ is important. I am overwhelmed by the compassion and the care that you've shared within our community and beyond over these past two years. Still, I know that it is exhausting. I know that it can feel discouraging, that when it seems like we've made progress in defeating this disease, another variant crops up and more people become sick, and, tragically, more people die. Like many others, I have turned to our faith for solace and guidance. The Psalms, in particular, have been a comfort. The writer of Psalm 46 writes, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, ...The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." The knowledge that God is with us throughout all of this, that we do not need to be afraid, that has been a great comfort to me. When everything around us seems to be in a constant state of change, I am grateful for a God who is steadfast, a refuge from our troubles. I am also grateful for a congregation that continues to serve as a refuge for others.

One of the incredible gifts of being part of a congregation is that none of us needs to walk the journey of faith alone. You have continued to give your time and resources to the ministries of our church. And you have cared for one another, offering assistance with meals, rides to medical appointments, messages of wellbeing, continued support for local missions like the Ecumenical Food Pantry and New Hope Ministries, and the gift of your presence in worship (in person and online). This February, as we brave the icy cold mornings and the dark evenings, let us continue to support one another in the sure knowledge that God is with us always; we are not alone.

Peace,
Pastor Allyssa





"I would like to thank the Congregation for their thoughts and prayers in this sad time for me. Also, for the lovely cards too. It meant a lot to me.

Thank you to Rev John for many kind words. I won't forget the kindness of the church and Rev John."

Susie White

"Dear St Paul's,

Thank you for all the prayers, cards, visits at her viewing, and altar flowers at the passing of my Mother. It is at times such as these when you can feel the closeness of our church and the love we all share."

With love, Terry and Gene Shaner

"Dear Reverend John and Pastor Allyssa, our very talented musicians, all other staff, and members of our wonderful family at St. Paul's UCC,

I cannot thank you enough for all the care, concern, and love that I and our children received over this past year of 2021. Being pretty much "sheltered in place" all year, it was so nice to look forward to the Sunday services on YouTube, the beautiful music, the choir, and cards from Called to Care.

Thank you so very much for the beautiful white mums and red roses the day after Christmas. May God bless my friends there and I hope to get back soon."

With love,
Gloria Hoffman

"I would like to thank you for sending the Sunday Message to me each week. They always give me something to think on. I always look forward to them."

Sincerely,
Dorothy Miller

"Our services have become "must-see T.V." I can't get around well yet and travel as little as possible.

As a bonus, Darcy the cat can join us for in-home services!"

Joy, Bruce, and Darcy Perry

"Thanks so very much for all the prayers, cards, and lovely altar flowers we were blessed to receive upon my father's recent passing. We felt your Christian love and support during these past few weeks. It was greatly appreciated."

Tim, Leann, and Zach



Articles for the March Epistle are due to the Church Office by end of the day, Wednesday, Feb. 16th.

Church Calendar - The most up to date calendar can be found on the Church website. Help us keep it current by scheduling your meetings & other events at the Church thru the Office at stpaulstaff@outlook.com or 717-766-7931. Thank you!



THOSE IN NEED OF PRAYER: Addie (Stork-Whitson); Kevin & Karen Allison; Alex & Family; Amy & Mike (Fox); Joe Baker (W.Wentz); Barb Bell;

Joann Bender; Mary Bensel; Beverly (Hayden); Bill (Ritter); Bill & Bob (Gabriel); George Bingaman; Mark & Katie Bingaman; Aileen Blanc (Ritter Butz); Barbara Blust; Melba Bomberger; Brian (Shearer); Brian (Riesmeyer); Missy Brouch (Myers/Mihmet); Tina & Chris Bowers; Jenny & Erica Budd (Lingenfelter); Anna & Dale Burns; Nancy Cabrera (Runkle); John Callaghan (Wotring); Sally Chiselko (Martek); Tom Chronister (Chronister); Cindy (Short); Cindy (Rhoads); Alyssa Claar (A. Thompson); Pat Cleland; Mary Clark Coleman (Riesmeyer); John & Sheri Conner (Layne); Rich Cowan; David (Mullin); David (Stork-Whitson); Rita Davidson (Plymette); Hudson Davis (Riesmeyer); Ron Deibert (Aumiller); Criste Derr (Short); Dewy (Short); Evelyn Diorio; Ethan Dixon & Family; Jim Dougherty (Ritter); Allen Dreibelbis; Richard Ecks (Plymette); Linda Eichelberger (Chronister); Ellery (Sizemore/ Sanders); Harry Felton (Sponsler); Bob & Eve Fenner; Tom Figiel (Weiser); Diane Freeman; Anne French (Ward-Diorio); Ron Gabriel; Lenny Gardner (Shearer); Bill Gladstone (Aumiller); Betty Goodfellow (Ritter); Tina Gordon (Burns); Floyd Gouse; Shirley Grammer; Harriet & Mark Grimm; Teri & Dave Guelcher; Brenda H. (Stork-Whitson); Dr. Mark Hagenbuch (Bomberger); Jane Hall; Noah Helwig (Trout); Brenda Hoffer (Stork-Whitson); Gloria Hoffman; Joshua Holbrook (Nolan); Fenton Fox & Rick Holtzapple; Jay Houser (Haagen); Michele Hughes (Murphy); Lee Jackson & Brian Medkeff-Rose; Jane Leader Janeczek (Aumiller); Janie (Jody Biss); Jeff (G.& P. Miller); Joan (Sizemore); Joe (B. Thompson); Dan & Will Jones; Julia (Fox/Holtzapple); Elaine Kansy (Hoehn); Kara (Sizemore); Cash Keck (Trout); Martha & Gene Keith; Stephen Keith; Rev. Dr. Chris Kennedy (Ward-Diorio); Bob Kinkley (Fox); Glenn Kline; Sandy Kline; Katy Kreitzer (LaRue/Short); Audra Kucharick (Aumiller); Jean & John Layne; Debbie Lever (A. Thompson); Larry Linder (Stork-Whitson/Williams); Lori (Murphy);

Luca (Knox); Naomi Losch (Endy); Taran M. (Taylor); Emily MacCarthy; Manny (Sharp); Marie (Murphy); Margueritte (Myers); Martin French Family (Ward-Dirorio); Joe Mazzei (Mihmet/Myers); Stephanie McGonigle (Warfield); Melissa (Ward-Diorio); Ruby Menke (Warfield); Michael (Richey); Michelle & Family (Mihmet); Charles Miller (Lloyd and Matthew's dad); Jessica Miller (Chapman); Linda Miller; Melissa Miller (Bender); Richard (P. Miller); Sue & Dayne Miller; Mindee (Ward-Diorio); Tasha Misner (Trout); Steve Mitchell; Ernie Moyer; Randy, Dar & Sarah Murphy; Beth Myers (Richey); Gene & Ruth Ellen Myers (Boyer); Rita N. (Trout); Nicole (Ward-Diorio); Nicole & Family (Westhafer); Bob Nies (A. Thompson); Kelly Otto (A. Thompson); Ryan Onufer & family (Grice); Jim & Mary P. (Rhoads); Pagi (Ward-Diorio); Lynne Patton (Taylor); Don Perry (Ritter); Joy Perry; Bobbi Pfaff (Larue/Short); Dan Pfister & Karen Klinedinst (Chronister); Randy (Bender); Richard Reba (Richenbacher); Robert Reiner (Bender); Carol Rhoads; Jason & Rachelle Rhoads; Jo Rice (Rushong); Richard (P. Miller); Nancy & Tom Richey; Sandi Ritter-Butz; Robb Family (Ward-Diorio); Rose & Pat (Short); Franklin, Andrew, Levi Roth; Tom Row (S. Miller); Kit Royer; Rhoda & Ned Rupp; Betsy & Benny Rushong; Sam (Freeman); Jane & Tom Scott & Family; Scott & Tracey (Davinroy); Dennis Scouler (Rushong); Corky Short & Candy LaRue; Conner Snow & Family; James Sowell (Sandy Kline); Tom Steel & Family (Shaver-Durham); Barbara Sterner; Dory Szeles (Sterner); April Thomas (Bomberger); Cathy Thomas; Kathy (Wolford Witmer) Toth; Shannon & Phoenix Trout; Edward Thorn; Tracy Thrush Family; Betty Underwood & Family (Richey); Ron Unrsh (S. Miller); Bill Utley (Boyer); Evelyn Warfield; Anthony Warner (Simpson); Suzy Weeks (Richey); Amy Wentz; Leita Wentz; Dave Wightman (Trout); Elaine Williams (A. Thompson); Geri Williams (A. Thompson); Lou Ann Williams (Cashman); Ryan Wilson (Bomberger); Chelsey Wirth; Fran Wolford; Mitchell Worley (Jones); Suzanne Worley (Jones); Alexa, Lacey Worrall & Family (Ward-Diorio); Kevin Young (A. Thompson); Russell Young (Rushong)

**Thanks
for Your
Help!**

Do you have an update to the prayer list? Let us know in the church office.

Sunday Worship Services

Along with in-person worship, the Sunday Worship Services will continue to be live streamed on: St. Paul's UCC Facebook Page at <https://www.facebook.com/stpaulsuccmechanicsburg/>

& also St. Paul's YouTube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/UCCStPauls/videos>. YouTube of the service will be posted shortly after on St. Paul's home website page at <http://www.saintpaulsucc-mech.org/>.

Please visit the church website at <http://www.saintpaulsucc-mech.org/> to sign up to Acolyte, Usher, Lector, deliver the Altar Flowers, and/or sponsor Altar flowers. You will find the individual sign-up sheets under the "Serving Others" menu heading.

Don't have internet? Give the Church Office a call at 717-766-7931 and the office admin will be glad to sign you up!

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

ACOLYTE

LECTORS

2/6 Eric Dundore
2/13 Nancy Richey
2/20 Karin Stork-Whitson
2/27 Youth Representative

USHERS

Head Usher: Carol Sizemore
2/6 Steven Roush, Wendy Hayden, Fenton Fox, Chris Grice, Rebecca Drazba
2/13 Shirley Keith Knox, Sherry Spencer
2/20
2/27

FLOWER DELIVERY

2/6 Bonnie Plymette
2/13 Dale Thorpe
2/20 Erin and Ben Anderson
2/27 Mary Runkle

COMMUNION PREPARER

2/6 Steven Roush

NURSERY HELPER

2/6 Jonneke Dundore
2/13 Sue Ward-Diorio, Sherry Spencer
2/20
2/27 Jonneke Dundore, Erin Anderson

FEBRUARY

Birthdays

2/05 Christopher Royer	2/19 Wyatt Paulus
Linda Miller	2/20 Zachary Davinroy
2/06 Anna Thompson	Karin Stork-Whitson
2/09 Bethany Pirtle	2/21 Catherine Thomas
2/10 Barbara Westhafer	2/22 Jane Hall
Amy Wentz	2/23 Kassidy Sweeney
Douglas Jacobsen	2/25 Harriett Grimm
2/12 Steven Roush	Christine Chandler
2/13 Elizabeth Royer	2/26 Donna Sharp
2/14 David Ritter	2/27 Candy LaRue
2/16 Charles Miller	Alyssa Lingenfelter
2/17 Molly Cowan	Michael Shea
Rachel Drazba	2/29 Allan MacKinnon Jr
2/19 Frances Wolford	

FEBRUARY

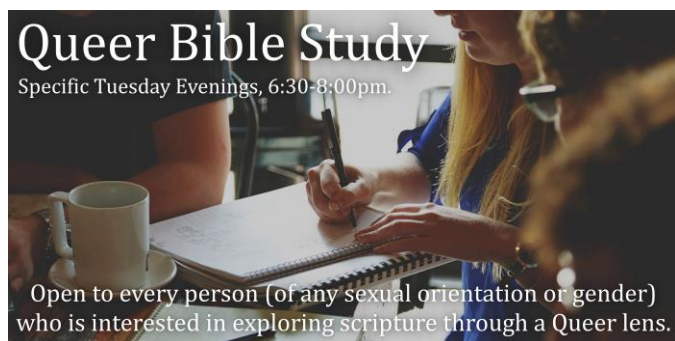
Anniversaries

2/25 David and Jean Weiss



ALTAR FLOWER SPONSORSHIP:

It is \$34 to sponsor the flowers in 2022. You may go on the church website, under the heading, "Serving Others" to sign up.



QUEER BIBLE STUDY

All Bible readings are contextual; readers bring with them their own context (perceptions and experiences gathered from social and cultural situations). But the vast majority of professional Biblical interpretation has come from heterosexual, cisgender people, which means there are LGBTQIA theological riches that remain buried. The Bible is our story, too! This Bible study is open to every person (of any sexual orientation or gender) who is interested in exploring scripture through a Queer lens. We will meet on six Tuesday evenings from 6:30-8:00 pm in room 7/8. Our schedule is...

- January 25
- February 1
- February 22
- March 1
- March 22
- March 29

Possible subjects include the stories of Lazarus, Mary and Martha, Ruth and Naomi, the Ethiopian eunuch, St. Paul, Joseph and his rainbow coat, Jesus' Beloved Disciple, and more. If you would like to participate, please let Pastor Allyssa know.



ECUMENICAL FOOD PANTRY:

Don't forget the Ecumenical Food Pantry when you give to the church. All donations

are appreciated, especially toiletries.



ST. PAUL'S WINTER QUART POT PIE SALE— February 19th

Do you want more legendary St. Paul's Pot Pie this winter (or, perhaps you missed getting some at the Bazaar)? Our Bazaar Kitchen Committee has come to the rescue with a Chicken Pot Pie winter quart sale on **Saturday, February 19th**.

The cost is \$10 per quart and **all sales will be by pre-order** which can be done by any of the following convenient methods:

Online @ <http://saintpaulsucc-mech.org/>

Or by **calling or emailing** Renee at the church office, 717-766-7931 or stpaulstaff@outlook.com

Final date to order: Monday, February 14th

The committee also needs help making the pot pie with picking chicken (Feb. 16th from 8-noon), dough making (Feb. 17th from 8-noon) and cooking/throwing dough/filling orders (Feb. 18th & 19th, 8:00 until 2:00) Please sign up to help if you can—it's a great opportunity to enjoy being with other folks (masked) and each set of hands helps the work go faster! If you have any questions, please contact Dave/Patty Scott (717-737-3139).

You can also help promote the sale by picking up a poster in the common area to take to your local businesses. Don't forget to tell your friends and neighbors!



UCC Homes is excited to announce that the **26th Annual Helping Hands** event will offer both an in-person experience and an online option! The Helping Hands Auction supports the Benevolent Endowment Trust Fund which enables UCC Homes to provide financial assistance in future years. Your support will assist in their mission to continue to underwrite residents who are no longer able to pay for the cost of their care and who are not deemed eligible for governmental assistance programs. *If you would like to contribute a monetary donation towards an auction basket from St. Paul's, please have your donation to the church office (or deposited in the Offering plate) no later than March 6th. Contact*

Melissa Cawley (melissacawley@aol.com) with any questions.



Join Adult 2 in our next discussion series - February 6th, 2022

Reason to Have Hope: A Public Health Response to Racism!

This virtual course is intended to support people in all settings of the church gain a deeper understanding of the harm that racism and white supremacy have on health and well-being. The material focuses on the systemic causes of health disparities for People of African Descent, Indigenous Peoples, and other People of Color, and how the work of health equity is tied to liberation for all.

Reason to Have Hope approaches the material with deep theological grounding. It details painful realities, but also relates stories of humanity, resistance and solutions from lived experience. It begins with a foundation on approaching racism as a public health crisis, and then dives into specific issues and topics. The final lessons offer a variety of approaches to inspire ways to take action in your own ministries and work. This course grew out of the Resolution of Witness declaring racism as a public health crisis that CHHSM and the UCC Council on Racial and Ethnic Ministries (COREM) are brought to General Synod 2022 this past summer.

For More Information, Contact Shirley Keith Knox at skeithknox@comcast.net.



Adult 1 Sunday School

Adult 1 will begin a new series of topics entitled: "The Thoughtful Christian: Faithful Living in a Complex World." Topics include...

- "Caring for People with Alzheimer's"
- "Gun Control: Is There a Christian Response?"
- "Is Affirmative Action Still Needed?"
- "Introduction to the Koran"
- "Separation of Church and State in America"
- "Is Torture Ever Justified?"
- "Understanding Iran"
- "Weaponizing Religion on the World Stage"
- "'Irredentism:' the Greatest Threat to World Peace?"

These topics will be taken in succession, but depth of discussion, guest speakers and weather may necessitate change. For more information, contact Herb Bomberger @ 717-432-4228.



JOIN THE MOVEMENT - United Church of Christ

Launched at the 2022 General Synod, the Movement toward Racial Justice is an invitation to demonstrate God's love and to partner with others who are working for the transformation of racism in our world so that we might foster flourishing lives for all.

Check out the website at jointhethemovementucc.org

Every setting of the UCC, from local churches to global partners, has a role to play in expanding our practices of antiracism and strengthening our capacities as partners and participants in the burgeoning racial justice movements of our time. In this effort, story-sharing is a key component. Our stories show us not only who we are, but also inspire who we may become. Providing opportunities to encounter the antiracism journeys of others, Join the Movement will be a hub for churches within the United Church of Christ of story-sharing that draws others to participate and opens hearts to new possibilities and practices of racial justice.

The Christian church began as a movement towards a just world through the teachings of Jesus. As followers of Jesus, we believe it is our mandate to work for and seek justice, love, and compassion, as we join with and become our own Spirit-led movements toward racial justice.

Go to the website to learn what churches are doing, find antiracism resources, and identify local and national practices that are unjust.



IT'S AGAIN TIME FOR THE SPRING STEWARSHIP AUCTION!

We're looking to fill the auction with your generous donations of themed baskets or other specialty items. Gift cards and consumable items are often the most popular. The auction will wrap up by Palm Sunday so Easter baskets with creative themes are encouraged! Here are some springy (and summery!) suggestions: Backyard BBQ, Rainy Day Fun, Spring Baking Bundle, Outdoor Summer Fun, Ice Cream Dream. Baskets are needed in the church office no later than Sunday, March 20th in preparation to be on display the following week. Please share the details of your donation or reach out to Melissa Cawley (melissacawley@aol.com or 717-691-8771) for theme suggestions. We can't wait to see what amazing creations you come up with!



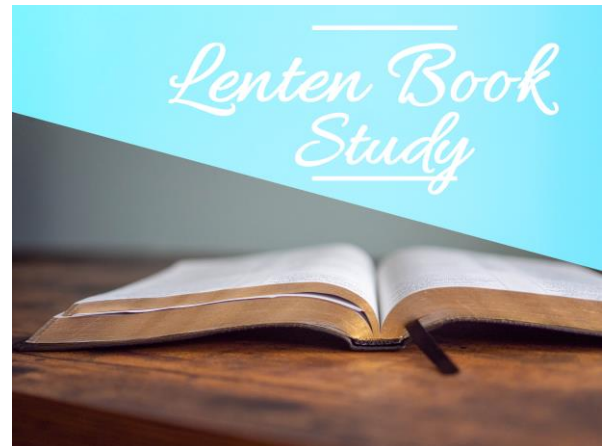
YOUTH SUNDAY

Please join us for worship on Youth Sunday, February 27, at 10:30 am, organized and led by St. Paul's Youth Group. We hope that

you will join us for this special opportunity to support our young people and worship together.

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

Help St. Paul's youth turn our nation's great day of football into a great day of caring! Following the worship service on February 13th, our youth group will be stationed at the doors of the sanctuary to collect monetary donations. The proceeds will go to Gather the Spirit for Justice Common Ground Community Center in Harrisburg. Use your dollars to support your team and tackle economic inequality!



LENTEN BOOK STUDY

Please join us for our study of "The Art of Gathering" by Priya Parker. In this book, Parker sets out a new approach for how people gather (at meetings, conferences, dinner with friends, etc.) with the hope of transforming the ways we spend our time together. After years of social isolation, our hope is that, by engaging with this book and one another, our gatherings will be more rewarding and meaningful. We will gather on the six Mondays of Lent (March 7, 14, 21, 28, and April 4, and 11) in room 9. To join us, please sign-up on the sheet in the commons, or email Pastor Allyssa. Please indicate if you would like to attend the afternoon group (1:00-2:30 pm) or the evening group (6:30-8:00 pm) or both. You may attend

all six sessions, or a few, and leave when you need to. If you would like for us to order a copy of the book for you from Whistlestop Bookshop (\$14 with our church discount), please mark this on the sign-up sheet. If you have any questions, please contact Rev. John or Pastor Allyssa.



ST. PAUL'S ON THE RUN, RACE AGAINST RACISM AND JUSTICE CHALLENGE.

The Harrisburg YWCA is sponsoring its 18th Annual Race Against Racism.

This year, we'll lead up to the Race Against Racism with a **21-Day Racial Equity and Social Justice Challenge, which begins April 1!**

More than 700 participants of the Racial Equity & Social Justice Challenge joined the YWCA last year to build better racial and social justice habits, including 24 members of St. Paul's!

The challenge is designed to create dedicated time and space to build more effective social justice habits, particularly those dealing with issues of race, power, privilege, and leadership.

Participants in the challenge will receive a daily email centered around racial and social injustice, asking them to read an article, watch a video, listen to a podcast, or reflect on a personal experience through unique categories of engagement and interaction.

Participation in an activity like this helps us to discover how racial and social injustice impact our community, to connect with one another, and to identify ways to dismantle racism and other forms of discrimination. The Race Against Racism is a mission-driven event promoting awareness of racism in our

community, and raises critical funds to support the YWCA's racial justice programs throughout the year.

This is an exciting opportunity to dive deep into racial equity and social justice.

St. Paul's will be participating in this challenge and virtual race again, through our team St. Paul's on the Run. Any member of St. Paul's can join our team and can participate in the 21-day challenge and/or the race as well. Kathy Aumiller will be acting as Team Leader again this year. When you register, please choose St. Paul's on the Run from the team listing.

We will again be gathering in person to complete the 5K walk/run on Saturday, April 23rd beginning at 9:00 AM. Our race course will again be the track near the West Shore Free Church on Williams Grove Road. Kim & Jim Pirtle have again agreed to open their back yard for us to gather safely before and after we run/walk.

Registration Cost

\$30 for individuals

\$20 for teams – use code TEAMCHALLENGE

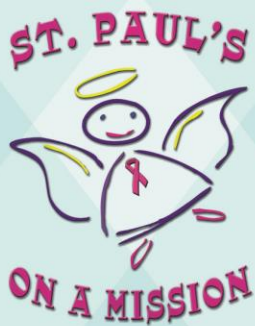
Registration Includes:

- Access to the 21 Day Challenge content
- Race participation
- 21 Day Challenge Certificate of Completion
- Branded T-shirt.

Registration opens February 1 and must be completed by April 1 to guarantee a T-shirt.

Go to www.ywcahbg.org/events and click on the 21 Day Challenge at the bottom of their website to register.

We hope you will join us on this journey and we can't wait to get started!



Easter Egg Sale

All proceeds go to
MAKING STRIDES AGAINST BREAST CANCER!

PEANUT BUTTER & COCONUT AVAILABLE IN MILK OR DARK CHOCOLATE

\$1.00
EACH

PLEASE PLACE YOUR ORDER BY MARCH 27th.
THERE WILL BE EXTRA EGGS AVAILABLE ON A
FIRST-COME FIRST-SERVED BASIS.

\$1.00
EACH

3 WAYS TO ORDER!

1. Online: <https://www.timetosignup.com/stpaulsucc/sheet/1325090>
2. Sign up on the sheet in the Common Area
3. Email Brenda Kern: bkern59@verizon.net

Eggs will be available for pick up at the church kitchen:

Saturday, April 2nd: 12Noon-1:00PM • Sunday, April 3rd before & after service.

Saturday, April 9th: 12Noon-1:00PM • Sunday, April 10th before & after service.

Exact change or checks preferable payable to Brenda Kern.

HELPERS NEEDED!

We need lots of helping hands to make this fundraiser a success!

Sign up online: <https://www.timetosignup.com/stpaulsucc/sheet/1325088>

OR let Brenda know you are able to help!



