



St. Paul's United Church of Christ
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Phone: 717-766-7931

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JUNE 2022

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

From the Pastor

On Sunday June 5, following our 9:15 AM Worship Service, we will engage in a **Congregational Conversation** centered on whether our outside doors should be locked during Worship. It was wisely suggested that we not call this a Congregational Meeting since we are not taking any votes and the goal of our gathering is to hear each other's perspectives. There is not one correct answer or perspective but numerous ones, impacting whether we believe the doors should be unlocked or locked during Worship. We need to hear yours.

As an Open and Affirming Congregation, we strive for diversity in the make-up of our Congregation. We acknowledge that we are not all exactly the same.

That is a good thing. Our perspectives therefore are not always the same. This can make us nervous and perhaps uncomfortable sharing. We are generally not comfortable with disagreement, particularly if it may lead to conflict. We have legitimate fears that our perspective might not be respected or taken seriously. Many of us have experienced disrespect, or silencing, or the delegitimizing of our perspectives in the past simply because of our gender, sexuality, economic status, race, culture, abilities, age, or other factors. As an ONA Congregation we have pledged to make every effort to ensure that does not happen within our life together, recognizing that we fail at times. Our Congregational Conversation is an opportunity for all to share safely and respectfully, offering our personal perspectives and refraining from making judgements.

During our Congregational Conversation, we will all be invited to share our perspectives about whether our doors should be unlocked or locked during Worship, and why we feel that way. We will not be debating each other or trying to prove that someone else's perspective is wrong. Rather we will be sharing our perspective and listening carefully to other people's perspectives. This may feel counter-cultural, especially during our current atmosphere

where seemingly everyone is trying to prove that anyone with a different opinion than their own is wrong and there is no room for compromise.

People have already been sharing their perspectives with Consistory Members, Pastor Allyssa, and me. There are no wrong perspectives but there are differences in perspective. One person feels unsafe and a potential target in our Sanctuary because of past shootings in Churches, or other locations, and therefore wants our doors locked. Another person

feels because LGBTQ+ people have been made to feel unwelcome in Churches, even when those Churches advertise all are welcome, a locked door means they have been lied to again and are not really welcome. Are either of these perspectives wrong or not worthy of being heard and considered? No. And if we are going to make decisions that require some compromise, we need to better understand our varied perspectives. The purpose of this Congregational Conversation is to listen and to share. We will not take any votes at this gathering. After the gathering, Consistory will determine what changes, if any, we will make to our security policies during Worship.

Living within a diverse community in which all people are accepted and respected for who they are requires a broadening of our personal understandings and perspectives. We primarily achieve that through increasing our understanding of our histories and the current reality in which we live, and through conversations where we respectively speak and listen to each other. Our Congregation has entered into a covenant with God, ourselves and the wider community stating that we value diversity, equality and acceptance, and that we will work to make that happen within our life together here and in the wider world. Our Congregational Conversation is part of that work. We look forward to seeing all who are able there, and hearing from you, and listening to each other.

Peace, Rev. John

GET TO KNOW ST. PAUL'S CONSISTORY!



Consistory is the governing body of St. Paul's UCC.

In a continuing effort to get to know your Consistory, please let me introduce:

Megan Riesmeyer



I came to St. Paul's in 2010 and I found the church when friends of ours told us about a UCC church in the area that was Open and Affirming. I grew up in the UCC and knew I wanted to stay part of this faith community. The first service we attended was the Christmas Cantata and we loved it!

Fun Fact about me: I played the cello from 4th through 12th grade

Term Started: 2020

Term Ending: 2023

Committee Liaison to: Stewardship

I like working with the Stewardship committee for two reasons. One, the committee is focused on growing the church and being able to brainstorm fun creative ideas to do that is fantastic. And two, the people on the committee are wonderful, warm, and fun people. Serving on Consistory and on the Stewardship committee has given me the great privilege to learn more about our church and the people I serve with.



Church Calendar - The most up to date calendar is 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!

Spotlight on Sacred Art

Welcome to a new feature in our monthly epistle. Here we'll highlight symbols, emblems, and other aspects of our church's art and architecture, explain their meaning, and reveal a little about their history. This month, our spotlight is on the **Chi Rho** symbol and **red paraments**.

The **Chi Rho** (pronounced "kai row;" rhymes with "high low") is one of the earliest forms of christogram. A christogram is a monogram, or combination of letters, that forms an abbreviation for the name of Jesus Christ. It may look like the letters 'X' and 'P' put together, but those are actually letters from the Greek alphabet: chi (X) and rho (P). They are the first two letters of the word ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ, *Christos*, which means "Christ" in Greek. You can spot the Chi Rho on our Christ Candle and on our white pulpit parament.



At



Paraments are the pieces of fabric that adorn the altar table, pulpit, and lectern in our sanctuary. Their colors (called liturgical colors) represent the seasons and special occasions in the church year. Red is the liturgical color for celebration.

St. Paul's, the **red paraments** are used on Pentecost Sunday, and for

confirmations and ordinations. In many places around the world, the Day of Pentecost is synonymous with red. But in Great Britain, the Church calls Pentecost "Whitsun" or "Whitsunday," a contraction of "White Sunday." This naming quirk is a result of the Norman Conquest, when French-speaking Normans confused the English word "white" with "wit," meaning wisdom or understanding, a reference to the outpouring of wisdom by the Holy Spirit on the disciples. If you were worshipping at St. Paul's 70 years ago, you might remember our old E&R hymnal which used the word "Whitsunday" instead of Pentecost. Our red pulpit parament displays the image of a ship that includes a symbol on its sail. This may look like a Chi Rho, but it's actually another Greek monogram called the staurogram, or Tau Rho, made from the Greek letters tau (T) and rho (P). *Stauros*, ΣΤΑΥΡΟΣ, means "cross" in Greek, and may have visually represented Jesus on the cross in biblical manuscripts from the 4th, 5th, and 6th centuries. Don't hesitate to walk up to the pulpit, lectern, and altar table on Pentecost to get a closer look at the red paraments!



Are you curious to learn more about a particular symbol, artwork, or other feature? Let us know by contacting Pastor Allyssa or Rev. Anna Thompson. We would love to hear from you!



THOSE IN NEED OF

PRAYER:

Addie (Stork-Whitson); **Alex & Family**; **Kevin & Karen Allison**; **Amy & Mike** (Fox); **Joe Baker** (W.Wentz); **Barb Bell**; **Joanne Bender**; **Cindy Bensel**; **Mary Bensel**; **Beverly** (Hayden); **Bill & Bob** (Gabriel); **George Bingaman**; **Aileen Blanc** (Ritter Butz); **Barbara Blust**; **Melba Bomberger**; **Brendan and Family** (Richey); **Brian** (Shearer); **Brian** (Riesmeyer); **Missy Brouch** (Myers/Mihmet); **Jenny & Erica Budd** (Lingenfelter); **Anna & Dale Burns**; **Nancy Cabrera** (Runkle); **Cheryl** (Freeman); **Sally Chiselko** (Martek); **Tom Chronister** (Chronister); **Cindy** (Rhoads); **Alyssa Claar** (A. Thompson); **Pat Cleland**; **Mary Clark Coleman** (Riesmeyer); **Heather Connelly** (Bomberger); **John & Sheri Conner** (Layne); **Rich Cowan**; **David** (Mullin); **Rita Davidson** (Plymette); **Hudson Davis** (Riesmeyer); **Evelyn Diorio**; **Ethan Dixon & Family**; **Dotty** (Richey); **Jim Dougherty** (Ritter); **Tim Drazba**, **Allen Dreibelbis**; **Richard Ecks** (Plymette); **Edison** (A. Thompson); **Linda Eichelberger** (Chronister); **Harry Felton** (Sponsler); **Bob & Eve Fenner**; **David Fetterman** (Aumiller); **Tom Figiel** (Weiser); **Dawn Fox**; **Fenton Fox & Rick Holtzapple**; **Diane Freeman**; **Ron Gabriel**; **Lenny Gardner** (Shearer); **Jack and Jean Gatesman** (Richey); **Bill Gladstone** (Aumiller); **Betty Goodfellow** (Ritter); **Floyd Gouse**; **Shirley Grammer**; **Roger Grice**; **Harriet & Mark Grimm**; **Teri & Dave Guelcher**; **Dr. Mark Hagenbuch** (Bomberger); **Jane Hall**; **Noah Helwig** (Trout); **Jim and Leslie Hoehn**; **Brenda Hoffer** (Stork-Whitson); **Gloria Hoffman**; **Joshua Holbrook** (Nolan); **Jay Houser** (Haagen); **Michele Hughes** (Murphy); **Ingrid** (Richey); **Jane Leader Janeczek** (Aumiller); **Janie** (Jody Biss); **Joe** (B. Thompson); **Dan & Will Jones**; **Julia** (Fox/Holtzapple); **Elaine Kansy** (Hoehn); **Karen** (Fox/Holtzapple); **Martha & Gene Keith**; **Stephen Keith**; **Rev. Dr. Chris Kennedy** (Ward-Diorio); **Jesse King**; **Bob Kinkley** (Fox); **Dave Kirkwood**; **Glenn Kline**; **Sandy Kline**; **Kristine and Family** (Ward-Diorio); **Audra Kucharick** (Aumiller); **Jean & John Layne**; **Debbie Lever** (A. Thompson); **Larry Linder** (Stork-Whitson/Williams); **Lori** (Murphy); **Naomi Losch** (Endy); **Luca** (Knox); **Taran**

M. (Taylor); **Manny** (Sharp); **Margueritte** (Myers); **Marie** (Murphy); **Craig Martek**; **Joe Mazzei** (Mihmet/Myers); **Brian Medkeff-Rose**; **Michael & Ernie** (Richey); **Michelle & Family** (Mihmet); **Charles Miller** (Lloyd and Matthew's dad); **Jessica Miller** (Chapman); **Joanne Miller**; **Linda Miller**; **Melissa Miller** (Bender); **Sue & Dayne Miller**; **Tasha Misner** (Trout); **Steve Mitchell**; **Ernie Moyer**; **Sue Mullin**; **Randy, Dar & Sarah Murphy**; **Beth Myers** (Richey); **Gene & Ruth Ellen Myers** (Boyer); **Nicole & Family** (Westhafer); **Bob Nies** (A. Thompson); **Nyugen, Thu** (P. Boyer); **Ryan Onufer & family** (Grice); **Jim & Mary P.** (Rhoads); **Panker Family** (Richey); **Lynne Patton** (Taylor); **Eric Potts** (A. Boyer); **Randy** (Bender); **Anne Rankin**; **Richard Reba** (Richenbacher); **Robert Reiner** (Bender); **Carol Rhoads**; **Jason & Rachelle Rhoads**; **Jo Rice** (Rushong); **Nancy, Tom & Dan Richey**; **Sandi Ritter-Butz**; **Franklin, Andrew, Levi Roth**; **Tom Row** (S. Miller); **Rhoda & Ned Rupp**; **Betsy & Benny Rushong**; **Sam** (Freeman); **Jane & Tom Scott & Family**; **Scott & Tracey** (Davinroy); **John Shandra**; **Sharon and Family** (Lingenfelter); **Debbie Sharp and Family**; **Corky Short & Candy LaRue**; **Conner Snow & Family**; **James Sowell** (Sandy Kline); **Tom Steel & Family** (Shaver-Durham); **Barbara Sterner**; **Dory Szeles** (Sterner); **Wendi Taylor**; **April Thomas** (Bomberger); **Cathy Thomas**; **Edward Thorn**; **Dale Thorpe**; **Tracy Thrush Family**; **Tiberius** (A. Thompson); **Florence Torbert** (S. Miller); **Kathy (Wolford Witmer) Toth**; **Shannon & Phoenix Trout**; **Betty Underwood & Family** (Richey); **Bill Utley** (Boyer); **Rosalie Utley** (Boyer); **Vickie** (S. Miller); **Evelyn Warfield**; **Anthony Warner** (Simpson); **Billy Webber** (Ward-Diorio); **Suzy Weeks** (Richey); **Jean and David Weiss**; **Amy Wentz**; **Leita Wentz**; **Doris & Luke Williams**; **Geri Williams** (A. Thompson); **Lou Ann Williams** (Cashman); **Ryan Wilson** (Bomberger); **Chelsey Wirth**; **Fran Wolford**; **Mitchell Worley** (Jones); **Suzanne Worley** (Jones); **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.

WORSHIP SERVICE LEADERS UPDATES

There are two updates being made in the next two months that pertain to the worship services.

The title of *Usher* is being replaced with the title of **Welcome Team Member**. The Consistory Member who leads us each month in welcoming everyone to church will have the title of **Welcome Team Leader**. These two titles will be listed in the weekly service bulletins and on the *Time to Sign Up* online program. This new title relates more closely to the main responsibilities of the duties.

The *Time to Sign Up* worship service pages of Acolyte, Altar Flower Delivery, Lector, Nursery Attendant and Welcome Team Members will be combined into one sign up sheet beginning with the July 2022 services. Each column will be assigned a Sunday with the sign-up feature under each responsibility within that column. The sheet will be titled Worship Leaders followed by the month and year. The page will be copied into our Epistle newsletter each month.

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

ACOLYTE

6/5
6/12
6/19
6/26

LECTORS

6/5 Paula Boyer
6/12 Shirley Keith Knox
6/19
6/26 John Layne

USHERS

Head Usher: Wendy Hayden
6/5 Steve Roush, Paula Boyer, Jim Pirtle
6/12 Corky Short, Jody Biss, Candace LaRue

6/19 Betty and Thomas Olsen, Jody Biss
6/26 Paula Boyer, Steven Roush

FLOWER DELIVERY

6/5 Joanne Miller
6/12 Mary Runkle
6/19 Betty Olsen
6/26 Dale Thorpe and Don Dupes

COMMUNION PREPARER

6/5 Joanne Miller

NURSERY HELPER

6/5
6/12 Art Williams
6/19
6/26

Sign up to be a Worship Participant on the church website under the 'Sign Up' heading.



Articles for the July Epistle are due to the Church Office by end of the day, Wednesday June 22nd.



thank you

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

| | | | |
|------|-------------------------|------|---------------------|
| 6/1 | Juliet Rhoads | 6/18 | Daniel Wentz |
| 6/2 | Matthew Howe | 6/19 | Lilyan Stumpf |
| 6/3 | Kristen Templin | 6/20 | Eric Dundore |
| 6/5 | Ava Drazba | 6/21 | Cooper Miller |
| | Kristine Amtower | | Caleigh Cowan |
| 6/7 | Liane Gladwin | 6/22 | Mark Dundore |
| 6/9 | Michael Gray | 6/23 | Kylah Miller |
| | Brian Medkeff-Rose | 6/24 | Keira Nalepka |
| 6/11 | Karen Allison | 6/25 | Martha Brown |
| | Cynthia Toombs-Irwin | 6/27 | Phoenix Trout |
| | Joanne Schmick | | Stefi Moyer |
| | Thomas Sheaffer | 6/28 | Melba Bomberger |
| 6/12 | Calvin Thompson | 6/29 | Randy Whitman |
| 6/13 | Truc Anh Elliott | | Eleanor Weiser |
| 6/14 | Mackenzie Shea | 6/30 | Stanley Rudisill |
| | Jean Layne | | Brian Foust |
| 6/16 | Landyn Miller | | Ian Nalepka |
| 6/17 | Isabella Shaner-Elliott | | Sherri Bergstresser |
| 6/18 | Joan Shearer | | Molly Hockenberry |

Dear Friends of St. Paul's,

Many thanks for your gift of the beautiful altar flowers to brighten my days following my knee surgery!

Thank you for your thoughts and prayers, they worked! I am feeling much better!

Appreciatively,

Tim Drazba

Dear Congregation of St. Paul's,

Thank you so much for the prayers, well wishes, and altar flowers. All the support has paid off it seems! Mary Bensel and I are not seeing overt signs of cancer spread right now. Thanks, Jill Morell, for bringing the flowers. I will be sure to share with Mary! So thankful!

Cindy Bensel

Dear friends at St. Paul's,

Thank you so much for the beautiful altar flowers and all the cards, phone calls, crocheting instructions, and well wishes sent my way during my recent broken foot debacle. I am so thankful for all of your concern and am looking forward to walking and playing the organ in the future.

Sincerely and with lots of love,

Pat Miller

Thank you to the entire congregation of St. Paul's UCC.

This past Sunday, I was approved for ordination (pending a call) in the United Church of Christ. I could not have done it without the incredible love and support you've given me over the past three decades. Your encouragement, guidance, generosity, and faith have been a beacon to me. In countless ways, big and small, you have showed me what ministry is, and I am deeply grateful. My heart is full. Thank you.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Allyssa

JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

- 6/01 Jonathan & Kimberli Nalepka
- 6/02 Ralph & Catherine Kiner Jr
- 6/03 Rebecca & Richard Lingenfelter
- 6/05 Jeff & Jane Leister
- 6/06 Sarah Myers & Elizabeth Mihmet
- 6/07 Daniel & Kara Wentz
- 6/12 Larry & Donna Sharp
- 6/16 Kelly & James Wentz
- 6/24 Jeffrey & Randy Whitman
- 6/26 Thomas & Tania Pineo

PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

In the season of Eastertide, we are resurrecting the Pastoral Relations Committee. Two actually. We are actively working to staff a committee for Reverend John and one for Pastor Allyssa. Read on to learn more about the PRC and let SherrySpencer@comcast.net (717-919-4692) know if you have any questions.

WHAT IS A PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE?

The Pastoral Relations committee is a standing committee that seeks to support and maintain an open and healthy relationship between the Pastor and members of the congregation. The committee serves in two primary ways: as an advisory group to the Pastor and as a support for the Pastor's leadership. As an advisory group, the committee shares ideas, dreams, hopes, expectations, and concerns of the congregation with the Pastor. As support for the Pastor, the committee interprets roles, functions, and needs of the Pastor to the congregation.

Constructive and caring communication, in an atmosphere of confidentiality and trust, is essential to the work of the committee. This committee is the congregation's fundamental support group for the Pastor. It builds the framework in which conflict can be dealt with creatively. Its goals are the professional growth and well-being of the Pastor, and the promotion of mutual ministry between the Pastor and the congregation.

The basic reason for sustaining open and healthy Pastor-people relationships through the work of this committee is to enhance the effectiveness of the church's mission. The nurture of the Pastor by this committee not only fosters a wholesome and healthy congregation, but also creates a climate in which the spiritual life and mission of the people are strengthened. Serious attention to the dynamics of the relationship between Pastor and congregation can result in a local church able to carry out its ministry effectively.

A SURE FOUNDATION – resources for the relationship between pastors and congregations

Produced by Ministerial Excellence, Support & Authorization (MESA) Ministry Team, 2018 United Church of Christ

ST. PAUL'S ON A MISSION UPDATE



Thank you to everyone who helped make Peanut Butter and Coconut Eggs. It's a big job and we had many helping hands. Between the Easter Egg and Winter Chicken Corn Soup Fundraisers, St. Paul's on a Mission has

raised almost \$2,500.00. Thank you everyone for your orders and generous donations to help offset the cost of ingredients.

St. Paul's on a Mission is registered for the "IN PERSON" 2022 Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk. This year marks the 25th Anniversary of the Making Strides Walk. The walk is back to being held on City Island, Saturday, October 15th. To join our team or make a tax deductible donation under St. Paul's on a Mission, search for "Making Strides of South Central PA Presented By Bath Fitter | American Cancer Society". Search for St. Paul's on a Mission Team. Our team has raised \$120,052.77 over the past 20 years!!

After 20 years as St. Paul's on a Mission's Team Leader, I am retiring at the end of 2022. I thought maybe some of St. Paul's UCC newer members

might be interested in knowing, and maybe some older members as well, why St. Paul's on a Mission team was formed:

I became a Team Leader in 2003 for Making Strides Against Breast Cancer. Our team members came up with our team name "St. Paul's on a Mission." I personally wanted to raise money for this very worthy cause in honor of Beverly Peterson. I taught the Nurse Sunday School class with her for a few years here at St. Paul's. Breast cancer took her young life, leaving her 2 sons, husband and mother. The 1st walk SPOM took place in was dedicated to Beverly.

Since this time our congregation has had quite a few members who are Breast Cancer Survivors, our SPOM warriors!!!! My hope and prayers were and are to raise monies to help find a cure for this horrid disease!

I'm ready to pass my knowledge to another Team Leader. My sincere hope is that someone or maybe a group of folks will want to take over this position. Please contact me with any questions, bkern59@verizon.net or 717-512-9838 or Sherry Spencer sherryspencer@comcast.net.

Thank you, Brenda Kern

Events & Announcements



IT'S RAINING, IT'S POURING... WHAT A PERFECT DAY FOR A YARD SALE!

Thank you to everyone who showered St. Paul's with treasures, drinks, food, and delicious baked goods to sell! The Spring Yard Sale brought in \$1785.39! The weather didn't dampen the mood in the kitchen which sold the best egg sandwiches and hot dogs with sauerkraut for breakfast. The Yard Sale committee greatly appreciates everyone who weathered the storm and came out to help in any way, including setting up tables, renting spaces/tables, serving coffee, pricing items, selling baked goods, standing in the rain and directing cars and cleaning up after the yard sale. THANK YOU! We are always in gratitude to the outpouring of volunteers who show up at St. Paul's events. THANK YOU!

Sincerely, the Yard Sale Committee: Mary Runkle (President), Carol Sizemore (Head of Sales), Joan Moyer (Chief Financial Officer and many other

titles), Susie White (Pricing and Sales Expert), Val Chapman-Jones (Marketing and Advertising), Patty, Dave and Rebecca Scott (Restaurant Management), Shirley Keith-Knox (Baked Goods Sales Manager), Renee Durbin (Customer Service Executive) and Kim Pirtle (Sign maker).

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Beginning on Sunday, June 5, we will hold one worship service starting at 9:15 AM each Sunday morning. There will be no Sunday school; enjoy your summer break! Sunday school will resume on Rally Day, September 11, 2022.

SPECIAL WORSHIP SERVICES

Our congregation will praise God and proclaim the Gospel through the observance of several special worship services this June:

- June 5: Pentecost Sunday (don't forget to wear "flame-colored" clothes)
- June 12: Trinity Sunday
- June 19: Commemoration of Juneteenth
- June 26: Open and Affirming Sunday

We hope you will join us!



STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING

Sunday, June 5th, 2022

"The last two years have told a remarkable story about the resilience of our churches and their leaders.

This has been hard.

Leaders are tired.

Leaders are anxious.

Leaders are beleaguered.

Leaders are traumatized.

But every day, and in countless ways, leaders in the church demonstrate the power of faith in the risen Christ as they embody the spirit of Paul himself who wrote that we will 'rejoice in all circumstances' and 'we do not grieve as those who have no hope.' Two years into this pandemic, we struggle to name a more devastating season through which we have all lived. And yet still we see signs of life and resilience and ingenuity and growth and enduring hope.

There are stories of how college students left for college and for the first time since anyone can remember they were still able to worship every week with their home church.

One church noticed their members were struggling with a variety of mental health issues. They brought a counselor on to their staff who set up an office in the church to provide therapeutic care to them. The pastor noticed that neighbors who had never been to the church were also suffering - and the counselor began to meet regularly with them as well. Now, there is a full-time mental health specialist on staff who serves not just the church, but the neighborhood.

Many of our settings are reporting that their giving rose in 2021, a sign that even in the midst of deep sorrow our better angels emerge with a desire to support those who suffer and those who care for the suffering.

Churches that feared losing all their members when we all quarantined learned how to connect virtually for pastoral visitation, prayer, worship, and fellowship. They not only didn't lose their members, many grew by finding an audience who were only ever going to be found in the virtual spaces they occupy and find safe.

Our churches remain strong in the Lord.

All that we do to Strengthen Our Churches extends the kingdom of God. Preaching the gospel is our collective calling. Even a raging global pandemic cannot suppress either our

desire or ability preach that gospel, nor the Spirit's ability to change lives when we do.

Won't you please help sustain the mission of the risen Christ, and Strengthen the Church with your offering of love, prayer, and generosity?"

John C. Dorhauer
General Minister and President
All Together!
United Church of Christ

and playground area at Fuller Lake. We have the pavilion reserved for the entire day; come as early as you want and hang out as long as you want. There are several trails in the park of varying lengths and difficulty; we will have maps and descriptions for folks to hike as they want. Cool off afterwards with a dip in the lake. Or just stay at the pavilion and enjoy the shade or some lawn games that will be set up. Hot dogs, drinks and paper products will be provided. The rest of the picnic will be potluck. We will set up starting at 10am, with cooking noon-2. Parking and restrooms are also very close to the pavilion. All are welcome; bring your friends along too! Watch for a sign-up sheet to be posted soon.

CAREGIVERS SUPPORT INFORMATION

The monthly Caregivers Support hybrid meeting on the second Tuesday of the month is not meeting for the months of June, July and August. All persons that have been part of this group that may have any concern that may need an urgent conversation with either Chris Bowers or Chris Royer are welcome to call either of them for some support until we meet again in September.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL July 5th-8th, 2022

Save the dates! St. Paul's UCC will hold VBS July 5th-8th. Kids in preschool through 5th grade are invited to participate; stay tuned for ways to sign-up! Adults and youth, there are many ways to help: we need enthusiastic volunteers who are willing to lead VBS stations, act out Bible stories, take photos, and guide our kid crews. If you are interested in volunteering, please let Pastor Allyssa know. Thank you!

SPOOF PICNIC AND HIKING August 6th, 2022

Join SPOOF (St. Paul's On Our Feet) for a fun day in the outdoors on August 6th at Pine Grove Furnace State Park! We have reserved the Brickyard Pavilion, which is close to the beach

