

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Sunday, February 11, 2024



1235 Summer Hill Road, Auburn, PA 17922

Pastor: Rev. Ken McDowell, cell phone: 610-207-4783

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

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Transfiguration Sunday
Celebration of Baptismal Anniversaries

Rev. Ken McDowell, Pastor

Music Director & Pianist- Rae Ann Borger

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

This morning we remember in prayer, from our Schuylkill Association Prayer Calendar, **Transfiguration Sunday**.

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.

INVOCATION

GATHERING FOR THE WORD

PRELUDE

The congregation may stand.

SOLEMN DECLARATION.....Sung “Amen”

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: The light of God is shining...

People: Shining around and within.

Pastor: The voice of God is calling...

People: Calling not just from ancient texts, but from here and now.

Pastor: The love of God is with us ...

People: Flowing around and within us.

Pastor: Let us worship God who has brought us out of darkness! Amen.

OPENING HYMN NO. 245.....“We Have Come at Christ's Own Bidding”

*We have come at Christ’s own bidding to this high and holy place,
where we wait with hope and longing for some token of God’s grace.
Here we pray for new assurance that our faith is not in vain,
searching like those first disciples for a sign both clear and plain.*

*Light breaks through out clouds and shadows, splendor bathes the flesh-joined Word,
Moses and Elijah marvel as the heavenly voice is heard.
Eyes and hearts behold with wonder how the Law and Prophets meet:
Christ with garments drenched in brightness, stands transfigured and complete.*

*Strengthened by this glimpse of glory, fearful lest our faith decline,
we, like Peter, find it tempting to remain and build a shrine.
But true worship gives us courage to proclaim what we profess,
that our daily lives may prove us people of the God we bless.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

CONFESSION OF SIN (Unison)

God of life, you never stop shining. Yet, sometimes we forget to keep looking. It is not always easy to remember to keep our eyes on you—to watch until you are out of sight, to remember that you are never really out of sight. Forgive us when we stray from you. We long for you, O God, especially when we have wandered away and yearn to come home. Entrust us with a double portion of your

**Spirit—when we need it most, when we don’t even know we need it, when we have no words to ask.
Bless us, we pray, and bring us home. Amen.**

MOMENT OF PERSONAL CONFESSION

KYRIE

Pastor: Lord, have mercy upon us.

People: Lord, have mercy upon us.

Pastor: Christ, have mercy upon us.

People: Christ, have mercy upon us.

Pastor: Lord, have mercy upon us.

People: Lord, have mercy upon us.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: When we have turned away and have lost our way—

People: Still, God is with us; still, God will not leave us.

Pastor: When we have stopped looking for God—

People: God is still looking for us, shining as brightly as we need, so we can find and be found again.

Pastor: Be at peace! God will gather us in with the tender words: “You are forgiven.” Amen.

THE GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, it is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

The congregation may be seated.

ENGAGING THE WORD

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

READING OF THE WORD.....Lector, Mike Fessler

Old Testament: 2 Kings 2:1-12 (Page 319)

Psalm: Psalm 50:1-6 (Read responsively)

Lector: The mighty one, God the Lord, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

People: Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth.

Lector: Our God comes and does not keep silence, before him is a devouring fire, and a mighty tempest all around him.

People: He calls to the heavens above and to the earth, that he may judge his people:

Lector: “Gather to me my faithful ones, who made a covenant with me by sacrifice!”

People: The heavens declare his righteousness, for God himself is judge.

Epistle Lesson: 2 Corinthians 4:3-6 (Page 1005)

Gospel Lesson: Mark 9:2-9 (Page 876)

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.”

SR. CHOIR ANTHEM.....“A Holy Nation” by Nan & Dennis Allen

SERMON.....“A Silver Lining”

RESPONDING TO THE WORD
The congregation may remain seated.

HYMN OF REFLECTION NO. 144.....“O Splendor of God's Glory Bright”

*O splendor of God's glory bright, from light eternal bringing light,
O Light of light, the fountain spring, O Day, all days illumining:*

*Come, very Sun of heaven's love, in lasting radiance from above,
and pour the Holy Spirit's ray on all we thing or do today.*

*Confirm our will to do the right, and keep our hearts from envy's blight;
let faith her eager fires renew, and hate the false, and love the true.*

*All praise to God the Father be, All praise, eternal Son, to thee,
whom with the Spirit we adore forever and forevermore.*

CELEBRATION OF FEBRUARY BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARIES

Bryant Lawrence, son of Zachary Bitting and Jessica Borden

The congregation may stand.

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

Pastor: Do you believe in God?

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

Pastor: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

People: I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Pastor: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**People: I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

The congregation may be seated.

PASTORAL PRAYER

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray.

SILENT PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

PRAYER RESPONSE

Hear our prayer, O Lord; Hear our prayer, O Lord; Hear our prayer, O Lord, And grant us Thy peace. Amen.

CALL TO OFFERING

The congregation may stand.

OFFERING RESPONSE & DEDICATION.....DOXOLOGY
Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

OFFERING PRAYER

GOING WITH THE WORD

COMMISSION

Pastor: May the dazzling brightness of God light our way.

People: May the dazzling brightness of Christ shine within us.

Pastor: May the dazzling brightness of God’s Spirit flow through us.

People: With God to guide us, we are ready to proclaim the Good News.

BENEDICTION

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

CLOSING HYMN NO. 520.....“Swing Low, Sweet Chariot”

Refrain: *Swing low, sweet chariot, coming for to carry me home;
swing low, sweet chariot, coming for to carry me home.*

*I looked over Jordan, and what did I see, coming for to carry me home?
A band of angels coming after me, coming for to carry me home. [Refrain]*

*If you get there before I do, coming for to carry me home;
tell all my friends I’m coming too, coming for to carry me home. [Refrain]*

*I’m sometimes up, I’m sometimes down, coming for to carry me home;
but still my soul feels heavenly bound, coming for to carry me home. [Refrain]*

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 by Kirsten Linford and from the 2024 Abingdon Worship Annuals edited by Mary J. Scifres and B. J. Beu.

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-Offering on Sunday, February 4, 2024: \$2,750.00

-Weekly envelope & plate budget for 2024: \$3,243.09

-The February Communion Offering is designated to the Church World Service (CWS) Blanket Offering. The March Communion offering will support the Joe and Tamara Nagle Family (medical expenses).

-The 2023 End of Year statements are now available. Please see Kathy Kline or contact the church office.

-TODAY is “Souper” Bowl Sunday and we will join thousands of other churches and organizations tackle hunger by collecting canned food and/or cash donations. All donations stay right in Schuylkill County to help our neighbors in need through the Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry. Look for the specially marked food donation boxes and the monetary donation pot!

-Join us TODAY for Fellowship Time (aka, coffee hour)- conversation, along with a cup of coffee and light refreshments following our 10:30am worship service. 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. And best of all, it's free of charge!! Help is needed: If you would be interested in helping to assist in hosting a fellowship hour, please contact the church office or speak to Pastor Ken.

-Gofundme to Help Mathias on His Spina Bifida Journey- Friends and family of Joe, Tamara, and baby Mathias- As a lot of you already know, Joe and Tamara recently received a serious diagnosis for their unborn baby. At a routine 20 week pregnancy ultrasound, their baby boy was diagnosed with Spina Bifida, which can come with a wide range of health issues and disabilities. If you would like to donate, you can visit: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-matthias-on-his-spina-bifida-journey> or you may also give to the March communion offering.

-Meals Needed: Tamara and Joe Nagle and their children along with Joe's mother, Lucinda have moved to the Philadelphia area Ronald McDonald House while they await the birth of Mathias. This will be over the course of a few months. Rae Ann Borger is organizing meals for Lucinda's husband, Tom and her mother, Marion. If you would be able to assist her with this effort, it would be greatly appreciated. Please speak to her or call 739-2311 for more information.

-The Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry is in great need and accepts all non-perishable food items/ 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, February 12** at 8:30am and **this Friday, February 16** at 1pm. Please speak to Verna Ebling or the church office if you would like to help or donate items.

-The Prayer Shawl Ministry meets the second Tuesday of each month from 10am-12noon in the conference room. The next meeting will **Tuesday, February 13.** If you are interested in crocheting and/or knitting, we can hook you up! If you know of someone who could use a prayer shawl, please contact the church office.

-There will be a Vacation Bible School Planning Meeting this Tuesday, February 13 at 7pm in room B1 (downstairs 2nd kitchen). Anyone interested in helping at VBS, which will be held June 17-21, is invited to attend. Please speak to Bill Reber for more information.

-A traditional Ash Wednesday Service will be held this Wednesday, February 14 at 7:00pm in person and live-streamed. The service will include the imposition of ashes and the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Wednesday evening Lenten services will begin **February 21** and continue through **March 20** at 7pm. Please join us as we journey with Jesus to the cross.

-The Adult Sunday School Class will begin a Lenten study next Sunday based on the book “The Third Day” by Tom Berlin. We will explore the ways Christ's resurrection transformed the lives of the first apostles and how we too can experience that power today. All are Yeahwelcome to join us in room B-1 at 9:15 AM each Sunday.

-Order forms are available for the Easter lilies. The **first deadline is next Sunday, February 18** and the **final deadline is Sunday, March 3.** Each lily is \$7, and orders and money can be given to Ardith Moyer, Verna Ebling or the church office. No standing orders please!

-There will be a Consistory Meeting on Tuesday, February 20 at 7pm in the conference room.

-We will be collecting monetary donations on Sunday, February 25 to be used toward the Church World Service Blankets+ Program. Blanket offering envelopes will be available by the bulletin basket on the table in the narthex. Blankets+ is a special mission opportunity for all ages. Some 8,000 congregations and groups across the U.S. hold CWS Blankets+ events, providing funds to help people in need around the world, including the U.S.

-The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 25 following worship. In the event of worship cancellation, it will be held on **Sunday, March 3**. Annual reports will be available prior to the meeting.

-Anyone interested in learning more about our Sunday School program is welcome and invited to attend the Board of Christian Education Meeting on Tuesday, March 5 at 7pm. The meeting will take place downstairs in room B1 (2nd kitchen). Please speak to Laura Carll, any Sunday School teachers, Pastor Ken or the church office for you information.

-On Sunday, March 10, we will receive the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering. OGHS, the refugee, relief and development offering of the UCC, transforms lives through health, education, agricultural, and emergency relief initiatives in 138 countries. Special envelopes will be placed on the bulletin table prior to that Sunday.

-Please note that the fresh altar flower sponsorship price will be going up in price from \$30 to \$35, effective April 1. The silk flowers will still be \$12, and bulletin sponsorship will be \$10.

-In an effort to keep our records up to date, we are asking that if you have had a change to any of your information, would like to add a cell phone number or email address, or just want to be sure we have your most current info., please contact the church office.

-Your help is needed!! Now that we have settled into our new sound and video equipment, we are looking for some additional people to help run it on a Sunday morning! Please let us know if you would be willing to help. We will then figure out a good mutual time to “train” those who are interested! Ideally, we will get a few people interested, and then sign up for Sundays either on a weekly or monthly basis, somewhat like the lectors.

-We are in need of altar prep volunteers. Everyone is welcome! It will be a rotation schedule on a weekly basis. You can sign up for one week or multiple weeks. Your assistance is needed to change the altar paraments, make sure altar flowers are changed and the oil candles are filled. “Training” will be provided! It’s a minimal commitment, but a great help in keeping our services running smoothly. If you would like to learn more about how you can help, please speak to Kelly Palerino.

-When you or a loved one is sick or in the hospital for an extended stay, please notify the church office. Please do not assume that the pastor will know you are there. We are served by many different area hospitals and do not know which one you may utilize. So please do not hesitate to let us know your condition so that Pastor Ken can provide you with spiritual care! You may call the church office at 570-754-7225 and leave a message 24/7 with your name, number, and what you are calling about. The staff will be notified remotely of your call and will get back to you as soon as possible. You can also email us at summerhillucc@gmail.com.

-Our church services are livestreamed on Facebook! We continue to reach many people who are unable to worship with us in person, giving them God’s message of hope and love. Call the church office if you or someone you know needs help getting online.

-Prayer is Powerful! Please continue to call the church office or email us your prayer concerns to be included on our prayer list. We believe in the power of prayer and want to pray for you. **We have a prayer concerns email group for anyone who would like to join.** Contact the church office and we will be happy to add you to the email distribution list. The Agape Committee continues to send cards to members on the prayer concerns list, so please continue sharing your concerns with us. Thank you!!

PRAYER CONCERNS: All those earnestly seeking God's help in difficult times, Military personnel & National Leaders, Savannah Olsen, Diane Best, Brett Neifert Jr., Harold Berkheiser, Kenneth Smith, Ron Mengel, Joesph & Tamara Nagle and unborn son Mathias Joseph, Jason Swick, Shirley German, Guy Fessler, Dick Clauser, Cassie Wolfe, Marion Bartolet, Mabel Edwards

CANCER PATIENTS: Boone, Marie Bleu, Alex DuVee, John Eckert, Glennis Eifert, Rebecca Henderson, Sherri Jo Jennar, Deb Kemmerling, Norma Koperna, Joan Krause, Carol Mallory, Carol Mengel, Dr. Donald Moyer, Tom Nagle, Judy Ohl, Pat Reading, Jim Thompson, Terri Willard

FOR THE WEEK OF SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11

Sunday, February 11 * "Souper Bowl of Caring" Collection *Transfiguration

-Fellowship Time (aka Coffee Hour) following worship

Monday, February 12

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

10:30 AM -Pastor Ken to lead Chapel Service at Luther Ridge

Tuesday, February 13

10:00 AM -Prayer Shawl Ministry Meeting

7:00 PM -Vacation Bible School Planning Meeting

Wednesday, February 14 *Ash Wednesday *Valentine's Day

5:30 PM -Confirmation Class

7:00 PM - Ash Wednesday Worship Service with Holy Communion and the Imposition of Ashes

-Senior Choir Rehearsal following worship

Friday, February 16

1:00 PM - Help at the Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry

Sunday, February 18 *First Sunday in Lent *First Lily order deadline

9:15 AM -Sunday School

10:30 AM -Worship

2:00 PM -Cub Scout Meeting and Pine Wood Derby

***Lectionary Readings for next week:**

Genesis 9:8-17

Psalm 25:1-10

I Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:9-15