

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Sunday, March 10, 2024

Fourth



SUNDAY

IN LENT

1235 Summer Hill Road, Auburn, PA 17922

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

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**Fourth Sunday in Lent
Celebration of Baptismal Anniversaries
One Great Hour of Sharing Offering**

Rev. Ken McDowell, Pastor

Music Director- Rae Ann Borger
Organist- Jacob Challenger

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

This morning we remember in prayer, from our Schuylkill Association Prayer Calendar, **the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering and the Wider Church Ministries.**

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.

LENTEN CANDLES

Pastor: Even before the world was created, God knew that Jesus would be the Way, the Truth and the Life for all who believed in him.

People: But God didn't just ignore his people then, waiting until the time came for Jesus.

Pastor: No, he gave them a way to be forgiven. He gave them a way to be healed.

People: Many followed the outward ritual, but they didn't live lives that reflected his glory.

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

Pastor: What has God told us? What is good? What does the LORD require of us?

People: To do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God. (Micah 6:8)

HYMN OF REPENTANCE.....“Just As I Am” (Verse 4)

*Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind, sight riches, healing of the mind,
yea, all I need in Thee to find, O Lamb of God, I come, I come!*

INVOCATION

GATHERING FOR THE WORD

PRELUDE

The congregation may stand.

SOLEMN DECLARATION.....Sung “Amen”

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: The goodness of God beckons,

People: Calling us to goodness and grace.

Pastor: The grace of God redeems,

People: Saving us and making us whole.

Pastor: The love of God welcomes,

People: Inviting us to worship and praise. Amen.

OPENING HYMN NO. 251.....“I Come to the Cross”

*I come to the cross seeking mercy and grace, I come to the cross where you died in my place.
Out of my weakness and into Your strength, humbly, I come to the cross.*

*I come to the cross seeking mercy and grace, I come to the cross where You died in my place.
Out of my weakness and into Your strength, humbly, I come to the cross.*

*Your arms are open, You call me by name, you welcome this child that was lost.
You paid the price for my guilt and my shame, Jesus, I come, Jesus I come, Jesus, I come to the cross.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

CONFESSION OF SIN (Unison)

Gracious God, lift up our hearts this day, for we long to see your salvation. Lift us up from the pits of sin and sorrow, that we may walk in the light of your love and grace. Forgive our sinful ways and create us anew as reflections of your light and as offerings of your grace. For we yearn to bless everyone we meet, even ourselves, in your name. In hope and gratitude, we pray. 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: In Christ Jesus, we are created to do good things.

People: By God’s grace, we are able to be good people.

Pastor: In God’s goodness, we are created good.

People: In Christ’s grace, we are saved by love,

Pastor: Praise be to God, for we 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, Nancy Dewald

Old Testament: Numbers 21:4-9 (Page 134)

Psalms: Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 (**Read Responsively**)

Lector: O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever.

People: Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, those he redeemed from trouble

Lector: and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

People: Some were sick through their sinful ways, and because of their iniquities endured affliction;

Lector: they loathed any kind of food, and they drew near to the gates of death.

People: Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress;

Lector: he sent out his word and healed them, and delivered them from destruction.

People: Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wonderful works to humankind.

Lector: And let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices, and tell of his deeds with songs of joy.

Epistle: Ephesians 2:1-10 (Page 1017)

Gospel: John 3:14-21 (Page 924)

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.....“Sacrifice of Love” by Brian Russell

SERMON.....“Give Credit Where Credit is Due”

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

The congregation may remain seated.

HYMN OF REFLECTION NO. 61.....“There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy”

*There’s a wideness in God’s mercy like the wideness of the sea;
there’s a kindness in his justice which is more than liberty.*

*There is welcome for the sinner and more graces for the good;
there is mercy with the Savior; there is healing in his blood.*

*For the love of God is broader than the measure of our mind;
and the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.*

*If our love were but more simple, we would take him at his word,
and our lives would be illumined by the presence of our Lord.*

CELEBRATION OF MARCH BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARIES

Kylah Leigh and Kaycee Layne, daughters of Charles and Kayla Ferguson

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: God sends us forth with the immeasurable gift of faith.

People: We will live in the joy of our salvation.

Pastor: God sends us forth to walk in the light of holy love.

People: We will walk in the light of Christ.

Pastor: God sends us forth in spirit and in truth.

People: We will journey in the Spirit’s tender mercies.

BENEDICTION

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

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

*To God be the glory, great things he hath done;
so loved he the world that he gave us his Son,
who yielded his life an atonement for sin,
and opened the life gate that all may go in.*

Refrain: *Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father through Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory, great things he hath done.*

*O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
to every believer the promise of God;
the vilest offender who truly believes,
that moment from Jesus a pardon receives. [Refrain]*

*Great things he hath taught us, great things he hath done,
and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
but purer, and higher and greater will be
our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see. [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 Mary J. Scifres
from the 2024 Abingdon Worship Annuals edited by Mary J. Scifres and B. J. Beu.*

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-The altar flowers and bulletins are in loving memory of Kenneth Kreager by Linda, Dick, Christopher and Amy Clauser.

-Offering on Sunday, March 3, 2024: \$2,480.00

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

- The March Communion offering will support the Joe and Tamara Nagle Family (medical expenses). The April Communion offering is designated to the Schuylkill Association Ministries.

-The Adult Sunday School Class are doing a Lenten study based on the book “The Third Day” by Tom Berlin. We are exploring the ways Christ's resurrection transformed the lives of the first apostles and how we too can experience that power today. All are welcome to join us in room B-1 at 9:15 AM each Sunday- it's not too late to join us! Please speak to Pastor Ken.

-TODAY 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 are available on the bulletin table.

-Join us for Fellowship Time (aka, coffee hour) TODAY following worship. Enjoy conversation, along with a cup of coffee and light refreshments. We 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/ speak to Pastor Ken or sign the sheet on the bulletin table.

-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, March 11** at 8:30am and **Friday, March 15** at 1pm. Please speak to Verna Ebling or the church office if you would like to help or donate items.

-Lenten Schedule: Our **Wednesday evening Lenten services** will take place this **Wednesday, March 13** through March 20 at 7pm in the sanctuary. Please join us as we journey with Jesus to the cross. A **Palm Sunday Service**, with the Blessing of the Palms, will be held on **Sunday, March 24** at 10:30am. On **Maundy Thursday, March 28**, at 6:00pm, we will gather in the fellowship hall for our version of the **Seder meal**. A **Good Friday Tenebrae Service** will be held on **March 29** at 7:00pm. **Easter Sunday, March 31:** We will rejoice and celebrate Christ's resurrection beginning with our Sunrise Service at 6:30am on Easter morning. An Easter Breakfast will be held in the fellowship hall at approximately 7:15am followed immediately by a Worship Service with Holy Communion around the breakfast table (8:15am). Sunday School will be held at 9:15am, followed by the 10:30am Easter Worship Service with Holy Communion. Although it is not necessary, if you plan on attending either or both, **please sign up for the Seder Meal and/or Easter Breakfast to help in our food preparation planning.**

-This year we are doing plastic egg donations for our annual Easter Egg hunt on Sunday, March 24 during the 9:15 Sunday School hour. They may be filled or not and you can place them in downstairs room B-1. **PLASTIC EGGS ONLY-** please no real eggs. **Plastic eggs will need to be here by next Sunday, March 17.** Thank you!! Please sign up with your name and how many dozen of eggs on the sheet by the bulletin basket.

-The Prayer Shawl Ministry normally meets the second Tuesday of each month from 10am-12noon in the conference room. They will actually meet **Tuesday, March 19** this month. 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.

-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.

-Your invited to the Everybody's Birthday Party on Friday, April 19 from 6-9pm. It will be a pot-luck style, so you may bring a dinner choice and/or a dessert choice. Please sign your name and what you will be bringing on the sign-up sheet by the bulletin basket. We will have games & provide ice cream and drinks. We hope to see you there!!

-PLAY BALL! Spring is here and with it so comes America's great past time of baseball. **We have once again scheduled a group outing to see the Reading Fightin' Phils on Saturday, June 15th** against the Portland Sea Dogs. First pitch is at 6:45pm. Tickets are \$36.00 each and includes admission to game, AYCE Buffet supper and incredible fireworks to follow the game! Sign up sheet is on table as you enter the sanctuary. Payment for tix can be given to Kelly in Church office or paid directly to Mike Fessler. There are 32 tickets reserved for us so tickets will be provided first come, first serve.

-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, it would be greatly appreciated. Please speak to her or call 739-2311 for more information.

-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.

-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, **Ron Mengel**, Tom Toomey, Norman Spotts Sr., Denise Knoblauch, Guy Fessler, Savannah Olsen, Brett Neifert Jr., Harold Berkheiser, Kenneth Smith, Joesph & Tamara Nagle and unborn son Mathias Joseph, Shirley German, 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, Tom Nagle, Judy Ohl, Pat Reading, Jim Thompson, Terri Willard

FOR THE WEEK OF SUNDAY, MARCH 10

Sunday, March 10 *Daylight Savings Time begins *One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

-Fellowship Time (aka Coffee Hour) following worship

4:00 – 7:30 PM -Cub Scout Meetings

Monday, March 11

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

10:30 AM -Pastor Ken to perform chapel service at Luther Ridge

7:15 PM -Boy Scout Meeting

Tuesday, March 12

4:00 PM -Boy Scout Sub Sale Pick-up

Wednesday, March 13

5:30 PM -Confirmation Class

7:00 PM -Lenten Worship Service / Senior Choir Rehearsal following worship

Thursday, March 14 *Pastor Ken's Birthday

Friday, March 15

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

Sunday, March 17 *St. Patrick's Day

9:15 AM -Sunday School

10:30 AM -Worship

5:30 PM -Cub Scout Meeting

***Lectionary Readings for next week:**

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Psalm 51:1-12

Psalm 119:9-16

Hebrews 5:5-10

John 12:20-33