

**ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**Sunday, March 17, 2024**



**SUNDAY**

**IN LENT**

**1235 Summer Hill Road, Auburn, PA 17922**

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

**Church Office Phone:** 570-754-7225

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

**Church Email:** [summerhillucc@gmail.com](mailto:summerhillucc@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.summerhillucc.com](http://www.summerhillucc.com)

**Livestream:** [www.facebook.com/summerhillucc](http://www.facebook.com/summerhillucc)

**Fifth Sunday in Lent  
St. Patrick's Day**

Rev. Ken McDowell, Pastor

Music Director- Rae Ann Borger  
Organist- Colin Andrew

**CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH**

This morning we remember in prayer **St. John's, Orwigsburg** from our Schuylkill Association Prayer Calendar.

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: God wants people to be happy. And the only way we can be happy is by following his instructions.

**People: So he gave us his Word, his written Word.**

Pastor: The Word revealed where our life comes from and how we can keep it.

**People: But again and again we think our ideas are better than God's. And we turn from life to death.**

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

Pastor: The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul.

**People: Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.**

(Psalm 19:7a, 11)

**HYMN OF REPENTANCE....."Just As I Am" (Verse 5)**

*Just as I am, Thou wilt receive, wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;  
because Thy promise I believe, 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: Are you feeling tired and worn out?

**People: Call on the name of the Lord.**

Pastor: Are mistakes from the past weighing you down?

**People: Come to the fount of living water.**

Pastor: Are you the person you wish to be?

**People: Seek God's help and it shall be granted.**

Pastor: Are you looking for a better path?

**People: Ask Christ to show you the way.**

Pastor: Come! Let us worship. Amen.

**OPENING HYMN NO. 353....."Grace Greater than Our Sin"**

*Marvelous grace of our loving Lord, grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt,  
yonder on Calvary's mount outpoured, there where the blood of the Lamb was spilt.*

**Refrain:** *Grace, grace, God's grace, grace that will pardon and cleanse within;  
grace, grace, God's grace, grace that is greater than all our sin.*

*Dark is the stain that we cannot hide; what can avail to wash it away?  
Look! there is flowing a crimson tide; whiter than snow you may be today. [Refrain]*

*Marvelous, infinite, matchless grace, freely bestowed on all who believe:  
you that are longing to see his face, will you this moment his grace receive? [Refrain]*

## CALL TO CONFESSION

### CONFESSION OF SIN (Unison)

**O Lord, we long for your law of love to burst forth with every beat of our hearts. Work within us this day, that the majesty of your love may shine through us in everything we say and do. Put a new and right spirit within us. Forgive our failings so that we may embrace the glory of our salvation, through Christ, our Lord. 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: God is just and forgiving.

**People: God receives us as we are, lifts us up and calls us again to be people upholding justice and peace.**

Pastor: Receive God's pardon and peace, knowing that all sins are forgiven

**All: Thanks be to God!**

## 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 Rubinkam

Old Testament: Jeremiah 31:31-34 (Page 680)

Psalm: Psalm 51:1-12 (Read responsively)

Lector: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

**People: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.**

Lector: For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

**People: Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.**

Lector: Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

**People: You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.**

Lector: Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

**People: Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.**

Lector: Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

**People: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.**

Lector: Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

**People: Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.**

Epistle Lesson: Hebrews 5:5-10 (Page 1046)

Gospel Lesson: John 12:20-33 (Page 936)

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.”

SENIOR CHOIR ANTHEM.....“Search Me, O God” by Mark Andrew

SERMON.....“Face the Future”

**RESPONDING TO THE WORD**

*The congregation may remain seated.*

HYMN OF REFLECTION NO. 458.....“O Jesus, I Have Promised”

*O Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;  
remain forever near me, my Master and my Friend:  
I shall not fear the battle if you are by my side,  
nor wander from the pathway if you will be my guide.*

*O let me hear you speaking in accents clear and still,  
above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self will.  
O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control;  
now speak, and make me listen, O guardian of my soul.*

*O Jesus, you have promised to all who follow you  
that where you are in glory, your servant shall be too; and,  
Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;  
O give me grace to follow, my Master and my Friend.*

*The congregation may stand.*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Unison).....Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.**

**Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**

**With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. 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's law of love is engraved on our hearts.

**People: We trust God's internal compass to guide us.**

People: Discern the still small voice that whispers with every heartbeat.

**People: Going forth, we will heed the promise of the heart—the warm beat of the living law of love.**

BENEDICTION

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

CLOSING HYMN NO. 479.....“Near the Cross”

*Jesus, keep me near the cross; there a precious fountain,  
free to all, a healing stream, flows from Calvary's mountain.*

***Refrain:*** *In the cross, in the cross, be my glory ever,  
till my raptured soul shall find rest beyond the river.*

*Near the cross, a trembling soul, love and mercy found me;  
there the bright and morning star sheds its beams around me. [Refrain]*

*Near the cross! O Lamb of God, bring its scenes before me;  
help me walk from day to day with its shadow o'er me. [Refrain]*

*Near the cross I'll watch and wait, hoping, trusting ever,  
till I reach the golden strand just beyond the river. [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 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 memory of Beatrice Kreager by Linda, Dick, Christopher and Amy Clauser.
- Offering on Sunday, March 10, 2024:       \$3,873.00
- 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 is 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.
- The congregation is invited to a welcome reception at Saint Paul's Lutheran Church for their new pastor, Rev. Marie Meeks immediately after services today.**
- TODAY is the deadline for plastic egg donations for our annual Easter Egg hunt next Sunday, March 24** during the 9:15 Sunday School hour.
- The Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet this Tuesday, March 19** from 10am-12noon in the conference room. 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 **fundraiser for the Boy Scout Troop 651 at the Friedensburg Country Restaurant this Tuesday, March 19.** The Scouts will receive 20% of your total bill and the fundraiser will go through the day: breakfast, lunch and dinner. There are tickets on the table by the bulletin basket. You can also contact Lorna Palerino or the church office if you need a ticket.
- Lenten Schedule:** Our **Wednesday evening Lenten service** will take place this **Wednesday, 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 **next 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.**

**-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.

**-Join us for Fellowship Time (aka, coffee hour) on Sunday, April 14 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 **Monday, April 15** at 8:30am and **Friday, April 19** at 1pm. Please speak to Verna Ebling or the church office if you would like to help or donate items.

**-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](mailto: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, *family and friends of Holly Hughes, Ernie Jones*, 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 17**

### **Sunday, March 17 \*St. Patrick's Day**

5:30 PM -Cub Scout Meeting

### **Tuesday, March 19**

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM -Prayer Shawl Ministry Meeting

7:00 PM -Consistory Meeting

### **Wednesday, March 20**

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

### **Saturday, March 23**

8:00 AM -Outdoor Spring Clean-up of church grounds

### **Sunday, March 24 \*Palm/Passion Sunday**

9:15 AM -Sunday School/ Easter Egg Hunt

10:30 AM -Worship with the Blessing of the Palms and the Recognition of the Confirmation Class of 1974

4:00 – 7:00 PM -Cub Scout Blue and Gold Dinner

### **\*Lectionary Readings for next week:**

#### **(Liturgy of the Palms)**

Mark 11:1-11 or John 12:12-16

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

#### **(Liturgy of the Passion)**

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm 31:9-16

Philippians 2:5-11

Mark 14:1-15:47 or Mark 15:1-39, (40-47)