

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Sunday, March 1, 2026



SECOND 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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**Second Sunday in Lent
The Sacrament of Holy Communion**

Rev. Ken McDowell, Pastor

Music Director- Rae Ann Borger
Organist- Colin Andrew

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

This morning we remember in prayer **Salem Hetzel’s, Pine Grove** from our Schuylkill Association Prayer Calendar.

Please read the announcements that are in this bulletin, the online bulletin, as well as what we post on Facebook, emails, and phone calls, and then help spread the word to those who do not have access to any of those messages.

(Communion note: This morning, as some of us are gathered together here at church while many are gathering with us virtually from their homes, we all are invited to the same table. Those present this morning are invited to pick up a bag of individually prepared elements from the table in the narthex, as we will not be distributing the elements during the service. Those at home may gather bread and drink and partake as we do when we are gathered together.)

Lenten Candles

Focus: The Shadow of Distrust: The rejection of Christ by those who did not believe His word.

Scripture: “He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.” (John 1:11)

Pastor: Jesus came to His own, but many did not receive Him. They demanded signs, questioned His authority, and hardened their hearts against His grace.

People: We confess that in our doubt, we often look for certainty rather than resting in your promise.

Pastor: As we extinguish this second light, we remember the darkness of a world that refuses to see the Truth standing before it.

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

RESPONSIVE HYMN NO. 354.....“Just As I Am” (verse 2)

*Just as I am, and waiting not to rid my soul of one dark blot,
to thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot, 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: God calls us to set out in faith.

People: The love of God leads us home.

Pastor: Christ blesses us that we might bless others.

People: The blessings of Christ heal our world.

Pastor: The Holy Spirit strengthens us for the journey.

People: The power of the Spirit sustains and supports us.

Pastor: The One who made heaven and earth meets us here.

OPENING HYMN NO. 16.....“The God of Abraham Praise”

CALL TO CONFESSION

CONFESSION OF SIN (Unison)

Maker of heaven and earth, when we face times of trial, lift our eyes to the hills to find our help. For you meet us in our need, and you lift us from the cares and toils that weaken our spirits and sap our strength. Call us this day as you called your followers of old, for we long experience your awesome power and respond with faithful hearts and willing spirits. Forgive us our sins, and bless us each day, that we might share the promise of your blessings with a world struggling to find its way. 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

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 Reber

Old Testament: Genesis 12:1-4a (Page 9)

Psalm: Psalm 121 (Read responsively)

Lector: I lift up my eyes to the hills— from where will my help come?

People: My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

Lector: He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.

People: He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

Lector: The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade at your right hand.

People: The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.

Lector: The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.

People: The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.

Epistle Lesson: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17 (Page 950)

Gospel Lesson: John 3:1-17 (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.”

SENIOR CHOIR ANTHEM.....“Sacrifice of Love”

Words and Music by Timothy Webb and Michael Popham; Arranged by Brian Russell

SERMON.....“Pass It On”

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

The congregation may remain seated.

Ushers will receive tithes and offerings at this time.

HYMN OF REFLECTION NO. 251.....“I Come to the Cross”

The congregation may stand.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Unison)The Apostles’ Creed

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth;
And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost; 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

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

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation:

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to God Most High.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

The Communion Prayer:

The Seraphic Hymn

*Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full, are full of the majesty of Thy glory, Hosanna,
Hosanna, hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna
in the highest!*

The congregation may be seated.

Words of Institution:

Prayer of Consecration:

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.

Breaking of the Bread:

Lifting of the Cup:

Call to the Supper:

The Sharing of the Elements:

Blessing of the Children:

The congregation may stand.

The Prayer of Thanksgiving (Unison):

Mighty God, we give you thanks for the gift of our Savior’s presence in the simplicity and splendor of this holy meal. Unite us with all who are fed, so that we may faithfully proclaim the good news of your love and be the Body of Christ in the world. Amen.

GOING WITH THE WORD

COMMISSION

Pastor: As we have been helped,

People: God sends us to help God’s world.

Pastor: As we have been restored,

People: Christ sends us to restore others with love.

Pastor: As we have received the Spirit,

People: the Spirit sends us to share our spirits with kindness and compassion for all.

BENEDICTION

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

CLOSING HYMN NO. 428.....“When Peace Like a River”

SILENT MEDITATION

Acolytes take the Light out into the world.

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 B. J. Beu from the 2026 Abingdon Worship Annuals edited by Mary J. Scifres and B. J. Beu.

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-The bulletins are in honor of Jeremiah Nagle’s Birthday (Feb. 24) and Abram Nagle’s Birthday (March 3) by grandparents, Tom and Lucinda Nagle.

-Offering on Sunday, February 22, 2025: \$1,448.00

-Weekly envelope & plate budget for 2026: \$3,368.52

-The March Communion Offering is designated to the Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry.

-Everyone is encouraged to stay for the Congregational Meeting TODAY following worship.

-Prayer Concern Privacy: As Christians, we fervently believe in the power of prayer — that's why we include prayer concerns in the weekly bulletin and lift folks up in prayer during worship! That said, the Consistory respectfully asks that before you add somebody to the prayer list or bring up their name during worship, please obtain that person's permission. We take medical privacy very seriously and make every effort to respect the wishes of individuals who do not want to be named publicly in a bulletin or live-streamed worship service. Thank you for your cooperation!

-Our Easter flower sale has begun. This year we are once again offering a variety of beautiful Easter flowers. (Prices: Easter Lily- \$15.50; Tulip- \$12.05; Daffodil- \$12.50) Order forms are available on the bulletin table. Orders and money may be given to Lori Moyer, Ardith Moyer or dropped/ mailed to the church office. Money is due at the time you place your order. **The final deadline for ordering is Sunday, March 15.**

-Anyone interested in learning more about our Sunday School program is welcome and invited to attend the **Board of Christian Education Meeting this Tuesday, March 3** at 7pm. Please speak to Laura Carll, any Sunday School teachers, Pastor Ken or the church office for more information.

-Join us this Wednesday, March 4 for our evening Lenten service which will be held at 7pm. Services will continue each week through March 25. The services are based on Adam Hamilton's Book, "Why Did Jesus Have to Die? The Meaning of the Crucifixion." Pastor Ken is also leading lessons from the book each Sunday during Lent, at 9:15am in the downstairs Generations Adult Class in room B1. Everyone is welcome to attend. Please speak to Pastor Ken if you have any questions.

-All kids are invited to join our Youth Group Escape Room this Saturday, March 7th from 4-7pm here at St. Paul's UCC. Solve puzzles as you race through the rooms to see who can finish first! Pizza will be provided. An **RSVP is appreciated by Sunday, March 1st** but is not required. We can't wait to see everyone here!

-Fellowship Time: Join us for conversation, along with a cup of coffee and light refreshments following our 10:30am worship service **next Sunday, March 8.** 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. We have been having a wonderful response to our monthly fellowship times! Donations of treats (cookies, brownies, cupcakes, muffins, etc.) are greatly appreciated.

-You still have the opportunity to sign up for the Reading Phillies game on Saturday, July 18 against the Altoona Curve (Pirates). First pitch is at 6:45pm. Picnic table seats will be in the '67 Club along the 3rd base side ground level. There will be an AYCE Buffet for 2.5 hours starting a half an hour prior to game time (BBQ Ribs & Chicken, BBQ sandwiches, Hot Dogs, Hamburgers, Cheeseburgers, Vegetable lasagna, Mac & Cheese, Baked Beans, Pasta and Potato Salad, Tossed Salad, Fruit, Cookies and Pepsi Products). There will be a "Mega Blast" Fireworks show immediately following the conclusion of the game. Tickets are \$43.00 per ticket. Children 4 years old and under are free of charge. **If interested, please sign-up by next Sunday, March 8** and up make checks out to St. Paul's UCC or provide cash and give to Kelly Palerino. Think Spring! Hope to see you there!

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

-The annual **Everybody's Birthday Party** will be held on **Friday, March 13** beginning at 6:00pm. It will be potluck style, and Sunday School will provide a cake to celebrate. Please join us for this time of fun and fellowship!

-On Sunday, March 15, 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 on the bulletin table prior to that Sunday.

-The Cabinet Meeting will be held following worship on Sunday, March 15. It will be led by Mike Fessler to discuss a focus and direction for church activities in 2026. All leaders and any church member interested in providing suggestions and input on this topic are encouraged to attend.

-The Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry is in great need and accepts all non-perishable food items and 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. **We will be helping on Monday, March 16 beginning at 8:30am and Friday, March 20 beginning at 12pm.** Please speak to Verna Ebling, Bill Reber or the church office.

-The Consistory will have the monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 17 at 7:00pm in the conference room.

-Your Help is Needed for the Outdoor Spring Clean-up! An outdoor grounds clean-up will be held on **Saturday, March 21** beginning at 8:00am. ALL HANDS ON DECK – Children would be great. Please bring gloves, rakes, shovels, wheelbarrows.

-There will be a Maundy Thursday Worship Service Seder Meal on April 2 at 6:00 pm. Although we will try to make room at the table for anyone who shows up, we ask that you please sign up to help us plan this special service. **Please add your name and how many are attending on the sign-up sheet by Sunday, March 22.** This special service is a modified version of the Jewish Passover Seder Meal, recalling the Last Supper that Jesus shared with his disciples before his betrayal, arrest, trial, and ultimately his crucifixion.

-There will be an egg hunt hosted by the Sunday School on Palm Sunday, March 29 that will take place during the normal 9:15am Sunday School hour. There will be goody bags after the egg hunt, so please make sure you get one from Amy Zimmerman. **There is a plastic egg donation sign-up sheet on the table by the bulletin basket.** PLASTIC EGGS ONLY- please no real eggs. They may be filled or not, and can be placed in downstairs room B-1 **by Sunday, March 22.**

-Prior to Saturday, March 28: Please remove any winter arrangements from the cemetery that you would like to keep. Thank you.

-The fifth Sunday Offering on Sunday, March 29 is designated to the Pastor's Emergency Relief Fund.

-St Paul's UCC will once again have a YARD SALE on Saturday, May 2 from 8am to 1pm. There will be indoor and outdoor spaces available for members of the church and their friends. Spaces will cost \$10 and can be paid to Trevor Smith or the church office. In addition, we will also be having a small concession stand and bake sale. **We are kindly asking for donations of food items and baked goods, as well as volunteers to help in the kitchen.** Sign-up sheets are located in the narthex for vendors as well as food donations/volunteers. Flyers will be available for advertisement. **The deadline to sign up will be Sunday, April 26th.**

-We are looking for youth to serve as acolytes on Sunday mornings during the worship services. If your child is interested in helping and would like to learn more, please speak to Laura Carll, Pastor Ken or the church office. Training will be provided.

-Following many natural disasters, **Clean-Up Buckets** provide those affected with the essentials to begin getting their lives back in order. The Schuylkill Association, working with the UCC Disaster Ministries, helps provide these kits through Church World Services anywhere they are needed, to include right here in Schuylkill County. Our Association currently has over sixty empty five-gallon buckets that need to be filled. **If you would like to help in this ministry**

by coordinating the filling of some of the buckets or can donate materials or money to buy the required materials, please contact the church office. Learn more at <https://cwskits.org/>.

-In an effort to keep our records up to date, please contact the church office if you have had a change to any of your information, including phone or cell phone numbers, email or home addresses, or any family updates.

-When you or a loved one is sick or in the hospital for an extended stay, do not assume that the pastor will know you are there. Please call or email the church office so that Pastor Ken can provide you with spiritual care!

-Prayer is Powerful! Please call or email the church office with your prayer concerns. We believe in the power of prayer and want to pray for you. **We have a prayer concerns email group AND also a prayer phone call chain for anyone interested.** Please contact the church office if you would like to be added to these lists.

PRAYER CONCERNS: All those earnestly seeking God's help in difficult times, Military personnel & National leaders, *Ernest Towne, family and friends of Florence Moyer*, Cathy Krause, John Borchick, Ronnie Mengel, Dave Heim, Shirley Williamson

CANCER PATIENTS: Al Basci, Joe Branca, Bill Dobrotsky, Alex DuVee, John Eckert, Glennis Eifert, Meg Goodwin, Laura Haupt Grapsy, Rebecca Henderson, Lisa Hoynoski, *Donna Jenan*, Sherri Jo Jennar, Deb Kemmerling, Clara Kramer, Joan Krause, Lori Krug, Mary Anne Maccarone, Carol Mallory, Nicole McFarland-Bish, Tara Moss, Judy Ohl, Dana Osborne, Nick Reading, Pat Reading, John Redman, Amy Reed, Noah Richardson, Jen Semenco, Jim Thompson

FOR THE WEEK OF SUNDAY, MARCH 1

Sunday, March 1 -Second Sunday in Lent

-Congregational Meeting following worship

4:00 PM -Cub Scout Meeting

Tuesday, March 3

7:00 PM -Board of Christian Education Meeting

Wednesday, March 4

7:00 PM -Wednesday Lenten Worship Service

-Senior Choir Rehearsal following worship

Saturday, March 7

4:00 – 7:00 PM -Youth Event Escape Room

Sunday, March 8 -Third Sunday in Lent -Daylight Saving Time Begins -Deadline for Baseball game

9:15 AM -Sunday School

10:30 AM -Worship with the Celebration of Baptismal Anniversaries

-Fellowship time following worship

3:00 PM -Cub Scout Banquet

***Lectionary Readings for next week:**

Exodus 17:1-7

Psalm 95

Romans 5:1-11

John 4:5-42