

**ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**Sunday, March 15, 2026**



FOURTH 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)

**Fourth Sunday in Lent  
One Great Hour of Sharing Offering**

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 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.

LENTEN CANDLES

Focus: The Shadow of Betrayal: The rejection of Jesus by those closest to Him.  
Scripture: “Even my close friend, someone I trusted, one who shared my bread, has turned against me.”  
(Psalm 41:9)

Pastor: It was not just the strangers who turned away; it was the kiss of a friend and the flight of disciples that added to the gathering gloom.

**People: We confess the times we have denied you in our actions and betrayed you with our hearts.**

Pastor: As we extinguish this fourth light, we feel the coldness of abandonment and the deepening shadows of the journey toward the cross.

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

RESPONSIVE HYMN NO. 354.....“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: Come into the light of God.  
**People: Christ’s brightness will guide our way.**  
Pastor: Come into the wisdom of God.  
**People: The Spirit’s insight will reveal new truths.**  
Pastor: Come into the praise of God,  
**People: Worship opens new doors in our hearts. Amen.**

OPENING HYMN NO. 440.....“Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us”

CALL TO CONFESSION

CONFESSION OF SIN (Unison)

**Christ our Healer, we want to see and be seen fully. We long to heal and be healed fully. We yearn to love and be loved fully. Yet, these desires seem beyond our reach when our minds are set on earthly things. Forgive us and set our minds instead on you. Help us perceive the possibilities of fullness, of shalom, of your realm on this earth. Then guide us to help live into the reality you show us. 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: Surely goodness and faithful love follow us all the days of our lives.

**People: For these gifts are already ours through the grace and the power of Christ Jesus.**

Pastor: God forgives us for our failings, upholds us in love, and leads us to the place that Christ has prepared for us. 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 Rubinkam

Old Testament: 1 Samuel 16:1-13 (Page 248)

Epistle: Ephesians 5:8-14 (Page 1019)

Gospel: John 9:1-41 (Page 932)

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.....“Holy Place” -Written by Keith Wilkerson and Arranged by Hal Wright”

SERMON.....“Corrective Lenses Required”

**RESPONDING TO THE WORD**

*The congregation may remain seated.*

*Ushers will receive tithes and offerings at this time.*

HYMN OF REFLECTION NO. 480.....“Open My Eyes, That I May See”

*The congregation may stand.*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH.....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: As Christ's light has led us here,

**People: so now Christ's light leads us into the world.**

Pastor: Go with the light, go to be light.

**People: We will brighten the world with God's love.**

BENEDICTION

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

CLOSING HYMN NO. 258....."At the Cross"

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 Mary Scifres from the 2025 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 8, 2025: \$2,121.00

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

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

**-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 on the bulletin table.

**-The Cabinet Meeting will be held following worship TODAY.** 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.

**-TODAY is the deadline for the Easter flower sale.** Orders and money may be given to Lori Moyer, Ardith Moyer or dropped in the church office. Money is due at the time you place your order.

**-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 tomorrow beginning at 8:30am and this Friday, March 20 beginning at 12pm.** Please speak to Verna Ebling, Bill Reber or the church office.

**-The Consistory will meet this Tuesday, March 17** at 7:00pm in the conference room.

**-Join us this Wednesday, March 18 for our evening Lenten service beginning at 7pm.** The service is based on Adam Hamilton's Book, "Why Did Jesus Have to Die? The Meaning of the Crucifixion."

**-Your help is needed for the Outdoor Spring Clean-up this Saturday, March 21** beginning at 8:00am. Please bring gloves, rakes, shovels, wheelbarrows.

**-There will be an egg hunt hosted by the Sunday School on Palm Sunday, March 29.** Children should arrive at 9:15 for a short lesson with their Sunday School class. All classes will participate in the egg hunt together following their lesson. 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. PLASTIC EGGS ONLY-** please no real eggs. They may be filled or not, and can be placed in downstairs room B-1 **by next Sunday, March 22.**

**-All are welcome to an Egg Hunt at St. Paul's Lutheran Church on Sunday, March 29 beginning at 2pm.**

**-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 next 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.

**-A Good Friday Tenebrae Service will be held on April 3 at 7:00pm.**

**-Easter Sunday, April 5:** 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. Please sign up for the Easter breakfast to help in planning.

**-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.**

**-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!

**-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, Keith McKeivitt, Nancy VanDeest, Ernest Towne, Cathy Krause, John Borchick, Ronnie Mengel, Dave Heim, Shirley Williamson

**CANCER PATIENTS:** Al Basci, Joe Branca, Bill Dobrolsky, 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 15**

**Sunday, March 15 -Easter flower order deadline -One Great Hour of Sharing Offering**

-Cabinet Meeting following worship

#### **Monday, March 16**

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

#### **Tuesday, March 17 -St. Patrick's Day**

4:30 PM -Scout Sub Pick-up

7:00 PM -Consistory Meeting

#### **Wednesday, March 18**

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

#### **Friday, March 20 -First Day of Spring**

12:00 PM - Help at the Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry

#### **Saturday, March 21**

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

1:00 – 4:00 PM -Church in use for Eagle Scout Ceremony

#### **Sunday, March 22 -Deadline for Seder Meal -Deadline for plastic egg donations**

9:15 AM -Sunday School

10:30 AM -Worship

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

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Psalm 130

Romans 8:6-11

John 11:1-45