

## Pastor Ray's Corner



Way back, before it was my JOB (ok, ok, my “calling”) to be at church on Sunday mornings, there were times when I felt like skipping church. Maybe to sleep in, or run some errands, or just take it easy for the day. And I admit that sometimes I gave into those temptations.

But on the days that I struggled and finally DID get myself to church, I discovered that there was a REASON I needed to be in church that day. Something the pastor said, or something in one of the hymns, or maybe something in a conversation with a fellow church member after worship – it would be just the thing I needed to hear, to help me with whatever was going on in my life at that moment. In other words, a personal Word of God was waiting for me at church on those days.

(I don't think much about the devil, but sometimes I wonder if the devil wasn't the one trying to keep me from going to church on those particular days, because he already knew God had something important to say to me that day.)

Even now, when there are times that part of me wants to skip out on a meeting or other church gathering, I find that by GOING, I get fed. (Yes, even a committee meeting can carry a Word from God.) Especially when some problem is bothering me and I would rather be left alone, I find that by being WITH other Christians, I feel better, and my problem doesn't seem so insurmountable after all.

So what about those Sundays, way back, when I sometimes yielded to temptation and skipped church? Dunno, and never will. If God had a Word for me that day, I missed it, because I wasn't there to hear it.

I know it's summertime, and this is the season par excellence to chill, to travel, to relax from otherwise rigorous schedules. But God is still speaking whenever and wherever we gather as followers of Jesus. So unless you're away traveling, please come on by on Sunday morning. There's a good chance God has a Word just for you, but you'll never know if you're not there to hear it.

See you in church.

Peace and Blessings,

Pastor Ray



## Upcoming St. Paul's and Wider Church Activities

### Worship – Sundays, 8:45am

- Large-print bulletins available
- Busy Bags available in side room for children
- **Sunday School for Children** – on summer break
- **Youth Classes** – on summer break
- **Choir Rehearsal** – on summer break
- **Handbell Rehearsal** – on summer break
- **August 6, 10am - Outdoor Galilean Service with communion, Spring Glen**
- **August 8, 9am - Prayer Chain**
- **August 8, 7:30pm – Consistory**
- **August 27, 5pm – Northern Cluster Hymnsing, St. Peter's UCC, Lykens**



### Acolyte Assignments:

- Aug 6 Chase Coleman
- Aug 13 Jimmy Dietrich
- Aug 20 Carson Ellinger
- Aug 27 Lauren Deibert

### Combined-Church Galilean Service AND PICNIC Coming in August

A “Galilean” worship service is held along a shoreline, with the message being delivered from a boat to the people seated along the shoreline. We will gather, together with folks from Salem UCC, for our annual Galilean worship service, *with communion*, on **August 6, 10am**, at the pond on Robert Koppenhaver’s property along Route 25 in Spring Glen.

We will have a picnic afterwards in their spacious garage. Please sign up at church to bring meat, soda, etc., plus a covered dish, salad, or dessert to share. So bring your lawn chair, dress casually, and enjoy worship and fellowship in a beautiful outdoor setting. (Rain location – Koppenhavers’ garage.)



### Northern Cluster Hymnsing

Do you have a favorite hymn, or two, or three? Then come join us for the annual Northern Cluster Hymn Sing! This will be held on Sunday, August 27, at 5pm, at St. Peter’s UCC (Crossroads). Bring your voice, and a dessert to share (fresh fruit, baked goods, homemade ice cream, etc.). Rain or shine! *And – St. Paul’s handbells will be playing!*

### Aging Joyfully Program at St. Paul’s

Join us on Tuesday, August 29, 11:30am-1pm, for a fun program presented by Debbie Herb of Diakon. Learn some helpful hints and fun tidbits about aging with joy, as we enjoy a lunch at church (downstairs). The program is free, but donations are welcome. To register, please contact Debbie Herb at 570-624-3016 no later than August 15.

### All-Church Night at Valley View Park - Saturday, August 12

This year’s All-Church Night will begin at 5:30pm on Saturday, August 12, with a potluck meal. People are asked to provide entrees and side dishes (but not desserts). The park will provide refreshments (keg root beer) and desserts (ice cream). The Christian musical group Recreation will begin their program at 7pm.



*If anyone asks you why you do kind acts, tell them, “I am a disciple of Jesus. I am serving him by serving you, because that is what he came to do.”*

## Confirmation Class This Fall

For young people in 7<sup>th</sup> grade or older, we will be forming a combined-church Confirmation Class this fall. Please contact Pastor Ray as soon as possible to let him know if your child/grandchild will be joining this class. Based on response, we will then schedule a planning meeting and classes.

## Special Music for This Summer

**August 6** – Galilean Service    **August 13** – Larry Hornberger    **August 20** - Naomi Straub    **August 27** – hymnsing

## Mission Project: CWS Hygiene Kits – WE DID IT!

For a few months now, we have been collecting items for CWS (Church World Service) to make Hygiene Kits to aid people in disaster situations. And you came through! We reached our goal of 25 kits – thank you!



## Combined-Church Dine-Out Night – September 16, 5pm

This year our combined-church dine-out night will again be held at The Red Lion Café & Restaurant, 697 Deturksville Road, Pine Grove. Please sign up at church **by September 10**, so we can give them an accurate headcount. We will meet at the restaurant at 5pm (or if you need a ride, please let Doris Shade know, and we can arrange for carpooling). Please plan to join us for a relaxing time of church fellowship, and good food.



## Upcoming Blood Drive

The American Red Cross is sponsoring a blood drive on Tuesday, August 8, 2017, from 2-7pm, at St. Andrew's United Methodist Church, Valley View. Please donate, and give the gift of life.

## Special Music in July



On July 16, Doug Koch shared his musical gifts with us during worship.

On July 23, we were blessed by the music of Heather Clevenger.



## The Power of Hymns

There is a reason God's people have *sung* the poetry of our faith ever since faith began—the beautiful reality of shared truth, conviction, and hope. There is a tangible bond when people of faith speak to one another in psalms, hymns, and songs of the Spirit—a reality that we truly are surrounded by the promised great cloud of witnesses (who are probably singing with us); that the music we make even within the limitation of our little human experience is somehow hardwired into the “music of the spheres.”

Such is the power of hymns – the spiritual meat of the sung Christian Tradition. Such is the potential for true Christian fellowship when the hymns inspire us to be authentic with one another, and vulnerable to one another in our shared journey of faith. There's a lesson here. The authenticity that is returning to the worship and witness of many living congregations who are rediscovering the power of hymns can't come fast enough. Watching younger followers of Jesus eagerly engage with biblical and theological realities that shaped and strengthened their ancestors is both thrilling and heartwarming.

(Article adapted from <https://www.reformedworship.org/blog/power-hymns>)

## Reminder: Food Collection Program!

There is a collection container in the side room for donations of non-perishable food items and paper products. These items are given to St. John's UMC Emergency Food Closet, Hegins. For the past thirty plus years, St. John's has been helping families in the Tri-Valley area with emergency food needs. Monetary donations will also be accepted in the form of a check made out to St. John's Emergency Food Closet. **Shopping list: pasta/noodles, spaghetti sauce, peanut butter, jelly, canned soups, paper towels, napkins, pancake mix, anything non-perishable.** For more information, or if you are in need of emergency food, please call the St. John's Food Closet at 570-682-9036 or 570-682-9187. Since we began our year-round collection in September 2013, we have collected 2335 items. **MONETARY DONATIONS to the Food Closet are also needed.**

## Donations for Upper Dauphin Human Services

We have an ongoing collection for the Upper Dauphin Human Services Clothing Closet: gently-worn/nearly new clothing for babies, children, and teen-agers. Please leave your donations in the collection box at church. BTW, this facility has relocated to 517 Main Street (Route 209), Lykens.



### Wheelchair Available at Church

St. Paul's has a wheelchair located in the side room at church. This is available for use during worship, as well as short-term loan, e.g. if someone needs a wheelchair at home while healing from surgery, to get to doctor appointments, etc. You are welcome to borrow the wheelchair – but please use the sign-out sheet (on a clipboard), so we can keep track of it. Thanks.

## Local Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) Meetings

- **Millersburg:** Trinity United Church of Christ, 235 Center Street, Millersburg, 7pm on Tuesday evenings: go around back of the church - through double-glass doors, down the steps to pastor's study
- **Lykens:** Our Lady of Help Catholic Church, 732 Main Street, Lykens, 7pm on Thursday and Sunday evenings: go up the outside set of black metal steps (like a fire escape) to second floor. For more information about A.A., contact Tom Moulfair 717-648-3656.





## Memorial Fund Treasurer Update

After serving as the treasurer of our memorial funds for many years, Tim Klinger is stepping down from this position. We thank him for his service, and we are now looking for a new volunteer to fill this important position. To learn what is involved, please contact the Consistory or Pastor Ray.

### Memorial Fund Report - 7/18/17

Raymond & Virginia Latsha (Interest & Dividends)	-0-
Ray & Carrie Bowman 1692.00 CD (Altar)	465.56 int
Sam & Lillian Starr 1200.00 CD	35.04 int
John Gilbert (Des for Flags at Shank Gilbert Grave)	630.00
Dorothy Dietrich	83.93
Darlene Stiely	50.00
Victoria Lettich	402.75
Charlie Smith Sr	100.00
Hilda Gilbert	300.00
Warren & Bernice Heim	1715.00
George Dietrich	175.00
Bill Bowman	280.00
Ronald Mayer	60.00
June Heim	195.00
D. Feree	40.00
Shirley Rissinger	648.00
Dolly Troutman	175.00
Checking Now Account Interest	69.08
Totals of all individual funds	5424.36

**Checking Account Balance 5424.36**

#### Expenses 2017

4/12/17 Transfer to General Account	9000.00
8672.75 from Latsha account	
327.25 from Victoria Lettich	

## 2017 Giving – January through June

The chart below shows contributions for the first two quarters of 2017. By way of explanation, as of 6/30/2017, 69 members/giving units gave ZERO dollars total for the year so far; 20 members/giving units gave a total of \$1-25. We can do better. We *need* to do better. Please help us out here.

2017 Offerings (Through June)		2017 Offerings (Through June)	
Dollar Amount Given	# of People Giving This Amount	Dollar Amount Given	# of People Giving This Amount
\$0	69	\$351-400	1
\$1-25	20	\$401-450	5
\$26-50	14	\$451-500	1
\$51-75	3	\$501-550	1
\$76-100	6	\$551-600	1
\$101-125	2	\$601-650	0
\$126-150	5	\$651-750	0
\$151-200	2	\$751-1000	5
\$201-250	6	\$1001-2000	4
\$251-300	3	\$2001-3000	1
\$301-350	3		

Average attendance for July was 25

and average envelope giving for July was \$783.20.



### Summer Vacation Reminder

As you travel this summer, don't forget the church! Find a place to worship, wherever you go; but remember that we still need your weekly offerings **here** to help pay the bills.

### Thrivent Investment Opportunity for Our Church

Thrivent Financial, a national investment company, provides a unique charitable grant opportunity for its investors, called Thrivent Choice Dollars. Our church is now registered with Thrivent as a potential recipient for these contributions. If you are a member of Thrivent and wish to have your Choice Dollars directed to our church, please contact your Thrivent representative, or go to [Thrivent.com/thriventchoice](http://Thrivent.com/thriventchoice).

## GENERAL SYNOD REPORTS AND REFLECTIONS

### **There is a river whose streams make glad the City of God. - Psalm 46:4**

#### ***Report from Kay Boyer, Delegate, Penn Central Conference:***

"Come to the River . . . Come to the River . . ." (c'mon, sing along with me), come to the river where 3,000 persons gathered. Young, old, brown, black and white skin, on scooters, using canes, jumping for joy, we all gathered at the river, or in this case, Baltimore's Inner Harbor, for the meeting of the 31st General Synod of the United Church of Christ. Some came to move forward issues of justice, others came to enjoy the colorful, energizing worship services; and still others were moved by the Holy Spirit to assemble as one. As we gathered at the river from all corners of the country, we were going to be immersed in the waters and become a community restored to act in love.

Along with the stirring word from the Rev. Traci Blackmon in the opening worship service, we shared in a service of baptism. This service probably looked a little different than the one we are accustomed to in our churches! Each person was given a small piece of sponge, gently soaked in water. At the appropriate time in the service, we were asked to "play" with the idea of baptizing those seated near us. It was an activity enjoyed by the entire convention hall as laughter prevailed and the bonding of new friendships had begun.

Over next two days the delegates met in discussion with small groups to discern a resolution that was assigned to them. We had energizing worship sprinkled in; and time to walk to the Harbor to take in the sights and sounds. An exhibit hall was situated aside of the main hall and there you could find information on many UCC related organizations as well as vendors selling fair trade items, Synod t-shirts, and even crab mallets!

On Sunday we welcomed over 120 persons from PCC who made their way to Baltimore to share in the afternoon worship service. The United Church of Christ is excited about the new vision and the speakers sharing the stage gave us some insight into the meaning they wished to convey in three great loves . . . Love of Neighbor, Love of Children and Love of Creation. See below to learn more!

On Day 4, our delegation crawled out of our pillow-top beds to join together in a breakfast caucus . . . at 7 a.m.! A long day awaited as a majority of the resolutions were brought to the floor to be discussed and amended and to ensure that there is a just world for all. Once the gavel hit the wood and business convened for the day, we shared in worship where the dancers, singers, liturgists and speaker shared the story of Namaan and how he was encouraged to get in the Jordan River to cure his leprosy. (2 Kings)

The dynamic, inspirational speakers invited us to think of the wider church and asked us to make "space" not "room" in our churches for the under-represented; we are to dismantle the balconies as we work for justice for all. And, as Rev. Dr. David Vasquez-Levy urged us to "get in the water, Namaan!" we, too, need to get off the safe shores and jump into the water to do God's work. There is much work waiting for us to get done, and it just takes a small pebble to start the ripple . . .

#### ***Report from Our Conference Moderator, Dr. Craig Ellis:***

Nearly 3000 delegates and visitors from across the nation met June 30 - July 4, 2017 for the 31st General Synod of the United Church of Christ in Baltimore, Maryland's Convention Center. This was located right between Baltimore's Inner Harbor and Orioles' Camden Yards. Synod is convened every two years at different cities across the United States and this was a perfect venue. It was great to have it near Penn Central Conference as many Penn Central folk traveled to Baltimore for the public Sunday service and on other days to visit. The theme of the Synod was MAKE GLAD based on Psalm 46:4, "There is a river whose streams MAKE GLAD the city of God" and all those attending did just that-- MAKE GLAD!

We did that with inspiring worship services and presentations led by such luminaries as author Glennon Doyle, The Rev. Traci Blackman, newly elected Executive Minister of Justice and Witness ministries, and Rev. Dr. John C. Dorhauer, General Minister of the United Church of Christ. We did it with workshops, hearings, plenary sessions for business and voting, perusing exhibits in the exhibit hall and connecting with many new and longtime friends and participants attending Synod.

We prayed, sang, studied, voted, deliberated, debated, celebrated, danced, spoke our truth, acted upon and reacted to proposed resolutions and pronouncements from all over the United Church of Christ with such varied topics as:

- New Endowments to strengthen future ministries
- Endorsing raising the minimum wage
- Gun violence
- The Environments
- Children living under military occupation
- Corporal punishment of Children
- Immigrants
- Persons with disabilities
- and Bylaws changes to name a few

A full reporting of all the actions of the General Synod will be available UCC.org under the Synod section. Ask any Synod Delegate about their experience or invite them to report at your church or consistory meetings. They will be glad to share. Also, be sure and thank them for all their work in preparation and participation the Synod process as we again had a very hardworking and dedicated delegation representing Penn Central Conference at Synod 31.

As moderator, I had the opportunity to meet with other moderators representing various conferences across the nation. Many were reporting diminishing staff and considering cooperative models and merging of resources in a survival mode mentality. We can be extremely proud of recent initiatives of the Penn Central Conference indicative of a thriving mode for "Together we are doing great things." Thank you for the opportunity to represent the Penn Central Conference at General Synod 31.

**WE ARE THE  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**PURPOSE**  
To love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves. (Mt. 22)

**VISION**  
United in Christ's love, a just world for all.

**MISSION**  
United in Spirit and inspired by God's grace, we welcome all, love all, and seek justice for all.



**GREAT LOVES**  
a just world for all

**LOVE OF NEIGHBOR**

**LOVE OF CHILDREN**

**LOVE OF CREATION**

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST** has a vision of a just world for all. The 3 Great Loves is the denomination's opportunity to express how our Love of Neighbor, Love of Children, and Love of Creation work together to address the inequities in our current world.

**O**VER THE COURSE of the next two years, through the lens of the 3 Great Loves, the United Church of Christ will tell the story of how we are impacting and transforming the world, united in common purpose and mission.

*Our expression of love is and will be our living testimony.*

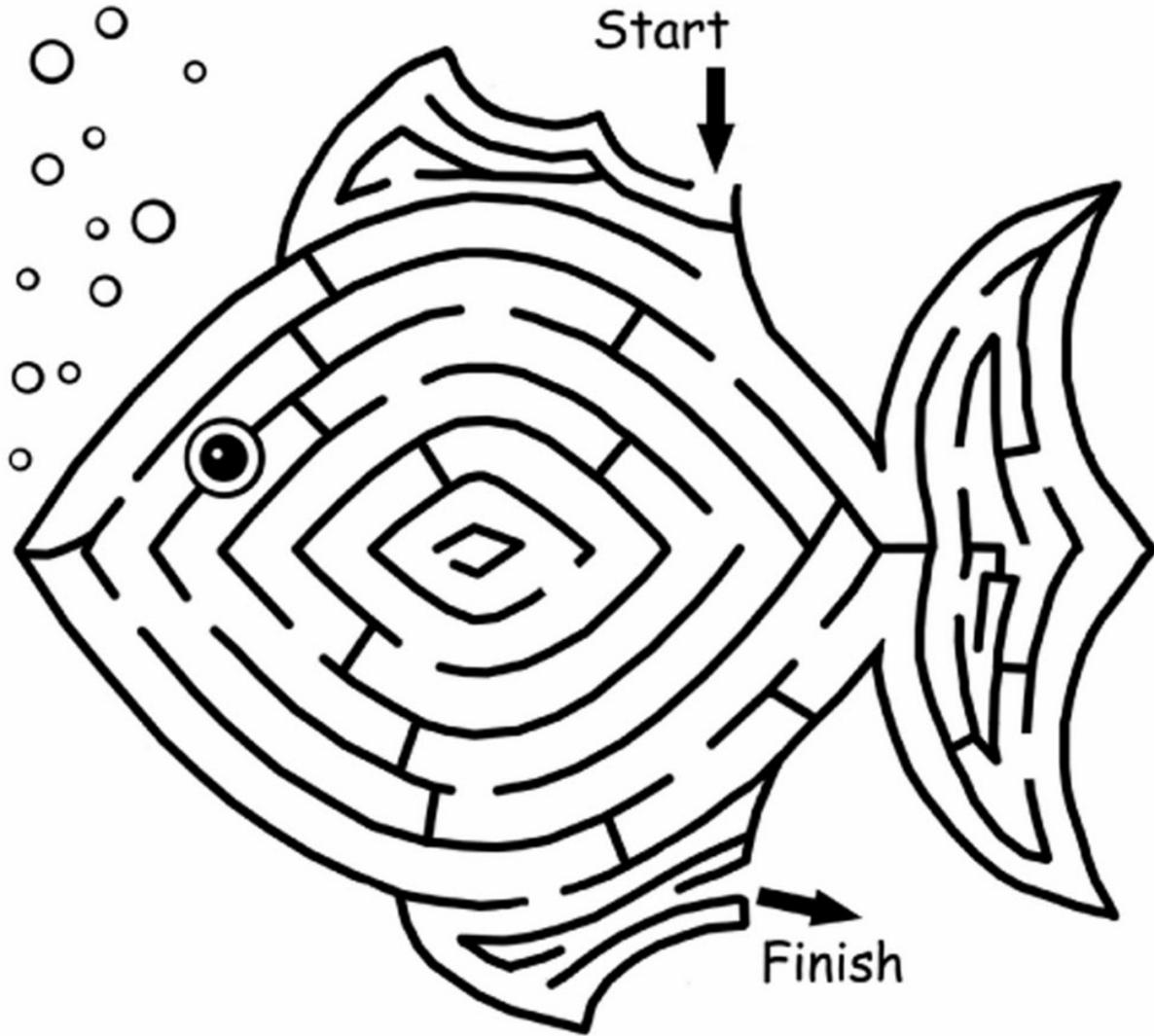




**D**URING THESE UPCOMING two years, there will be moments of special invitation to participate in this denomination-wide undertaking. One by one we will focus on each of the 3 Great Loves in service to our communities.

**O**UR EXPRESSION OF LOVE is and will be our living testimony.

**I like to follow Jesus!**



**From now on, you will fish for people.  
Luke 5:10b**

If you love your *kids*, bring them to church.  
If you love your *church*, bring your kids.

# THOSE WHO SERVE IN AUGUST

**Altar Committee:** Amy Ney                      **Ushers:** Robert Koppenhaver & Ann Strohecker  
**Newsletter Sponsor:** Doris Shade            **Greeters:** Kim Carpenter & Alex Peay  
**Financial Assistants:** Ann Strohecker

*A clipboard with sign-up sheets is located on the table in the side room. Please volunteer your time to be a greeter, usher, financial assistant, altar committee or a newsletter sponsor. Your help is greatly appreciated every week. **There are a lot of empty spaces.***



Cindy Maurer	All the churches in our area	Mary Rothermel	Brett Stehr
*Family of Dolly Troutman	Victims of mass-shootings	Brooke Ellinger	Ferne Dietrich
Upper Cheyenne UCC	Migrants and Refugees	*Ashley Rothermel	Jennifer Miller
Gail Hamilton	Our Military and Police Officers	Jessica Capelli	Margie Ludwig
Mike Wolfgang	Florence Woll	The people of the Middle East	Robert Jones
Paul Clark	Cancer patients	All caregivers	*Tom Leitzel
Alzheimer's patients	Racial & justice issues in the U.S.	*Bruce Koppenhaver	*Mary Witmer

\* Indicates a new addition. Names will be on the list for one month. If you wish to continue to have a name on the prayer list please contact Ruth Koppenhaver at 570-682-3617 or to add someone to the prayer list. **Please remember to notify Pastor Ray if someone is ill or needs a pastoral visit.**

# Flower Calendar



**DON'T FORGET TO SIGN UP FOR ALTAR FLOWERS ON OUR FLOWER CHART, POSTED IN THE SIDE ROOM.**

8/06/17      \*\*\*\*\*Open Date\*\*\*\*\*  
 8/13/17      \*\*\*\*\*Open Date\*\*\*\*\*  
 8/20/17      \*\*\*\*\*Open Date\*\*\*\*\*  
 8/27/17      \*\*\*\*\*Open Date\*\*\*\*\*

*The flower chart for 2017 is in the side room. Please help make our altar beautiful each Sunday. Flowers can be given in honor of someone's birthday, anniversary or in memory of a loved one.*

*(Fresh flowers may be ordered from: Dee's Flowers, 22 East Main Street, Tremont 570-695-2269.)*



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY



8/2	Nathan Brandenberger	8/2	Donna Strohecker	8/2	Dara Miller
8/3	Brec Koppenhaver	8/4	Conner Ney	8/5	Kim Harner
8/5	Janet Smith	8/6	Austin Koppenhaver	8/13	Gatlin Aaron Roadcap
8/14	Brenda Hoffman	8/14	Kera Spickler	8/15	Roy Harner
8/18	Steve Mattern	8/21	Michael Wolfgang	8/22	Steve Harner
8/22	Jonene Adams	8/26	Brooke Boud	8/26	Diana Stiely
8/28	Levi Rissinger	8/30	Pat Miller	8/31	Beth Coleman

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

8/6	Mr. & Mrs. Claus Wiest	8/13	Mr. & Mrs. Larry Klinger	8/14	Mr. & Mrs. Carl Klinger
8/16	Mr. & Mrs. Brandon Fettero	8/17	Mr. & Mrs. Roy Harner	8/18	Mr. & Mrs. Chris Jury
8/22	Mr. & Mrs. Erik Loeb	8/29	Mr. & Mrs. Brock Klinger		

### Staying in Touch With Our Shut-Ins

Some of our older sisters and brothers in Christ are homebound, or now reside in assisted living or convalescent homes. But we can STILL be in touch with them, and they would LOVE to hear from us. A list of our shut-ins is posted in the side room at church, including names and addresses. Please Check it out, and send out some cards. You will be bringing warmth and hope to some old friends. ***And if you know someone we should add to the list, please let us know.***



### Pastor Ray's regular daytime work schedule at the library:

Mondays: 12:45-8:15pm      Thursdays: 4:15-8:15pm  
Fridays: 9:45am-5:15pm      And some Saturdays: 9:45am-2:15pm

### Red Prayer Bowl at St. Paul's



Remember that you can always place your written prayer requests in our red prayer bowl, located in the side room. Our Prayer Chain meets monthly to review and pray over all requests. And if YOU feel called to join this prayer ministry – perhaps you have

the spiritual gift of intercessory prayer – then please let Ruth Koppenhaver or Pastor Ray know, and we will be sure to include you at the monthly

prayer gatherings. Note: when the group meets and prays over requests, they are added to our newsletter's prayer list, and are removed from the prayer bowl. **Any Military Personnel to Pray For?** *Do you have family or friends serving in the military? Our Prayer Chain members want to keep them in prayer – please let us know.*

**National Suicide  
Prevention Hotline:**  
1-800-273-TALK  
(1-800-273-8255)



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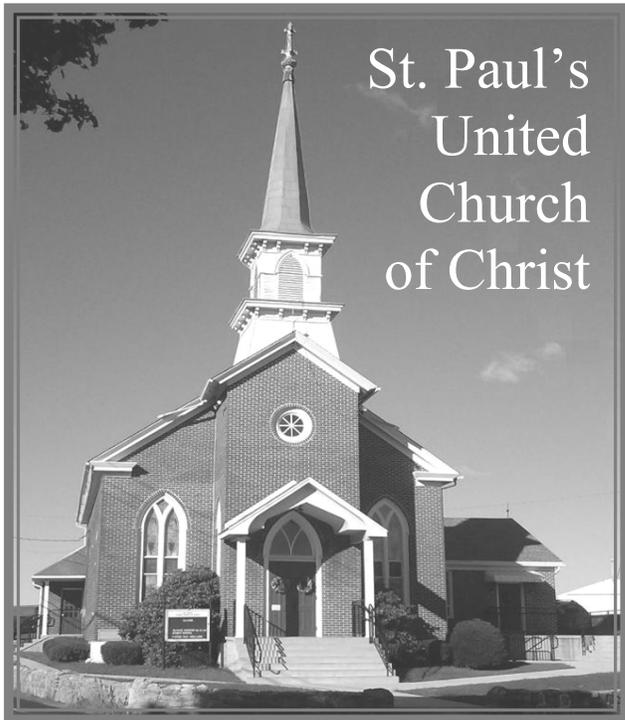
**BULLETIN & NEWSLETTER DEADLINES** – the deadline for information for the church bulletin is TUESDAY and the deadline for the newsletter is the 20<sup>th</sup> OF THE MONTH. You can contact Pat Miller at 570-682-3720 with your information.

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**ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**2300 EAST MAIN STREET**  
**SACRAMENTO, PENNSYLVANIA 17968**

*RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED*

## **AUGUST 2017 NEWSLETTER**



**PASTOR**

Pastor Ray Holland 570-452-0050  
Email: rayholland03@gmail.com or  
stpaulsucc.sacramento@gmail.com

**ORGANIST/PIANIST**

Amy Ney

**CHURCH SECRETARY**

Pat Miller

**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE**

Sandy Deibert

**WORSHIP SERVICE & SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Sundays, 8:45am