

## Pastor Ray's Corner

The Fourth of July, Independence Day – a day to remember and celebrate our decision as a fledgling group of colonies to declare our independence and separation from Mother England. As Americans, we have always treasured our freedoms, defending them at home and abroad whenever our freedoms were threatened. But what we sometimes forget – as individuals and as a nation – is that freedom FROM something also means responsibility TOWARD something. For the thirteen original colonies, that meant working TOWARD creating a new nation, being responsible FOR providing better and just treatment for citizens and businesses.

As a freedom-loving nation, we Americans sometimes celebrate and defend our freedoms, but without recognizing the responsibilities that come with those freedoms. We say we don't want anyone telling us what to do, and yet to function as a society and as a nation, we must have rules and guidelines that everyone can agree on and follow. We can't simply be free to run amuck – that creates nothing but chaos.

In similar fashion, as Christians we celebrate our “freedom in Christ,” something that St. Paul went to great (and sometimes confusing) lengths to explain. The early churches got into so many disagreements about what they could or couldn't do, partly because they had to make up new rules for themselves, and couldn't agree on what those rules should be. They argued about what to eat, how to dress, who could talk during worship, how to treat other Christians, how to relate to their pagan neighbors, etc. On one extreme were those who thought that “freedom in Christ” meant they could do anything (yes, ANYTHING), and God would be ok with that. On the other extreme were people who stood by the rules and condemned anyone who broke them.

Paul had to navigate between these two extremes in his letters to the various churches. Generally, his conclusion was that, in principle, we could let our conscience be our guide; but if our conscience-based decisions confused or “weakened” fellow Christians, then we should refrain from using the fullness of our freedom. In his first letter to the Corinthians (a VERY conflicted church), he says it well: “‘All things are lawful,’ but not all things are beneficial. ‘All things are lawful,’ but not all things build up.’” In other words, something may be entirely permissible, but it might not be the best thing to do.

For Paul, the ultimate issue was not about freedom or restriction; it was glorifying God. In other words, stop arguing about whether you can or can't do such-and-such. Instead, ask yourself which choice will do a better job of glorifying God by building up the members of the church.

As Christians who are also Americans living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we need to thank God constantly for the freedoms we have – both the freedoms our nation grants us, and the freedoms that Christ grants us. In both cases – nation and church – we need to guard our freedoms, but we also need to use those freedoms wisely. Ask yourself – which decisions I make will build up our country? And also ask yourself, which decisions I make will build up our church and its members? Once you can answer these questions, then go ahead and use your freedoms . . . to make wise and caring choices for the benefit of all. Amen.

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
- **July 2 – Communion**
- **July 11, 9am – Prayer Chain**
- **NO CONSISTORY MEETING IN JULY**

### Father's Day Thank-You's

Many thanks to the Worship Committee for providing yummy chocolate for all the dads on Father's Day. And thanks to Amy Ney for the special Father's Day Children's Message!



### Acolyte Assignments:

July 2	Lauren Deibert
July 9	Makayla Gilbert
July 16	Rylee Coleman
July 23	volunteer needed
July 30	Broc Dreisbach



### 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, 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!



### 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.

*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."*

## **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.



## New Bible Study Began in June

Written by Ann Spangler & Jean Syswerda, Women of the Bible includes 52 women of both the Old and New Testaments, from Eve and Sarah, to Mary the mother of Jesus, to Priscilla. Our Bible Study group generally meets at Doris Shade's house on Sunday afternoons at 3pm. It's not too late to join us!

# **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.***

## **Mission Project: CWS Hygiene Kits – GOAL IS 25 KITS!**

We are still collecting items for CWS (Church World Service) to make Hygiene Kits.

We have 10 kits so far; **our goal is 25 kits by the end of July.** Below is what is needed for each kit. Let's see how many kits we can get together to help CWS and others in need!



- One hand towel measuring approximately 15" x 28" to 16" x 32" (no fingertip, bath, dish towel or micro-fiber)
  - One washcloth
  - One wide-tooth comb removed from the package\*
  - One fingernail or toenail clipper removed from the package (either one is acceptable)
  - One bath-size bar of soap in the original package
  - One toothbrush in the package
  - Ten standard size Band-Aids

\*Affordable wide tooth combs can be found at discount suppliers such as sallybeauty.com. (Search for wide-tooth pastel combs to see an example of combs that meet the kit's requirements.)

All items need to fit inside a one-gallon plastic Ziploc-type bag. Remove the excess air from the bag and seal before boxing. Do NOT add any extra items or toothpaste. A tube of extended expiration date toothpaste will be added to each hygiene kit just prior to its journey. Value: \$15.00 Processing fee: \$2.00 per kit

## Rosebud on the Altar



On June 18, a rosebud was placed on the altar in honor of Olivia Rose Engle, born to Dara Miller and Matt Engle on June 14, 2017, in Lewisburg, weighing in at 8 lbs 1 oz, and measuring 19 inches. We wish the entire family much health and happiness.

## Rosebud Ministry at St. Paul's

A newborn of a member of St. Paul's has often been recognized with a red rose placed on our altar. We would like to continue this ministry, making our best effort not to miss anyone. Please notify Amy Ney by phone or email if you know of a birth to any of our members. Phone: 570-682-8612, or email: [russamyney@netscape.net](mailto:russamyney@netscape.net).

## **Special Music for This Summer?**

Would YOU like to volunteer to sing or play music one Sunday this summer, while our choir enjoys vacation? Or do you know someone who would be willing to share their musical gifts with us on a Sunday morning? Please let Amy Ney or Pastor Ray know as soon as possible, so we can schedule everyone. So far, we have:

July 2 - OPEN	August 6 - Outdoor Galilean
July 9 - OPEN	Service
July 16 - Doug Koch	August 13 – Larry Hornberger
July 23 - Heather Clevenger	August 20 - Naomi Straub
July 30 - OPEN	August 27 – hymnsing

## **Cookies for Conference**

Many thanks to everyone who provided cookies for our Conference's annual meeting this year. Much appreciated!

## **UCC General Synod Opportunities**

This year's Synod, our biannual national gathering, is being held in nearby Baltimore. Penn Central Conference is providing bus transportation from Harrisburg to Baltimore for the special synod worship on July 2. The bus will leave the conference office around noon and return around 8pm. Cost depends on the number of people going, but will be around \$25 round trip. Contact Wendy Hepler in the conference office ASAP!!

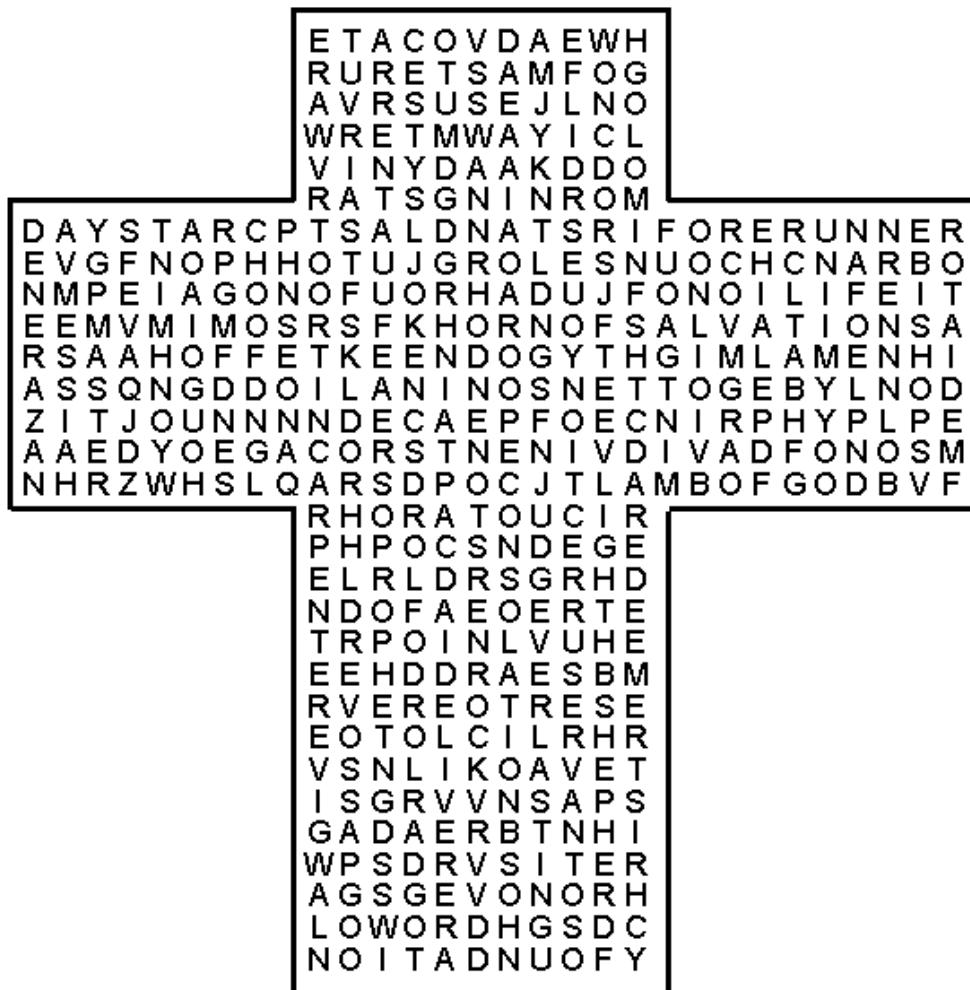


## **List of Resolutions for General Synod 31**

- On Enhanced Support of American Missionary Association Founded Churches that Participated in the Merger Forming the United Church of Christ
- Calling for Participation with the Boy Scouts of America Through Inclusive Scouting Programs
- A Call for the United Church of Christ to Advocate for the Rights of Children Living Under Israeli Military Occupation
- On Corporal Punishment of Children in Homes and Institutions
- Bring Down the Wall in the Caribbean
- Resolution Declaring the Work of the Pattern of Giving in the United Church of Christ Complete
- The Disparity of Rights of Adoptees to Access Birth Certificates for Adults
- Resolution of Support for Establishing Relationships Between United Church of Christ Settings and Community Development Federal Credit Unions
- On Proposing a New Framework for Covenantal Giving and Implementing Fundraising Best Practices
- On Recognizing and Studying Gun Violence as a Public Health Emergency
- On Becoming an Immigrant Welcoming Church
- A More Just Economy: Living Wages and Job Creation
- Manual on Ministry, Re-Visioned
- Resolution of Witness in Support of Legislation Authorizing Aid in Dying
- Enact Minimum Wage Laws of \$15 Per Hour
- On Establishing Procedures for Cultural Diversity Training for Authorized Ministers
- Resolution of Witness in Support of Adult Survivors of Child Abuse and Neglect
- Affirming and Supporting the Authorized Ministries of Under-represented Clergy in Local Congregations: A Call for Greater Representation and Economic Justice
- Toward Disability Justice: A Call to the Church and Churches
- Affirming the Coalition of Immokalee Workers' Boycott of Wendy's

## Young People's Page

But Whom Do You Say That I AM?



Advocate	Door	Lawgiver	Redeemer
Almighty	Emmanuel	Life	Resurrection
Alpha and Omega	Everlasting	Light	Rock
Amen	Faithful and True	Lion of Judah	Savior
Apostle	First and Last	Lord	Servant
Beloved Son	Forerunner	Lord of Lords	Shepherd
Bishop	Foundation	Master	Son of David
Branch	Governor	Master	Son of God
Bread	Head	Mediator	Son of Man
Captain	High Priest	Messiah	Vine
Carpenter	Holy and Just One	Mighty God	Way
Chosen	Horn of Salvation	Morning Star	Wonderful
Christ	I AM	Nazarene	Word
Consolation	Jesus	Only Begotten Son	
Cornerstone	Judge	Passover	
Counselor	King	Priest	
Day Star	King of Kings	Prince of Peace	
Deliverer	Lamb of God	Prophet	

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

# ***THOSE WHO SERVE IN JULY***

**Altar Committee:** Leslie Mayer

**Newsletter Sponsor:** Mary Bowman

**Ushers:** Volunteers Needed

**Greeters:** Linda Mayer

**Financial Assistants:** Russ & Amy Ney

*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  
Dolly Troutman  
Upper Cheyenne UCC  
Gail Hamilton  
Mike Wolfgang  
Paul Clark  
Alzheimer's patients

All the churches in our area  
Victims of mass-shootings  
Migrants and Refugees  
Our Military and Police Officers  
Florence Woll  
Cancer patients  
Racial & justice issues in the U.S.

Mary Rothermel  
Brooke Ellinger  
Bentley Deibert  
\*Jessica Capelli  
The people of the Middle East  
All caregivers  
\*Lynn Dietrich

Brett Stehr  
Ferne Dietrich  
\*Jennifer Miller  
Margie Ludwig  
\*Robert Jones

\* 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.**

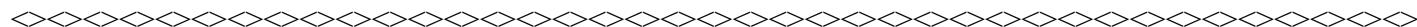
## **Flower Calendar**

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

7/02/17      \*\*\*\*\*Open Date\*\*\*\*\*  
7/09/17      In memory of Cathy Matter and Ruth Stehr presented by Jamie & Deb Stehr  
7/16/17      \*\*\*\*\*Open Date\*\*\*\*\*  
7/23/17      \*\*\*\*\*Open Date\*\*\*\*\*  
7/30/17      \*\*\*\*\*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.)



### **Thrivent Investment Opportunity for Our Church**

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

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY



7/01	Leslie Wiest	7/05	Linda Beigh	7/06	Forrest Kissinger
7/09	Raymond Schlegel	7/11	Rodney Heim, Jr.	7/12	Sherry Heisler
7/13	Carol Shade	7/13	Kali Oman	7/16	Kylee Clark
7/17	Cole Ney	7/17	Killian Broc Koppenhaver	7/20	Grant Gilbert
7/21	Ashley Rothermel	7/21	Joshua Mayer	7/23	Emily Ganunis

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

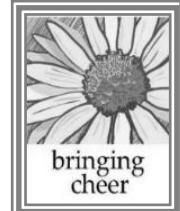
7/8 Mr. & Mrs. Mark Dietrich

7/22 Mr. & Mrs. Mark Cox

### **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)

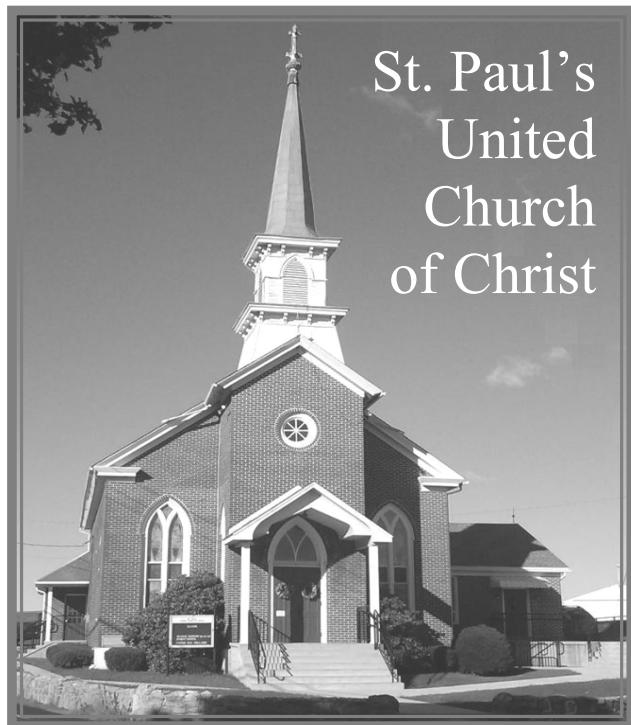


**BULLETIN & NEWSLETTER DEADLINES** – the deadline for information for the church bulletin is TUESDAY and the deadline for the newsletter is the 20<sup>th</sup> OF THE MONTH. You can contact Pat Miller at 570-682-3720 with your information.

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

*RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED*

## JULY 2017 NEWSLETTER



### **PASTOR**

Pastor Ray Holland 570-452-0050  
Email: [rayholland03@gmail.com](mailto:rayholland03@gmail.com) or  
[stpaulsucc.sacramento@gmail.com](mailto:stpaulsucc.sacramento@gmail.com)

### **ORGANIST/PIANIST**

Amy Ney

### **CHURCH SECRETARY**

Pat Miller

### **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE**

Sandy Deibert

### **WORSHIP SERVICE & SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Sundays, 8:45am