

Pastor Ray's Corner



In April, we celebrated the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday, and the hope it gives us for our own resurrection and eternal life. But what does that mean? What does it mean to have a “resurrection” body, or as Paul puts it in 1 Corinthians 15:53, what does it mean for this “perishable body [to] put on imperishability, and this mortal body [to] put on immortality”?

We know that some things in the Bible are symbolic and should not be taken literally. In particular, the most future-looking book in the Bible, Revelation, is full of imagery that absolutely cannot be taken literally (dragons, sea beasts, locusts with human faces and scorpions’ tails, etc.). And thankfully, we have some theories about what many of those images symbolically represent.

But what if – what if some things we have long dismissed as symbols that point to something more ethereal are in fact supposed to be interpreted literally? For instance, the prophet Isaiah declares, “On this mountain the Lord Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples” (Isaiah 25:6). And doesn’t the resurrected Jesus actually ask his followers, “Have you anything here to eat?” (Luke 24:41b). Granted, this request also proved to them that wasn’t a ghost, but it also shows that someone with a resurrection body could still enjoy food.

We spend a lot of time – and imagination – speculating on what heaven will be like, and Lord knows a lot of energy in Hollywood has gone into getting the story WRONG. Likewise, there are lots of books out there that supposedly tell us what “the great beyond” is really like. But what if, instead of turning to movies and secular books, we turned to the one authority we can trust – the Bible itself?

Jesus’ resurrected body was like ours, but he could also appear/disappear at will, travel significant distances instantaneously, and at times prevent others from recognizing him. So his body was STILL a body, but with extra abilities. If Jesus’ resurrection body is any indication, then we might imagine a more literal – less symbolic – eternal future for ourselves.

Instead of imagining ourselves with angels’ wings (sorry – we definitely don’t get those, despite what Charlie says in *It’s a Wonderful Life*) or floating around on puffy clouds and playing harps forever, what if we started imagining a life kinda sorta like here, only better – well, actually, perfect. No sickness, no evil, no sin, no threats, no aging, no disabilities, no disagreements, no disappointments. It’s hard to imagine, but if we pictured the afterlife as a “new heavens and a new earth” (cf. Isaiah, 2 Peter, and Revelation), then wouldn’t that make the whole dying-and-going-to-heaven way more appealing? In turn, wouldn’t that make us want to be faithful, not so much to avoid going to the bad place, but because we are actually excited about getting to the good place?

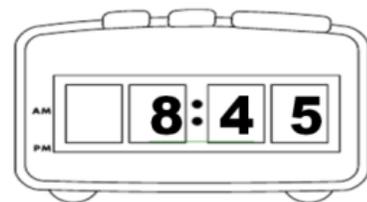
I’m starting to think that we have been making things about eternal life so nebulous, so indeterminate, so totally symbolic, that we have overlooked the very real – and scriptural – possibility of things there being more literally real and familiar. For me at least, it certainly makes the idea of resurrection and eternal life more definite and more appealing. How about you?

Peace and Blessings,

Pastor Ray

Worship Time Change in JUNE

Effective June 6, our worship time will change to 8:45am. This later time will continue through the end of May 2022.



Upcoming St. Paul's and Wider Church Activities

Worship – Sundays, 10:30am

- Large-print bulletins available
- Busy Bags available in side room for children
- Sunday School for Children – during worship
- Youth Classes – schedule TBD
- Choir Rehearsal – on break for now
- Handbell Rehearsal – see Amy Ney for schedule
- April 27, 4-11am - Mr. Sticky sale (sale runs from 6-11am, volunteers needed starting at 4am)
- May 2 – Worship with Holy Communion
- May 6, 7pm – Tri-Valley Ministerium National Day of Prayer Service, at Valley View Church of God
- May 9 – Mother's Day
- May 10, 10am – Prayer Chain
- May 11, 7pm – Consistory meeting
- May 13, 7pm – TVM Ascension Day Service, at Salem Church of Rough & Ready
- May 23 – Sunday School Teacher Recognition; Graduate Recognition; Pentecost
- May 25, 7pm – Northern Cluster meeting at St. Peter's UCC (Crossroads)
- May 30 – Trinity Sunday, Memorial Day weekend

Acolyte Schedule:

May 2 – Emma Brandenberger

May 9 – Grant Gilbert

May 16 – Karson Ellinger

May 23 – Kayliah Dansavage

May 30 – Makayla Gilbert



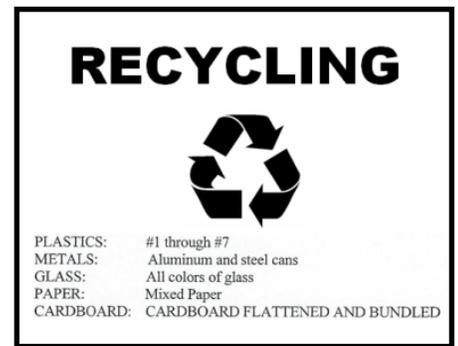
Italian Night Recap

Our first-ever *curbside* Italian Night was a huge success. We saw our highest numbers every: 120 meals, and \$1245 in profit. Many thanks to chef Jamie Stehr and everyone who helped to prep, cook, serve, and run orders out to the cars.



Recycling Update

Our local waste hauler, Zerbe Refuse Hauling, is now picking up recycling once a month. Our church will participate in this program as a way of practicing good stewardship of God's creation. A large blue bin in the side room upstairs, and a black trash can in the kitchen, have been repurposed and relabeled as recycling containers. (Everything will then be consolidated into a single 64-gallon can for curbside pickup.) As the sign indicates, mixed plastics, mixed glass (all colors), paper, cardboard, aluminum and steel cans, are all acceptable. And yes, they can all go in the same container. So please think before throwing something out at church. If it can be recycled, please use the bin or can, and help us in our recycling effort.



Northern Cluster Pig Roast and Concert – June 27

On Sunday, June 27, beginning at 5pm, the Northern Cluster of UCC Churches will host a free pig-roast and concert at MYO Park in Millersburg. The Seger Family from Shamokin will share the Gospel in Bluegrass, Southern Gospel, and Country-style music. Bring a covered-dish to share, and a lawn chair. A free-will offering will be received. All are welcome – come join us for great food, music, and fellowship! FYI we will keep things safe by having a single serving line, and the servers will all wear gloves.



Easter Egg Hunt Recap

After missing a year, none of the young people missed out on this year's event, following the Palm Sunday service on March 28, even if the weather kept everyone inside.





Rosebud on the Altar

A rosebud was placed on the altar on April 11, in honor of the birth of Ivy Lavina Zimmerman, daughter of Joseph & Amy Zimmerman. Ivy was born on March 22, 2021, and weighed in at 6 lbs., 11 oz. We wish the entire family health and blessings.

Worship Service CD Recordings Available

Don't feel safe joining us for in-person worship, and you don't have internet to see our weekly online worship videos? How about an AUDIO CD version of the worship video – something that you can play on your home CD player? If you are interested in participating in worship by listening to the services, please contact Pastor Ray, and we'll be glad to send you the weekly CD.



Ongoing Help Needed for Chase Coleman

Please keep Chase and his family in your prayers: for Chase, for healing, patience, and strength; and for his family, for strength and comfort. In addition to prayers, there are two ways we can assist the family with the many expenses they will incur:

1. You can donate online to: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/care-for-chase/donate>
 2. You can mail or drop off a donation at the Gratz Bank (mention that it is for Chase's fund): Gratz Bank, c/o Chase Coleman Medical Expenses, 1625 West Main Street, P.O. Box 816, Valley View, PA 17983
- Cards can be sent to: Chase Coleman, 614 Valley Road, Hegins, PA 17938

Thank you for any and all the ways you can provide support for Chase and his family.

Reminder – COVID-19 Guidelines In-Church Services

Please understand that our Consistory's primary concern is the safety of our members. We want people to be able to gather for worship and other church-related activities, but we also want to make sure we do everything we can to keep everyone healthy and safe. We have consulted with guidelines from the CDC, PA DOH, and our Penn Central Conference, to make the best decisions we can. We will continue to consult these guidelines as things progress throughout the summer. For now, this primarily means that everyone attending church needs to wear a face mask or face shield (except children 2 and under).

We recognize that not everyone sees this pandemic the same way, and perhaps for some, these precautions seem excessive. However, especially given the average age of our members, the Consistory would rather err on the side of safety than put someone's health at risk. If you are not comfortable with these temporary precautions, either for health reasons or personal reasons, we certainly understand. For now, please continue to join us online, as we will continue to post weekly online worship service videos (and audio CDs). Thank you for your understanding and patience.

Recognizing Our Graduates

Please join us on **Sunday, May 23**, as we recognize our graduates during worship. (We are also arranging to record each of our graduates, so we can share their stories online.)

Rylee Coleman, daughter of Shawn & Beth Coleman, graduates from Tri-Valley High School, where she was a member of the National Honor Society, FBLA, Athletes for Christ, and Varsity Soccer; and served as the Senior Class Treasurer and Student Council Treasurer. She plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in veterinary technology, and become a veterinary technologist.



Martha Holland, daughter of Pastor Ray and step-mom Liz, graduates from the University of Hawaii with a Bachelor's Degree in Russian Studies. Future plans include pursuing work in the area of social justice.

Kailyn Shoffler, daughter of Michael & Angela Brandenberger, graduates from California University of Pennsylvania with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Chemistry. Her future plans include attending Towson University in Maryland to earn a Master's Degree in Forensic Science, and then seek fulltime employment within a police department.

Alexander Peay, son of Kim & Richard Carpenter, graduates from Tri-Valley High School, where he was active in the school band. Future plans include seeking employment.

Church Policy Regarding Photos Etc.

The church and/or its representatives may take photographs and make video recordings during programs. Please advise the church immediately, in writing, if you do not wish to appear in any church publications.

Teacher Thank-You's – May 23

We will recognize our Sunday School teachers in worship and in our online worship video on Sunday, May 23.



Vacation Bible School 2021

The VBS planning group (Salem UCC and Trinity UMC in Elizabethtown) will meet in early May to decide if they will offer a VBS program this year, and if so, how to ensure the safety of the young people. Stay tuned!

Seasonal Floral Arrangements for the Sanctuary.

Many thanks to Doris Shade's sister, Marge Comella, who donated these beautiful arrangements in Doris' memory.



Donations for Upper Dauphin Human Services

We have an ongoing collection for the Upper Dauphin Human Services Clothing Closet (727 Main Street, Lykens): gently-worn/nearly new clothing for babies, children, and teen-agers. Please leave your donations in the collection box at church.

Food Collection Program

We have a collection box 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 570-682-9157. Since we began our year-round collection in September 2013, we have collected 3585 items. **MONETARY DONATIONS to the Food Closet are also needed.**



Graduate Recognition Sunday – May 23, 2021

Do you know any graduates (from high school *or* from college) whom we should recognize this year? If so, we will have a special dedication for them in June. But please let Pastor Ray know as soon as possible, so we can plan this event.



Name of graduate _____

Graduating from _____

If college what degree received _____

Parents' names _____

Continuing Education – if so where _____

Clubs or Activities involved in (FFA, National Honor Society, etc.) _____

Future plans _____

(please return this form to Pastor Ray as soon as possible)

Treasurer's Report – March 2021

	TOTAL
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
Building Fund	
Improvement fund	1,442.00
Total Building Fund	1,442.00
Interest Checking	1.06
Memorial Fund Dividends	50,000.00
Mission Offerings	
One Great Hour Of Sharing	70.81
Total Mission Offerings	70.81
Offerings	
Ash Wednesday	15.00
Envelopes	7,285.00
Initial Offering	16.00
Lent	135.00
Loose	195.00
Maundy Thursday	100.00
Newsletter	45.00
Total Offerings	7,791.00
Outside Contribution	700.00
Reimbursement from Salem	
Electric-Parsonage	51.36
Oil-Parsonage	206.62
Payroll-Dental	41.00
Payroll-Health	571.00
Payroll-Life/Disability	35.66
Payroll-Pension	332.81
Payroll Pastor Salary	2,131.46
Rent Value-Parsonage	250.00
Water-Parsonage	26.05
Total Reimbursement from Salem	3,645.96
Special Services Income	
Flowers	146.00
Total Special Services Income	146.00
Stewardship Income	
Italian Night	1,245.00
Total Stewardship Income	1,245.00
Total Income	65,041.83
Gross Profit	65,041.83
Expense	
Building & Maintenance	
Pest Control	69.00
Repairs Church	141.92
Total Building & Maintenance	210.92
Charitable Contributions	
Hillside SPCA	200.00
St John's Food Closet	500.00
Total Charitable Contributions	700.00
Computer and Internet Expenses	2.12

	TOTAL
Insurance Expense	
Building Insurance	1,187.50
Total Insurance Expense	1,187.50
Italian Night costs	
paper supplies	49.13
Total Italian Night costs	49.13
Landscaping Expenses	
Mower	1,300.00
Total Landscaping Expenses	1,300.00
Ministry Expenses	
Subscriptions	24.00
Total Ministry Expenses	24.00
Office Supplies	
Copier Lease	179.62
Postage	55.00
Total Office Supplies	234.62
PA Income Tax	1.00
Payroll expenses	
Dental Insurance	82.00
Health Insurance	1,142.00
Life/Disability	71.32
Pension	665.62
Payroll expenses - Other	4,720.43
Total Payroll expenses	6,681.37
Special Events	
Flowers	72.05
Total Special Events	72.05
Utilities	
Electric-Church	107.57
Electric Parsonage	102.73
Water Church	41.60
Water Parsonage	52.10
Total Utilities	304.00
Wheel Chair Lift	
Construction	28,775.00
WC Lift Equipment	18,175.00
Total Wheel Chair Lift	46,950.00
Total Expense	57,716.71
Net Ordinary Income	7,325.12
Net Income	7,325.12

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."

Young People's Page

JESUS' DISCIPLES

The names of Jesus' disciples are listed below. Write the letter of the correct disciple's name in front of each statement on the left. Answers may be used more than once or not at all.

Then, see how many of the names (in bold) that you can find in the word search.

___ I was a tax collector. (Matt. 9:9)

___ I betrayed Jesus. (Matt. 10:4)

___ I denied Jesus three times, but later repented. (Matt. 26:69-75)

___ I was Peter's brother. (John 1:40)

___ We were brothers, the sons of Zebedee. (Mark 1:19-20)

___ I said that I would not believe that Jesus was risen until I saw the print of the nails in His hands. (John 20:24-28)

___ I beat Peter in a foot race to the empty tomb. (John 20:6-10)

___ Jesus asked me where we should buy bread for 5,000 people. (John 6:5-7)

___ My name means "Twin".

A. Peter (also called Simon)

B. Andrew

C. James

D. John

E. Philip

F. Bartholomew (also called Nathanael)

G. Thomas

H. Matthew

I. James (the Lesser)

J. Jude (also called Thaddeus)

K. Simon the Zealot

L. Judas (Iscaiot)

h	t	o	w	p	t	j	d	s	p	s
s	m	w	e	h	t	t	a	m	i	j
h	s	t	m	h	r	d	j	m	t	d
e	e	a	o	o	u	j	o	l	e	o
r	m	m	l	j	n	n	h	d	d	s
j	a	m	o	s	r	l	n	e	u	j
s	j	p	h	i	l	i	p	t	j	e
d	e	m	t	s	o	w	a	m	e	d
a	n	d	r	e	w	a	l	u	d	e
t	j	e	a	j	r	e	d	e	e	a
a	m	s	b	e	a	a	o	r	n	o



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

THOSE WHO SERVE IN MAY

Altar: Leslie Mayer
Newsletter Sponsor:
Financial Assistants:

Lay Reader: Pat Miller
Greeters: n/a
Ushers: n/a

*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.***



PRAY FOR EVERYONE HERE AND AROUND THE WORLD BEING AFFECTED BY THE CORONAVIRUS

Alzheimer's patients	All the churches in our area	Mary Bowman	Mark Rissinger
Victims of abuse	Victims of mass-murders & their perpetrators		Our nation
Upper Cheyenne UCC	Migrants and Refugees	Edna Reed	Forrest Dietrich & family
Ann Fay Brady	Military, Police, First Responders	Cancer patients	Chase Coleman & family
Mike Wolfgang	Victims of fires/floods/storms	All caregivers	Ferne Dietrich
Rev. Jimmie Schwartz	Racial & justice issues in the U.S.	The people of the Middle East	Rev. Curtis Zemencik
Stephanie & Lester Lyons	American farmers & their families	All teachers, students, & staff	Kera Spickler
All who are affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic		Bill & Ginger Fishel	Carolyn Sargent
All Essential Workers	*Family of Marybeth Evanko	Ric Coleman	Teresa & Marc

* 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



05/02/21 *on break*
 05/09/21 *In honor of Mr. & Mrs. Randy Mayer Wedding Anniversary*
 05/16/21 *on break*
 05/23/21 *on break*
 05/30/21 *on break*

The flower chart for 2021 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 or Flowers & Friends, Ridge Road, Pitman 570-847-5353.)

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."

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



5/2 Colton Boud
5/7 Tina Capik
5/22 Maura Pearl Boud
5/26 Larry Klinger
5/28 BreAnn Sulouff

5/4 Alex Cox
5/11 Quinn Koppenhaver
5/24 Becky Deibert
5/26 Raquel Koppenhaver
5/29 Darryl Miller

5/4 Naomi Cox
5/20 Bill Fishel
5/24 Trevor Heisler
5/26 Lori Klinger

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

5/8 Mr. & Mrs. Brendan Stehr

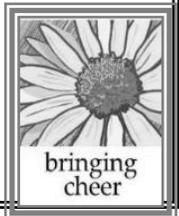
5/11 Mr. & Mrs. Randy Mayer

5/11 Mr. & Mrs. Tim 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.



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)

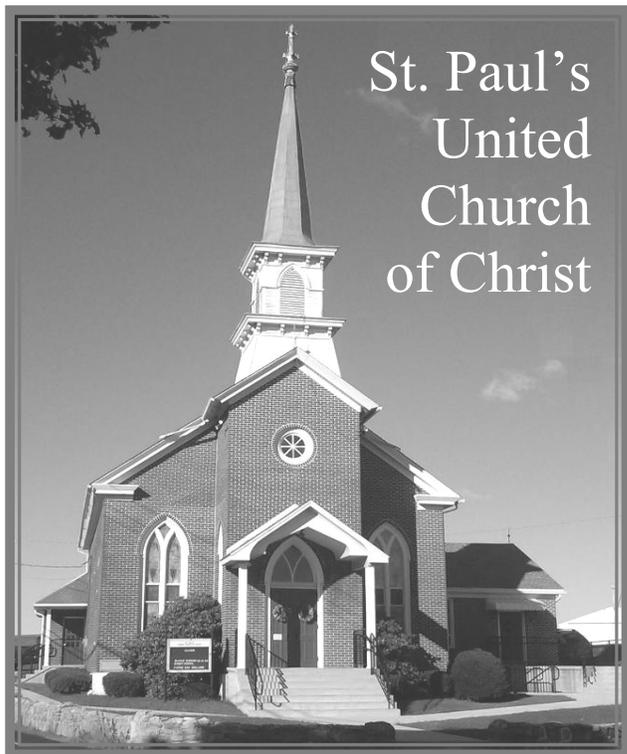


BULLETIN & NEWSLETTER DEADLINES – the deadline for information for the church bulletin is TUESDAY and the deadline for the newsletter is the 20th OF THE MONTH. You can contact Angie Brandenberger at 570-590-8277 with your information.

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

MAY 2021 NEWSLETTER



PASTOR

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

ORGANIST/PIANIST

Amy Ney

CHURCH SECRETARY

Angela Brandenberger

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE

Larry Michael

WORSHIP SERVICE & SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sundays, 10:30 am