

## Pastor Ray's Corner



On May 9, we will celebrate the Ascension of Jesus. Ascension Day is always 40 days after Easter. And talk about heartbreak! Imagine the roller coaster the disciples have been through. First, Jesus was arrested, and then he died on the cross. They thought that was the end. Then three days later, he rises from the dead – a bit changed, but alive! Then a mere 40 days after that, he leaves again – he ascends back to heaven. And this time, the leaving is for good.

Or is it “for good?” Well, yes, and yes. Yes, after the Ascension, Jesus never again returned in bodily form to earth. And he won't, until he returns at the end of time. So yes, in his Ascension, Jesus DID leave his disciples “for good.” But he also left them “for good.” Here, let Jesus explain it, as he explained to his disciples during his farewell speech in John's Gospel: “But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you, but if I go, I will send him to you” (John 16:6-7).

Get it? It was for our “good” that Jesus left, so that he could then send the Holy Spirit (the Advocate) to us. The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Holy Trinity, and also in a sense the very spirit of Jesus. And the Holy Spirit can do what Jesus (in bodily form) could never do – the Holy Spirit can be with each and every believer, in every time and place, providing the very same comfort and guidance and mercy that Jesus provides, because it IS the spirit of Jesus.

And we know that ten days AFTER his Ascension, on the Day of Pentecost (May 19 this year), Jesus DID send the promised Holy Spirit, to be with all believers forever. So yes, Jesus DID leave his disciples “for good,” but it was for their “good,” and for our “good” as well.



See the article in the newsletter for opportunities to celebrate Jesus' Ascension, and be grateful for what he did and continues doing for us.

Peace and Blessings,

Pastor Ray

## Worship Time Change in JUNE

Effective June 2, our worship time will change to 10:30am. This time will continue through the end of May 2025.



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

**Worship – Sundays, 8:45am**

**Busy Bags available in side room for children**

**Sunday School for Children**

**Choir Rehearsal – Sundays, after worship**

**Handbell Rehearsal – see Amy Ney for schedule**

- **May 5 – Graduate Recognition Sunday**
- **May 5, 12:15pm – Worship & Parish Life meeting**
- **May 9, 7pm – Northern Cluster Ascension Day service, St. John's Lutheran, Berrysburg**
- **May 9, 7pm – Tri-Valley Ministerium Ascension Day service, Christ Church, Leck Kill**
- **May 12 – Mother's Day**
- **May 13, 10am – Prayer Chain, St. Paul's**
- **May 13, noon – TVM meeting, Hegins**
- **May 13, 7pm – Consistory, St. Paul's**
- **May 18, 9am – Harrisburg Association spring meeting, Spring Glen**
- **May 18, 4:30-6:30pm – Potpie fundraiser supper, Salem**
- **May 19 – Pentecost Sunday**
- **May 26 – Sunday School Teacher Recognition**
- **May 28, 7pm – Northern Cluster meeting, Peace UCC**
- **May 29, 7pm – Tri-Valley Ministerium Baccalaureate service, Trinity Lutheran**
- **June 1, 5:15pm – Volunteer at Bethesda Mission (carpool from church at 4:15pm)**
- **June 19, 1-3pm – Volunteer at Caitlin's Smiles (carpool from church at 12noon)**

*Acolyte Schedule:*

*May 5 – Bryce Fetterolf*

*May 12 – Broc Dreisbach*

*May 19 – Dash Brandenberger*

*May 26 – Emma Brandenberger*



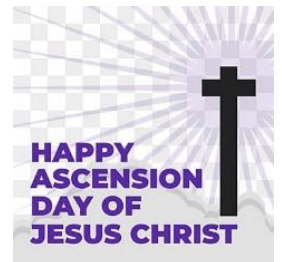
### **Ascension Day Services in Our Area – May 9**

This year, May 9 is Ascension Day on the church calendar. This holy day is often forgotten, yet it is the day we remember the risen Jesus leaving his disciples, returning to heaven, and receiving full authority from the Father – a cosmic coronation ceremony! And this year, there are two services being offered in our area. The **Tri-Valley Ministerium** will host a service at Christ Church, Leck Kill, at 7pm.

Also, the **Northern Cluster of UCC Churches**, together with St. John's Lutheran Church, will host a service at St. John's Lutheran Church (the Hill Church), Berrysburg, at 7pm.

This service will feature Thomas Dressler, an accomplished organist from Albrightsville, providing a “mini-concert” within the service.

Please make time to celebrate the ascension of our Lord.



### **Mother's Day – May 12**

Join us in worship as we honor the women who have been so important in our lives.

### **Chicken Potpie Dinner at Salem UCC – May 18**

Our church will be hosting a fundraiser Chicken Potpie Dinner on Saturday, May 18, 4:30-6:30pm. The menu will include chicken potpie, pepper cabbage, roll, dessert, and a drink for \$12.00. Take-outs available.



### **Official Call: Harrisburg Association of the United Church of Christ Spring Meeting, 9-11am on May 18, to be held at St. Matthew's UCC, Spring Glen**

This is a business meeting of the association. All are welcome to attend and learn more about our association and its churches.

## Celebration of Christian Gifts, May 19, 3pm

What better way to celebrate the Gifts of the Spirit on Pentecost Sunday (May 19), than to celebrate the gifts of God's people? This year we'll feature a variety of musical gifts from both of our churches, plus poems, artwork, woodworking, quilted items, and nature crafts. How about YOU? Do you have a creative gift that you would like to share? Please let Pastor Ray know, so we can include you in this special program. Light refreshments will follow.



## Teacher Thank-You's – May 26

Please join us as we recognize our Sunday School teachers in worship on Sunday, May 26.

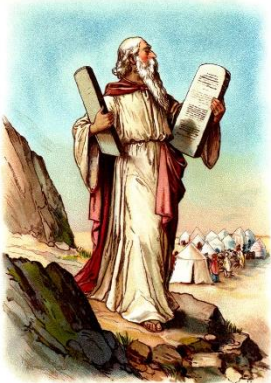
## Combined-Church Potluck Meal – June 2, 11:30am-ish

Join us right after church on Sunday, June 2, for a time of food and fellowship at our potluck meal. Everyone's invited from both of our churches. Just bring something to share (an entrée, a side dish, or a dessert). It will be good to break bread with our sisters and brothers from both Salem and St. Paul's.



## Lenten Prayer Vigil Update

Thanks to everyone from both churches for participating in this year's Prayer Vigil, from Maundy Thursday evening to Holy Saturday evening. We filled 53 of the 64 45-minute time periods this year with continuous prayer to God.



## New Bible Study Starting in June

We will study the **Ten Commandments** (Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5) and Jesus' 8 **Beatitudes** (Matthew 5) in depth, learning their original contexts, and considering how they apply in today's world. Classes will begin on **Monday, June 3, 7pm**. The schedule will be (mostly) the first and third Monday evenings of each month. Please let Pastor Ray if you would like to join us.



## One Great Hour of Sharing - Recap

On **March 24**, we **dedicated** our OGHS offering, which helps people in need around the world and in communities impacted by disasters in the United States. Our young people collected \$36 all on their own, plus donations from the rest of us. Many thanks!

## April 4 Mr. Sticky Sale – Canceled

Alas, we didn't get nearly enough pre-orders (we only got 356 – we needed 700), so our April 4 Mr. Sticky fundraiser had to be canceled. In retrospect, it may be time for us to consider some different fundraisers that better utilize our members' time availability and skills. Got some ideas?

## Recognizing Our Graduates

Please join us on Sunday, May 5, as we recognize our graduates during worship.



**Chase Coleman**, son of Shawn and Beth Coleman, graduates from Tri-Valley High School. While in school, Chase was active in Football, Basketball, and Baseball. His future plans include pursuing a degree in Sports Communication.



**Jimmy Dietrich**, son of Mark and Diane Dietrich, graduates from Penn State with an MBA. While at school, he was involved with Penn State Pullers and the MBA Leadership Board. His future plans include employment at Timken Service Engineering.



**Elizabeth Stehr**, daughter of Brendan and Patty Stehr, graduated from University of Pittsburgh on December 17, 2023, with a Bachelor's Degree with two majors: Public and Professional Writing and Communication Rhetoric; and a Certificate in Public Communication of Science and Technology. She has been accepted to University of Pittsburgh Law, beginning in August 2024. Three years of Law School will follow, then a career in the Law Field.

## 2024 Easter Egg Hunt

Our young people had a great time hunting for Easter eggs after Palm-Passion Sunday worship on March 24. Thanks to the adults for hiding the eggs and overseeing the hunt!





### Volunteer at Bethesda Mission – June 1

Our two churches have an opportunity to serve a meal to the men in the shelter at Bethesda Mission on Saturday, **June 1, from 5:15-6:15pm**. The staff there prepares the meal; we simply serve it as the men come through the line. We are also invited to join the men at the tables for the meal, once we have finished serving. Want to reach out to others? Join us! They have room for **5 servers**, so please sign up at church – first-come/first-serve. (We will carpool from church.)

### Volunteering at Caitlin’s Smiles – June 19 (daytime opportunity)

Volunteering at Caitlin’s Smiles in Harrisburg is very simple and actually a good stress reliever, as we spend two hours assembling the components of craft kits and decorating gift bags for long-term hospitalized children. Our two churches’ next time to go down is **June 19, 1-3pm** (*carpool from church at noon*). *(Below are some snapshots from our March 26 trip.)*



## Treasurer's Report – March 2024

	TOTAL
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>	
<b>Income</b>	
Interest Checking	1.43
Mission Offerings	
One Great Hour Of Sharing	61.00
<b>Total Mission Offerings</b>	61.00
<b>Offerings</b>	
Envelopes	3,104.00
Initial Offering	2.00
Loose	74.00
Maundy Thursday	73.00
Newsletter	90.00
<b>Total Offerings</b>	3,343.00
<b>Outside Contribution</b>	300.00
<b>Reimbursement from Salem</b>	
Electric-Parsonage	41.26
Oil-Parsonage	233.32
Payroll-Dental	44.37
Payroll-Health Pastor	554.00
Payroll-Life/Disability	37.67
Payroll-Pension	351.56
Payroll Pastor Salary	3,396.87
Rent Value-Parsonage	250.00
Spouse Supplemental	84.51
<b>Total Reimbursement from Salem</b>	4,993.56
<b>Special Services Income</b>	
Flowers	166.00
<b>Total Special Services Income</b>	166.00
<b>Thrivent Grant</b>	26.00
<b>Total Income</b>	8,890.99
<b>Gross Profit</b>	8,890.99
<b>Expense</b>	
<b>Building &amp; Maintenance</b>	
Pest Control	84.76
Repairs Church	132.85
<b>Total Building &amp; Maintenance</b>	217.61
<b>Charitable Contributions</b>	
Hillside SPCA	150.00
<b>Total Charitable Contributions</b>	150.00
<b>Computer and Internet Expenses</b>	831.57
<b>Insurance Expense</b>	
Building Insurance	1,793.00
<b>Total Insurance Expense</b>	1,793.00
<b>Ministry Expenses</b>	
Piano/Music	192.20
Worship Supplies	52.98
<b>Total Ministry Expenses</b>	245.18
<b>Office Supplies</b>	
Copier Lease	126.56
<b>Total Office Supplies</b>	126.56

## Treasurer's Report – March 2024 (cont'd)

	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>PA Income Tax</b>	2.09
<b>Payroll expenses</b>	
<b>Dental Insurance</b>	88.75
<b>Health Insurance</b>	
<b>Spouse Supplemental Health Insurance - Other</b>	169.02
	1,108.00
<b>Total Health Insurance</b>	1,277.02
<b>Life/Disability</b>	75.34
<b>Mileage Reimbursement</b>	89.91
<b>Pension</b>	703.13
<b>Payroll expenses - Other</b>	7,402.37
	9,636.52
<b>Total Payroll expenses</b>	
<b>Special Events</b>	
<b>Refreshments</b>	28.59
	28.59
<b>Total Special Events</b>	
<b>Utilities</b>	
<b>Electric-Church</b>	121.66
<b>Electric Parsonage</b>	82.47
<b>Telephone</b>	99.52
	303.65
<b>Total Utilities</b>	
<b>Total Expense</b>	13,334.77
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	-4,443.78
<b>Net Income</b>	-4,443.78

### 2024 CROP Walk

Many thanks to our volunteers, friends, and donors who helped raise \$794 for this year's CROP Walk – well above our original goal of \$300! (Not shown in photos – April Fetterolf.)



## Special Music on April 21

Many thanks to Ava Kramer (Ferne Dietrich's great-granddaughter) for sharing her musical gifts with us during worship, with a beautiful flute arrangement of *Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us*.



### Ongoing Assistance 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



### 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 570-682-9119 (Sharol Snyder). Since we began our year-round collection in September 2013, we have collected 5380 items. **MONETARY DONATIONS are also appreciated. IMPORTANT: Please make sure there are no expired items, and if you bring things in boxes, please use small boxes - they are easier to lift.**



### 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.

### 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.



# The Day of Pentecost

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.  
Acts 2:4 (NIV)

Based on Acts 2:1-21



X T O B P P H W G H X U E X I  
T G T F Z J V J Y I O C G M B  
Y B H J P X I L P F F U Z Z X  
L L E L E J O Z J M D E S I W  
I W R Y N H L A N G U A G E L  
S Q Z I T E Z F I L L E D A L  
J C C E E L J W H K K A Q D J  
R E G G C S F V Q A T L Q W X  
T Q S G O R W I E S O W H J M  
M D P I S H G P B O N J I V J  
F A I M T E S K J U G A R N H  
I Y R J N A B Y N N U H X K D  
R N I A E V W Q K D E E R L Z  
E L T R H E X M K Y S A P N A  
Z H O C R N S T F I A R K X K

PENTECOST	FILLED	HEAR	HOUSE	WIND
HEAVEN	FIRE	TONGUES	LANGUAGE	OTHER
DAY	HOLY	SOUND	SPIRIT	SPEAK

**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:

Newsletter Sponsor: Bruce Koppenhaver

Financial Assistants: n/a

Lay Reader: Amy Ney

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	Lizzie Layton
The people of Ukraine	Victims of abuse	Victims of mass-murders & their perpetrators
Our nation	Upper Cheyenne UCC	Migrants and Refugees
Carolyn Sargent	Ann Fay & Kevin Brady	Military, Police, First Responders
Mike Wolfgang	Cancer patients & caregivers	The people of Israel & the innocent people of Gaza
Chase Coleman & family	Karen Wolfe	Racial & justice issues in the U.S.
World Peace	Misty Rice	American farmers & their families
*Ginger & Bill Fishel	Emily Degnitz	Sandy Deibert & family
Lois & Paul Bennick	Julie Strohecker	Becky Deibert
Pastor Ray	Kim Zweibel	Vicki Holland
*Family of Pat Herb	Caitlin Shemas	Sherry Wiest
Roseann Mele	*Ferne Dietrich	*Family of Betty Williard
*Dora Deibert		

\* 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

05/05/24	Open
05/12/24	Open
05/19/24	Open
05/26/24	Open

The flower chart for 2024 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.)

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY



5/2	Colton Boud	5/4	Alex Cox	5/4	Naomi Cox
5/7	Tina Capik	5/11	Quinn Koppenhaver	5/20	Bill Fishel
5/22	Maura Pearl Boud	5/24	Becky Deibert	5/24	Trevor Heisler
5/26	Larry Klinger	5/26	Raquel Koppenhaver	5/26	Lori Klinger
5/28	BreAnn Deibert	5/29	Darryl Miller		

## 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.***



bringing  
cheer

### **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:  
DIAL 988**



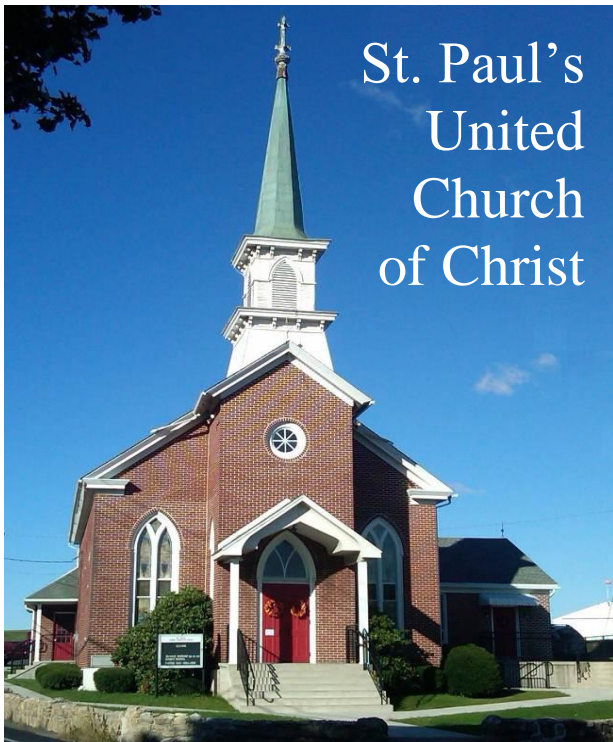
***If anyone asks you why you do kind acts, tell them, "I am a disciple of Jesus.  
I am serving him by serving you, because that is what he came to do."***

**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 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 2024 NEWSLETTER**



**CHURCH:** 570-682-9828

Email: [stpaulsucc.sacramento@gmail.com](mailto:stpaulsucc.sacramento@gmail.com)

**PASTOR**

Pastor Ray Holland 570-452-0050

Email: [rayholland03@gmail.com](mailto:rayholland03@gmail.com)

**ORGANIST/PIANIST**

Amy Ney

**ASSISTANT CHURCH MUSICIAN**

Sarah Degnitz

**CHURCH SECRETARY**

Angela Brandenberger

**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE**

Larry Michael

**WORSHIP SERVICE & SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Sundays, 8:45 am