

*Rooted in the past,
living faithfully in the present.*

St. Paul's United Church of Christ

April 2019

*"By listening to
the still
speaking God,
we seek to
connect people
to God and to
others through
worship,
service, and
fellowship."*

We are a church
that values:

*Welcome
Fellowship
Outreach
Tradition*

God
is still
speaking,

19 "What things?" he asked.

"About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. 20 The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; 21 but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. 22 In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning 23 but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. 24 Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus." Luke 24:19-24

One of my favorite post-resurrection stories is the Road to Emmaus. Some say it is an allegory for early Christian worship. For others, it is the ultimate communion story—the revelation of Jesus in the communal breaking of the bread.

I would say it is my favorite because it gives us a glimpse of a community reeling in loss, and the way Christ is revealed to them in the midst of their pain and grief. Holy Week in itself is a roller coaster of emotions, the high of a triumphant ride moving towards a midnight sham of a trial, culminating in a death scene at Calvary. So many feelings to be felt—excitement, joy, disbelief, anger, sadness, bitterness, and even fear; then on its very end is the excitement, joy, and disbelief of resurrection.

This text from Luke stops us short of that joyous moment. There has been talk of empty tombs, however there is no understanding of a risen Jesus. In its conclusion the disciples will know they have experienced something special, even if they can't form words around what it is they have witnessed. Regardless of their confusion, they choose to go back and talk about what they have seen.

I too, am feeling many emotions as we move to the second week of April. There is grief and sadness, but also joy and laughter. I have worry but also a sense of abiding hope. I am full of gratitude and perhaps just a bit bitter for things I cannot control. In a colloquial way of speaking, I am feeling “all the feels.” And I believe this is exactly how God expects us to grieve—with all the colors of our feelings.

As we remember the ultimate sacrifice of Christ, let's not be afraid to feel all of our feelings. As we revel in the joy of Easter morning and the realization of an empty tomb, I double down on that declaration. As we separate our faith journeys on April 7th, with a luncheon and shared fellowship, I hope we have the courage to acknowledge the highs and lows of living faithfully alongside one another. Because being called to discipleship is just that, a path of smooth and rocky road and all the emotions that come along with that walk. Ultimately, the best part is that we do not make our way to Emmaus without a companion. We have Jesus—dressed as stranger/visible as friend—to accompany us on our way forward. As he reminds us that this life is not without struggle, I pray we also hear that it is also pregnant with a full measure of hope in the time to come. May it be so for you too, always.

Blessings, Pastor Sheresa

He Is Risen! Risen Indeed!

Alleluia! Over the course of the past few weeks, we have used our Lenten services as an opportunity to explore our pastoral expectations, our relationship with God as expressed within Christian leadership here at St. Paul's, and the realistic pastoral needs of our church. Our discussions have unearthed so many wonderful realizations and sparked deep discussion. The attendance has been minimal, which prompts larger discussion

about the way in which this community of faith views participation outside of Sunday worship or special occasions like Ash Wednesday or Christmas Eve Service. In further exploration, this is a key component to the needs of the congregation. You are invited to bring your pastoral devotional to Palm Sunday service on April 14th. A large piece of paper will be available to record the congregation's feedback. You may use the post it notes and place them in the appropriate space before or after the service.



Holy Week Schedule

April 14th– Palm Sunday
Worship at 10:15 AM
Feedback before/after worship



April 18- Maunday Thursday
Parlor at 7 PM



April 19– Good Friday
6:30 pm at
United Missionary Baptist
Church
719 18th Avenue, Middletown



Easter Service
Worship at 10:15 AM

Bible Study Texts

April 9th– Community time and
farewells

Friends,

Thank you for giving the men, women and children at Hope House the help and hope they need to change their lives! Hope is what you gave our guests with your recent gift of \$65. Thank you. Two simple words which hardly seem adequate to express our deep appreciation. We praise God for you.

We're holding in prayer ...

Our shut ins: Virginia Elam
Cleo Habig
Carrol Stein
Amanda Lorig
Charlene Hale
Lorraine Clark
F. Stoutenborough

Our military: Chase McConehea
Jake Burley

... and friends:
C. Trees
Selbys
D. Wyatt
P. Mahoney
R. Combs
B. Clark
K. Kuhn
M. Cole
B. Coke
P. Stevenson



A note from the co-moderator

We are always looking for volunteers. If you have not been asked, now is your chance to tell Chuck, Cindy, or Barb that you would like to help. Greeters welcome people, run the lift, and make nametags for visitors. Ushers pass out bulletins and collect the offering. One of them usually acts as acolyte. Refreshment host/hostesses bake or purchase some kind of goodies and serve with coffee and tea after worship service. They also clean up afterward and take the kitchen towels home to wash. Communion servers prepare the bread and wafers and juice and help Rev. Sheresa serve it. Liturgists read the scriptures for the day. Please consider how you would like to be of service. Thank you.

Lunch Bunch Happenings

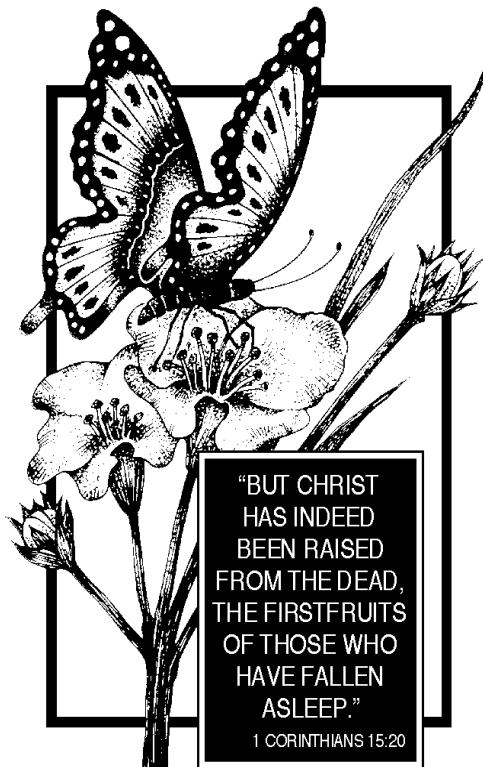
On the last Sunday of the month, congregants gather after worship at a local eatery to share in food and fellowship. It's a lot of fun!



Locations ...

April– Spinning Fork
May– Clubhouse Grill

The Lunch Bunch crew is always on the lookout for a new place. Share your suggestions with Dan M.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



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1st	Judy Brewer	21st	Rick Lyons
2nd	Jonathon Webb	24th	Jordan Lowman
6th	Lesa Boone	26th	Jack Kiniyalocots
12th	Patricia Lemmons Scott Lowman	27th	Kaitlyn Canter

Reminder!! We will hold our congregational Meeting May 19th after worship. If you feel called to serve on council, let one of the current council members know of your interest.

April Volunteer Schedule

Date	Greeters	Liturgist	Refreshments	Ushers
7th	S. Green J. Green		luncheon	T. & M. Shibley C. Lowman
	Communion—K. Rice & C. Kiniyalocots (forward)			
14th	J. Williams R. Lyons		B. Flory	R. & L. Britton C. Clark
21th	C. Kiniyalocots J. Kiniyalocots		R. McQuade	C. & J. Batliner R. Lyons
28th	J. Rockwell A. Turner		C. Clark	C. Lowman C. Burnett C. Kiniyalocots

Income for the month of February....\$19,517.07 (\$3,924.00 of that amount is offering)

Expenses for the month of February...\$12,027.87 February collection was Hope House \$65.00

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Children

*Children's Sunday school will take place during worship the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays of the month. They meet on the stage in the fellowship hall. * The 1st Sunday of the month will be dedicated to intergenerational worship.

Adult The adult class will be finishing Amy Jill Levine's exploration of the Last Week of Jesus's life on April 7th. No other class is scheduled as of now. Adult Sunday School begins at 9:00 AM in the library.

Church Women United will hold their April meeting at First Christian Church April 8th at 1 PM.

April 2018

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

	1	2	3 Choir 4:30 pm	4 Lenten Session 7 P	5	6
7 10:15 Intergenerational Worship Farewell Luncheon after worship	8	9 Bible Study 2 PM	10 Council Mtg 5:30 pm Choir 4:30 pm	11 Pastor Sheresa's Final Day	12	13
14 10:15 Worship	15	16	17 Choir 4:30 pm	18	19	20
21 Worship 10:15 AM Easter Day 	23	24	25 Choir 4:30 pm	26	27	28
28 10:15 Worship	29	30				

* Bible studies are held at Triple Moon Coffee shop 1100 Central Avenue, Middletown

*Reminder that children's Sunday school is held during worship on the
2nd, 3rd, and 4th Sundays of the month in the fellowship hall*

Join us April 7th for a service of farewell and release as we say good-bye to Rev. Sheresa Simpson-Rice. We will have a luncheon after the service for a time of fellowship and friendship as we wish God's blessings on Pastor Sheresa and Karl, who are returning to Pennsylvania.



The annual clean up, and celebration of Earth Day and Arbor Day in Middletown, Ohio is slated for Saturday, May 11, 8 am to 12 noon at Middletown High School. Keep Middletown Beautiful Executive Director Jeff Michel will coordinate volunteers to continue the successful series of annual projects in Middletown. In past years, several parks have seen major work such as professional tree and shrub trimming and removal, painting and planting. The 2019 Earth Day event will focus on the Middletown City Building area and downtown streets as well as general clean up in several parks. Arbor Day will be celebrated with a tree planting at this time. Gloves and garbage bags will be given to volunteers (sign in at Middletown High School main lobby). Dump trucks and dumpsters will be in strategic locations and volunteers can put bags in the trucks. All volunteers working that day (with a KMB shirt) are welcome to join KMB in the lobby of the high school to eat lunch immediately following the community clean up at 12:00. Volunteers may pre-register online by April 26 at www.keepmiddletownbeautiful.org or in person on the day of the event at Middletown High School. Children 14 and under must be accompanied with parent or guardian. Groups may organize before the day of the event to clean up anywhere throughout the greater Middletown area. Please contact executive director Jeff Michel at 513.425.7750 or email jeffmi@cityofmiddletown.org by April 26. Please have volunteer registration sheets filled out for participating volunteers and provide volunteer shirt size for each member of your group. Please take photographs of the group working that day or a group photo. Tally the total number of volunteers and roughly how many hours they all worked. Pre-registration by April 26 is recommended for Earth Day due to the limited supply of T-Shirts.

9th Annual
Mother's Day 5K Run & Walk

Woodside Cemetery & Arboretum, Middletown, Ohio
Sunday May 13, 2018 – 8:30 A.M.

COME & ENJOY THE BEAUTIFUL HISTORIC WOODSIDE CEMETERY/ARBORETUM

- Walk in memory of a special person, a sign will be placed along the route with their name
- Race Runners/Walkers Chip Timed by Speedy-Feet
- Course welcomes recreational walkers and runners for any distance
- Corporate/Civic group discounts available for 10 or more participants. Contact 513.424.2273
- Mothers walking receive a special gift
- Goodie bags to first 150 participants
- Lots of door prizes

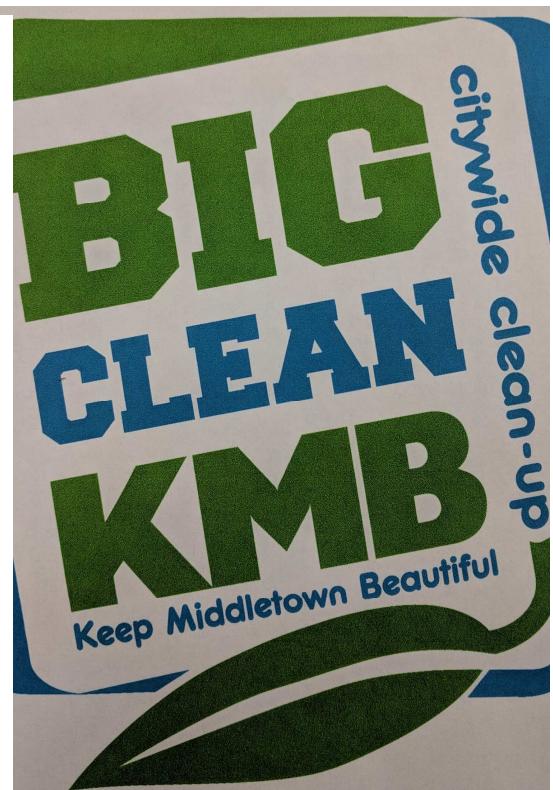
Mothers, Daughters, Sons, Husbands...All are Welcome.

Register online:
<http://speedy-feet.com/race-entry.php?id=1875>

Register via phone or receive more information:
(513) 424-2273


**Hospice Care
of Middletown**

YOUR HOMETOWN HOSPICE™



ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

114 S. BROAD STREET

MIDDLETOWN OHIO 45044

OPEN AND AFFIRMING

**Every Sunday in April: 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School
10:15 a.m. Worship Service**

**Nursery Provided • Lift to Sanctuary • Handicap Accessible
Holy Communion celebrated on the first Sunday of the month.**

***Rev. Sheresa Simpson-Rice, Pastor
Marsha Minge, Choir Director • Barbara Flory, Pianist***



Office Hours Tuesday, Wednesday 11:30a.m—2:00p.m.

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