

Rooted in the past,
Living faithfully in the present

St. Paul's United Church of Christ

February
2021

*“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,**

UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Lent is upon Us

Yes, to me, the most important and meaningful part of the church year begins with Ash Wednesday on February 17th. It is a time for reflection and determination to embark upon a journey of renewal of the spirit – a rejuvenation of our faith values as we begin that long road to Jerusalem and the cross.

But, for some people, Lent is a time to tone down their New Year's resolutions – and consolidate it into a six -week span of time. Thus, when asked what are you giving up for Lent, they respond with the same gusto as they did six weeks prior when asked what their New Year's resolution was going to be! For me, I'm giving up brussel sprouts – never liked them – never will. Just what are you giving up for Lent?

I propose instead of giving up something for this season, let's think about giving in. Yes, that's right, giving in is something we should seriously consider doing – each of us. Too often when we give something up for Lent it only lasts until the end of the season. But, if we give in to something – then we can be more successful in following through with it forever. Now what am I suggesting we give in to?

Well, for starters, how about giving in to God's LOVE for each of us. How's that for a starting point? If we try real hard to remember and feel God's love around us and within us each day, it can change our whole life around. No longer will we feel that nobody loves us – because we know, in our heart, that God loves us no matter what. By giving in to His love, we can move away from our feelings of loneliness, heartache, anger, jealousy and begin to look at the world and the people in the part of the world we live in, differently.

We can give in to our talents and abilities. How many of us have wasted these over the years by sitting back and letting others take the lead? How many times have we given up sharing our talents and abilities because we had better things to do -or we just got into a mood of apathy? Well, now is the time to break loose from our doldrums and give in to those gifts God has blessed us with and share them with others – either individually or as part of the body of the church.

Then there is the idea of giving in to our understanding and fairness with others. Too often we let our stubbornness keep us from giving in to our true emotions of forgiveness and concern for one another – some more gifts that God has endeared us with. This is the opportunity to show our true selves to others – let our hair down – let our guard down and openly welcome the chance for reconciliation with family, friends and acquaintances. This is a way we can not only renew friendships; but make new ones as well!

Giving in is not a sign of weakness; but of real strength – strength that comes from within courtesy of our Heavenly Father. So let us be determined to give in this Lenten Season and let God's love weave itself in and around us so that we can find a true sense of renewal and purpose that will stay with us forever. And I'm still not going to eat brussel sprouts!

Shalom.....*Paaton Rich*



Ash Wednesday

This year our service, to start the Lenten Season, will on **FEBRUARY 17TH** and held in the Chapel. Due to the Covid-19 regulations, we will have ashes available for each person to take and apply themselves. **The service will begin at 7pm.** For those unable to be there for the service, ashes will be available on Sunday, February 14th.



LENTEN CROWN OF THORNS READERS SOUGHT

I am looking for volunteers to do a reading each Sunday of Lent, as you extinguish a candle. The following Sundays we need someone are: February 21, 28, March 7, 14, 21, 28. Just call the office or let me know after church and I will get you a copy of the reading at least a week before.

In Loving Memory



On December 15, 2020 the St. Paul's Community lost a dear friend , Dan Meeker. His celebration of life will be held on March 6, 2021 at St, Paul's UCC . The doors will be open at 10:30 am and the service will begin at 11:15 am. There will be a live Facebook stream for the service also. All

memorial donations can go to

St. Paul's UCC or Shriner's Hospital for Children.



This month we celebrate **Chuck Clark**, who not only serves on the Church Council as our Treasurer; but runs our video equipment for our services and takes care of getting the food for families having funeral services.

Chuck also is our “go-to person” when there is a problem with the printer, computer, etc.

Chuck does numerous other odd jobs around the church and is always ready and willing to help out when a need arises.

St. Paul's Special Offering for February



Hope House Mission

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, MIDDLETOWN, OHIO

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES - DECEMBER 13, 2020

PRESENT: Rev. Luh, Barb Flory, Chuck Clark, Judy Brewer, Julie Ratliff, Darlene Adams, Larry Adams.

ABSENT: Bryan Canter, Rick Lyons.

OPENING PRAYER: Larry APPROVAL of Minutes from November 8, 2020. Motion to approve. Chuck/Julie Motion passed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA. Motion to approve as amended. Added New Business #5 - Christmas Eve. Chuck/Julie. Motion passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT. On January 1st our accounting program will reset to zero. That will take care of problems we have been experiencing. Motion to approve to file for audit. Judy/Julie. Motion passed.

PASTOR'S REPORT.

1. Our Angel Tree seems to be successful and hopefully all will return their gifts by next Sunday for me to take to Majestic. Thanks to those of you who took an angel from the tree.
2. Community Advent service at First Christian Church. I participated in it on November 29th. It was a nice service in carols and readings, although there were only eight people in the audience.
3. I attended another Ministerial meeting on November 19th and announced our opening of the Clothes Closet will be on March 2nd. We will be accepting clothing donations starting in January. January 7th we will have a meeting to set up specific rules and regulations for the Closet. This meeting will be at our church and start at 7pm. Our meeting on the 12th of November had First Christian Church represented, Judy Brewer was there from the Council and Ann, via ZOOM was representing several organizations around town that want to be a part of this ministry. Pastor Jeff from First Christian has younger folks lined up to help set up and sort clothes and other items before we open. It was decided to not rush into this - that is why we set a starting date of Tuesday, March 2nd. This gives us time to get the room ready and clothes sorted out. We will begin receiving clothing donations next month. We agreed to open on Tuesdays from 10-1pm. We will be asking for clean Spring clothing and monies to purchase underwear, diapers, etc. We have several people who say they have clothes to donate and one person in our church has a rack to donate. A letter will go out to the churches concerning our January meeting and soliciting clothing and monies to get us started. We discussed several procedures for getting clothes but will wait until the January 7th meeting to finalize a permanent plan of action.
4. Our Bible Study is moving right along. Our Bell Choir started practicing November 29th and will perform by playing two carols on December 27th. Many thanks to Barb for all her efforts in getting the bells ready for use. We are still looking for other people to participate.
5. Christmas Eve service will be at 4:30 and JoAnn Wagner, pastor John's wife from First United Methodist has accepted an invitation to play the organ on Christmas Eve. She will partner up with Barb for the Carols during the service. She is fine with a \$50. Fee to do this. She tried the organ the week after Thanksgiving and it sounded wonderful! Mike Ratliff will be playing 3 solos.
6. Our service on December 27th will be a service of Carols and Readings.
7. I am in contact with our shut-ins and have communicated with Dan Meeker during his hospitalization. I look forward to the time when I can actually visit these people and talk with them face to face.
8. The Covid situation is getting worse and quite frankly, it seems that we are but a few of the churches still having live worship. The pastor from the Latino group wanted to use our facility for worship and it was a wise decision to pass on it for now. If we do go virtual for worship, I am ready to do whatever needs to be done - just let me know.
9. Many thanks also to Larry, Chuck and Rick for all their efforts around the property. A big thank you to Darlene and Larry for getting the decorations going and to the rest of the people who helped on the 28th. The church looks really nice for the holidays! A special thanks to Chuck and Ann for helping me figure out this computer and printer in the office - time & again.
10. Ann has done a great job and I don't think I could have accomplished much without her help. She is the main resource person in our midst and we should all be grateful for her service. She has her finger on the pulse of the congregation and is the "go to" person for any information you could ever need about our members and about the community. She reminds me a lot of the secretary I worked with in Germantown for 4 years. Perfect, no. Neither are any of us. But her dedication is undeniable. I feel fortunate to have her as our Secretary and friend; and I know you do too.
11. Yes, looking back at the time I have been here, gives me great joy in getting to know the workers in the trenches of the church. You, as Council members, are to be congratulated as well for all your enthusiasm and dedication to the church. I count it a pleasure to work with you now and in the future.
12. If we put our heads together and work out a plan for the next year, despite Covid-19 dilemma, I feel we can accomplish a lot of good ministry here at St. Paul's. I am looking forward to that challenge - this opportunities - as they arise and as we create.
13. Let's keep Bryan's family in our prayers. May you all have a joyful, blessed, healthy Christmas and a Happy New Year!

NEW BUSINESS

1. Hispanic church. Tabled until June.
2. Date to take down Christmas decorations is January 3rd after church service.
3. Monthly benevolence for 2021. The January giving will be for the Needy Fund. The rest of 2021 will be decided at January council meeting.
4. Christmas checks. A motion was made to to give checks of \$50 each to the pastor, secretary, music director and custodian. Barb wrote the cards and envelopes and Ann will put in the checks. Motion made to continue the tradition. Chuck/Darlene. Motion passed.
5. Christmas Eve. This was discussed during the Pastor's report.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Clothing Closet. This was discussed in the pastor's report.
2. Update on new copier. New copier was installed and all the paperwork was done. We will have a final bill. We should receive a check for \$1300 for ProSource within 3-4 weeks.

CO-MODERATORS' REPORTS - Barb & Rick. No report.

SERVICE - Julie & Judy. There was a email from Shalom that someone is looking for a car.

WORSHIP - Barb & Darlene. No report.

FELLOWSHIP - Chuck. No report.

PROPERTY - Rick & Larry. We have an estimate of \$850.00 to install 8 horizontal blinds and change 10 ceiling lights from D & M Custom Painting and Home Repairs, LLC. After discussion, a motion was made to accept the estimate and go forward with the work. Chuck/ Julie. Motion passed. We are in the process of getting estimated for needed plastering of damaged walls in the church.

BUDGET & FINANCE - Bryan. No report.

NEXT MEETING: January 10, 2021

NEXT MONTH OPENING PRAYER: Barb

ATTENDANCE: November 2020 - 122 (24/5 week average) November 2019 - 123 (30/4 week average)

Respectfully submitted by

Judith S Brewer Church Council Secretary



**Middletown Interfaith
Clothes Closet**
We've Got you Covered

As you may already know, we are opening on Tuesday, March 2nd from 10-1pm and every Tuesday after. People needing use of the Closet, must call for a reservation first.

We are looking for clothes racks, hangers and of course, clothing. The location will be in the old Library, next to my Office.

If you wish to donate any items – or wish to volunteer to help out, please let me know at 93e7-993-5464 or call the Office. We look for monetary donations as well – and if you wish to give monies, please make the check out to: St. Paul's UCC and earmark it for the Clothes Closet.

We are cleaning out the Library and if you wish to help with this, just give us a call. Your support, in any way is greatly appreciated. Our Board of Directors thus far consist of: Pastors' Connor Thompson, Jeff Wilder, Judy Brewer, Ann Babb and myself.

FEBRUARY VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

DATE	GREETERS	USHERS	LITURGIST	Open/Close
2/7/2020	J. Rockwell	L & D Adams	Carl Batliner	Chuck C.
2/14/2020	J. Williams	C. & J. Batliner	Marsha Minge	Chuck C.
2/21/2020	C. Clark	T & M Shibley	Cindy Burnett	Chuck C.
2/28/2020	C. Batliner	C. Burnett J. Rockwell	Judy Brewer	Chuck C.

Things are running slightly behind in the office due to illness. Your giving statements will be going out this week. If you need them sooner please call the office to make arrangements to get them.



*Virginia Elam Lorraine Clark Cleo Habig
Charlene Hale Frances Stoutenborough
Mike Davies Margaret Morrison & Family
Cindy Burnett*

***Prayers for our service men and women..
Chase McConnehea Jake Burley***

February 2021

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Bible Study 1 pm				
7 Confirmation Class 11:30 am Communion Sunday	8	9 Bible Study	10	11	12	13
14 Council	15	16 Bible Study 1 pm	17 Ash Wednesday Service 7pm	18	19	20
21 Confirmation Class 11:30 am Services 10:15 am	22	23 Bible Study 1 pm	24	25	26	27
28 Services 10:15 am						

* Bible studies are held in Friendship Hall @1pm on Tuesday social distancing and Covid-19 standards are followed. Masks are required
February Special Offering is the "Hope House"

Name: _____

Date: _____

Lenten Word Find

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

Confession

Love

Divine Mercy

Passion

Veronica

Mary

Good Thief

Stations

Forty Days

Last Supper

Catholic

Good Friday

Sacrifice

Crown of Thorns

Cross

Crucifix

Fasting

Jesus

Purple

Prayer

Palm Sunday

Ashes

Lent

Alms

Living Lent



Instead of giving up chocolate this Lent, could you take up one challenge which will help tackle climate change?

Give up meat? Take up alternative forms of transport? Commit to living locally?

Sign up at www.livinglent.org and receive inspirational and practical daily emails, and join with others undertaking the same challenges.

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
114 S. BROAD STREET
MIDDLETOWN OHIO 45044

OPEN AND AFFIRMING
10:15 a.m. Worship Service

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

Rev. Rich Luh, Pastor
Marsha Minge, Choir Director • Barbara Flory, Pianist

Pastors Office Hours Tuesday-Wednesday Thursday 9:30-2 pm or by appointment
Office Hours Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 11 a.m.—2:00 p.m.
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