

Rooted in the past,
Living faithfully in the present

St. Paul's United Church of Christ

April 2018

“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

Jesus repeated his greeting: “Peace to you. Just as the Father sent me, I send you.” Then he took a deep breath and breathed into them. “Receive the Holy Spirit,” he said.
John 20:20-22 The Message

Throughout Lent this year, the Gospel of John has been a constant: the adult Sunday school spent six weeks studying it and for much of the Lenten season it has been the Gospel choice for the lectionary in worship. I took a class on John in seminary, but I admit not much insight stuck with me. Learning about it anew has been wonderful.

John is the most unique of the four Gospels in that it highlights Jesus’ divine, kingly nature start to finish. It places Jesus in Jerusalem several times for the Passover, unlike the synoptic Gospels. It even has its own version of the Pentecost story— except it doesn’t take place on Pentecost nor does it feature the special effects of dancing flames or multiple languages. In true John fashion, it is simply Jesus doing the heavy lifting and breathing the Spirit on his disciples. Matthew Skinner, New Testament professor at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, says this: “Here, the Spirit comes on Easter, during Jesus’ first post-resurrection appearance to a collection of his followers. (Earlier in the day, outside the tomb, he spoke to and commissioned only Mary Magdalene.) Also, in this passage we encounter the Spirit with less of a universal tone (in comparison to Acts); the focus here is more particular, focused on the identity and sending of a community.”

I don’t need to tell you why this resonates with me. Here we are, fresh into a new Easter season, and John tells us we don’t need to wait for Pentecost to be sent out. It can happen... Right here! Right now! We don’t need to wait a second longer. In one of our Lenten services, a member said they long to evangelize on behalf of the church. The intention? Spread the word that St. Paul’s is a terrific community to be a part of and people are missing out if they don’t join us.

Over the past few weeks, that comment of deep desire has rested on my soul. Of course I was permissive, but the burning question is “what is it about our community that gives the impression that we don’t want to grow?” You may scoff at such a notion, but keep in mind that we often speak words that say one thing and in the next action demonstrate an opposite notion through our actions. As we process our responses from Lent, I’ll encourage the examination of this idea as well. *Are we standing in our own way?*

Now that Jesus has conquered death, I think it’s high time we did a little conquering ourselves. If we say we value Welcome, Fellowship, Outreach, and Tradition, I ask why and how? Why is tradition important and *which tradition?* If outreach is important, why do so few people come to feed our Shalom guests, especially since we value fellowship. And whose fellowship *do* we value? Is money our sole way to do outreach? Note that Jesus did not say to his disciples that he has been sent but they should take up a collection and *send someone else*. He said, as God sent him he was sending *them* out.

The building of a community of faith isn’t easy— if you doubt it, ask the Apostle Paul. But it is worthy work for called people. I believe that we are indeed called, if not I would not have chosen to join you in this disciple journey you are treading. As we discern our future, get involved. Help us to formulate a map to steer by and a plan to reach the horizon we have named for our destination. You are necessary to this church and we need you! If not, why would you have taken the time to read this in the first place? You have inhaled and been inspired by The Spirit. Now go where you are sent!

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 ourselves, our relationship with God and the vision those in attendance dream for our church. Our discussions have unearthed so many wonderful concerns and sparked deep discussion. We have learned about one another in new and exciting ways, and several suggestions have flowed out of these sessions. One is the important impact of silence. Silence prior to worship was a regular part of the meditative time here at St. Paul's UCC before the church service started. Over time, as the church congregation changed, socialization crept into those moments before church began. The individuals around our Lenten table shared that they hungered for the centering quiet that a silent sanctuary affords, and therefore the council will be encouraging the ushers to keep the doors into the sanctuary closed, opening them to allow people to enter the meditative space. Also, we will be as intentional as possible to keeping a time of silence within the worship service as well. Perhaps in our stillness, we will not only know God, but feel the powerful peace that abides in stillness.



A note from the moderator...

VOLUNTEERS 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.

SUMMER MUSIC

During summer we ask guest musicians to volunteer to share their talents with us some Sundays. If you know a singer or musician that you would like to ask to share their talents with us, please do and give Pastor Sheresa or Barb their contact information so dates can be arranged. Thank you.

We're holding in prayer ...

Our shut ins: Virginia Elam
Cleo Habig
Carrol Stein
Betty Steigerwald
Amanda Lorig
Barb Ligett
Charlene Hale
Sue Brown
Amy Sebastian
Randy Combs
Baby Bree
Lorraine Clark

Our military: Chase McConehea
Jake Burley



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 studying Moses by Adam Hamilton. Join us as we explore the wilderness and struggle of the ancient Israelites.

**Adult Sunday School begins at 9:00 AM in the library.
Children will meet for Sunday school during worship.**

Bible Study Texts

April 10th– Acts 20:17-38

April 24th– Acts 25:1-12

Lunch Bunch Happenings

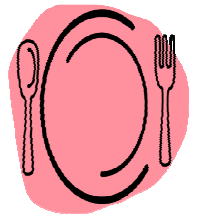
On the last Sunday of the month, congregants gather after worship at a local eatery to share in food and fellowship. It's a lot of fun!

Locations ...

April– Rivertown

Brewing Co.

May– Barn & Bunk



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

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Council Minutes.

March 13, 2018

PRESENT: Patricia Lemmons, Julie Ratliff, Cindy Burnett, Rick Lyons, Chuck Clark, Bryan Canter, Barb Flory, Judy Brewer and Reverend Sheresa Simpson-Rice.

OPENING PRAYER: BARB

BRIAN BUTT FROM JOHNSON INVESTMENTS: Brian addressed the council concerning options for investment strategies.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES from February 13, 2018. Motion made and passed to approve minutes as written. Bryan/Patricia

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion made and passed to approve the agenda. Rick/Julie

TREASURER'S REPORT: Motion made and passed to approve the report. Julie/Rick

PASTOR'S REPORT: Worship - 3 Sundays, Ash Wednesday Service 2/14; Church Events - Lenten Gathering 2/22, Attended Dorothy Webb's funeral 2/10; Meetings - Council 2/13, UCC Women Clergy 2/19, Ministerial Alliance 2/22; Wider Church - Installation 2/18, Governance Council 2/20, MID (Members In Discernment) 2/20; Clergy Council 2/17; Education - Bible Study 2/13, 2/27, Sunday School 2/11, 2/18, 2/25; Pastoral Visitation - 2/28 - Virginia Elam, 2/28 - Betty Steigerwald, 2/28 - Carroll Stein, 2/28 - Amanda Lori, 2/28 - Cleo Habig, 2/28 - Charlene Hale (not in room, left message); Funerals - Pat Moore 2/8; Bereavement Leave - January 25, February 1, February 5; Upcoming Events - May 1-3 UCC Women Clergy Conference, May 21-25 DMin Intensive Week, August 13-19, 2018 vacation.

CO-MODERATORS' REPORTS - Barb - Expressed appreciation for the way everyone on council comes together to get things done when they arise.

SERVICE - Patricia & Julie - It was decided to give a check for \$65.00 to Rosa Parks Elementary and let them decide how it can best be used for the school. This was the money collected from the snack sale. Shalom - 20+ people were served by the church.

WORSHIP - Barb & Dan - Music is planned out for the coming weeks.

FELLOWSHIP - Chuck & Cindy - List is made for the ushers and greeters. A meat & cheese tray was sent for Pat Moore's funeral.

PROPERTY - Rick - Larry got another bid for fencing around the outside stairs of the church and for repairs to the handrail. The property committee will get together for discussion. This needs to be finalized before May so it gets on the agenda for the congregational meeting.

BUDGET & FINANCE - Bryan - Brian Butt summed up how we are doing with the investments we have made.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Audit - Bryan and Chuck set the date of March 27 at 11:00 a.m. to do the audit for the years 2016 & '17.
2. Computer update - currently limping along. Rev. Sheresa will look into storage options to alleviate the slow speed of the computer.
3. ALICE training - Rick and Karl will meet to come up with a response plan and bring it back to council in April.

Continued on the other side

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Maundy Thursday - 7:00 p.m. Fellowship Hall get together followed by the service. Those who attend will be asked to bring nibbles.
2. Palm Sunday - A carry-in will be held after service. After, each table will have questions from the Lenten booklet written on large sheets of paper. Each person can then go from table to table to write their thoughts to the questions.
3. Easter - Communion will be served in the pews. Cindy will pick up flowers.
4. May Congregational Meeting - The date is May 6.
5. Nominations for Council members - Need nominations for new council members by the April council meeting.
6. Annual Reports - Due by 4/23 to be printed for Congregational meeting.
7. Lunch Bunch - In April they will be going to Rivertown and on May 20 to Barn 'N Bunk.
8. Silent meditation upon entering the sanctuary - Discussion about the noise level outside the sanctuary doors. Having the doors shut and opening them for people to enter was discussed as a way to control the noise.
9. Book Cart - The book cart in Fellowship hall needs attention. It was decided to announce during church service that anyone who donated books who would like to have them back need to get them by April 15th. Books that are left will be donated to AAUW for their annual book sale. After that date, a request for different books will be made to the congregation.
10. Church Women United - Asked about the availability to use the church for their meetings next year. They have another church that is available for their use. It was decided to give the other church a chance to host the meetings.

NEXT MEETING: April 10, 5:30 p.m.

NEXT MONTH OPENING PRAYER: Rick

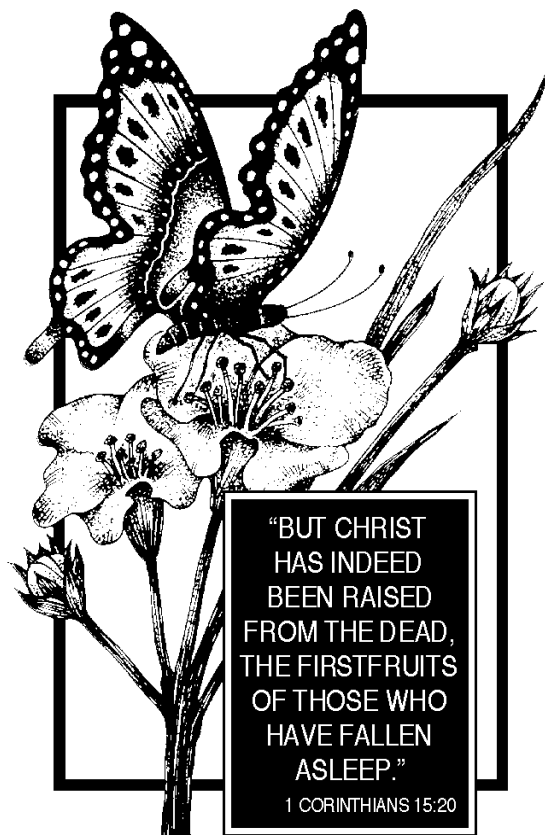
Attendance: February 2018 - 139 (34/4 week average)

February 2017 - 142. (35/4 week average)

Respectfully submitted by Judy Brewer, Council Secretary

The Book Cart

Here at St. Paul's, we have some real gems available to our congregation. One of those things is our book cart. Folks give books to the cart and others borrow from it. Its inventory has been stable for quite some time. Recently, we became aware that the AAUW (American Association of University Women) holds a book sale every year to benefit scholarships for youth. This presents a wonderful opportunity for us. The council plans to donate the books we have and purchase new ones. **If you gave a book you don't want donated, please remove it before April 10th.** The last day for donations to AAUW's book sale is April 15th, just in case you too want to purge your library. To get more details about that, call the church office.



Pastor Sheresa is in the church
 Tuesday/Wednesday
 11:30 AM– 2:00 PM If she isn't
 there, call her cell phone; there's
 a good chance she's at a meeting
 or on an emergency visit.

Her cell phone is (717) 318-6865.
 Her home phone number is
 (513) 915-7184.

She writes a devotional
 on her blog:
www.thewonderingpath.com



Church Women
 United will hold
 their April meeting
 here at St. Paul's
 UCC on April 9th at 1
 PM.



Reminder!! We will hold our congregational Meeting May 6th after
 worship. If you feel called to serve on council, let one of the current
 council members know of your interest. We need you!

April Volunteer Schedule

Date	Greeters	Liturgist	Refreshments	Ushers	Nursery
1st	C. Burnett J. Burnett	Patricia Lemmons	J. Rockwell	B. Canter S. Canter P. Lemmons	
Communion—C. Kinyalocets, C. Clark, C& J Batliner (in pew)					
8th	S. Green J. Green	Cindy Burnett	B. Flory	C. Kinyalocets J. Kinyalocets C. Clark	
15th	J. Williams R. Lyons	C. Lowman	J. Batliner	M. Shibley T. Shibley N. Fisher	K. Canter B. Canter
22rd	C. Kinyalocets R. McQuade	J. Meeker-Kishler	B. Canter	R. McQuade L. & R. Britton	C. Kinyalocets
29th	J. Rockwell N. Fisher	C. Kinyalocets	C. Kinyalocets	L. & D. Adams C. Lowman	

St. Paul's folks arrived in numbers to feed the homeless in March. We were grateful to have our regular volunteers, the Canters, Kinyalocets', Patricia Lemmons, Julie Ratliff; and also some new faces—Karl Rice, Barb Flory and Pastor Sheresa, donating or serving food. This was the last week of Shalom for the season. One hundred and ten people utilized this temporary housing solution over the winter months. On the night we served dinner, the tables were full and we estimated around 25 people served. There were no leftovers!



On Palm Sunday, we gathered to share the contents of our Lenten booklets. We are in the process of forming a committee to compile that feedback and organize it into a vision to shape the future of the church, as well as steps to guide our journey as we manifest that vision. If you have an interest in serving, tell Pastor Sheresa

April 2018

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

1 Easter Day 10:15 Intergenerational Worship 	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Bible Study 2 PM Council Mtg	11 Choir 6:30 pm	12	13	14
15 10:15 Worship	16	17	18 Choir 6:30 pm	19	20	21
22 Worship 10:15 AM	23	24 Bible Study 2 pm	25 Choir 6:30 pm	26	27	28 SONKA spring Gathering 9A- 1:30 P
29 10:15 Worship	30	31				

* 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

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Council Minutes.

February 13, 2018

PRESENT: *Chuck Clark, Bryan Canter, Patricia Lemmons, Julie Ratliff, Judy Brewer, Cindy Burnett, Dan Meeker, Rick Lyons and Reverend Sheresa Simpson-Rice.*

OPENING PRAYER: *Rick*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES from January 9, 2018. Motion made and passed to approve as amended-under Budget & Finance, Brian will be here in March not February. Chuck/Bryan. APPROVAL OF AGENDA. Motion made and passed to approve the agenda. Bryan/Chuck. TREASURER'S REPORT: After discussion, a motion was made and passed to accept the treasurer's report as amended with clarification. Chuck/Rick

PASTOR'S REPORT: WORSHIP - 4 Sundays, CHURCH EVENTS - Poverty Experience 1/21, COMMUNITY EVENTS - MLK Service 1/14, MEETINGS - Council 1/9, WIDER CHURCH -

Outdoor Ministries 1/28, EDUCATION - Bible Study 1/9, 1/23 & Sunday School 1/14, 1/21, 1/28, PASTORAL VISITATION - refused-Virginia Elam, 1/30-Carroll Stein, 1/31-Cleo Habig, UPCOMING EVENTS - Funeral for Pat Moore 2/8, 2019 Lenten opportunity for travel, May 1-3, 2018 UCC Clergy Women Conference in Arizona, May 21-25, 2018 DMin intensive week, August 13-19, 2018 Vacation/son's marriage.

TEAM REPORTS

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

SERVICE - Patricia & Julie: Shalom is scheduled for March 8. The snack sale brought in \$65.00 which will go to Rosa Parks Elementary School.

WORSHIP - Barb & Dan: No report. Rev. Sheresa: After discussion, it was decided to have Lenten Study on Thursday's at 7:00.

FELLOWSHIP - Chuck & Cindy: A meat & cheese tray was provided for the family of Pat Moore. Organized the luncheon for the Poverty Experience. Next month on Palm Sunday we will be having a carry-in of breakfast items.

PROPERTY - Rick. Following a discussion of the state of the boilers, it was decided to do more research. This will be revisited in April. Continued discussing repairs needed in the church and funding options available.

BUDGET & FINANCE - Bryan: Brian Butt from Johnson Investments will be here next month to talk about our investments. It is time to do an audit. Bryan and Chuck volunteered. Brian Butt wants to change the allocation of the money from stocks that are very conservative to some that are more risky. Motion made and passed to allow Brian Butt to move the some of the finances around from those that are very conservative to some that are less conservative. Chuck/Cindy

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: No unfinished business at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

Liquor license request - 64 South Main Street. Request is for a B & B and an upscale restaurant and bar. It was agreed to not oppose the request.

Office computer - the computer in Reverend Sheresa's office is almost out of memory. Her suggestion is to get a external hard drive, move data from the computer to the hard drive and then get rid of the computer. It was agree to follow her suggestion.

Pastor vacation/Lent 2019 - Rev. Sheresa has a chance to travel with her family to the Grand Canyon during Holy Week next week. There are two options: skip Palm Sunday and come back for Maundy Thursday or do Palm Sunday, skip Maundy Thursday and come back in time for Easter. It was decided that to be here for Palm Sunday and Easter would be the best option.

Church Women United \$30.00 Dues - Motion made and passed to pay the \$30.00 dues. Dan/Chuck.

NEXT MEETING: March 13, 5:30 p.m. NEXT MONTH

OPENING PRAYER: Barb

ATTENDANCE: January 2018 - 120. (30/4 week average) January 2017 - 173. (34/5 week average)

Respectfully submitted by Judy Brewer, Council Secretary

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 11:00a.m—2:00p.m.
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