

TIDINGS

St. Paul United Church of Christ

24158 Goddard Road, Taylor, Michigan 48180-0190

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www.stpaulucctaylor.org

Senior Pastor - Rev. Dr. Geoffrey G. Drutchas

Minister of Christian Education - Pastor Cheryl Schalm

April 2020

Letter from our Council President

The global spread of the coronavirus, COVID-19, has become a topic of discussion and concern for all of us. As we navigate through these difficult times, it is important for you to remember that you are part of the larger St. Paul Church family. Effective Tuesday, March 24th and continuing through Monday, April 13th Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer has issued a statewide STAY-AT-HOME order to help fight the ongoing coronavirus outbreak.

To ensure the health and safety of our entire congregation, our staff and the community, the Executive Committee has implemented the following actions:

- All Sunday Worship Services have been moved to Virtual Services until further notice.
 - o Live streaming will continue every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. utilizing Facebook Live. You can access this by following our "St Paul United Church of Christ, Taylor" Facebook page.
 - o Services may also be viewed later on our Website at "stpaulucctaylor.org" under the "Sermons, Bulletins and Audio Service" tab.
- All church activities will remain suspended until further notice.
- The Church office is officially closed, and most staff members have been told to stay home. We will continue to monitor the Voice Mailbox so please leave a detailed message and someone will get back with you.
- Rev. Geoffrey Drutchas (313) 319-1759 and Pastor Cheryl Schalm (734) 255-0935 will continue to be available for pastoral services. Feel free to contact them directly.
- The Spring Rummage Sale has been postponed; the new dates have not yet been determined.
- Drive-Thru Fish Dinners will continue for the short term with reduced staffing

We ask that you, our members, continue to invest in the mission and ministry of our church by continuing to participate in giving. We hope that you will continue to donate as you are able through the on-line service provided at stpaulucctaylor.org or by mailing your check payable to "St. Paul UCC, 24158 Goddard Rd, Taylor, MI 48180". Drop off donation envelopes will no longer be accepted since the office will not be staffed.

For the most current resources and updates, and ways to participate in our ministry, please visit our website "stpaulucctaylor.org". A "Coronavirus" selection under the "What's Happening" tab has been created to keep our members up-to-date on changes

as they occur. We will continue to connect virtually and spiritually with each other by utilizing Facebook and Email as well to keep you informed. As we move through these unprecedented times we ask that you join us in prayer for our church members, our community, our nation and the world.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact one of your Executive Committee members: Tim Ruffner, 1st Vice President; Jim Poet, 2nd Vice President; Dan Case, Treasurer.

Peace and Blessings to you,
Michele McNeely
President, St. Paul Council

PASTOR'S PEACE

These past several weeks have brought swift change for our lives. Responding to Michigan Governor Whitmer's executive order, more of us than ever are at home or staying very close to home, except for trips to the grocery or pharmacy, in order to help curtail the spread of the coronavirus. All this has had a huge impact on our church life together. Our usual Lenten season programs have been suspended right up to Easter and beyond. This has included Sunday morning worship in our sanctuary. Right now we are all scrambling to do things in different, safer ways. Our sit-down Lenten Fish dinners became drive-thru dinners instead. With the help of a couple of resident "techies," Michael Isaacs and Gary Peters, we have been able to livestream a shorter Sunday morning worship service on Facebook at 10 a.m., afterwards posting it on our church website for many more to view. Meanwhile, Pastor Cheryl Schalm has launched a special blog for young people of our congregation to help keep them connected at this time in which we're called to keep up social distancing. And just about every day I am on the phone calling individual church members and families, asking how they're doing and if there's anything they need right now with which their church family can help.

In the midst of circumstances that seem to change every day and can easily rattle the calmest person in the world, I just keep foremost in mind that we are a community of faith. We have a God revealed in Jesus Christ who wants us to flourish and prevail in health. Although this virus shows us how nature can go drastically amiss, I know in my heart that God is always working redemptively on our behalf and will help guide and get us through this tough time if we are open to his leading and look for those opportunities to do our part to help check this virus and keep it at bay. I consider the medical knowledge about the coronavirus already at our disposal is directly or indirectly a gift from God that we need to put to use to combat it for our own sake and the sake of everyone we love. I do listen to what the docs and public health authorities are saying. We all need to listen and adjust our daily lives accordingly.

It would be wonderful to be together in church this Easter, just a few weeks from now, admiring the white lilies that usually decorate our altar and chancel and breathing their always-fragrant scent. Yet, looking at the facts, that doesn't seem realistic. Instead, we need to stay safe, protect each other's well-being, and look to ways that we can share this most sacred time without unnecessary hazard. Over the next several days I will be conferring with Pastor Schalm and our Music Director Tracy Hoffman about ways that we can through live streamed services still make Holy Week and Easter special for those with the capacity to join on Facebook or check in with the church web site. We will

also be looking for ways to make an Easter connection with those not on Facebook or online.

At St. Paul we have a wonderful congregation that has lived through many truly difficult and challenging times. Although the weeks ahead will not be without their worries, Easter and its season is all about resurrection and the renewed hope that a risen savior brings to our lives. In our daily prayers at home, let us, even as we exercise good, pragmatic sense, renew our trust in the loving, redeeming God that Jesus proclaimed through his life and death that we may continue as men and women of sustained courage and strength.

~ *Shalom, Pastor Geoffrey Drutchas*

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION EDITORIAL

Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.
~ ***Hebrews 11:6***

God speaks to us during all times and He always nurtures our souls with what they need at any given time. I found great solace in the following devotion offered by S. Chadwick. My hope is that it will serve to keep you mindful of God's faithfulness during difficult and trying times and of how important it is that we place our trust in Him. May you find comfort in it as I did.

We all need faith for desperate days, and the Bible is filled with accounts of such days. Its story is told with them, its songs are inspired by them, its prophecy deals with them, and its revelation has come through them. Desperate days are the stepping-stones on the path of light. They seem to have been God's opportunity to provide our school of wisdom.

Psalms 107 is filled with stories of God's lavish love. In every story of deliverance, it was humankind coming to the point of desperation that gave God His opportunity to act. Arriving at "their wits' end" (Psalm 107:27) of desperation was the beginning of God's power.

Remember the promise made to a couple "as good as dead," that their descendants would be "as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore" (Hebrews 11:12). Read once again the story of the Red Sea deliverance, and the story of how "the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan" (Joshua 3:17). Study once more the prayers of Asa, Jehoshaphat, and Hezekiah when they were severely troubled, not knowing what to do. Go over the history of Nehemiah, Daniel, Hosea, and Habakkuk. Stand with awe in the darkness of Gethsemane, and linger by the tomb in Joseph of Arimathea's garden through those difficult days. Call to account the witnesses of the early church, and ask the apostles to relate the story of their desperate days.

Desperation is better than despair. Remember, our faith did not create our desperate days. Faith's work is to sustain us through those days and to solve them. Yet the only alternative to desperate faith is despair. Faith holds on and prevails.

There is not a more heroic example of desperate faith than the story of the three Hebrew young men Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Their situation was desperate, but they bravely answered, "If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he

does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up" (Daniel 3:17-18).

*Let us not forget the Garden of Gethsemane and let us ponder its "nevertheless."
"If it be possible..nevertheless..."(Matthew 26:39). Our Lord's soul was overwhelmed by deep darkness. To trust meant experiencing anguish to the point of blood, and darkness to the very depths of hell - Nevertheless! Nevertheless!*

When obstacles and trials seem like prison walls to be, I do the little I can do and leave the rest to Thee. And when there seems no chance, no change, from grief can set me free, Hope finds its strength in helplessness, and calmly waits for Thee.

~ In Christ, Pastor Cheryl Schalm, Minister of Christian Education

Christian Education News and Events

Food & Flick, April 10th

Join the youth group and young adult fellowship in a Food & Flick night. All interested are invited and encouraged to prepare your favorite snack and to tune into "Jesus Christ Superstar," on Netflix at 7:00 p.m. This musical is based on a concept album project written by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice and the subsequent long-running Broadway performance. This film tells the story of the final 6 days in the life of Jesus Christ through the troubled eyes of Judas Iscariot. There are no spoken lines. Everything is sung.

For those who do not have Netflix, I have other Christian movie DVDs to loan to include, Veggie Tales. If you would like to borrow a movie please contact me and I will make the arrangements.

Sunday Morning Sunday School Blog to Continue Through April

The Christian Education Corner Sunday School Blog will be available every Sunday throughout April. Simply log onto the website, stpaulucctaylor.org and click on the Christian Education Corner link. There will be a greeting, a story, a message, a love letter from God, an activity, a weekly challenge and a closing prayer. If you should have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Pastor Schalm.

Book Buddy and Adopt a Grandparent programs will continue throughout April

If you are a middle school or high school student or post high school young adult and would like to serve as a weekly book buddy to one of our younger Sunday School children please contact Pastor Schalm. If you are a parent of a young Sunday School child and would like for them to have a book buddy please contact Pastor Schalm. The book buddy will facetime with the child once a week, read them a story, chat about the story and then say a prayer with the child before closing.

Sunday School children, youth and young adults are needed to adopt a grandparent during these days of shelter in place. All that is required is that you send a bi-weekly note, drawing or picture to your adopted grandparent. If you or your children are interested please contact Pastor Schalm. These are both great ways to help out during these difficult days. Please prayerfully consider them.

Last Sunday of the Month Video

Sunday School children, youth and young adults are invited and encouraged to send Pastor Schalm pictures of what they are doing during these shelter in place days. Send me pictures of where and how you do your schooling, pictures of the activities you may be doing, send me your acts of kindness, pictures of your completed Sunday School projects, pictures of your animals and family, pictures of your work if you are still working. I will utilize all pictures I receive by the 15th of each month to put together a short video to live stream on the last Sunday of the month. Let's stay connected despite our inability to be physically present.

Welcome Back Party and Celebration to Replace the Sunday School Easter Party and Egg Hunt and Confirmand Breakfast

With the Easter Party and Egg hunt and Confirmand breakfast having to be cancelled, plans are underway for a big welcome back celebration. While the date is uncertain, children and young people can look forward to a big, CHRIST IS RISEN and GOD REMAINS GOOD, celebration. Date and details to follow.

Youth Flower Sale Upcoming

Given the uncertainty of the days ahead and the availability of flowers from Blocks, the youth flower sale will be put on hold until such time the shelter-in-place mandate is lifted. The fundraiser will be re-evaluated at that time.

Plans For The "2020" Mission Trip are Underway Pending Virus Status

Plans are currently underway for the "2020" summer, youth mission trip. The trip will take place the week of June 22nd – June 27th. Participants will be serving the Detroit Metropolitan area working at Cass Social Services, Salvation Army Bed and Bread Truck and Gleaners Food Pantry. Then on Wednesday we will head to Gaylord for a Christian Unite Festival. Fundraising events and activities will continue all the way through June. Only twenty spots are available. Those participating in fundraisers will be granted the first opportunities. Please contact Pastor Schalm if you are interested in participating. Youth should watch their mail for additional information.

EVENTS YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS

St. Paul Pictorial Directory Postponed

Due to the uncertainty with regards to our church activities and the Coronavirus we have decided to postpone the Pictorial Directory. Photo sessions scheduled for Thursday, April 16th (2:00 – 8:00 PM), Friday, April 17th (1:00 – 7:00 pm) or Saturday, April 18th (10:00 am to 4:00 pm) have all been cancelled. The new dates for photo sessions are Thursday, September 10th (10:00 am to 4:00 pm), Friday, September 11th (1:00 – 7:00 pm) or Saturday, September 12th (10:00 am to 4:00 pm) . Re-scheduling of your appointment will be required. More information will be shared at the Semi-Annual Meeting on Sunday July, 12th. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause you and your family. Call the Church office at (313) 291-1221.

HEALTH MINISTRIES

CPR/First Aid Being Offered in May

Ideally, we would like two persons from each church group or committee to take a First-aid/CPR class. This will allow someone to be able to be a capable first-responder to an injured person during church activities. Kathy Williams will lead an American Heart, CPR/First aid class which takes about 8 hours. Classes will include two four-hour sessions or one 8-hour session. *The class workbook will be available prior to the sessions. The workbook needs to be read prior to the class.* Tentative classes are planned for two 4-hour sessions on Thursday & Friday May 14 and 15, or an 8-hour on May 16. More classes can be scheduled if needed. If you are willing or interested in becoming certified, please place a Make a-Wish card in the offering plate. Please sign up in the office.

Matter of Balance Class Begins June 1

A Matter of Balance is an award-winning program designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase their activity levels. Balance has improved by those taking the class. You will learn techniques to improve your balance. You need to register. Snacks are provided. Classes are free; donations are accepted. This program is offered through the Agency on aging and the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan. Registration is needed by mid-May. Call LaShawn Griffin at 734.222.98 Ext 214 or fill out a Make a Wish card.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENT

At St. Paul We Encourage All to Give and Share As You Are Able

Your financial support for St. Paul during this difficult time continues to be important. Electronic giving might be an option for you during the next few months and beyond. Electronic giving offers many conveniences. Automating your financial commitments means your contributions will be received on a steady, uninterrupted basis. You can easily create an account and schedule your gifts or give a one-time gift without creating an account. Please consider electronic giving as an option to support St. Paul during the upcoming months. While online giving is a great option, it may not be for everyone. You can continue to contribute by sending your donations directly to the church via the U.S. Mail. By knowing what you are willing to commit financially, we are able to better plan during this extremely difficult time. To set up a recurring giving schedule, visit us online at www.stpaulucctaylor.org/giving, locate the Online Giving button, and set up your recurring giving schedule. For additional assistance or if you have questions, please contact Dan Case or Gary Peters.

Easter Lily Remembrances

Easter is a time when we honor, commemorate, and memorialize loved ones with white lilies to decorate the altar and chancel at the front of our sanctuary. This Easter will be different. But there is still an opportunity to remember those dear to us by making a special \$10 contribution to the "St. Paul Lily List." Those you wish to remember and commemorate will be included in a special Easter time roster on our St. Paul website and through an email to our entire church family. You can add your loved one's name to "Lily List" by sending your dedication request to the church with your donation enclosed. Please contact the church office and leave a message if you have any questions.

Reach Out and Share--Safely

Over the last month the call for social distancing has kept many folks wisely staying at home with family. However, as reported in the media and shown among our own network of friends, we can be very creative about connecting with others while staying safe and not contributing to any virus spread. One neighborhood held a thoughtfully coordinated scavenger hunt for kids. Neighbors put up shared-theme front window decorations and kids walked separately with their parents up and down the streets to look for the next exciting clue without health hazard to anyone. In another case, a young person celebrating a birthday had the delight of watching a dozen different friends with their parents organize a parade in his honor. The occupants of each passing car waved a different birthday greeting as they passed by the front porch of his family's house.

A scavenger hunt or parade may be a little more than we can muster. But we can telephone old and new friends. Although emails and text-messaging may be efficient and general Facebook sharing can be sweet, nothing beats the warmth of the human voice in all its nuances. Also, old-fashioned greetings cards mailed to family and friends show in tangible ways that we remember and care. Received and set out on a desk or table they remind us again and again that we are not forgotten, but cherished.

In these weeks ahead, when we need to keep a little or a lot more mutual distance, may we each look to ways that we can nevertheless feel closer together across our St. Paul Church community. A text, a card, a call sent can make a big difference in someone's day and dispel some of the aloneness our friends and loved ones might be feeling. Naturally, upcoming birthdays and anniversaries—even the Easter holiday—provide extra good cause to communicate and share. But the best reason to call or message may be no reason at all—just the fact that we are thinking of each other. –Pastor Geoff Drutchas

Information the St. Paul Website makes available to you you- Monthly Tips

Our St. Paul Website at www.stpaulucctaylor.org has all types of information that might be of use to you.

- A special Coronavirus section was added, to keep you informed of changes.
- Video and audio copies of our St. Paul Worship Services are available online by selecting the "Weekly Sermons, Bulletins and Audio Services" tab from the home page. Select a date from the listings to view. The video and audio recording, Order of Service, Morning Tide and Sermon will display.
- Our Church Calendar is available by selecting the "What's Happening" tab from the home page. The calendar is an up-to-date listing of all events and activities happening at our church.
- Did you know?, there is a "Search" box at the bottom of every web page. Just type in a keyword and it will take you to a listing appropriate pages on the Website. (for example: type in "forms" and it will take you to our online forms).
- To help in navigating the many pages available within our site, a new feature has been added. A "Sitemap" button has been added in the bottom of any page. A sitemap lists every page within the site. Clicking on the page title from that list, will take you to that page.

If you have any questions or suggestions for improving our website, please contact our IT Ministry - Gary Peters, Michael Isaacs or Dan Case.

ChristNet Shelter and Fish & Loaves Community Pantry Remain Open

As emergency services, both the ChristNet Shelter and the Fish & Loaves Community Food Pantry remain open at this time, providing help to those who need shelter and food. Efforts are being made by both community-based programs to incorporate social distancing and other safety precautions as a part of their daily—and for ChristNet, nightly—routines.

Fish & Loaves has closed its client-choice store in favor of drive-thru services only with clients lining up in their vehicles in front of the building. Volunteers bring forward loaded grocery carts that clients unload in their own cars. Each cart is carefully sanitized afterwards. Fish & Loaves hopes to continue providing its important services to families in need as long as it can do so safely for volunteers and clients.

Presently scheduled church host sites for ChristNet have signaled their commitment to continue hosting guests over the next three weeks even though their church facilities are closed to other activities. The goal is to provide emergency overnight housing through the rest of the season which finishes at the end of May or at least until the weather is warmer.

Please keep both Fish & Loaves clients and ChristNet guests in your prayers

JOYS AND CONCERNS

“THANK YOU” to the March Merry Mailers: Marjie Barnard, Sharon Podpora, Louise Stanek, Barb Schultz, and Fred Miller

2020 Souper Bowl Winners

Congratulations to Pam Lange on taking first place for “Best Soup” with her Butternut Squash soup and to Marsha Gibson for taking first place for “Most Original” with her Sausage and Mushroom soup. In all over 25 soups from members and local businesses were there to taste, a great time was had by all with over 100 people in attendance.

Condolences To:

Doris & Ollie Hilliker on the loss of Ollie’s brother, Frederick Hilliker who passed away February 28, 2020 at the age of 87 years. Funeral service was March 5, 2020 Arrangements by Voran Funeral Home, Taylor Chapel.

Janet & Julius Enesey on the loss of Janets’ sister-in-law, Nancy Kroeger, who passed away March 3, 2020 at the age of 84 years. Funeral was on March 6, 2020. Arrangements were by Howe-Peterson Funeral Home, Taylor Chapel.

Jim Fraser on the loss of dear friend, Gail Holland (daughter of Viola Holland), who passed away March 6, 2020 at the age of 69 years. Memorial service was March 13, 2020. Arrangements by Howe-Peterson, Taylor Chapel.

Mary Dubke on the loss of son, Eric Dubke, who passed away on Tuesday, March 16th. He grew up in our congregation and his mother, Mary Dubke who was also married to the late Max Zilka, remains a member. Funeral arrangements are pending. We will keep you posted as to any arrangements.

WE ASK FOR YOUR PRAYERS FOR

Members & Friends: Marion Bolen, Shirley Drobil, Harold Fick, Kyle Hard, Mary Hard, Doris Hilliker, Ollie Hilliker, Shirley Koths, Pam Lange, Neil McEachern, Bill McGahey, Shirlen Powell, Eleanor Rossi, Sally Sigman, Bob Smarr, Tracy Spears, Helen St. Louis, Diane Sturgeon, Brenda Tank, and Doreen Thompson.

Extended Family: Nikata Burris (cousin of Charlie Barnard), Lisa Collins (daughter, Arlene Felske), Mary Jane Fliss (sister-in-law, Arlene Wolfram), Gabriella Gomez (niece, Darlene Babin), Kevin & Steven Johnson (grandsons, Patricia Olson) Richard Jones, Tyler Keith (son, Anne Blanchard), Joanne LeFleur (daughter, Helene & Neil McEachern), Jennifer & Tammy Lee (granddaughter & daughter, Barb Siemers), Courtney Matthew McEachern, Kim McEachern (daughters-in-law, Helene & Neil McEachern), Alice Nagy, Family of Norma Reid (friend, Denise Foley), Judy Robin (aunt, Lucinda Chavez), Trudy Clark-Schiller (daughter, April & Steve Clark), Darlene Spence (sister, Grace Wangbickler), Larry Staten (brother-in-law, Peggy Staten), Nicholas Surre great-grandson, Helene McEachern), Kevin Wangbickler (son, Grace Wangbickler), Victoria Whitcher (daughter, Cheryl Stewart), and Carol Wiley (cousin, Cindy Romas).

Congregations' Parents: Robert Brainard (father, Ed Brainard), Jan Filpus (mother, Julia-Joy Miller), Bonnie Isaacs (step-mother, Michael Isaacs), and John Sharp (father, Gina Hribik).

Church Members & Friends in Nursing or Rehab Care:

Donald Babin - *Carolyn's Corner*, 17890 Parkridge Dr., Riverview, 48193; Mary Dubke - hospice - *Amy's Place*, 41346 Llorac Lane, Northville 48167; Terry Dyer - *Heartland Healthcare Center*, 9150 Allen Rd., Allen Park, 48101; Esther Perry - *Bellbrook Assisted Living*, 873 West Avon Rd., Unit 209 H, Rochester Hills, 48307; Eleanor Rossi - *Maple Heights*, 4600 Allen Rd, Room 415, Allen Park, 48101; Melissa Rossi - 17652 Colgate, Dearborn Heights, 48125; Sheryl Schwab - Belle Fountain, 18591 Quarry Rd., Riverview, 48193, and Betty Steinhauer - *Rivergate Health Center*, 14141 Pennsylvania Rd., Riverview, 48193.

Link to our online: [**CHURCH CALENDAR**](#)