

TIDINGS

St. Paul United Church of Christ

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Senior Pastor - Rev. Dr. Geoffrey G. Drutchas

Minister of Christian Education - Pastor Cheryl Schalm

April 2021

PASTOR'S PEACE

The Easter season is with us. And not just for a day but many weeks—seven weeks in all, taking us right to Pentecost. The length of the Easter season is no accident. It took a long time for Jesus' apostles and disciples to grasp the meaning of the empty tomb and to realize that the spirit of Christ was very much alive and would continue to abide with them. It was Mary Magdalene who understood this first. But Peter soon did too, followed by all the other apostles. The Apostle Thomas had the greatest trouble accepting the spiritual facts. He was a hands-on kind of guy. It was only when he was confronted by the risen Christ directly that he also believed. In that moment of transformative encounter with Thomas, the risen Christ declares: "Blessed are those who believe without seeing."

Two thousand years have passed since that first Easter. Today, our world continues to grapple with the good news of Easter, which is all about the living Christ. Some, like Mary Magdalene, grasp it right away. Like her, we can say, "I have seen the Lord!" Others struggle a bit more for this kind of vision, but, akin to the Apostle Peter, sooner than later in their lives they have been able to declare, "I see him too!" But there are always those of a more skeptical frame of mind who want proof and total certitude before they will believe that Christ still lives. In Church life we've often called them "Doubting Thomases"—not in ridicule, but in memory of the Apostle Thomas who it took a lot to be persuaded. In the end, however, he became as much as any other apostle, a wonderfully passionate evangelist or witness for the risen Christ. The Christians of far-off India credit Thomas with sailing to their western shore in 52 A.D. just two decades after Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection and planting the first Christian churches there. Today, there are thirty million Christians across India.

What the different experiences of the early Christian apostle's underscore is that the exact time-table of our embrace of the risen Christ matters less than the fact that, in the end, we do come to believe and know the salvation that Christ makes possible for our lives. Even some late, late-comers, like the Apostle Paul, who started out as a vicious and mean bounty hunter of Christians, prove to be among the greatest Christians of all.

Although Paul had his own encounter with the voice of risen Christ on the road to Damascus that became the tipping point, I have always suspected that it actually began much earlier for him as he physically dragged Christian upon Christian to imprisonment, death, and martyrdom. The deep faith in the living Christ of those Paul who persecuted--reflected in their own courageous demeanor and calm words--probably impressed the future Apostle in the moment more than he knew. And it all began adding up for him unconsciously. These brave and stalwart Christians prepared Paul to subsequently hear and heed the voice of Christ directly addressing him on the Damascus road, calling him to a fresh way of life where love rather than hate and fanaticism rules.

In this seven-week Easter season, it's a good time for us to think back on how we first came to believe in the living Christ, as well as any lingering struggles we may have in taking our belief to heart and living accordingly. Honesty with ourselves matters. We may not be a Mary or a Peter, but it's okay to be a Thomas or a Paul, who struggle harder with faith in the living Christ at first but come to match or equal anyone else in their ultimate devotion. Meanwhile, for us already more certain and secure in our faith, how important for us to show and share it with sincerity and enthusiasm. Like those Christians whom Paul initially persecuted, we can through our own love, caring, and committed sense of fairness and justice be the vessels by which the living Christ is attractively revealed to others so that they come to see that Christ, crucified at Calvary so long ago, is very much alive and a presence that can make a difference for their lives too. May the joy of our own experience of the living Christ truly shine through our daily lives, encouraging and inspiring others.

~ *Shalom, Pastor Geoffrey Drutchas*

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION EDITORIAL

"But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you." ~ Luke 6:27-28

How fitting as we celebrate Easter to be reminded of the old saying, "April showers bring May flowers." On the first Sunday of April, Easter Sunday, we remember and reflect upon the gift of grace and forgiveness showered upon us by our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus.

Because of what Christ did for us on the cross, God has forgiven us, no matter what mistakes we have made. Forgiveness is very important to God and He wants us to forgive others just like He has forgiven us.

The gift of forgiveness not only helps the person we forgive, but it also helps us. When we forgive, we let go of the feelings of hurt and anger that can make us so unhappy and sad. By letting go of these feelings joy and happiness is often restored.

May the showers of April provide you with the opportunity for hope and happiness to grow.

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

Christian Education Activities

Easter Sunday Children's Easter Party and Egg Hunt

On Easter Sunday, April 4th the Sunday School will be hosting an Easter egg hunt and party during the church hour for all children attending Sunday School. All activities will be set up for sibling groups or individual participation. Rumor is, the Easter Bunny will be watching from a distance! To register for the Easter Party and egg hunt please contact Pastor Schalm.

Sunday Morning Sunday School Blog to Continue Through April

In addition to in-person class and lesson, the Christian Education Corner Sunday School Blog will be available every Sunday throughout April. Simply log onto the website, stpauluctaylor.org and click on the Christian Education Corner link. If you should have any questions in regards to the lesson please contact Pastor Schalm.

Rock Hard in Faith Youth Fellowship

The 30 Hour Famine Members of Rock Hard in Faith Youth Fellowship and the Young Adult Ministry want to thank Mrs. Staten for the wonderful cookies she baked for them. Participants, Andrew Caruso, Katelyn Isaacs, Angel & Anthony Staten, Alyssa Brandt and Emily Winter sincerely enjoyed them during their breaking of the fast - as did Pastor Schalm. Additionally, all participants want to thank all those who supported and donated monies to help support their cause to eradicate world hunger.

Food & Flick, April 11th Join the youth group and young adult fellowship for a Food & Flick event. All interested are invited and encouraged to remain after church on April 11th for lunch and a movie on the big screen. All Covid protocols will be followed. Please confirm your participation by contacting Pastor Schalm by April 9ths.

Bike & Breathe, April 25th All young people are encouraged to join in the youth fellowship bike & breathe event to be held on April 25th at noon. All participants will gather outside for lunch at Pastor Schalm's at noon. Following lunch, bikes will hit the pavement as we bike our way to Willow Metro Park. Please confirm your participation by contacting Pastor Schalm by April 23rd. BYOB ... Bring your own bike. However, if you are in need of a bike please contact Pastor Schalm.

Youth Flower Sale The youth will once again be holding a spring flower sale through Blocks Greenhouse. All flowers will be required to be pre-ordered by April 25th. Flowers will be ready for pick up from the church following service on May 2nd. More information to come in the following days.

Easter Sunday Video All church families and members are welcome and encouraged to send Pastor Schalm a family picture or a picture of one's self along with an Easter greeting to be included in the St. Paul UCC Easter Video. The all-church Easter video will be posted to the private Youth Fellowship Facebook page on Easter Sunday. Please text all pictures to Pastor Schalm (734) 255-0935 by April 1st.

Worship Wednesday's Young Adult Bible Study & Fellowship

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst. - John 6:35

All post-high school young adults are invited and encouraged to join the Young Adult Bible Study group. The group meets at Pastor Schalm's at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday's. However, due to Covid all participants are required to wear a face mask and to maintain a six foot distance. Whether you have been a regular or are considering coming for the first time, we welcome and look forward to your company and participation.

Calling all College Students and Recent High School Graduates

Christian Education is in need of addresses of all St. Paul UCC college students and High School graduates enrolled in continuing education programs (trade school, skill programs, apprenticeships, etc.). Please forward addresses to Pastor Schalm or to the church office.

ALL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION EVENTS WILL BE HELD ACCORDING TO CDC AND STATE OF MICHIGAN COVID RECOMMENDATIONS AND LAWS. EVENTS WILL BE MONITORED AND CANCELLED IF DEEMED NECESSARY BASED ON SUCH.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Holy Week Observances Include Maundy and Good Friday Services

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has changed so many things, Holy Week will remain just as special as always at St. Paul Church with both Maundy Thursday and Good Friday reverently observed. "Maundy" is an old-English variation on the Latin word *mandatum*, meaning commandment. It refers to Jesus' command that we love God and one another at the Last Supper with his apostles before he was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane (John 14:12-15). Likewise, Good Friday started out as "God's Friday," but was later modified by popular usage. It is a "good" day because Christ's sacrifice on the cross makes possible the divine salvation of humankind.

The "Gethsemane Night" Tenebrae Service for Maundy Thursday will be held in the sanctuary on April 1, at 7 p.m. We will join in recalling Jesus' last night with his apostles before his arrest in the Gethsemane's Garden. Candle after candle will be extinguished, acknowledging the deepening shadows of that fateful night when Jesus was seized and arrested, taken off to the Roman praetorium or prison. The following noontime our congregation will gather again to remember Jesus' final hours on the cross before commending his spirit to God. His "Seven Last Words" will be shared by lectors with the gathered in the sanctuary joining in prayers.

Both onsite services, maintaining masking and social distancing in the pews for non-family members, will be livestreamed on Facebook. Afterwards the services will also be posted online on our church's website for later viewing.

Easter Morning Service Celebrates Christ's Resurrection

A lily decorated altar and our Lenten Cross festooned with a large Easter lily spray will signal Resurrection Day at St. Paul United Church of Christ as we celebrate the first discovery of Jesus' empty tomb on Sunday, April 4, 10 a.m. In addition to Easter prayers and gospel readings, along with a message from our pastor, the service will include an Easter hymn medley, the communion sacrament, and a processional of the cross at the end of service. Set in place outside, the cross will be the focal point for the congregation to gather outside on the front church lawn socially distanced to join in singing one hymn, "O For a Thousand Tongues." For mutual safety we'll continue to remain masked as well.

The onsite service will also be Facebook live-streamed for home viewing. Church members and friends remaining at home are invited to join the communion sacrament making use of elements from their own kitchens for the sharing of the bread and cup. All elements will be consecrated by pastoral prayer during the words of the communion service. Our St. Paul congregation practices an open communion: those sharing in the sacrament do not need to be formal members of our congregation but adult, baptized Christians, seeking to walk more faithfully with Jesus Christ.

If you have questions about the Easter Sunday service please contact the church office (313-291-1221).

Two Young People Confirmed in Christian Faith

Two St. Paul youth were confirmed in Christian faith during the Palm Sunday service on March 28. Ethan Hard and Anthony Staten, who have been studying with Pastor Geoff Drutchas at Wednesday night classes throughout the past two years confirmed their baptism during the Sunday morning service. As a prelude to their confirmation ceremony, each shared a brief Christian testimonial with gathered worshipers. They also answered an examination question based on their Christian studies. As Ethan Hard and Anthony Staten then separately knelt for the act of confirmation, their parents stepped into the chancel to present them with a stole to wear across their shoulders—a symbol of the cloth band that Jesus took from his own waist and used as a servant's towel to humbly wash the feet of his own apostles. At the close of the ceremony, which finished in prayer, Pastor Drutchas extended to both young men the right of Christian fellowship on behalf of our congregation, along with certificates of confirmation and gift cards from our Christian Education ministry.

HEALTH MINISTRIES

Message from our Parish Nurse

Wishing you and your family a Blessed Easter. Let us continue to keep as healthy and fit, both body and soul, as we can. Please continue to exercise as you are able. We continue to need to social distance with masks/face shields until a time when we no longer need to keep each other safe from Covi-19. I pray that you stay as healthy as you can and I look forward to a time in the future when we can go back to our normal everyday life. In the meantime, please reach out and call friends, relatives, and church family members. You can also call me on my cell phone if you wish to discuss health concerns. *Kathy Williams, Parish Nurse*

Covid-19 Vaccinations

Persons 65 years and older are eligible for the vaccine. Check the health system that you are using and get on the waiting list. You only need to have an on-line MyChart account to be able to receive an appointment. Please inform others that do not have an MyChart that they should set one up with a trusted family member or friend that has an email address. Meijer and Rite-Aid are also giving the immunization. Meijer stores are providing the immunization through an on-line sign-up. Go to [Coronavirus - Vaccine Locations \(michigan.gov\)](https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus) and choose the county in which you reside. This site will also give other Michigan Covid-19 updates as they are available.

Beginning March 22, those 50 years and older, and those 16 years and older with a disability/medical condition and their caregiver or household family members, will be eligible for the vaccine. Beginning April 5 those 16 and older are eligible. It is suggested not to take any NSAIDs, ibuprofen (Aspirin, Motrin) or acetaminophen, (Tylenol) at least 8 hours prior and after to getting the immunization as it may cause a negative effect of the immunization.

Upcoming Blood Drive

Our next Blood Drive is Tuesday, April 27 from 1-6:45 PM. This replaces the one we had to cancel last month. You can sign up for a time slot now by going to <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/find-drive>. Once signed up, you can get a rapid pass on the same day by answering the questionnaire on-line. Print the pass or download it to your cell phone and bring it with you to your appointed time. This will shorten your waiting period at the drive. Contact Kathy if you want her to set up a time for you. Make sure that there will be at least 56 days since your last donation. Please also pass this information to other family and friends who may wish to donate. There is always a critical need.

Chronic Pain PATH Classes scheduled to continue on these dates

1. Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m., Info Session: March 25, Sessions 1-6: April 1- May 6 **Kathy will be co-leading these classes**
2. Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m.- 8:00 p.m., Info Session: April 20, Sessions 1-6: April 27 - June 1

To register contact 800-633-7377 or visit <http://classes.beaumont.org>

Exercise via Zoom

Please let Kathy know if you would like and be able to participate via Zoom. You must have access to the internet by computer, I-pad, or phone with video availability. You do not have to have to show on camera during class. You will need to be able to see the instructor. Classes would be on Wednesdays from 2-3:15 PM Delissa Hampton is the instructor. Please join us. Contact Kathy Williams if you have questions.

Our Daily Bread Devotional Availability

If you are interested in reading, *Our Daily Bread*, a quarterly devotional, please contact the church office. They are available in large print or regular print. If you wish to have a copy please be sure to specify the print type that you want. You can arrange with the office to pick it up or let Kathy Williams know you wish to have it mailed to you.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Burial Plots for Sale

The St. Paul Memorial Ministry has four burial plots available for immediate purchase. The burial plots are located at Michigan Memorial Park in Huron Township. The plots are located in Block 22 Section 7 "Garden of Apostles" with a retail value of \$1,825 per grave, the asking price is only \$1,000 per grave. Once purchased the graves may also be used as partial payment (full retail value) for purchase of a spot in their above ground burial sites or their indoor and outdoor cremation niches as well. You have many options available to you. Please contact Dan Case, St. Paul Treasurer, if you are interested.

St. Paul Budget Update

Donations remain strong through March and we are above our budgeted income. We continue to monitor our expenses while purchasing only those items that are required to run the Church. We have submitted our application for forgiveness on our loan from the COVID-19 Paycheck Protection Program with the Small Business Administration that we applied and were approved for in 2020. Approval for forgiveness can take up to 150 days after submission of the application.

Pastor Delivers Prayer for Wayne County Commissioners

Pastor Geoff Drutchas was recently invited to deliver the invocation at the opening of the meeting for Wayne County Commissioners. The meeting on March 18, 2021 was conducted via zoom. Pastor Drutchas' prayer called upon God's guidance to ensure wise, honest leadership sustained through mutual civility and a concern for the common good. His prayer was as follows: *O God, In troubled times like our own we discover anew the importance of wise, honest leadership. Help our Commissioners as they convene today and in these weeks and months to come to bring their best to all deliberations and decisions on behalf of all Wayne County residents. Guide our Commissioners that they may employ the resources at their disposal for the common good so that they may never be judged self-serving or wanting in integrity. Give them courage and insight in the face of any difficult choices and an abiding empathy and compassion so necessary to conduct the people's business with mutual civility and goodwill. Bless them, God, in all these virtuous ways. Amen."*

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Health Ministry Committee Volunteers needed

Please consider serving on a Health Ministry Committee. If interested contact Kathy Williams our Parish Nurse.

Medical Volunteers

If you are currently certified in CPR / First Aid or have been trained on the use of a defibrillator you can help. We are looking for members to serve on our Medical Response Team (MRT).

Duties of a Medical Response Team include:

- Provide immediate medical care prior to the arrival of emergency responders.
- Provide first aid and assistance in the event of minor accidents or illnesses.
- Work in coordination with security team members and others at special events,

providing oversight of conditions. Ensure the presence of adequate first aid supplies and equipment.

- Add to our overall church outreach and safety and security program.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Parish Nurse Kathy Williams at (313) 209-6628.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

A Very Special THANK YOU to the following people for their continued support during the 2021 Fish Dinners: Jeff MacZink, Deb Case, Dan Case, Pastor Schalm, Candace Poet, Diane Poet, Crystal Poet, Eric Poet, James Poet, Sharon Podpora, Elizabeth Isaacs, Toni Hill, Tim Ruffner, Pastor Drutchas, Mark Ennis, Kathy Williams, Eddie Brainard, Fred Miller, Gary Staffeld, Dorothy Evison, Dan Evison, Grace Wangbickler, Cheryl Kincaid, Gene Kincaid, Dee Salsbury, John Smith, and Barb Smith. We have served over 969 drive-thru dinners through Friday, March 19.

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

ORGAN FUND:

In Memory of: *Norman Gall* From: Doug & Janet Staffeld

In Memory of: *Velma McGee* From: Doug & Janet Staffeld

In Memory of: *Doris Hilliker* From: Doug & Janet Staffeld

In Memory of: *Shirlen Powell* From : Doug & Janet Staffeld

ENDOWMENT REPAYMENT FUND:

In Memory of: *Bonnie Isaacs* From: Jeanette Wackro

FACILITY IMPROVEMENT FUND:

In Memory of: *Shirlen Powell* From: Thelma Poet, Jim Poet Family

In memory of: *Shirlen Powell* From: Gloria Lakatos

UNIFIED BUDGET:

In memory of: *Carl Schmockel* From: Jeanette Wackro

BOF TREE OF FAITH:

In Memory of: *Joe Roscoe (Lilian)* From: Lilian Roscoe

In Memory of: *Al Whited* From: Barb Schultz

WE ASK FOR YOUR PRAYERS FOR

Church Members and Friends: Darlene Babin, Bob Barley, Kim Beyar, Liz Bechtol, Kirk Blanchard, Marion Bolen, Kristi Caruso, Margo Charette, Mary Fairemouth, Oren Forsyth, Dan & Kathy Galeski, Maggie Hall, Kyle Hard, Carrie Hill, Ollie Hilliker, Wayne Jones, Gerri Lynn King, George Koster, Arnold Knofske, Dave Kulhanek, Larry Kurtzel, Loretta Kurtzel, Ciera Mack, Neil MacEachern, Jeffrey & Maria MacZink, Jim Nault, Judy Nieman, Gary Peters, Lil Roscoe, Jennifer Ruffner, Morgan Schalm, Sheryl Schwab, John Smith, Sue Spears, Dianne Sturgeon, Helen St. Louis, and Bert Thompson.

Extended Family: Dawn Sturgeon Anderson, Paul Bachran (son, Sharon Leonard), Marcie Bolen (daughter, Ron & Marion Bolen), Talama Braba (Judy Albright's daughter), Cassidey Wangbickler-Congelierre, Mary Jane Fliss (sister-in-law, Arlene Wolfram), Gabriella Gomez (niece, Darlene Babin), Richard Janztsen (son, Ann Anderson), Kevin & Steven Johnson (grandsons, Patricia Olson) Richard Jones, Joanne LeFleur (daughter, Helene & Neil McEachern), Jennifer & Tammy Lee (granddaughter & daughter, Barb Siemers), Courtney McEachern Matthews, Kim McEachern (daughters-in-law, Helene & Neil McEachern), Toni Oliver, Judy Robin (aunt, Lucinda Chavez), Trudy Clark-Schiller (daughter, April & Steve Clark), Joseph Smith (husband, Cheryl Smith), Nicholas Surre (great-grandson, Helene McEachern), Rick Thie, Bruce Vernor (father, Eileen Vernor Drutchas), Bob Wright (father-in-law, Charmaine Wright), and Victoria Whitcher (daughter, Cheryl Stewart).

Congregations' Parents: Robert & Diane Brainard (parents, Ed Brainard), Jan Filpus (mother, Julia-Joy Miller), and Carol Hoffman (mother, Tracy Hoffman).

Church Members & Friends in Nursing or Rehab Care:

Donald Babin - Carolyn's Corner, 17890 Parkridge Dr., Riverview, 48193; 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.

LET US ALSO KEEP IN PRAYER THOSE PROVIDING EMERGENCY

'FRONTLINE' SERVICES as police officers, nurses, and EMS workers during the ongoing pandemic. We want to especially remember church members and friends Tricia Nault, Kim Arndt, Wendi Wioncek Ashby, Rick Barnosky, Jennifer Babin, Rhonda Wioncek Berndt, Dana Wioncek Barlage, Chelsey Eisenga, Joshua Eisenga, James Hubert, Debbie Lyles, Amy McGahey, Jarod MacZink, Ciera Mack, Marci Magnuson, Sam Martin, Lexi Mellin, Michelle Mellin, Brenda Murphy, Inez Kurtzel Ogonowski, Amber Ostrowski, Rebecca Ostrowski, Samantha Pedersen, Eric Poet, Trudy Clark Schiller, Rachel Tank, Emily Wangbickler Baggett, Jillian Wangbickler, and Sarah Wangbickler.



**Holy Week & Easter Observances -- 2021
St. Paul United Church of Christ, Taylor**

"And they went to a place...called Gethsemane..." –Mark 14:32
Maundy Thursday "Gethsemane Night" Tenebrae Service,"
April 1, 7 p.m. - Sanctuary and Facebook Live-streamed

***"And they came to the place which was called The Skull...
there they crucified him."—Luke 23:33***
Solemn "Seven Last Words" Good Friday Observances
April 2, 12 Noon – Sanctuary and Facebook Live-streamed

***"And the angel said to them, 'Do not be amazed; you seek
Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen...'" –Mark 16:6***
Easter Worship, April 4, 10 a.m. – Sanctuary and Facebook Live-streamed
Open Pew Communion (visitors welcome)

**For everyone's benefit and safety, both masking and social distancing
are maintained in the sanctuary for all services.**

**Take time to be holy...to be faithful...and to know
the blessings of God's love and grace through Jesus Christ!**

