

St. Paul United Methodist Church  
201 Levitt Parkway  
Willingboro, NJ 08046



If you no longer wish to receive The Epistle,  
please notify the church office at 609-877-7034 or  
stpumc@verizon.net.



Will you help beautify our sanctuary on Easter Sunday? You can do so by purchasing lilies, hyacinths or tulips. The order form with prices is in this newsletter. Deadline for ordering in March 18.

There many opportunities to honor or remember someone special or a special occasion by sponsoring the altar flowers. The **Flower Chart** is in the hallway outside of the sanctuary. The cost is \$13 per urn; dedication forms and payment envelopes are by the chart.



**Fellowship Time** in Ridgeway Hall will be after worship on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays. Birthdays of the month will be celebrated on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday. Please assist the hostesses by bringing a small snack item either Sunday. If you are willing to sponsor or purchase a birthday cake, please contact Evelyn Carson (609-877-6497). Will you host Fellowship Time one Sunday? If so, the sign-up sheet (January - June) is on the bulletin board in Ridgeway Hall.



## St. Paul United Methodist Church

*"An intentionally diverse faith community  
Committed to the way of Jesus Christ"*

Saint Paul United Methodist Church strives to continue to be a caring and diverse community of Believers who celebrate and proclaim the Word of our Lord Jesus Christ through Worship, Christian Education, Fellowship and Service.

**March - April 2018**



### Holy Week Services

**Palm Sunday, March 25th**

**10:30 am** Worship Service      Choir Cantata  
After Worship                      Egg Hunt

**Maundy Thursday, March 29<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm**

Worship Service with Communion and Tenebrae

**Good Friday, March 30<sup>th</sup> Noon-2 pm**

Ecumenical Worship Service

Delaware Valley Baptist Church, 493 Beverly-Rancocas Rd, Willingboro

**Easter Sunday, April 1<sup>st</sup>**

**6:30 am**                      Ecumenical Sunrise Service  
Holy Trinity UCC

Beverly-Rancocas Rd, Willingboro

**10:30 am**      Join us for a joyous celebration of our  
Savior's resurrection!

Dear Beloved,

The purpose of Lent is to prepare the Christian for the celebration of Easter through prayer, subjecting the flesh, repenting of sins, sacrificial giving, and self-denial. Many Christians also incorporate a Lenten spiritual discipline, such as reading a daily devotional or praying through a Lenten calendar, to draw themselves nearer to God. It's a wonderful opportunity to evaluate your life and to explore how you can draw closer to God beyond the days leading to Easter.



According to the UMC website, "In the early church, Lent was a time to prepare new converts for baptism. Today, Christians focus on their relationship with God, often choosing to give up something or to volunteer and give of themselves for others with joyful anticipation of the Resurrection."

When we examine the state of our world, nation, and even the local communities surrounding our beloved St. Paul, we can certainly understand why developing a more disciplined and intentional relationship with God is so critical now even more than ever. This is the time to listen intently, remove all of the distraction of our world and explore what we can do to intently make a difference as ambassadors for Christ through the body of believers here at St. Paul.

In addition to the discipline associated with this Lenten season there are two ways in particular I think you can help.

Lenten is traditionally a time of sacrificial giving. St. Paul continues as a generous, giving congregation and although we are grateful that giving is increasing, the needs in particular of the physical structure also continue to increase. We are realizing as we embark upon our 60th church anniversary that our building is no longer "new and state of the art". Like our homes, we must continue to upgrade. Ongoing efforts to replace our sound system and integrate visual technology are still very much needed. We also have recently encountered several unanticipated challenges with our heating system, an organ repair and our kitchen dishwasher. Your ongoing and special gifts of giving in these areas are more important now than ever. We strongly encourage you to use this season of reflection to give with a cheerful heart. (*There is a Lenten offering envelope in this newsletter.*) Your sacrificial giving can help ensure we remain focused on the needs while sharing the gospel in most effective ways.



Remember to buy your **Shop Rite Cards**. This is an easy way to support St. Paul while doing your grocery shopping. Cards are available every Sunday in Ridgway Hall in \$20 or \$50 amounts, payable in check or cash. Cards have no expiration date and make a nice gift for someone!

Do you buy your groceries from Shop-Rite? If so, please bring in your receipts. The United Methodist Women receive 1% of the total, which helps meet their budget. Place the receipts in the Shop-Rite box in Ridgway Hall. Thanks!



2<sup>nd</sup> Ian Fisher, Leonia Robinson  
8<sup>th</sup> Ruth Sutterley  
11<sup>th</sup> Landon Hill  
13<sup>th</sup> Doris Cook  
15<sup>th</sup> Vance Turner  
20<sup>th</sup> Rebecca Grab  
23<sup>rd</sup> Charlotte Kane  
25<sup>th</sup> Tim Thomas  
26<sup>th</sup> Rachel Greene  
27<sup>th</sup> Michael Jeh  
28<sup>th</sup> Lynn Howard, Kathy Kovach  
29<sup>th</sup> Damian Lewis  
30<sup>th</sup> Alyssa Shivers, Barbara Skacel  
31<sup>st</sup> Lee Isackson

10<sup>th</sup> Lisa Tchume  
11<sup>th</sup> Wyvonia Turner  
14<sup>th</sup> Rhonda Calloway  
20<sup>th</sup> Anna Calloway  
21<sup>st</sup> Wamsley Samuels  
23<sup>rd</sup> Sylvia Dawkins, Kimberly Taylor  
26<sup>th</sup> Ricardo Larrier  
29<sup>th</sup> Manny Knox

### ***The Epistle***

A Periodic Publication of St. Paul United Methodist Church  
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Rev. Gregory S. Smith, Pastor 609-920-3467

On Friday evening, February 16, 2018, seven of St. Paul's awesome youth attended by three equally awesome chaperones took a trip to the unexpected...to America's Keswick Conference center to participate in a life changing experience sponsored by the United Methodist church...The Midwinter Advance.



According to the website, "Over fifty years ago, just as the church structures were being challenged by the turbulence and change of the Fifties and Sixties, a group of South Jersey pastors sensed a need for evangelistic action for teenagers. They organized what is now known as the Midwinter Advance. Although the organizers were Methodist pastors, the retreat is not a denominational phenomenon: Its purpose is that teenagers hear the gospel of Jesus Christ, accept the atoning work of Christ crucified, and commit to a new life in the resurrected Christ as Savior and Lord. The evangelistic work of the Advance is done through teams of students from numerous Christian Organizations and Colleges as a part of their recruiting, training, or missions efforts. The teams, usually ranging from six to ten in number, engage the teens in fellowship singing, sports and games, and a combination of skits, scripture, messages, and testimony. They offer themselves as a living testimony to the Christian lifestyle. The weekend messages focus on commitment to Christ. There is an invitation to the altar so that everyone has the opportunity to dedicate his or her life to Christ."

According one of our chaperones, Richard Issa Bokari, "The experience was awesome. The weekend was run by West Chester University Students who simply told their stories...I just reflected on my own experiences as a naive college student and how their stories pertain to my life as an adult." He further added, "It's always good to chat with people who "get it" when it comes to this wonderful faith of ours...It was great seeing our kids come into it all shy and holding back, but once they got comfortable they were answering questions and talking in group discussions."

The kids came back tired but were able to articulate their experience most favorably. Fourteen year old Uriah S. indicated that it was the "best experience ever" and reported that he would like to participate in similar other youth activities, possibly even working at one of the sites during the summer." Alice, another youth, said, "The mid winter advance opened up my mind to know that the love of Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, is the greatest love we can ever receive...that we should not fear and take everything to him in prayer, and accept him in our lives and know that he will take care of us."

The students raised funds for this effort by selling hoagies on Super Bowl Sunday. Pastor Smith also had an opportunity to visit the site Sunday morning. "It was amazing to see so many youth and adults migrating through the grounds...everyone was smiling and it was obvious that the Spirit of God was in the atmosphere."

We look forward to hearing more from our youth and the other chaperones relate their experience in the next *Epistle*.

Another way to use this time creatively would be to join our bi-monthly think tank sessions on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays of each month at 5:30pm. We are joining with interested members to engage in discussion about ways that our church can continue to have a viable presence in our community. St. Paul is hoping to apply for a grant sponsored through the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference "Communities of Hope" in the fall of 2018 and we'd like to incorporate some areas of visibility within our communities in advance of then. We've been discussing ways to use our existing space in the Kolster wing and other areas to avail ourselves with our community as visible ambassadors of Christ.

I invite you all to join me in prayer, reflection, sacrificial giving and dialogue to ensure that we are well prepared not only for the resurrection of Christ, but also the resurrection of our spiritual presence in the community that he has assigned us to serve.

*Pastor G*



This year's **Maundy (Holy) Thursday's** service on March 29 will include a Tenebrae service. We are looking for volunteers to read portions of the liturgy. You will receive the reading in advance. The sign-up sheet is on the Welcome Table.

Our annual **Easter Egg Hunt** will be on Sunday, March 25 (Palm Sunday) immediately following the worship service for all children ages 3 through 10 in attendance that day. Remember to bring a bag or basket with you.

The congregation can help by donating 1 dozen filled plastic eggs, filled wrapped candy only (for safety reasons). Place your donations in the labeled box in Ridgway Hall or give to Jennifer Irizarry. Please have your donations in by Sunday, March 18. Thank you for your support!



The annual **Good Friday Breakfast**, sponsored by the United Methodist Women, will be on March 30<sup>th</sup> at 9 am in Ridgway Hall. The guest speaker will be Rev. Vanessa Wilson, pastor of Magnolia Road UMC. *Seating is limited.* Tickets are \$5 and are available from Kathy Kovach, Evelyn Carson, Cile Grant, Liz Kreutel, May Diehl or Vicki Lynch.



**Special Thanks** to all who played a role in our celebration of African American History Month, whether it was preparing and presenting the weekly lesson, singing songs written by African Americans, providing delicious food and yummy desserts for the luncheon last Sunday; serving in the kitchen; setting up and cleaning up, making the display in Ridgway Hall, coordinating with the Carolyn Watson Johnson Dance Theatre liturgical dancers or working in countless other ways 'behind the scenes'. Your good work made for an inspiring, informative and joyful celebration of our rich history.



Mark your calendars! The annual Children and Youth Service will be on Sunday, March 18 during the morning worship. This year's theme is "The Power of Faith". Come support our young people and be prepared to have your spirit lifted!

Celebrating 60 years! 2019 will mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St Paul and Team Vital is leading the way for a year-long celebration. Every good party, however, needs great planning. Over the next few months, planning meetings will be held to discuss the types of activities and celebrations we would like to have. If you would like to participate in the Planning Committee, please sign up at the Welcome Center or call the church office. Please contact Jennifer Irizarry (609-239-0352) if you have any questions. Many hands are needed to make this a success!



**Growing Gracefully** will meet on Monday, March 26<sup>th</sup> at 10 am. The focus will be on Cardiac Care. The facilitator is Gwendolyn Hughes, RN and Transition Care Coordinator at Lourdes Medical Center of Burlington County. The April session will be on Monday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10 am. Watch the bulletin for more information. Please call the church office (609-877-7034) if you plan to attend so we have enough materials.



### United Methodist Women Circles

- PM Circle**—March 12 & April 9 at 7 pm
- GIGS Circle** – April 21 at 1 pm
- HOPE Circle** – March 19 & April 16 at 12:30 pm
- JOY Circle** – March 20 at the home of Alice Wilson & April 17 at 11:30 am



A **Spring Fashion Show** is coming on April 28. We're looking for volunteers to model as well as help with hospitality, publicity, talent and vendors. Call the church office to volunteer or sign-up at the Welcome Table.

Help! Our **dishwasher** requires a \$3,000 repair. Would you be willing to help defray the cost? We've received \$1,825 so far. Any amount will be greatly appreciated. Please be sure to mark your contribution "Dishwasher Repair". Thank you!



A free **Family and Friends Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)** class is offered for family members, friends and members for the general community who want to learn how to perform CPR for adults and who do not need a course completion card. Airway obstruction management is also demonstrated. There is no testing involved.



Class dates in 2018 are April 14, July 14 or November 10 at 10 am at the Burlington County Emergency Services Training Center (53 Academy Dr, Westampton, (near the county library). Advance registration is required; registration forms are available in the church office or online at <http://www.co.burlington.nj.us/DocumentCenter/View/4386>.



The **United Methodist Men** will meet for breakfast in Ridgway Hall on Sunday, March 25<sup>th</sup> and April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:30 am. All men in the congregation are invited.