

A publication of
Myerstown
United Church of Christ
304 West Main Avenue
Myerstown, Pennsylvania 17067



Paul's Epistle

I began my January Epistle with a celebration of leaving 2020. Obviously, the struggles, sorrow, conflicts, and pain of 2020 is leaking and will continue to leak into our experience of life in this New Year. The events of January 6th, along with difficulties in the vaccine roll out, and increased infection cases, even among our own membership, tells us we will continue to need the presence, guidance, and healing touch of our God. But I guess we already kinda knew that, didn't we?

This year will continue to offer challenges. We will need to continue to focus on God's guidance and direction, God's presence and power in our midst, listening to and caring for each other. I hope that will mean continuing to mask and maintaining the guidelines we have all heard many times on how to fight this virus' spread and getting vaccinated as soon as we are able.

There is reason for hope that we will defeat this virus, revive our economy, return to safely gathering in restaurants, gyms, and especially in Church. We will be able to embrace and enjoy community in love and peace.

This time of Lent speaks to us in this in-between time. A time of anticipation and hope as well as a time of sacrifice and work and humility. Jesus prepared himself for the work of His ministry of healing, leadership development, feeding, loving and teaching which culminated in the greatest sacrifice of all. May we follow in His footsteps.

God's Richest Blessings,

Pastor Paul



Pastoral Emergency

In the event of an **emergency requiring pastoral support**, please contact Pastor Paul directly by phone [610.217.9717] or email [muccpastor@comcast.net].



Office Update

In an effort to be responsive with the PA Department of Health recommendations, as much of the office work as possible is being accomplished from staff homes. The staff who most often have office hours are coming into the office once a week [usually]. There is an **irregular regularity** to who is there when!

In order to maintain as much productivity as possible, the church has established a plan with Comcast Business to that the Office Manager can answer the phone from his home during "posted" office hours. During other times, the calls will be answered by voice mail.

The Parish Administrator is managing the schedule for the church office. The Office Manager is managing the schedule for the church building. Questions and requests via email and voicemail will be communicated to the appropriate person during regular posted hours.

Posted Office Hours

Monday: 9 a to noon

Tuesday: noon to 3 p

Wednesday 9 a to noon

Thursday: noon to 3 p

Friday: 9 a to noon

2 Elaine Cummings
Gloria Ebling

Gary Underkoffler

3 Franklin Seifert

4 Arlene Fischer

5 Brittany Behm

Benjamin Garman

6 Adaline Wolfe

7 Shirley Davis

9 David Blystone

Katie Gehman

16 Shirley Houtz

18 Kathy Grose

Christine Wolfe

19 Tina Gares

Nicholas Goodyear

Candace Hibshman

23 Jill Kinsey

24 Kaley Frantz

Sara Zeller

26 Harold Noll

29 Gabriella Bicher

Wanda Rabold

February Birthdays

Feb 7

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Sermon: El Shaddai

Scripture: Isaiah 40:21-31

A source of strength surrounds us always, but we often rely on our own resources rather than opening to the power and presence of the living God. Isaiah reminds us of the powerful resource awaiting us, always.

Jesus tells His disciples some will live to see the "Kingdom of God has come with power" and immediately following, it happens! Are our eyes and spirits open to the same reality in our own lives? The kingdom needs them to be.

Feb 14
Transfiguration Sunday
Valentine's Day

Sermon: Busy Work & God's Work
Scripture: Mark 9:2-9

FEBRUARY

Feb 21
First Sunday of Lent

Sermon: Signs of the Covenant
Scripture: Genesis 9:8-17

Signs of the love of God are all around us, even written across the skies, obvious to those whose hearts are open. They are signs to nourish and revive us through hope and covenant.

Feb 17
Ash Wednesday

Sermon: Acceptable Fast
Scripture: Isaiah 58:1-12

As we come together to receive the mark of the Cross in Ashes as invitation to the 40-day period of Lent,

marking the 40 days of fasting prior to Jesus' public ministry. What kind of fast does God call us to enact to show our devotion to the Divine?

WORSHIP

Feb 28
Second Sunday of Lent

Sermon: Forever Close
Scripture: Mark 8:31-38
Psalms 22:23-31

Throughout history and faith history, people have struggled with the feeling that God wasn't paying attention or just didn't care about our suffering. Although not the first or last time, God in Jesus shows us that God is with us and understands our struggles and suffering.

THE BIBLE IN A YEAR
FEB
2021
THE BIBLE IN A YEAR

1	Luke 23:26-56	Genesis 42	Psalm 33
2	Luke 24:1-12	Genesis 43	Psalm 34
3	Luke 24:13-53	Genesis 44	Psalm 35
4	Hebrews 1	Genesis 45:1-46:27	Psalm 36
5	Hebrews 2	Genesis 46:28-47:31	Psalm 37
6	Hebrews 3:1-4:13	Genesis 48	Psalm 38
7	Hebrews 4:14-6:12	Genesis 49:1-50:26	Psalm 39
8	Hebrews 6:13-20	Exodus 1:1-2:25	Psalm 40
9	Hebrews 7	Exodus 3:1-4:31	Psalm 41
10	Hebrews 8	Exodus 5:1-6:27	Proverbs 1
11	Hebrews 9:1-22	Exodus 6:28-8:32	Proverbs 2
12	Hebrews 9:23-10:18	Exodus 9:1-10:29	Proverbs 3
13	Hebrews 10:19-39	Exodus 11:1-12:51	Proverbs 4
14	Hebrews 11:1-22	Exodus 13:1-14:31	Proverbs 5
15	Hebrews 11:23-40	Exodus 15	Proverbs 6:1-7:5
16	Hebrews 12	Exodus 16:1-17:16	Proverbs 7:6-27
17	Hebrews 13	Exodus 18:1-19:25	Proverbs 8
18	Matthew 1	Exodus 20:1-21:36	Proverbs 9
19	Matthew 2	Exodus 22:1-23:33	Proverbs 10
20	Matthew 3	Exodus 24	Proverbs 11
21	Matthew 4	Exodus 25-27	Proverbs 12
22	Matthew 5:1-20	Exodus 28:1-29:46	Proverbs 13
23	Matthew 5:21-48	Exodus 30-32	Proverbs 14
24	Matthew 6:1-18	Exodus 33:1-34:35	Proverbs 15
25	Matthew 6:19-34	Exodus 35:1-36:38	Proverbs 16
26	Matthew 7	Exodus 37:1-38:31	Proverbs 17
27	Matthew 8:1-13	Exodus 39:1-40:38	Proverbs 18
28	Matthew 8:14-34	Leviticus 1-2	Proverbs 19



Generally, the offering is counted two times each month. Care is taken to make sure the amount on and in the envelope match. When a check is

presented with no envelope, the information is recorded on a card. *As the information is posted in the software, it does not matter whether the envelope number or the person's name is used.*

For those who contribute through Givelify, a statement is received at the end of the month.



The offering is recorded then. The envelopes, cards, & statement are kept as a reference.



A Story

Many decades ago, when Sam was 6 years old, his mother told him that part of growing up was taking part in chores around the house. They talked about what his assigned tasks would be; his mother also told him that he would get an allowance of 10 cents per week. At the end of the first week, she gave him a nickel and five pennies. Sam smiled from ear-to-ear.

His mother then explained that it is important to remember God. She suggested that he take one of the pennies and put them in a small, cardboard bank that was the shape of the church. Sam thought it was a good idea; so he did.

As he got older, the chores grew with him. And so did his allowance. When the allowance reached twenty-five cents, Sam learned that he should



put 3 pennies in his bank. His mother told him that he should always round up for God.

The years went by and Sam completed Confirmation Class at his church. He got a special card and a box with envelopes in it. When they got home, Sam's mother told him that he could put away the cardboard church bank and start using the envelopes.

Sam used the envelopes faithfully to remember God. They were a reminder each week to tell God how much Sam was thankful.

As Sam became an adult, he found the 10% rule restricting. He began to think about thanking God much less rigidly. For Sam, this new way became exciting and expansive. He often wondered what his mother would say if she knew about the change in perspective. What didn't change was using the offering envelopes. They helped keep him on track: Something in every envelope!

Moral of the Story: Contributing to the work of God is not a one-size-fits-all way of doing things. **It doesn't matter if someone uses an envelope or not.** Some folks are like Sam; putting something in every offering envelope brings contentment and satisfaction. Others use one every time they come to church while a few don't use any envelope - ever! In the words of Sam's mother: "It is important to remember God" cheerfully and excitedly.



of outreach that transcends and mirrors the love of God.

There are five components to the UCC [Our Church's Wider Mission](#). It embraces Basic Support congregations, associations, and conferences have for General Synod. The other four parts are special mission offerings: One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, and The Christmas Fund. Each of these has designated times during the year. Being a 5 for 5 congregation shows a belief in diversity