

St. Paul's United Church of Christ
47 S. Whiteoak Street
Kutztown, PA 19530

(610) 683-3393

Sunday School for all ages 9 AM
Sunday Worship 10:15 AM

office@stpaulskutztown.org



The Pulse

MAY VOL 57 #5

Of ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Kutztown, PA

Be an organ
Donor. Give
your heart to
Jesus.

T H I N K

Before you Speak

T is it True?

H is it Helpful?

I is it inspiring?

N is it Necessary?

K is it Kind?

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- May 3 Rejoicing Spirits @ 3:00 PM
- May 16 Relay for Life - Bowers Park
- May 20 Young at Heart -
"The Robbery of the Century"
- May 23 - May 24
Homeless Box Sleepout
- May 31 Geraniums in the Sanctuary

MARCH 2026

\$16,640.70



\$16,983.30

“Jesus is risen from the dead.” Six words. Big story. Big deal. The glory of God is revealed. It’s the grandest event in human history for Christians. And we felt it on Easter Sunday.

Easter Sunday at St. Paul’s UCC was “big deal” glorious indeed. And not just because attendance was strong and the music was good. It was glorious mainly because the Risen Christ was afoot. Mind you, there isn’t any precise measure of the degree to which the risen Christ is present. In fact, there are many notions of what “risen Christ” means.

Some say that Jesus is present by how excited they feel. Others say that Jesus lives on in his teachings, immortalized like the words of Shakespeare inspire devotees of the Bard. Still others say that proof of the risen Christ is found in the way he lives on in the hearts of those who love him, rather like a beloved deceased family member does. Or some say the words that the Gospel writers use around the Resurrection are really poetic language, and so not to be taken as historical fact. Put differently, historical fact isn’t the only way something can be true. Accordingly, there is much poetic and figurative language in the Bible. In such cases where the language of poetry or metaphor dominates, I have found truth most revealed by asking, “What does it mean?” rather than, “Did it really happen that way?”

But in the case of the Resurrection, as Frederick Buechner puts it, “this simply does not apply because there really is no story about the Resurrection in the New Testament. Except in the most fragmentary way, it is not described at all. There is no poetry about it. Instead, it is simply proclaimed as a fact. *Christ is risen!* In fact, the very existence of the New Testament itself proclaims it. Unless something very real indeed took place on that strange, confused morning, there would be no New Testament, no Church, and no Christianity.”

And so, we try to make sense of it, try to connect our own lived reality with the reality of the Resurrection. It’s not something a 500-word essay can do. Or even a PhD dissertation. Because it’s not something to be grasped by the intellect but rather something to be caught by one’s being.

And this made me think that, for all the joy and fanfare of Easter, for all the complexity and mystery of our whole religious life together, and for all the millions of words we use to try and explain it all, that Christianity itself has a six-word autobiography, and it is this: ***Jesus is risen from the dead.***

These are the words that the breathless women carried from the empty tomb back to the other disciples. These are the words that have been passed from person to person, from community to community, every day since then -- in secret, in triumph, in darkness, in celebration.

In my Easter sermon message, I invited you to distill important realities of your life down to six words to help you remember that a life-giving connection with God always begins with being honest with ourselves about our current reality.

Some responses:

“God’s love is not just reason.”

“Can’t see it, but it’s there.”

“Not a good Christian but trying.”

“You all strengthened me; thank you.”

“You’re here! Where have I been?!”

“It’s too good to be true.”

What might your six words be?

Christ is risen! Risen indeed. Hallelujah!

Rev. Jim

From the Desk of our Interim Pastor



Daryn Keim – Pastor Search
Committee Chairperson
Mandy Boyer – Secretary
Keith Wuchter – Chaplain
Sue Kunkel
Barbara Krause
Ray Oswald

As promised, I want to update everyone on the Pastor Search Committee. Since our last update we have had two meetings, one on March 22nd and the second was held on March 29th. At our March 22nd meeting the committee discussed how the UCC or United Church of Christ is a Protestant Christian denomination which places significant emphasis on the covenant. A covenant is a sacred agreement or promise, and it is found often throughout the Bible. We have come to learn that the UCC is organized through a series of covenants, not by a strict hierarchy or a list of rigid rules. Each setting of the church is “autonomous but not independent,” meaning that while each body governs its own affairs, it does so in partnership and accountability with others. We also prepared for our visit with Rev. Kevin McLemore, our Search and Call Minister from the Keystone Conference. We compiled a list of questions which we asked him during our March 29th meeting.

At that meeting Rev. McLemore shared a wealth of information that will help guide us as we prepare to start our Long Profile. I want to take a moment and explain what the Long Profile is. The Long Profile is a snapshot of who and what we are at St. Paul’s. The profile consists of our 11-Year Report, demographic information, committee and missions of St. Paul’s, church finances, outreach to the community and the scope of work we expect from the pastor. This profile is then placed online at UCC Ministry Opportunities, which is nationwide. As I have stated before, the writing of the Long Profile is not a fast process. It takes time to gather all that data and present that information into a welcoming format that will showcase St. Paul’s best truthful qualities. I also want to extend a big thank you to our prior Pastor Search Committee who, in 2020, worked hard to complete our last Long Profile. Our current committee will utilize some of their information, but as we all know some changes have occurred since 2020.

Overall, our committee is moving along at a nice steady pace. Going forward we plan to hold a meeting every two weeks. Our next meeting is scheduled for April 12th. I want everyone to understand that this committee has St. Paul’s best interests at heart. We hope to bring a Pastor to St. Paul’s that will tend to our souls and uplift us. One who will shepherd our flock and have a good sense of humor. We need a gentle truth teller who will help us grow, not only in faith, but in our relationships with each other. St. Paul’s is NOT a dying church! We are a church that is rooted in generations of fighters. We will continue, with Gods guidance and love, to be the best church we can be!

And the people said, AMEN!

Daryn Keim
Pastor Search Committee Chairman

Do You Love Surprises?

Some people adore surprises – the unexpected party, the unannounced gift, or the sudden good news. Others prefer the comfort of a predictable plan, finding security in knowing exactly what comes next. Regardless of our personal preference, life is full of surprises. When we think we have our path perfectly mapped out, a sudden turn can change our direction entirely. These moments can be unsettling, but for those who walk with God, they can also be thrilling invitations to witness His divine creativity and goodness at work.

Our human minds tend to operate in straight lines, but God's ways are far beyond our limited understanding. He often works outside the box of our expectations, crafting a story for us that is richer and more beautiful than anything we could have planned for ourselves. The job we did not get might lead to a more fulfilling career down the road. A relationship that ended might make way for one that is healthier and more aligned with His will. A challenging diagnosis could open doors to a deeper faith and a new community of support. We may not understand the detours in the moment, but from God's eternal perspective, every surprising twist has a purpose.

Trusting God means embracing the mystery of His plan. It is about holding our own desires with an open hand, confident that His thoughts and ways are higher and better than our own. When life brings an unexpected turn, it is an opportunity to lean into faith rather than fear. Look for His hand in the unexpected. See it not as a disruption, but as a divine interruption, a sign that God is doing something new in your life.

Thought of the Day

Be open to His surprises, for they are often the very channels through which His great blessings flow.

- Dr. Joe Pettigrew

Church Staff

Rev. Dr. James Latimer.....Interim Pastor
Barbara MerkelAdmin Assistant
Judy Heffley Organist
Donna SheafferBell Choir Director
Cathy Dill.....Bell Choir Director
Sue Kunkel.....Custodian

Church Officers

Kathy Landis Consistory President
Sherry Leinbach..... Consistory V.P.
Gerald Silberman.....Consistory Secretary
Laraine Wuchter.....Treasurer
Marjorie Weida Financial Secretary

St. Paul's UCC belongs to the Covenant Association, Keystone Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Association Website:

<https://covenantassociation.org>

Keystone Conference Website:

<https://keystoneucc.org>

United Church of Christ website:

<https://www.ucc.org>

Grace is when God gives us good things that we do not deserve. Mercy is when he spares us from bad things we deserve. Blessings are when he is generous with both. Truly, we can never run out of reasons to thank him.

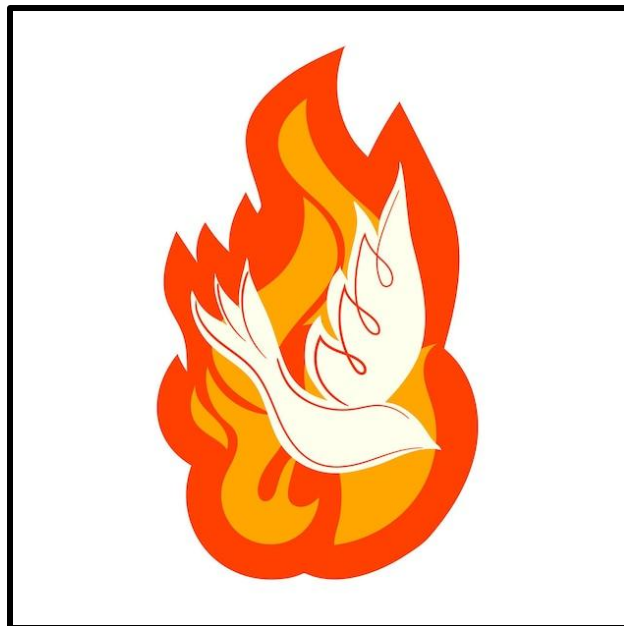
God Is Good All the Time!

Mike Block-Arioso Teach Me Life



Our April service was scheduled for Easter Sunday. The core team decided to cancel the service in order for our Rejoicers and volunteers to spend the day with family and friends. I hope everyone had an enjoyable Easter!

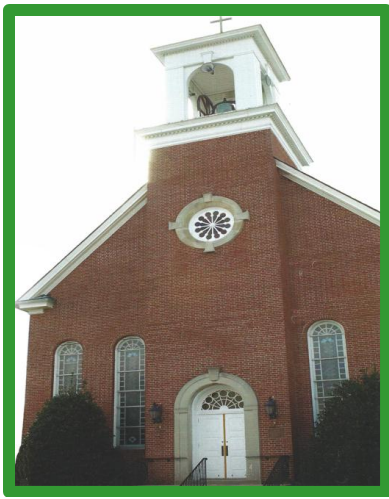
The May service will be held on May 3rd at 3:00 pm. All are welcome! The theme for the day will be Pentecost-Happy Birthday to the Christian Church! Pastor Susan will lead the service.



Following the service, we will gather in Fellowship Hall for a craft, fellowship, and snack. At the request of one of our Rejoicers, the snack will feature Walking Tacos!

Hope to see you May 3rd!

Blessings,
Erin Webb, Co-Chair of Rejoicing Spirits in Eastern Berks County



Greetings from Consistory

Something unusual happened at the April 8th meeting. It was finished in about an hour! There were few major points of discussion, and two topics were postponed until a later date.

A detailed written report was provided outlining the Pastor's activities for the month of March. Rev. Jim reminded us of his strategic priorities. The one at the top of the list is to serve as a guide and resource for the Settled Pastor search process.

One important topic under Old Business was the *Facility Use Agreement* concerning the proposed fees and start date for community organizations who hold their meetings within the church building. Due to the depth of the topic and concerns of some members of Consistory, a Special Consistory meeting will be held on Sunday, April 19, at the conclusion of worship to come to a resolution.

Delegates are still needed for the Keystone Conference on June 5-7, 2026, at Millersville University. A delegate may choose to attend only one day. For the local Covenant Association, to be held on April 26 from 3:00 to 5:30 PM, Daryn Keim, Barbara Krause and Kathy Landis will attend. Two delegates are required according to St Paul's bylaws to attend all conference and covenant association meetings. Please let Kathy or the office know if you would like more information or will offer to attend any day of the Keystone Conference representing St. Paul's.

A new leader is still needed for the Prayer Links group so it may continue to pray for those with illnesses, loneliness, surgeries, or other reasons. This is an important part of our service for God. Please prayerfully consider taking on this loving responsibility and let Barb or Kathy know if you would like to help out.

The written procedure for Fire Protection is in the development stage for the church. Brian Beck had a meeting with Kistler O'Brien concerning fire extinguishers and their strategic position. Some extinguishers have been relocated to more appropriate places to be easily accessible. Also, the fire suppression system was adjusted. Brian is working on floor plans that will display exit routes for each floor of the building. He will contact the Kutztown Fire Department about providing training in using the fire extinguishers.

Membership was again on the agenda. A vote was taken to approve a second letter to be sent to those members who have not responded to an initial letter asking whether they want to continue being an active member of St. Paul's. If there is no response again, those people will be considered inactive and result in a removal from the membership rolls as reported to the Conference. However, their names will remain in the church's records as past members.

In New Business, Kathy reported that Daryn Keim as head of the Pastor Search Team has requested that the Consistory discuss and agree on the compensation (including salary plus benefits) that the church is willing to offer a prospective settled pastor. Keystone Conference has changed the guidelines for suggested pastor salaries based on average teacher salaries in the Kutztown School District for those teachers who hold master's degrees. The Consistory agreed that the Finance Committee must take this into consideration first and ultimately make recommendations to the Search Team.

Be sure to use the Clothing Bin out in the back parking lot to donate used clothing, shoes, purses, and other attire. We are receiving \$120 per month for its location on our property as long as it is fruitful! Encourage others you know to make use of it too.

Thanks to all the dedicated members of the Consistory for their support of the congregation's best interests.

Submitted by Kathy Landis



YOUNG AT HEART

On Wednesday, March 15, Young at Heart hosted Jane Choc, local artist, who brought many visitors—her handmade, original, unique stuffed animals and dolls. (Check out photos, taken by Sandi Madeira, on the bulletin board inside the back door of the church and displayed by Nancy O’Neil).

Jane says her animals are primitive like a fox, an owl, duck, and ones that are just cute and very creative. Materials used are recycled from clothing available in thrift shops, like women’s coats, jackets, sweaters, socks, and doll clothes. She also searches useable materials in fabric shops or flea markets. Some are expensive like mohair and wool. For eyes, Jane may use buttons, fabric, safety eyes. Heads of dolls may be formed from clay as are feet and talons.

As for education, Jane attended a school for art and design as well as the PA Academy of Arts. When asked if she could sew, she said, “I just sew,” and indeed she does, including a lot of hand sewing. Her other talents in art started with painting architectural renderings, but she has been an illustrator, painter of house and pet portraits often commissioned. Also, she is working on two children’s books, both writing and illustrating. She loves creating animals for her grandchildren’s birthdays. Truly her creativity stood out and people asked many questions. Just recently, Jane and her husband moved from Downingtown to New Jerusalem, and she is seeking locations, craft shows, where she may display her work and sell.

Here is the YAH schedule of planned events occurring in 2026:

- **May 20- Berks History Center, Robbery of the Century (early 1900’s)**
- **June 17- Civil War history with artifacts (Dave Valuska)**

Many thanks to our presenters, but also to the Young at Heart team, Sharon Kozlowski, Sandi Madeira, and Ethel Beck. Also, kudos to Barb Merkel for support, printing materials, creating the posters, and advertising. We are low on refreshments so we would appreciate donations. If you place them in the kitchen, please mark them for YAH.

Young at Heart 2026 SCHEDULE: Every third Wednesday of the month, 10 AM – 12 noon. **Come, bring a friend, and enjoy the program and fellowship.** The program is held every month including the summer months. Many possibilities for presenters are soon to be confirmed. If you would like to attend, sign up on the attendance sheet posted outside the office.

If you have any ideas for presenters, please let one of our YAH team members know about it.

- Submitted by Kathy Landis



Joan Bieber	May 1
Jill Fitzgerald	May 1
Linda Merkel	May 2
Nancy Heffner	May 4
Jane Grim	May 4
David Hoffman	May 4
Patricia Bubbenmoyer	May 5
Lindsay George	May 5
Kenneth Ziegler	May 6
Robert Grim	May 8
Caroline Harris	May 10
Donna Sheaffer	May 13
Dallas Herber	May 13
Sue Kunkel	May 13
David Seaman	May 17
Debra Wehr	May 21
Bridget Oberheim	May 27
Devon Rhodes	May 28
Adalyn Galvis	May 30

GRACE NOTES

What are “Acts of Kindness?” Here are a few ways to show kindness:

- Express Appreciation
- Offer Support
- Compliments
- Recognition
- Friendly Outreach

We have people here at St. Paul’s performing acts of kindness. A card found in your mailbox expressing appreciation, candy given from a trip abroad or for a holiday, an email expressing how much they enjoy the Newsletter.

This all takes time. It is easy to think about things to do, but it takes effort to actually do it. That is why if you are a recipient of an act of kindness, think about the person giving it.

They thought about you and they tried to actually do something. How great is that?

No act of kindness, no matter how small is ever wasted. Look around you, is there someone who needs a little kindness? Kindness is contagious and has a ripple effect. Let’s make some waves here at St. Paul’s

- Barbara Merkel

be kind





What's Happening?

May 2nd – Spring Labor of Love 9:00 AM to Noon

Contact Info – 610-698-0852 or joeymarndt@aol.com

**May 8th – Kutztown Folk Music Society 7:30 PM – David Cullen at St. Paul's UCC
47 S. Whiteoak Street, Kutztown, PA (610) 683-3393**

**May 17th – Kutztown Community Choir at Trinity Lutheran Church at 7:00 PM,
357 Main Street, Kutztown.**

**May 20th – Young at Heart – The Robbery of the Century here at St. Paul's UCC
47 S. Whiteoak Street, Kutztown. (610) 683-3393**

Recipe from the Kitchen of Christine Keim

Crab Rangoon Dip

**2 cups crab meat or imitation crab meat
16 oz. cream cheese
½ cup sour cream
4 green onions
1 ½ tsp. Worcestershire Sauce**

**2 tbsp. powdered sugar
½ tsp. lemon juice
½ tsp. garlic powder**



Fried wontons strips or tortilla chips to serve dip

Directions: Soften cream cheese in microwave one minute. To the crab meat add; chopped green onions, sour cream, worchestershire sauce, powdered sugar, garlic powder, and lemon juice. Stir to combine. Add all to the softened cream cheese. Place in baking dishes. Bake at 350° for thirty (30) minutes. Serve with fried wontons or tortilla chips.

Household Hacks

Use a lint roller to clean lamp shades

Use lemon to clean cutting boards

Put a wooden spoon over boiling pasta to stop overflow

Use vinegar to clean showerheads

Use a rubberband to open stubborn jars

Use salt to scrub cast iron pans



Mom's Favorite Sayings

- What part of no don't you understand?
- I don't care who started it!
- Money doesn't grow on trees.
- Your face is going to freeze like that!
- Your hands are not broken.
- No one said life is fair.
- Eat your vegetables.
- I don't know is NOT an answer.
- Because I said so....That's why!

God made a wonderful mother, A
mother who never grows old; He
made her smile of the sunshine, and
he molded her heart of pure gold; In
her eyes, He placed bright shining
stars, in her cheeks fair
roses you see.

God made a wonderful mother, and
He gave that mother to me.

- Pat O'Reilly



Mother's Day Blessing

Almighty God, we ask Your blessing on each mother today. Fill their hearts with laughter and joy. Surround them with love from family and friends. Grant them health, peace, and fulfillment as they pursue their calling. Let them know their value and worth in Your eyes and ours. In Jesus' name, Amen.

St. Paul's Youth

APRIL 19TH – MAY 24TH Homeless Box Sleepout & Collection

The youth of St. Paul's UCC – Kutztown will be sleeping outside in cardboard boxes on Saturday, May 23, into Sunday, May 24, to raise awareness of homelessness and to collect needed items to donate to Opportunity House. Donation boxes will be in the hallway outside the Sanctuary. Monetary donations are also welcome. Below is a list of the most needed items.

- Toothpaste & Toothbrushes
- Shampoo & Liquid Body Wash
- Shaving Cream & Disposal Razors for men and women
- Men's T-Shirts & Underwear (Sizes M, L, XL, XXL)
- Menstrual Supplies – Tampons & Disposable Pads
- Diapers (Size 2,3, & up) & Pull-Ups (All sizes)

JULY 19TH – JULY 23RD VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL- "TRUE NORTH"

"Trusting Jesus in a Wild World" as we journey through the Alaskan wilderness. Please preregister as soon as possible (but no later than June 30). Contact Louise Moyer at 610-641-0507 or LouiseMoyer13@gmail.com.



This is YOUR newsletter. Is there something you would like to see? Are you being kept up to date on what is happening? Any suggestions are welcome. Thank you to Christine Keim for her suggestions! Hence, "The Hub" was created.

Fellowship Hour
Join us in fellowship hall every Sunday after worship!

- Relay for Life – May 16th
12 Noon at Bower's Park
NEEDS YOUR HELP!
- Hanging purple signs around Kutztown and at Bowers Park
 - Prepping purple signs
 - Setting up and taking down at Bower's park
 - Selling Raffle Tickets
 - Donating Raffle Basket
 - Walking in the event
 - Manning the Team Tent
 - Let us support our team.
See Denise Keim

MAY 2026



Worship—10:15 AM
 Sunday Schools—9:00 AM
 Office Hours; Tuesday—Thursday 8 AM—12:00 PM

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Pastor Sunday 3 PM Rejoicing Spirits	4 5-9 PM KB Cougars	5 5-9 PM KB Cougars	6 6 7 PM Consistory	7 6:15 PM Bells	8 7:30 PM Kutztown Folk Music—David Cullen	9 9 AM Prayer Walk
10	11 5-9 K B Cougars 6-8 PM Mice	12 5-9 K B Cougars	13 7 PM Consistory	14 6:15 Bells	15 PULSE DEADLINE	16 12 Noon—Relay for Life—Bowers Park
17 Last Sunday School Class Party	18 5-9 PM K B Cougars 6:45 PM Missions	19 5-9 PM K B Cougars 6-8 PM Relay K-Town	20 10AM-Noon Young at Heart 2-9 PM H & H Quilt	21	22	23 HOMELSS BOX SLEEP OUT
24	25 5- 9 PM KB Cougars 6-8 PM Mice 7 PM Property	26 5- 9 PM KB Cougars 7 PM Christian Ed	27 6 PM Personnel (L)	28 6:15 Bells	29	30
31 Geraniums in the Sanctuary						