

St. Paul United Church of Christ

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Like and follow our page St. Paul United Church of Christ – New Bremen, Ohio on Facebook
Rev. Becky Senior Pastor
Pastor Dee Associate Pastor
Jeff Quellhorst-Council President

Welcome to St. Paul UCC today, we are glad you are here!! Blessing and greetings to one and all. In the name of Christ, you are welcome today and every day.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the Church-Covid-19 is a respiratory illness that causes flu-like symptoms including fever, vomiting and difficulty breathing. Good hygiene helps prevent the spread not only of coronavirus but also of colds and flu! Stay home if you are sick. Sneeze/cough into the crook of your elbow or a tissue, not your hand. Wash immediately or use hand sanitizer after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose. Avoid touching your face, mouth, nose and eyes. On July 23 Governor DeWine mandated mask wearing in public, including houses of worship. Masks are essential to help keep those around us safe. Thank You for cooperating.

IN PERSON WORSHIP NOTES:

Masks, Bulletins and Offering Plates are available on round tables.

Please fill out worship cards located in the pews and place in offering plate as you exit. It is very important these cards are filled out by everyone who is here in case we need to contact you. Thank you!!!!

Listening devices are available in the Narthex/front entrance, for those who need them. Please return your device to an Usher following worship. Thank you! Children's Packets containing children's bulletins and other activities are available on the tables. Please take the whole packet home with you. Thank you!

WIFI Connection-connect via "St Paul – Guest" Password: Godlovesyou

The * indicates all who are able may stand

September 6, 2020 Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Worship Leaders

Ministers
Rev. Becky Erb Strang
Pastor Dee Schroer
Pastor Katie Jackson
Cheyenne Olt
Dick Hudson

The Congregation
Senior Pastor
Associate Pastor
Guest Pastor
Accompanist/Vocalist
Organist

GATHERING MUSIC

GREETING AND LIGHTING OF CANDLES: As we light the altar and Christ candles, you are invited to light a candle or candles at home in preparation for worship.

RINGING OF THE BELLS

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

MOMENT FOR MISSION: Local Aid

The mission for the month of September is Local Aid. As the name implies, local aid helps individuals and families in our surrounding communities, meeting the needs of daily life. Aid can come in the form of gas cards, rent money and other miscellaneous repairs and expenses that may occur in our daily living. To give towards Local Aid, please mark

your giving envelope accordingly or bring to the church office in an envelope labeled "Local Aid". Thank you!

*WELCOME SONG

No Matter

No Matter



*CALL TO WORSHIP

(adapted from Chalice Worship; Chalice Press, 1997)

Leader: God, of the whirlwind and fire, sweep into our presence in this hour.

People: Glory be to God, who strengthens us and blesses all people with peace.

Leader: God, who called all worlds into being, calls forth new life in us today.

People: Glory be to God, in whose creative purpose we are claimed and empowered.

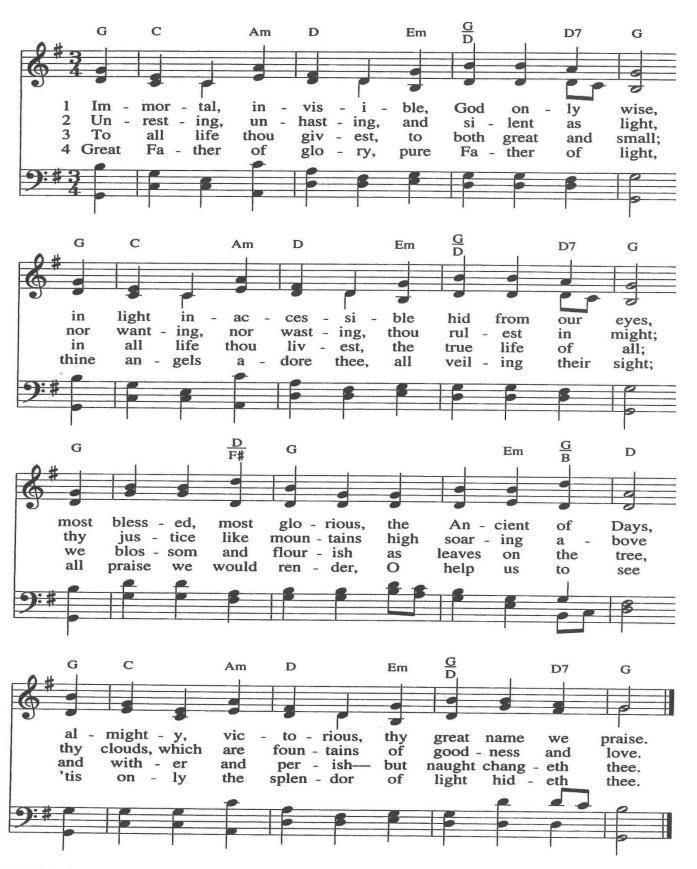
Leader: God, whose Spirit unites all people in a common language of love, confirm God's gifts in us as we worship today.

People: Glory be to God, who created light in which we can walk in confident expectation.

*HYMN OF PRAISE Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise verses 1 & 4

GOD OF MAJESTY & POWER

48 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise



*SERVICE OF CONFESSION

CALL TO CONFESSION: In Ephesians we hear, "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." (Ephesians 4:32). Let us confess our lack of love and our need of grace.

UNISON CONFESSION OF SIN: When we lose patience, when we are unkind, when we are envious, when we are rude or proud, when we are selfish or irritable, and when we will not forgive: have mercy on us, O God. Help us not to delight in evil, but to rejoice in the truth; help us always to protect, to trust, to hope and to persevere: then shall we see you face to face and learn to love you as your love us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION OF SIN ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Anyone in Christ becomes a new person altogether; the past is finished and gone, everything has become fresh and new. Friends, believe the good news of the gospel:

People: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

*GLORIA PATRI

Glory Be to the Father

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

We are in our fourth and final week of focusing our worship services on prayer. Today, we pray in color.

Purple: Pray for Animals Green: Pray for Family

Blue: Pray for the Earth/Environment

Red: Pray for Others

This week when you pray, pull out a piece of paper and some crayons and markers. Draw or doodle whatever comes to mind, but when you use purple, green, blue, and red, you can pause to pray.

Let us pray: God, we thank you that you have given us the beautiful colors in creation all around us. Prompt us to see your beauty, that we might respond with prayer. Amen.

PRAYER HYMN Where Is Bread? Where is Bread?



PASTORAL JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys: Worshipping together!

Concerns: We are continuing to pray for Deb Lear (Dodd Hall), Erin Rammel (The James), Ethel Mesloh, Julie Vogel, Jan Dammeyer, Drew Wray, Cindy Newman, and Pastor Dee Schroer.

PASTORAL PRAYER, PERSONAL PRAYER, AND THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Leader: Let us pray. O Spirit, help us so to serve you, that all the world might hear and rejoice in the greatness of your name:

Women/Girls: Lord of hosts, God of gods, Ruler of glory, Judge of earth, Lover of justice, Avenger of wrong;

Men/Boys: Upholder of life, Lifter of heads, Parent to the orphan, Protector of the weak;

All: Maker, Savior, Redeemer, Deliverer, Helper, Shepherd, Keeper, Midwife, sheltering Wings, forgiving God!

Leader: O Spirit, help us so to serve you, that all the world might hear and rejoice in the greatness of your hand:

Women/Girls: the Hand that opens, stretches forth, anoints, lifts up, rescues, saves;

Men/Boys: the Hand that leads, abides, receives our spirits, helps, holds our times;

All: the Hand that holds the cup—a strong hand, exalted, high, but not forgotten!

Leader: O Spirit, help us so to serve you, that all the world might hear and rejoice in the greatness of your arm:

Women/Girls: the Arm that creates the heavens and the earth and all who dwell therein, that performs great signs and wonders;

Men/Boys: the Arm that rules, that triumphs, that scatters the wicked and makes them still;

All: The Arm that brings slaves out of bondage, that gathers the lambs and all who are scattered—the Arm that is bared before all the nations!

Leader: O Spirit of the Living God, we lift up to you the prayers of our hearts! SILENCE

All of this we pray in the name of the Risen Christ who taught us to pray: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

ANTHEM Room at the Table Carrie Newcomer (YouTube search: Carrie Newcomer Room at the Table)

Let our hearts not be hardened to those living on the margins

There is room at the table for everyone.

This is where it all begins, this is how we gather in:

There is room at the table for everyone.

Too long we have wandered burdened and undone But there is room at the table for everyone. This is how it all begins, let us sing a new world in: There is room at the table for everyone.

Chorus:

There is room for us all And no gift is too small There is room at the table for everyone. There's enough if we share Come on pull up a chair There is room at the table for everyone.

No matter who you are no matter where you're from There is room at the table for everyone. Here and now we can be the beloved community There is room at the table for everyone. (Chorus)

Chorus:

There is room for us all

And no gift is too small
There is room at the table for everyone.
There's enough if we share
Come on pull up a chair
There is room at the table for everyone.

Let our hearts not be hardened to those living on the margins There is room at the table for everyone.
Room at the table for everyone.
Room at the table for everyone

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Romans 8:18-28 (NRSV)

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. 19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; 20 for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; 23 and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. 27 And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

28 We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

RESPONSE

Leader: The word of God for the people of God!

People: God is still speaking! Thanks be to God!

SERMON Pastor Katie Jackson

The last few weeks here at St. Paul, you have heard some of Jesus' words on prayer, and have been invited to experience how prayer can impact your life and your faith, and even the life and faith of our community. Today's reading, though, comes not from the Gospel of Luke, but from Paul's letter to the churches in Rome. Paul's perspective on prayer is probably much more radical than we might realize.

Romans contains some of the most well-known, often memorized verses in scripture, including the last verse from today's reading—All things work together for good...Do not conform to this world...I am not ashamed of the gospel...

But focusing only on these well-known verses from Romans causes us to miss the context, not only of their respective passages, but of the whole letter itself.

Chapter 8 of Romans is also pretty well known, and the message it shares is significant. Paul says that glory will be revealed to us. We will be adopted as children of God, and while we wait for that adoption, the Holy Spirit prays with us and intercedes on our behalf to give us strength in our waiting.

In her book, When in Romans, Beverly Gaventa says that rather than spending time in Romans, we tend to make weekend visits—kind of like we're doing right now.

The crux of Gaventa's study of Romans is that, when we only make weekend visits or pick and choose which passages or verses to read, we miss out on its most important theme: She says, "What Romans does is confront us with the universal, cosmic horizon of the good news." In this particular passage, Paul talks about suffering and prayer among other things.

Universal and cosmic good news. So I want you to consider: Who does this gospel exclude? If Paul's gospel is indeed universal and cosmic, who does it exclude? Where or what are the boundaries of this good

news? What I really want to focus on today is Gaventa's interpretive lens of a 'universal' gospel.

It is a challenge for us as Americans to read any part of the Bible without thinking of our own individual lives, faith and faith-journeys. The US has a focus on the individual that would have been foreign to Paul and his contemporaries. Humanity might be more connected than ever, but so much of it is superficial. The pandemic has only further isolated us from one another. The quarantine meant some of us were alone for days or weeks. I'm sure none of us can say that our lives and relationships have been unchanged. But the weird thing about this is that our experience also connects us. Although our perspectives on experience and the particulars are different, everyone is dealing with this together. Each of us has faced upheaval on some scale, in addition to our regular hardships. Paul does not dismiss the suffering of the people in his time, and he would not dismiss our suffering now-but he shows us that suffering is universal. We can choose to be bitter over our suffering and the suffering of others, or we can choose hope. Paul knew that the whole of creation suffers, but that does not mean that we should not have hope for the future.

In this passage, Paul frequently uses 'we' when talking about prayer, and Gaventa points out that, where modern readers may assume that 'we' means Paul and the reader, Paul likely meant 'we' as in the whole of Jesus' followers. If we follow Gaventa's guideline for interpretation, the 'we' becomes the whole of creation. Paul talks about creation groaning as it awaits freedom from suffering, and we are part of that creation.

Paul's idea of suffering and prayer are universal—all of creation suffers, and all of creation is invited to connection and community through shared suffering and through prayer.

Paul's letter was not written for us, but it now serves as an invitation—We are invited to join our sufferings with the sufferings of others, and of all humanity. We are invited to reassurance that we are not alone in our suffering.

We are invited to join in the kind of prayer that is constant, endless and eternal. We are invited to join in the groans and laments of people throughout the ages, with the hope for an end to human suffering and separation. We are invited to share in the vision, the 'cosmic horizon' over which all of creation is redeemed and the world is set right.

We are invited to the kind of prayer where the Holy Spirit meets us, and intercedes for us. Where words are unnecessary, where we can bring our whole selves to the One who hears us and understands us: all of us.

Paul offers us an invitation to prayer that not only connects us with God through the Holy Spirit, but connects us to our Christian ancestors throughout the centuries.

When the Holy Spirit is with us in our praying—whether it's words or groans, sighs, silence, screams and tears, we are truly partaking in something holy, and something universal.

WE RESPOND WITH OUR GIFTS

OFFERING INVITATION: God's blessings rain down upon us like manna from heaven. Sometimes we recognize them as blessings, and sometimes we don't. But God's presence is with us in either case. Today we pause on this journey to remember the many times God has been with us along the way, and has provided for our needs. Then, through the ministry of this church, we join in the work of God in providing for the needs of the world. Let us gather our gifts together and offer them to God in gratitude and praise. Amen.

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host: praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)

O God, having the same mind among us as we have in Christ Jesus, bless this offering of our lives that we may humbly serve others as Christ has ministered to us, compassionately reconcile as we have been reconciled, gladly witness as Christ has proclaimed good news to us. Empty us that we may be filled with your generous spirit. Amen.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION (Written by Rev. Maren Tirabassi)

INVITATION: Christ's invitation is simple—sit down where you are. You don't need to run off somewhere else--not a nearby village market or a familiar sanctuary, communion is where you are—sit down. The disciples complained—it is a deserted place and the hour is late. Jesus said, "They need not go away." No one needs to go away. No one is deserted and no one is late—not you who are alone, because you are vulnerable to virus or you who would feel alone even in a not-distancing crowd because something has made your life a wilderness. Jesus has compassion on every crowd, healing them, even the hungry, one by one by one. Here is green grass, someone to help you sit down, someone to help you stand up again, someone to bless Communion, so it will be enough, and break it into pieces you can handle. Sit down where you are and know that you are welcome at the table.

COMMUNION PRAYER

Leader: In the story about feeding a multitude, Jesus asked that people bring him what they had. You have done that today. In your many kitchens, living rooms and even in this sanctuary, the elements we hold, the elements you hold, are set aside as something sacred—as a sacrament. We ask God's blessing on them to make them enough and also to make them abundant for us and for all those who are in our prayers this morning. Let us pray.

People: God of compassion, you bless and break everything we are and everything we bring to you. Our deep scarcity becomes enough to sustain us, and then our "enough" becomes an abundance we could never imagine. We pray that your Spirit of life and love, of tenderness and power, rest upon every bread and every cup, that they may feed the inmost need of each child of God and pour forth a grace that can change the world. Risen Christ, live in us, that we may live in you. Amen.

WORDS OF REMEMBERING

Leader: We remember the Creator fed the aurora borealis and ocean depths, pterodactyls and diatoms, all we see now that grows and breathes, all that swims and swarms and slithers, all that runs and flies and leaps and loves.

People: We remember Jesus Christ played vintner at a wedding feast, rubbed elbows with Zacchaeus' friends, taught the disciples they should not substitute anything like a stone or snake for really important meals meant to nourish God's children.

Leader: We remember always a Passover in Jerusalem when Jesus borrowed an upper room, soaked and scrubbed the tired feet of others, and explained that there is a God-shaped hole in everyone's belly and Jesus would fill it with love.

People: Remembering is beautiful, but there is not much taste in it. Let us stop running to nearby villages with our hunger and thirst, and sit down here and now, to eat and drink, to be blessed and broken.

SHARING THE MEAL

Leader: The bread of heaven, broken for you. Take and eat. Leader: The cup of blessing, poured out for you. Take and drink.

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (unison) O Holy One, as we received this sacrament in this holy dispersion of virtual worship and the holy distancing in church pews, we thought we "ordered" from a select gourmet menu, and never expected to become the curbside pickup of your love and justice, of your compassion and courage, of your hope and healing for all your children who need a meal in a deserted place. Help us gather the leftovers from the miracles in our lives and give them away. Amen.

*HYMN OF SENDING

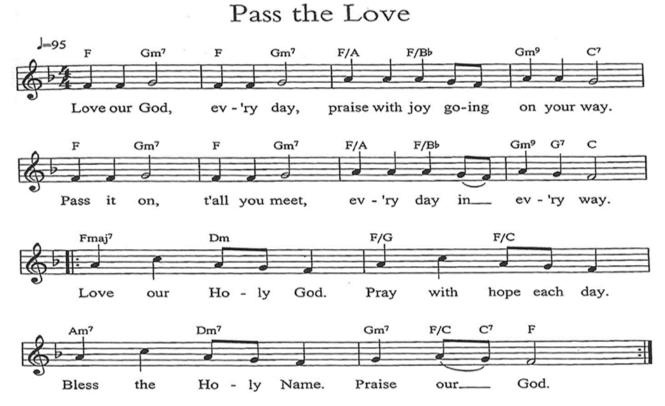
Trust and Obey

Trust and Obey



*BENEDICTION: May the God who existed before the creation itself come presently into your hearts and abide there always, that you may be forever a child of God and experience Christ's Kingdom here and in the time to come. Amen.

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE Pass the Love



*PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Let us share in the joy of the Lord by passing the Peace of Christ with one another.

As the ushers are dismissing you, let us pass the peace of Christ with each other, while maintaining our 6 ft physical distance. Direct eye contact, loving words, and a warm smile are as meaningful as a traditional handshake or hug.

*RECESSIONAL

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Altar Flowers are given in loving memory of Freda Voress by Judy, George & Karen and John & Gin Voress.

Meetings-Church Council Tuesday, September 8 at 7:00pm in the Assembly Room.

Attendance-Online-Daily Devotions Avg.-111, August 23-Sunday Worship Online-not available, In Person-43

Blessing Pantry-is open 10am-noon and 1pm-3pm Monday-Friday and 5:30pm-7:30pm Tuesday's. All Donations Welcome-Thank you! There is a metal can outside the East Educational Building door for donations.

Building Entrance-St. Paul is accessible by the East Educational Building door, Monday-Friday 10:00am-Noon and 1:00pm-3:00pm. Please ring the doorbell, wait outside the doors so staff may assist you. We are currently taking everyone's temperature, asking you to sanitize hands and shoes. Thank you!

Mailbox-There is a mailbox outside of the East Educational Building door for any correspondence you may have for the church and would like to drop off. Please lift the flap and drop through the slot on the top. The box is locked and will be checked often. Thank you!

Daily Devotions-Please join Rev Becky or Pastor Dee Monday-Friday at 11:30am, online via Facebook Live. These will be airing on our Facebook page St. Paul United Church of Christ-New Bremen, OH.

Opening Day Sunday School/Youth Groups-Due to COVID-19, Sunday School will start Sunday, October 4 in-person and Youth Groups will start Wednesday, October 7. More information will be in your mailbox soon. Thanks, Pastor Dee.

Zoom Bible Study-All are invited beginning on Thursday, September 17 at 6:30 p.m. Join Zoom Meeting by clicking on or logging onto: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88567175194?pwd=K2FBaGYzRUpaREIwTjc4Q1Y4b3UrUT09 Once you are logged on, you will need the following: **Meeting ID: 885 6717 5194 Passcode: 229014**

*If you would like an email version of this to make logging on easier, simply email Pastor Becky: berbstrang@stpaulnb.org

September Book Club is September 27 at 4:00 p.m. via Zoom. We will discuss Ashlee Eiland's *Human (Kind)*. Copies of the book can be picked up at the church office or you can contact the church office if you need a copy sent or delivered to you. All are welcome. Join Zoom Meeting by clicking on or logging onto:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81861071237?pwd=WTIEOTRCeXgrVGozNjgwL056NFIRUT09
Once you are logged on, you will need the following:

Meeting ID: 818 6107 1237 Password: 218178

*If you would like an email version of this to make logging on easier, simply email Pastor Becky: berbstrang@stpaulnb.org

Ushers Needed-Myra Hanenkratt, our Senior Deacon, is still seeking ushers for in-person worship. If this is something you are willing to do, please contact her or the church office.

September/October Upper Rooms-have arrived! They are available at the East entrance to the education building and on Sunday's in the Sanctuary. Or please call the church office if you would like one and we will gladly mail one to you.

Worship Schedule for September

Sunday's in September-we will be worshipping via Facebook Live and in person in our sanctuary at 10:15am. Katie Jackson's Ordination will be Sunday, September 13 at 3:30pm in person and via Facebook Live.

E-Giving @ St. Paul 3 Different Ways to Give

Online - Make a donation on our website: stpaulnb.org

Give+ App – Search "Give Plus Church" in your App store and find St. Paul to Get Started!

Text – Make a donation to our Number: 833-308-0048 St. Paul New "Text to Give" #(# changed as of 10/9/19)

How To Give by Text (Example - my amount for the example is \$25 (minimum amount is \$5.00))

- > For general fund giving: Send 25 space gl (hit send)
- > For building & property fund giving: Send 25 space bp (hit send)
 - For project of the year giving: Send 25 space poy (hit send)

Once a text amount is sent:

Registration Link- Sent via text the first time a donation is made. Thank you! Please visit (link) to register.

Donation Confirm- Sent via text each time a donation is made. Thank you for donating \$ (amount)! Text repeat to make this recurring or refund to cancel this donation.