

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

March 2018

PASTOR'S PEACE

This past Valentine's Day, coinciding with Ash Wednesday and the start of the Lenten season, was marred by a horrific crime—a mass shooting at the Marjory Stoneham Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida that left fifteen students and two teachers dead, plus more than 28 others wounded. The perpetrator was a 19 year-old Nikolas Cruz, who had been expelled from the same high school the previous year.

Amid the shock and grief of everyone in Parkland, shared by our nation at large as the news of this latest school violence spread, questions were asked: Who is Nikolas Cruz? Why did he do what he did? What could have been done to prevent the terrible carnage that ended so many young lives and brought such devastating sorrow to their families, friends, and neighbors?

It turns out, not surprisingly, that Cruz has a deeply troubled history. Adopted along with his younger brother by an older, loving couple, Cruz was diagnosed with both autism and ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). He struggled in school where many kids found him "weird." The high school administration banned him from carrying a backpack out of concern for what he might pack. Cruz was subsequently expelled from school altogether for brandishing a knife on school property and harassing the new boyfriend of his ex-girlfriend, as well as the girl. Well before Cruz brought an AK-15 to his former school, classmates who knew him casually predicted that he was the most likely candidate to become a school shooter.

Cruz had trouble at home too. His adopted father suddenly died of a heart attack in 2007, leaving his adoptive mom to raise him and his brother all alone. Overwhelmed, his mother considered relinquishing custody of both boys but soldiered on.

For a boy with few close friends in the world, guns became an important consolation. His mother allowed him to develop quite a collection, all legal in Florida—an AK-15, two other assault rifles, a BB gun and a pellet gun. Although neighbors were sympathetic to a mother trying to keep her sons in line, they reported acts of vandalism and theft by Cruz. In one case, a disgruntled Cruz shot up a neighbor's trailer with thirty bullets after being reprimanded for bad behavior. On 37 different occasions—the last time in November--the local police were called to the house. Cruz's mother also periodically

telephoned the police for advice on how to handle her oldest son and his temper. Apparently, Florida Child Protective Services were also called on and kept an open file on Nikolas Cruz for a long time.

Cruz was certainly not helped by his ready access to the internet and its hate-spewing sites. He hooked up online with a white supremacist group known as the "Republic for Florida" and actually attended one or two of their training sessions in distant Tallahassee. Cruz also used the internet for other kinds of self-aggrandizement. Through Instagram he posted a shot of himself killing animals. In September 2018, he was bolder, creating and posting a Youtube clip proclaiming, "I am going to be a professional school shooter." A fellow from Mississippi who noticed Cruz's Youtube boast online immediately notified both Youtube and the FBI. While Youtube promptly removed Cruz's blog from the internet, the FBI now appears to have been less than diligent in tracking Cruz down and checking him out.

Compounding Cruz's mounting mental turmoil, his adoptive mother died in November 2017 due to complications from the flu. Gone was an important emotional tether. Now homeless, Cruz and his brother accepted hospitality from the family of a former classmate who lived in a nearby trailer park. But his classmate's mother refused to allow him to bring his guns, insisting that "violence and guns are not accepted in my house." Cruz promptly found another sympathetic family that was willing to take him in, along with his guns. His latest hosts were a military intelligence analyst and a neonatal intensive care nurse who kept a gun safe for their own weapons. Cruz was required to store his gun cache in the well-locked family safe. Yet, unbeknownst to his generous hosts, Cruz was able to obtain his own key to the safe and remove his guns at will. That's exactly what he did on Valentine's Day as he also made arrangements for an unsuspecting Uber driver to deliver him and his AK-15 to the high school that had expelled him.

Right now, weeks after Cruz's rampage in Parkland, Florida, hard, unanswered questions still percolate and linger. Why wasn't high school security better? Where were mental health services? (Perhaps an earlier intervention could have prevented Cruz's mental problems from getting out of control.) Why did Cruz's mother, given her son's obvious emotional disabilities, ever allow him to accumulate guns? Why didn't the sheriff's deputy stationed at the school campus, plus two other police officers called to the scene, not enter the building immediately when he knew a shooter was active? And isn't the State of Florida and its legislators morally culpable for permitting someone younger than 21 to purchase AK-15 and other automatic weapons? All in all upon reflection, how wise is it to allow *anyone* in civilian life to purchase AK-15s and other automatic weapons, plus bump stock accessories and high-powered ammo magazines? Last but not least: why was the FBI so lax in following up on the warning it received from the Mississippi caller who noticed Cruz's boast on Youtube?

Unfortunately, amid all these perfectly valid questions, there are (by my sights) too many people and groups who want to avoid any personal responsibility by pointing fingers and blaming someone else when, in fact, it was a convergence of failings that produced Parkland's horrific tragedy—a repeat of similar mass shootings that have unfolded across our nation in the last decade and a half. Ultimately, none of us can escape blame for Parkland or any of our recent public massacres. Although it is a crazy gunman who invariably pulls the trigger, we are all participants and enablers in a culture that has allowed itself to become desensitized to violence. Our mass media is rife with images of violence: it sells movies and video games. We have been "trained" well. The graphic sight of blood entertains us. When was the last time we walked out of a film or

turned it off in our family rooms because the conspicuous show of violence sickened us or we didn't want the fertile minds of our kids or grandkids to be exposed to it? Meanwhile, collectively, we seem to be more concerned about defending unchecked individual rights to own whatever gun we choose than forestalling potential mass murderers and maintaining a safe public sphere for ourselves and our children.

I know that gun freedom advocates like to argue that guns don't kill, people do. But that's a rather specious, dissembling debating point because without an AK-15 or an equivalent assault rifle in hand, individuals like Nikolas Cruz would not be able to wreak mass murder so quickly and efficiently in the school classrooms and church sanctuaries of America without being challenged, interrupted, and halted.

As a citizen, I am a staunch constitutionalist who appreciates all the rights that America's founding documents confer. Yet I am also a Christian, a disciple of Jesus Christ, who morally and spiritually must answer to a higher authority than our U.S. Constitution. In fact, Jesus' gospel teachings in his Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere not only call us to be on guard against thoughts, emotions, and impulses that can poison our spirit but also to be wary lest a self-centered preoccupation with our own rights, prerogatives, and privileges swamp our deeper sense of responsibility to uphold the common good and the well-being of others. Jesus insists that we need to put a love of God and a love for our fellow men and women above all else.

It is possible that some folks are so well spiritually anchored that exposure to rampant scenes of violence do not titillate and contaminate them as Jesus feared. Likewise, owning guns is not in and of itself an offense to Christ (although the Amish, Mennonites, and members of other "Peace Churches" would disagree with me). Most gun owners are law abiding and peace-loving. However, we always have to be concerned about other family members and neighbors who may not have the emotional maturity or mental stability to handle exposure to real or imagined violence without being incited to violence in turn. And, frankly, for the same reasons some people shouldn't be trusted with a gun, particularly a high-powered one. What we endorse in our mass media culture when it comes to displays of violence should reflect this reality. So should our rules governing the purchase and ownership of guns.

As much as we would like a quick fix to the mass shootings that have plagued America for the last two decades, safety for our kids is going to require efforts on many different fronts. Beyond ending or at least tapping down the glorification of violence in our culture that we see on film and through video games, we do need greater safety measures in our schools and other public places. More accessible mental health care is also a must. But what's also necessary are more comprehensive background checks for would-be gun purchasers, age restrictions on gun purchasers across America (in Florida, for instance, the age is 18), and outright bans on assault-style rifles and equipment like bump-stocks that can add to the human carnage, murdering innocent children and adults alike.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, when he was about to be arrested, Jesus told his own followers to put away their weapons, saying "No more of this!" (*Luke 22:47-53*). He also warns us that those who live by the sword will die by the sword (*Matthew 26:52*). Here Jesus is not just concerned about our physical survival but also our spiritual well-being. The Prince of Peace does not want to see his disciples spiritually polluted by more violence.

While it is no sin to defend ourselves, we need to think twice and act very judiciously about the way that we wield any weapons. For us as Christians even the brandishing of weapons should be a last resort because it diverts and undermines the peace that Jesus

calls us to pursue when he declares, "Blessed are the peacemakers" (*Matthew 5:9*). In all the choices and decisions that lie ahead in seeking to make the world a safer place for our children who are 100 percent of our future, may we strive to be peacemakers, always honoring the way of Jesus Christ.

--Shalom, Pastor Geoff Drutchas

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION EDITORIAL

As we make our way through the Lenten season let us do so reflectively and expectantly. Let us draw closer to God and trust in His promises, even when there are no apparent signs of their fulfillment.

*It is easy to love Him when the blue is in the sky,
When the summer winds are blowing, and we smell the roses neigh;
There is little effort needed to obey His precious will
When it leads through flower-decked valley, or over sun-kissed hill.
It is when the rain is falling, or the mist hangs in the air,
When the road is dark and rugged, and the wind no longer fair,
When the rosy dawn has settled on a shadowland of gray,
That we find it hard to trust Him, and are slower to obey.*

*It is easy to trust Him when the singing birds have come,
And their songs of praise are echoed in our heart and in our home;
But it's when we miss the music, and the days are dull and drear,
That we need a faith triumphant over every doubt and fear.*

*And our blessed Lord will give it; what we lack He will supply;
Let us ask in faith believing – on His promises rely;
He will ever be our Leader, whether smooth or rough the way,
And will prove Himself sufficient for the needs of every day.
– George MacDonald*

May our faith grow during this Lenten season so that regardless of how forsaken we may feel, how delayed the answer to our prayer or how challenging our circumstances, we can remain steadfast walking in genuine faith.

In Christ, Pastor Cheryl Schalm, Minister of Christian Education

Spotlight on the Teacher

The March Spotlight shines bright upon Preschool & Kindergarten teacher, Emily Winter. Emily is the oldest child of Kevin and Cindy Winter. She has a younger sister, Melissa and a younger brother, Bradley. The family lives with their two dogs, Scooby and Scrappy in New Boston, MI.

Emily is a recent graduate of Baker College and is currently employed as an MA (medical assistant) at Henry Ford Health Systems. Several of Emily's favorite activities include volunteering, traveling, and hanging with friends and family. Some of her favored traditions are spending holidays together with her family, the annual family reunion

up-north and going to church. Favored values include honesty and loyalty. Make sure to introduce yourself to this wonderful young lady!

Christian Education Plans for Upcoming Events

Calling All College Students and Recent High School Graduates. Christian Education is in need of pictures and 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 and pictures to Pastor Schalm or to the church office.

Pictures will be displayed on the "College Connection" board and students will be added to the quarterly "College Connection" mailing list.

***Thirsty Thursday'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

Whether you have been a regular or are considering coming for the first time, we welcome and look forward to your company and participation.

"Thirsty Thursdays"

The What: Young Adult Bible Study

The Why: Rehydration: Daily living and life can be dehydrating!

The Where: The Schalm's. 26868 Winslow Drive. Flat Rock

The When: Thursday evenings

The Time: 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m

***Rock Hard in Faith Youth Fellowship upcoming activities include:**

March Fish Dinners, Friday, March 9th and March 23rd / 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. Youth should plan on assisting with this all-church fundraiser.

On **Sunday, March 4th** the youth will meet for lunch, planning and the writing of (30 Hour Famine) thank you letters following the 10:30 a.m. worship service.

Joe Dumars Fieldhouse Christian Lock-In - March 16th

On Friday, March 16th the youth will gather at the church at 5:00 p.m. for a lock-in and trip to the Joe Dumars Fieldhouse in Shelby Township.

Mission Trip – Plans are currently underway for the "2018" summer, youth mission trip. The trip will take place the week of June 18th – June 24th. Participants will be serving locally for the first of the week and in Muskegon the second half. Fundraising events and activities will continue all the way through June. Please contact Pastor Schalm if you are interested in participating. Youth should watch their mail for additional information.

Please be sure to read "Events You Won't Want to Miss" and "General Announcements" for complete articles of important Christian Education happenings past and future.

LENTEN EVENTS YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS

Volunteers Needed for Lenten Fish Suppers

Our congregation will be hosting four more Lenten fish suppers on Fridays during the month of March. Sit-down suppers, plus carry-out, will be hosted on March 9 and 23, 4-6:30 p.m. Drive-thru suppers will be hosted on alternating Fridays, March 2 and March 16. As in past years, the menu will include breaded wild-caught North Atlantic Cod, French fries, macaroni and cheese, our church's famous Cole slaw, roll, home-baked pie, and beverages.

Volunteer help is needed to host all of the suppers, starting with food preparation every Friday afternoon and continuing into the early evening with clean-up. Also, 90 pies are needed to serve the anticipated crowd at our sit-down suppers. Our volunteer sign-up board can be found in the narthex. Pie tins are also available in the narthex for pick-up. Please speak with the deacon on hand if you have any questions about volunteer sign-up or pie donations.

Christian Education seeks baked goods for annual Fish Dinner Bake Sales

The two remaining sit down fish dinners will be held on March 9th, and March 23rd. Christian Education will be hosting bake sales during these dinners to benefit Christian Education programs and events. Baked goods will be needed for each sale. We thank you in advance for your consideration to bake and for your support. All items are greatly appreciated and can be dropped off in the church office the day prior to the dinner or the day of the dinner.

Jerusalem Café Opens for Lenten Weeks

During the month March we will continue lighting the lights of the Jerusalem Café welcoming those attending Wednesday night activities. Desserts and beverages are being served in the West Room from 5:30-7 p.m. Each week will offer a different variety of light desserts. Jerusalem Café visitors will have a chance to enjoy refreshment and conversation before music rehearsals, worship, and Bible study. A basket donation will be appreciated.

Church members interested in contributing baked goods to the Café's desserts are invited to contact the church office (313-291-1221) or speak with Pastors Geoff Drutchas and Cheryl Schalm.

Readers Theater at Mid-week Lenten Services Tells Stories at the Cross

Artifacts that were all part of the fateful scene of Jesus' arrest, trial, and crucifixion come to life and tell our Savior's story during the Reader's Theater which returns to our sanctuary chancel for mid-week Lenten worship services. Worshippers will gather "in the round" in the chancel near the altar to hear first-hand testimonials of everything that led to Calvary's cross. The drama-in-worship series will be presented on Wednesdays, March 7, 14, and 21, 7-7:30 p.m. They will be followed by other Wednesday night activities, including choir rehearsals, confirmation class, and "No Wonder They Crucified Him" Lenten Bible Study Series.

Pastors Geoff Drutchas and Cheryl Schalm will be leading the worship services with individual actors also participating each night. All services will be held in the chancel with overflow seating below the steps. Come prepared for a thoughtful evening of worship, drama, and praise.

'No Wonder They Crucified Him' Lenten Bible Study Continues

A five week "No Wonder They Crucified Him" Lenten Bible Study continues throughout March on Wednesday evenings, meeting in our church parlor at 7:30-8:30 p.m. The Bible study series focuses on the different reasons why following Jesus is such a radical and wonderful thing to do. Upcoming topics include: 'Patrol Your Pleasures' (February 28); 'Check Your Bags' (March 7) 'Come Die With Me' (March 14); and 'Follow Me' (March 29).

Pastor Geoffrey Drutchas led the opening Bible study session on February 21. Our leaders for upcoming sessions include Doreen Thompson, guest ministers Reverend John Martin and Reverend Ralph Brown, and Pastor Cheryl Schalm. A study guide is provided to all participants, including the scriptural texts that we will be reading and discussing each night. The study guide can be picked up in the church office. Although it is helpful to attend the consecutive Bible study sessions, each session has stand-alone lessons to impart. You are invited to attend those week-to-week sessions you can.

The "No Wonder They Crucified Him" Bible Study is open to all church members and friends. There is no charge to participate. No previous bible study experience is necessary to enjoy and learn from this study series. Please sign up by using the RSVP form in your Sunday Morning Tide bulletin. For more information, contact Pastor Geoff Drutchas at the church office (313-291-1221).

Confirmands To Participate in Sunday Morning Worship Services

First and second year confirmands will be participating in Sunday morning worship services throughout the season of Lent. First year confirmands will be reciting the Apostles Creed in unison before the congregation during the fourth Sunday of Lent, March 11, at the 10:30 a.m. service. Throughout the remaining Sundays of Lenten second year confirmands will be sharing personal testimonies about their faith journey and reading a psalm selected for them. On April 18, at the 9 a.m. service second year confirmands will also be examined with questions based on their two years of study. They will be confirmed in faith the following week on Palm Sunday, March 25, during the 10:30 a.m. service.

All church members are encouraged to show their support for our confirmands by their own attendance at Sunday morning services throughout Lent.

Christian Education To Host Confirmand Breakfast The Christian Education ministry will once again be hosting the annual Confirmand Breakfast in honor of the "2018" Confirmation class. The breakfast will be served following the examination of candidates which will take place during the 9:00 a.m. worship service on March 18th. First year confirmation class parents are asked to bring a loaf of fruit bread, muffins or coffee cake to help off-set the cost. In addition, they are asked to arrive by 9:00 a.m. to help set-up and serve.

Mark your planners now for this special time of recognition and celebration. Anyone interested in helping or donating should contact Pastor Schalm or the church office.

Palm Sunday Services Inaugurate Holy Week

Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem at the start of a week culminating in his arrest, crucifixion, and resurrection will be commemorated during Palm Sunday services on March 25. In keeping with tradition, palms will be distributed to all parishioners at the close of 9 and 10:30 a.m. worship. Church members will be invited to come forth to the chancel steps to receive the palms, along with a personal blessing from Pastor Geoff

Drutchas and a presiding elder. During the 10:30 a.m. service, five young disciples will be confirmed in their faith.

The palms are often kept by church members at home and returned to church the following year for use in preparing the ashes that are distributed on Ash Wednesday.

Five Young People to Be Confirmed

Five ninth graders will be confirmed in Christian faith at the Palm Sunday Service on March 25, 10:30 a.m. Luke Frazier, Zachary Miller, Aidan Ostrowski, Emily Pedersen and Katie Stull are finishing two years of study with Pastor Drutchas and Sunday School Teacher Doreen Thompson. They will be invited to be baptized (if not already) and affirm their Christian baptism and discipleship in a special ceremony that will welcome into adult membership within our church. Each will kneel for consecration and then, rising, receive from the hands of their parents a personalized stole decorated with symbols of their individual life journey so far. Later that week, on Maundy Thursday, they will be receiving their first communion.

Sunday School Easter Egg Hunt and Party The annual Easter egg hunt and Easter party will be hosted by the Sunday School staff and held during the Sunday School hour on Sunday, March 25th. Over the course of the hour the children will share in the Easter story, decorate eggs and cookies and hunt for Easter eggs (outdoors, weather permitting). We are in need of bags of wrapped candy to help off-set the cost of filling Easter eggs. All candy donations can be dropped in the bucket located at the Sunday School Welcome Center. If you are interested in helping with the party or have further questions please contact Sheri Herkimer or Pastor Schalm.

Maundy Thursday 'Life of Christ' Service Held

A 'Life of Christ' will be held on Maundy Thursday this year, March 29, remembering Jesus' full life and recreating the supper that Jesus shared with his apostles in an upper Jerusalem room before facing arrest and crucifixion. As part of the Maundy Thursday service, worshippers will also share communion at an "Apostles' Table" placed below the chancel steps. Three newly-confirmed young people of our congregation will be receiving their first communion that evening.

The Maundy Thursday Service which takes its name from Jesus mandate or commandment to love God and one another will be held at 7:30 p.m., followed by a fellowship period in the West Room.

Good Friday 'Seven Last Words' Service Recalls Jesus' Passion

Church members and friends are invited to attend a noontime Good Friday Service in the sanctuary of St. Paul United Church of Christ on March 30. The liturgy or order of service for the occasion will be based on Jesus' compelling final words to his disciples and followers. Worshipers are asked to be seated for the service within the parameters of a cross stretched across the pews of the sanctuary. No offering will be taken. Worshipers will be asked to depart in complete silence.

Prior to the noontime service, the Women's Fellowship will be hosting a Good Friday brunch in the West Room, starting at 11 a.m. The menu will include two different kinds of quiches as well as salad, dessert, and beverage. A \$5 donation is invited. Brunch tickets will be available in advance at the kiosk in Fellowship Hall between Sunday morning services or through the church office (313-291-1221).

Lectors Needed for Good Friday 'Seven Last Words' Service

Lectors or readers are needed to assist with our Good Friday service, which will be respectively held on March 30, 12 noon. Good Friday lectors will participate in a liturgy based on Jesus' seven last "words" or declarations as found in the four gospels of the New Testament. Copies of the liturgy will be available at least one week prior to the services for all lectors.

Those interested in volunteering as lectors are asked to notify the church office and Pastor Geoffrey Drutchas by completing a Make-a-Wish card from the sanctuary pews and adding it to the morning office plate. No previous lectoring experience is necessary.

Special Baptismal Service Offered During Easter Vigil

Those who have not been baptized into the Christian faith but wish to be welcomed through the sacrament of baptism are invited to a special Easter Vigil Baptism Service on Saturday, March 31, at 6:30 p.m. Pastor Geoffrey Drutchas will offer the sacrament of baptism in the chancel of our sanctuary. Families and friends of those coming for baptism on the eve of Easter are also invited to attend. Candidates for baptism are asked to contact the church office in advance to let Pastor Drutchas know of their desire to be baptized. Baptismal certificates will be prepared for presentation that night.

Baptismal services on Easter Eve are part of the church's most ancient traditions. At St. Paul all baptisms are performed through an anointment of baptismal waters, rather than a full-body immersion as practiced in some other Christian churches. In keeping with the ecumenically-minded practice of the United Church of Christ, our congregation does not rebaptize those who have already received the sacrament elsewhere. However, where a baptism is in doubt, our pastors can administer the sacrament with special prayers to God, who knows, as we may not, our spiritual standing.

For more information about the Easter Vigil Baptism Service, please contact the church office (313-291-1221).

St. Paul Congregation Celebrates Easter Resurrection

Our St. Paul congregation will be celebrating Christ's resurrection with two morning services on April 1—a Sunrise service at 7 a.m. and a Mid-Morning Service at 10 a.m. Our Chancel Choir under the leadership of Music Director Tracy Hoffman will offer two Easter anthems and other special music for Christianity's most important holy day. Pastor Geoffrey Drutchas will be preaching that morning, assisted by Pastor Schalm and members of the church.

An Easter pew communion will be served at both services. Our congregation observes an open communion which means that all adult, baptized Christians are invited to share in the communion meal even if they are not church members. St. Paul members are encouraged to invite friends and family members to share in our joyous Easter morning services.

Facility Improvement Hosts Gala Easter Breakfast

St. Paul members and friends will be able to enjoy a gala Easter breakfast in a beautifully decorated Fellowship Hall once again this year, all thanks to the efforts of our congregation's Facility Improvement Ministry. The Easter breakfast will be served on Easter morning, April 1, 8-9 a.m. The breakfast menu includes scrambled eggs, pork sausage and bacon, raisin bread, juice, and coffee—all freshly prepared.

The Easter breakfast is a great occasion for families and friends to gather for a meal on Christianity's most holy day. Free will donations to help cover the cost of the breakfast are invited and appreciated.

OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS

Red Hot Purple Angels March event – On Saturday, March 3, at 7 PM – The RHPA are sponsoring an all church event. All Church members are invited and welcome to attend. "Piano Wars", a Premier Dueling Piano event, is an entertaining evening featuring Dave Caruso, the man of a thousand songs, bringing the party to you. The show is programmed for ages 18 and older. The location is the Democratic Club of Taylor (main hall east side entrance) 23400 Wick Road, Taylor. Doors open at 5:30 pm and entertainment starts at 7:00 pm. Tickets are \$25.00 and includes pizza and a soft drink. Beer and wine available for purchase. Tickets will be available from Michelle Matney, Barbara Shultz, and Marjie Barnard. This event is sponsored by the non-profit Taylor Public School Foundation for Educational Excellence, to support student scholarships, mini-grants, and educational special projects not funded by the School District.

The Dorcas Society will be having a meeting on Thursday March 8th at 7:00 p.m. to discuss upcoming events they will be hosting in March and May. Any questions please contact Marjie Barnard.

Sewing Guild -- Sew 'n Sews -- Please join us for a little sewing and a lot of fellowship at our next meeting on Thursday, March 15th at 10:00 a.m. Bring a sandwich for lunch, dessert and coffee is provided. P/S: No sewing skill required

Joe Dumars Fieldhouse Christian Lock-In - March 16th

On Friday, March 16th the youth will gather at the church at 5:00 p.m. for a lock-in and trip to the Joe Dumars Fieldhouse in Shelby Township. We will depart at 5:30 p.m. for Joe Dumars. Upon arrival the youth will have the opportunity for 3 hours of play on the basketball & volleyball courts, bayou golf (18 holes of putt-putt), high ropes course, caj' n cliffs (rock climbing), and gator tag (laser tag). We will return back to the church around 11:30 p.m. for a lock-in. Families should plan to pick up their young people by 9:00 a.m. Saturday.

The cost is \$21.95. Interested youth should sign the sheet on the youth board to confirm their participation.

Caregivers Plan Meeting in March

The St. Paul Caregivers Group will once again be meeting on the third Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. The next gathering is scheduled for Monday, 19 at 7:30 p.m. Every session starts with a quick-read article on a caregiving topic before we turn to conversation and discussion. Caregiving tips will be shared by participants who offer mutual support on a confidential basis. Pastor Geoff Drutchas leads the sessions, assisted by Parish Nurse Kathy Williams. The group is open to all St. Paul church members and friends.

HEALTH MINISTRIES

Exercise Classes - Exercise is important to our health. Classes are scheduled on Mondays and Wednesdays at 2 PM in the West Room unless otherwise advertised. Delissa is our instructor. She is a wonderful trainer with a Christian philosophy. Participants have notice increased strength and balance. Please plan to join us. A donation of \$3-5 is suggested for each day class attended.

Hepatitis A Outbreak in Southeast MI – Due to the outbreak of Hepatitis A in our area the health department has made *free* Hep A vaccines available. Two doses are required in the series 6 months apart. Check the Health Bulletin Board in fellowship Hall or speak with Kathy Williams.

First-Aid & CPR Classes – If you are interested in getting certified for First-Aid and CPR with AED, please contact Kathy Williams or make out a Make-a-Wish card for a class in April or May. The class takes 8 hours.

Shalom – Chronic disease group meeting. We usually meet the 2nd Monday on each month at 1PM. Our next meeting is April 9 at 1 PM. Check the MorningTide for additional information regarding topics and/or speakers.

Our Blood Drive was held February 15. (The original one planned for January was cancelled due to ARC workers illness.) Despite the weather and many cancellations or no shows, 20 pints of whole blood were collected. Five additional persons presented but were deferred from donating. There were some volunteers who stopped to donate thanks to the sign out front of church. Thanks to all who participated.

Keeping up with your Medical History – Are you tired of writing out your medical history every time you go to a new doctor or specialist? It is much easier to include diagnosis, medications, history and surgeries with dates on a document. You can update it yearly. You can take a copy of the document to your doctor, urgent care or emergency room visit. When their medical form asks for information about you, you just write in 'SEE ATTACHMENT' and leave a copy your form. Contact Kathy Williams for help or clarification.

Health/Medical supplies –If you have or need medical supplies, such as walkers, wheelchairs, please contact our parish nurse or the office.

"Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live." John 11:25

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

March St. Paul Member and Friend Anniversaries:

Happy Anniversary to the following couples: Robert & Shirley Robinson (51 years), Patricia & Jeffrey Britt (39 years), Colleen & Bernard Baca (38 years), Laura & Herbert Kiefer (36 years), William Jr & Billie-Jo Stears (18 years), Ken & Glema Weaver (16 years), Michael & Tonya Staffeld (14 years), Cynthia and Richard Yuenger (13 years), Steve and Norma Kane (8 years), James Hubert Jr & Kimberli Thisius-Hubert (7 years) and Kari and Jeremy Cappello (3 years).

March St. Paul Member and Friend Birthdays:

Happy Birthday to the following members and friends: Shirley Rohr, Dave Vandercook, Peggy Tunesi, Beverly Sitz, Joan Rensel, Jack Teetzel, Barbara Siemers, Barbara Schultz, Ken Weaver, Larry Kurtsel, Mary Caruso-Miller, Pamela Lange, Sylvia Matney, Robert Black, Marjie Barnard, Roy Staffeld, Lori McAdam, Kirk Blanchard, Sherry Martin, John Gunther, Kim Martinez, Cynthia Patterson, Brian Elliott, Laura Maher, Michael May, Alison Hipp, Matthew Staffeld, Barbara Romas, Brittany Lake, Zachary DeFoe, Melissa Rossi, Morgan Gillespey, Ethan Childress and Jena Mellin.

March St. Paul Youth Birthdays:

Happy Birthday to the following youth: Zachary Miller, Dylan Stull, Jack Lange, Brody Kulhanek, Luke Smart, Makenna Gorbe, Patra Flomo, Hadley Lake, Jadelynn Krause, Tyler King, Dylan Stephens, Preston Romas, Eleanor Ruffner, Maverick Hubert and Aurora Beyer.

We apologize if we missed your Anniversary or Birthday, but it's because our records don't include all your personal information, please feel free to contact the Church office at (313) 291-1221 and we will gladly update your personal information for you.

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

St. Paul Welcomes New Members

Our St. Paul congregation welcomed new members at Sunday morning services on January 25 and February 25. Steven Clark, John Kovach, Sheryl Schwab, and Paula Strawsine joined our congregation during special ceremonies with Pastor Geoffrey Drutchas officiating. All four members have been regularly attending worship services. Steven Clark's wife, April, was elected as Council secretary at our January annual meeting. Sheryl Schwab's daughter, Chris, serves as our Sunday morning nursery attendant in the new Family Room. Paula Strawsine is the daughter of Joan and Harold Foley and the sister of Denise Foley, all long-time members of our congregation. John Kovach has been attending our church over the past several months. His late father-in-law, Herve Cusson, was a church member.

All of our new church members have expressed appreciation for our church—both for its worship services and friendliness. Church members are encouraged to give them a warm personal welcome in these weeks ahead.

Christian Education Seeks "2018 - 2019" Nursery Attendant

It will be with a deep sense of gratitude and sadness that Christian Education and the nursery age children of St. Paul bid nursery attendant, Christine Schwab farewell at the close of the Sunday School year in June. While Christine will continue attending St. Paul, she will no longer be serving in the capacity of nursery attendant. Christine has been a true blessing and a wonderful asset. She will be greatly missed by all.

As a result of Christine's departure Christian Education is seeking a new nursery attendant. The position requires that candidates be 21 years of age or older, complete the "Reduce the Risk" program (offered at the church) and a background check (done at the church). The position pays \$15.00 per service (\$30.00 per two service Sundays).

All interested parties should contact Pastor Cheryl Schalm or Sheri Herkimer, Chairperson Christian Education.

Volunteer Office Manager Needed

St. Paul is currently looking for a volunteer to serve as Office Manager, position would be a part-time position and be about five hours a week. Responsibilities would include monitoring usage of church office supplies (paper, pens, pencils, toner, etc.) and ordering, as required. They would also be responsible for ordering special items for the ministries (Christian Education, Music, Stewardship, Pastors, Parish Nurse, etc.), examples might include: confirmation robes, tent and chairs for summer picnic as well as other special items. Monitoring and recording usage for the copier and risograph would also be part of the job description. If you are interested in applying for this volunteer position, please contact one of the St. Paul Trustees; John Smith, Michael Isaacs or Dave Badarak.

St. Paul's Own Girl Scout Troop is selling their famous Girl Scout cookies. Our sale goes through April 8th, 2018. The six main cookie flavors (Thin Mints, Tagalongs, Samoas, Trefoils, Do-Si-dos, & Savannah Smiles) are still only \$4 per box and the two specialty flavors - Toffeetastic (gluten free) & S'mores - are \$5.50 a box. The Troops to Troops donation offer is available again this year, too. For a \$4 donation, our Girl Scout troop will donate a box of cookies to our troops in the US Military. If you would like to place an order and help support our troop, there is an order form available in Fellowship Hall on our Girl Scout board where you can write your order, you can contact Jennifer Berringer at Jberringer3@aol.com (please put "cookie order" in the subject line and be sure to include your contact information). The girls will also be selling cookies during coffee hour once we have them in stock. As always, thank you for supporting our troop and our girls! ♥

St. Paul Youth Go Without Food To Raise Awareness And Funds To Help Eradicate World Hunger

Over the weekend of February 16 – February 18th, St. Paul youth chose to make a difference by participating in World Vision's 30 Hour Famine. They went without food in order to raise funds and awareness on issues relative to world hunger and poverty. Over the course of the weekend youth sponsored a Valentine Dinner Dance for Special Olympic athletes, went on a shopping spree to benefit the Fish and Loaves food pantry and participated in several activities to increase their own understanding as it relates to poverty and to addressing the needs of God's most vulnerable children. Following a "feast before famine" pizza meal, the youth gathered for a midnight candle service to mark the beginning of their 30 hour fast. Afterwards, they locked down for the night. On Sunday morning the youth met at Pete's Place restaurant in Taylor to break their fast and celebrate. The young people would like to thank all those who pledged and prayed for them. Your generous donations and support were so greatly appreciated.

Rock Hard In Faith Youth Fellowship Holds Eighth Annual ARC Dinner Dance

On Friday, February 16th the youth hosted their 8th annual Valentine's Dinner Dance for the ARC (Association of Retarded Citizens). The youth prepared and served a spaghetti dinner for 90 plus guest. Following dinner all enjoyed dancing and fellowship. The youth would like to thank all those who made donations or contributed to help make this event an enjoyable and fun evening for members of the ARC. A special thank you to

Arlene Felske for the beautiful cupcakes, Sue Mrowka for the beautiful table flowers and the Childress family for the beautiful carnations to hand out to our guest. Thank you also to Karen and Toni Hill, Eddie Brainard, Dan and Lisa Childress, Emily Winter and Candace Poet for all your help with dinner preparation.

Coffee Hour Drink Spills Have Created a Problem. Please help us avoid drink spills. Lids are provided during our Coffee Hour for your beverages if you would like to leave the hall with your drink. We have noticed many areas in the building where beverages were spilled. We would like to keep our building looking nice as we can. Your help is greatly appreciated. Thank You, St. Paul Building & Grounds Ministry.

Electronic Giving "Pew Cards" are available in the Narthex for those who make their donations electronically. The cards can be obtained as you enter the church. Simply drop the card in the offering plate to indicate that you are supporting the St. Paul ministry electronically. Ask any usher for a "Pew Card" or if you have any questions.

Volunteer needed for St. Paul Sign Board

The Building and Grounds Ministry is looking for a volunteer or volunteers to maintain our large St. Paul advertising sign, located to the West of the Church on Goddard Road. Responsibilities would be to update the sign as events are happening at St. Paul (ie: Fish Dinners, Rummage Sale, Blood Drives, etc), training will be provided. Anyone interested in volunteering to take over the responsibility for updating the advertising sign should see either Michael Isaacs, John Smith or David Badarak, our St. Paul Trustees.

Ushers Needed

We are seeking volunteers to assist at our Sunday morning worship services. Ushers are an extremely important part of our services. They help St. Paul present a welcoming atmosphere. Anyone interested please speak with the presiding deacon on Sunday mornings or contact Kristi Caruso by phone or text and she will contact you regarding any questions or concerns you may have.

St. Paul Eliminates PO Box

As part of the budget planning for 2017 it was decided to eliminate the Post Office Box effective July 1, 2017, since most of the Church mail was already coming to our regular mailbox. If for some reason you or your financial institution are still utilizing the **(PO Box 190)** address; you should notify them to change it to the church address **(24158 Goddard Rd, Taylor, MI 48180)** immediately. The post office is supposed to forward the mail, but recently there was an incident where they did not forward the mail. We apologize for any inconvenience this change may have caused you.

Lenten Food Drive for Fish & Loaves continues in March

St. Paul members are invited to make a difference for Fish & Loaves Community Food Pantry this Lent by the donation of canned goods each week to stock the pantry's shelves. Canned soups, stews, and chili will especially help Fish & Loaves serve the thousands of families who shop at the "client choice" pantry each month. If every worshiping member brings one canned good each week, our congregation will be able to present Fish & Loaves with over a thousand cans of nourishing food—a reasonable, worthy goal underscoring what one congregation can accomplish.

A Fish & Loaves bin has been placed in the church narthex. Canned goods collected each week will be counted and weighed with the results shared with the congregation throughout the season of Lent. Every can of food matters. Help Fish & Loaves help others.

Church Wi-Fi Password changed in February

The St. Paul Wi-Fi password was changed during the month of February in accordance with our IT policy. As many of you already know the wireless internet has added another dimension to St. Paul, in that it enables our members with smartphones, tablets and laptop computers to access resources that actually aid in our congregation's mission, it also helps to bring people in and encourages them to stick around. Please contact Dan Case, Michael Isaacs or Gary Peters during or after our services to get the new Wi-Fi password. Thank You, St. Paul IT Ministry.

Audio Copies of St. Paul Sunday Worship Services are available for your listening pleasure. Just log onto the St. Paul Web Site "stpaulucctaylor.org", select the "Our Worship Together" tab, then the Worship Services (Audio)" tab. Directions are given on the Service page. Services are also available on the Mobile application as well. If you have any questions, please contact Gary Peters, Michael Isaacs or Dan Case.

Enjoy the Convenience of Electronic Giving

As St. Paul begins to prepare our budget for 2018, it is important to know what support we can depend on from our members and friends. By knowing what you are willing to commit financially, we are able to better plan for the future. Please consider setting up a recurring giving plan. Automating your financial commitments means your contributions will be received on a steady, uninterrupted basis.



To set up a recurring giving schedule, visit us online at www.stpaulucctaylor.org/giving, locate the Online Giving button and set up your recurring giving schedule. The first time you give, you will select a password that will enable you to log in at any time and make changes to your giving or view your complete online giving history. St. Paul also offers a mobile version of our online giving page to make it easy for you to give anytime from your smartphone. Simply scan the image you see here using your phone's QR reader. If you need additional assistance or have questions, please contact Gary Peters, our Treasurer or Dan Case, Auxiliary Trustee.

Pastor Offers Invocation at Legislative Forum

Pastor Geoffrey Drutchas delivered the opening invocation at a Legislative Forum hosted by the Western Wayne Regional Chamber of Commerce on February 20. Congresswoman Debbie Dingell was the featured speaker before a full house at the Crystal Gardens Conference Center in Southgate. Pastor Drutchas' prayer for the occasion appears below:

"O God, as we gather for a shared meal and a conversation on matters important to us all, we seek your guidance and help. In these troubled days when the moral integrity of our nation's leadership seems so often in doubt and unchecked violence and mayhem intrude upon the peace and innocence of our schoolyards and sacred sanctuaries, deliver us from despair and the sins of apathy and cynicism. Strengthen us all to stand faithful

*and true to those higher values and virtues that honor your purposes for our lives.
Renew us in your gracious, generous spirit
that we might set aside prejudices and transcend all selfishness with the goal of serving
the common good. Grant us the wisdom and moral fortitude to rebuild an America more
worthy of our Founders' legacy and your continued blessings. Amen."*

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

Memorial Fund - In Memory of: *Sharon Ferguson* From: Richard & Beverly Parks; Harold, Joan, & Denise Foley; Brenda Tank; Dorcas; Voran Funeral Home; Susan Spears
In Memory of: *Sylvia Hakala* From: David & Julie Osen; Phill & Arlene Felske

Kitchen Fund-

In Memory of: *Sharon Ferguson* From: Doug & Janet Staffeld; Sewing Guild
In Memory of: *Sylvia Hakala* From: Sue Mrowka
In Memory of: *Sara Kauffman* From: Gary & Pat Staffeld

Music Growth Fund-

In Memory of: *Sharon Ferguson* From: Gary & Pat Staffeld

Health Ministries Fund-

In Memory of: *Sharon Ferguson* From: Ann Anderson; Cindy Romas
In Memory of: *Sylvia Hakala* From: Velma McGee; Cindy Romas
In Memory of: *William "Bill" Harry* From: Cindy Romas
In Memory of: *Genevieve Gehringer* From: Cindy Romas
In Memory of: *Sara Kauffman* From: Dan & Dorothy Evison

Christian Education Growth Fund-

In Memory of: *Jack C. Jones* From: Cindy Romas
In Memory of: *William "Bill" Harry* From: Bob Harry & Ruth Bianco
In Memory of: *Sara Kauffman* From: Cindy Romas

Facility Improvement Fund-

In Memory of: *Sharon Ferguson* From: Deb & Dan Case
In Memory of: *Sara Kauffman* From: Thelma Poet

Organ Fund-

In Memory of: *Sharon Ferguson* From: Velma McGee; Judy & Murl Nieman

Generational Endowment Fund-

In Memory of: *Sharon Ferguson* From: Staten Family; Miles & Irene Church

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Thank You to the February Merry Mailers: Fred Miller, Karen Hill, Toni Hill,

A special **THANK YOU** to the 25 volunteers who helped make the Coleslaw for the 2018 Fish Dinners. We ended up making (17) five gallon pails of Coleslaw for the Fish Dinners.

Coffee, donuts and great fellowship were enjoyed by all who attended. Those in attendance included Patricia Olson, John Smith, Barb Smith, Kathy Williams, Mark and Sandy Ennis, Henrietta Hinzmann, Helen St. Louis, Grace Wangbickler, Rosemarie Laslo, David Badarak, Patrick Ferguson, Dorothy and Dan Evison, Lisa Childress, Richard and Beverly Parks, Toni Hill, Thelma Poet, Sharon Podpora, Louise Stanek, Diane and James Poet, Gary Peters and Daniel Case. We would also like to extend a special "THANK YOU" to the Block Family for donating all the vegetables required to make the Coleslaw.

A special **THANK YOU** to Gary Staffeld, Fred Miller, Kathy Williams, Ed Brainard, John Smith and Dan Case for cleaning all our white tables and chairs in preparation for the 2018 Fish Dinners. From your St Paul Building and Grounds Ministry

A special **THANK YOU** to all those members and friends who helped to make the 2018 Wild Game Dinner such a tremendous success. Over 220 people enjoyed an evening of fun and fellowship along with a great meal. This was our eleventh annual Wild Game Dinner, over the past years the Building and Grounds Ministry has raised \$82,000 for the Church. The money has been used to help offset our Heat and Energy Cost and to enhance our beautiful facility (new windows, A/C for West Room, new carpet, etc.). From your Building and Grounds Ministry

Thank You Thank You to the many people that helped with the 13th Annual Scrapbook Crop. Whether you donated food or prizes, helped that day, or came and shopped, we are so appreciative! This is why I love our church, because of all the people that will step up when asked. We netted \$2,982, which gave BOF and Christian Education \$1,491 each. So in 13 years our total profit has been \$31,334, which means BOF and CE each have received \$15,667! Good Job!

Rose on the Pulpit celebrates the birth of Jack Edward Cappello, born February 8, 2018 to Jeremy & Kari Ennis Cappello. St. Paul Grandparents are Mark & Sandy Ennis. St. Paul Great-grandparents are Betty & Joe Mayfield and the late Pat & Jim Ennis.

Love and Deepest Sympathy to Karen (Andy) and Eric (Julie) and friends on the loss of mother, grandmother & great-grandmother, Sara Kauffman, who passed away February 2, 2018 at the age of 86 years. Memorial service was February 10, 2018 at St. Paul Church. Rev. Geoffrey Drutchas officiated. Arrangements by Howe-Peterson Funeral Home, Taylor Chapel.

Love and Deepest Sympathy to Bob & Shirley Robinson, Linda Robinson and family on the loss of Bob's sister Sandra (Cookie) Robinson who passed away Thursday, February 15, 2018. Funeral arrangements are private.

WE ASK FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Fellowship of Concern – Prayer List: Prayers are requested for the following church members and friends: Pauline Arndt, Megan Barnosky, Paula Block, Ryan Block, Marion Bolen, Curt Buzo, Betty Caufield, Shirley Drobil, Dave Cowper, Phill Felske, Danielle Gardner, Barbara Gish, Vicki Grant, Kyle Hard, Bob Harry, Pam Jones, David King, John King, Nancy Kittendorf, Yvonne Koster (Heartland, Canton), Nancy Koszalka, Rev. Bill Kren, Pam Lange, Sharon Leonard, Cameron Maher, Neil McEachern, Velma McGee,

Michelle Mellin, Joan Rensel, Bob Robinson, Shirley Rohr, Eleanor Rossi, Beverly Snyder, Sue Spears, Kevin Staffeld, Brenda Tank, Linda Tank, and Tom Williams. *Please contact the church office if your family member or friend needs to be listed longer than three weeks or their health has been restored.*

Please Pray for our Congregations Extended Family: Brenda & Bonnie (friends, Daisy Stedman), Justin Collins (son-in-law, Gerri King), Rebecca Havenstein Coughlin (daughter, Shirley Havenstein), Mary Faremont (sister, Richard Wagner), Allison Files (granddaughter, John & Barb Smith), Gabriella Gomez (niece, Darlene Babin), Robert Grigg (friend, Schalm family), Lynn Harbin (sister, John Smith), Paola Hillebrand (friend, Wendy Warner), Tamsey Hoffman (friend, Sue Mrowka), Kevin Johnson (grandson, Patricia Olson) Richard Jones, Justin Kurtz (friend, Chelsey Schalm), Joanne LeFleur (daughter, Helene & Neil McEachern), Jennifer Lee (granddaughter, Barb Siemers), Chris Lunsford (friend, Velma McGee), Courtney Matthew McEachern, Kim McEachern (daughter-in-laws, Helene & Neil McEachern), Scott Miller (son, Fred Miller), James Newsome (friend, Barb Schultz), Laura O'Neil (mother, Shawn Block), Nicki Pappas (friend, Velma McGee), Garnett Raymond (daughter, Betty Hagerty), Brian Reid (friend, Sue Mrowka), Lynda & Paul Reside (sister-in-law, brother, Arlene Felske), Robert Rider (brother, Virginia Butzlaff), Judy Robin (aunt, Lucinda Chavez), Trudy Clark-Schiller (daughter, April & Steve Clark), Richard Sherman (brother, Anne Blanchard), Joyce Smith (sister, the late Harry Thompson), Lynn Smith (sister, John Smith), David Staten (brother-in-law, Peggy Staten), Nicholas Surre (great-grandson, Helene McEachern), Paul Tetreau (nephew, Kathy & Gary Peters), Donna Vercande (cousin, Kathy Williams), and Victoria Witcher (daughter, Cheryl Stewart).

Please Pray for our Congregations' Parents: Michael Bailey (father of Christie Smart), Robert Brainard (father, Ed Brainard), Jan Filpus (mother of Julia-Joy Miller), Bruce Gaither (father, Rebecca Warren), Carol Kuhn (mother-in-law of Lori Kuhn), Stella Ludlam (mother-in-law, Ellen Ludlam), Bill Pinage (father of Brenda Buzo), Sheryl Schwab (mother of Mary Hard & Christine Schwab), Frank Small (father of Chris Chavez), and Anna Thompson (mother, Lucinda Chavez).

Church Members & Friend in Nursing or Rehab Care: Mary Dubke (Amy's Place, 41346 Llorac Lane, Northville 48167), Melva Haglund (Rivergate Health Center, 14041 Pennsylvania Rd., Riverview, 48193), Ilene Krogman (Applewood Nursing Center, 18500 Van Horn Rd, Room #124, Woodhaven, 48183), Helen Parrish (9637 Janet, Taylor, 48180), Eleanor Rossi (Maple Heights, 4600 Allen Rd, Room 415, Allen Park, MI 48101), Melissa Rossi (17652 Colgate, Dearborn Heights, 48125), Vernagene Schafer (Borgess Gardens, 3057 Gull Rd, Kalamazoo, 49048), Ben Scherf (904 E. Lake Mitchell Dr., Cadillac 49601), Betty Steinhauer (Rivergate Health Center, 14041 Pennsylvania Rd. Riverview, 48193) Grace Torango (Rivergate Health Center, 14041 Pennsylvania Rd., Riverview, 48193), and Lisa Wild (Anestic Care Residence, 21071 Tiffany Dr., Woodhaven, 48183).

Link to our online: [CHURCH CALENDAR](#)