



THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL

July 2020

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For an electronic
version of
THE EPISTLE,
please visit our
website at:
www.stpaulnch.com

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Worship Opportunities

Sundays:

9:50 AM Traditional

Worship in Sanctuary
Sunday School

IT'S ONE OF THOSE "MOMENTS"...

I don't know what I am doing! Seriously...and I freely admit it!

But then, if you've been paying attention at all over the past months, I am not the only one.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic it seems everyone has been scrambling, especially everyone and anyone in any kind of leadership or service role—from government (at every level), to health care, to schools and nursing facilities, small businesses, large corporations, banks, sports leagues, agriculture, the Church...you name it. All these institutions, as well as the public at large, have been plunged into uncharted waters as a result of Covid-19. These are unprecedented times; and, as has been often pointed out (by pundit and by experience), none of these institutions had a playbook ready for this pandemic.

Then, the George Floyd incident in Minneapolis (following other recent, similar incidents)...and we have a country in convulsions; and along with it, a rekindled but sadly, painfully familiar debate about race, justice, and history. I say "rekindled" and "sadly familiar" because at times in our past it has burned red hot...but in reality, has never stopped smoldering in our national life—because systemic racism requires systemic solutions, and we Americans can't seem to unite long enough or with enough intention (national will?) to find those solutions (yet).

And now...Covid-19 is resurging in many places. Add all this up, and the only constants since mid-to-late winter have been uncertainty, fear, anxiety, question upon question...along with pain, and grief, and loss, and inconsistency, and guess work...and more uncertainty.

So, no...as a church leader, I don't know what I am doing with all this. Except like just about everyone else, I am scrambling to make sense of it all and seeking some helpful responses to answer it all, reassure others in the midst of it all, plan/create online worship regardless of it all, stay strong and focused despite it all, persevere and find some kind of hope through it all, grieve and overcome the losses brought by it all. And maybe most of all, try to trust God in the middle of it all.

But, even if I don't know what I am doing a lot of the time, I do know a few things. I know, for example, that even those these are "unprecedented" times, we have been through unprecedented times before. Wars...social upheavals...recessions and depressions...times of national tragedy and national angst. And in this church, we have also lived through great stresses and upheaval before.

I also know we have always come through these times, one way or another. Different or changed, perhaps. Worn down but still resilient, definitely. Stronger and more united, occasionally. Wiser and more compassionate to one another—and more enlightened--hopefully. Always work to do there.

Further, I know that this tough and unique "moment" in history is a time of "testing," for everyone; and especially perhaps for our church. At our most recent "special" Council meeting (all members were invited), there was a lot of angst, anxiety, anger...some of this flowing from ongoing historic tensions, some from systemic problems we

Ponderings From The Pastor (continued)

need to fix in the church, some from mistakes or lapses in leadership (including my own!)—all mashed together, and all undoubtedly exacerbated by the stress and uncertainty of this tough and unique “moment” in history.

We will be working on these old tensions—or should I say, we will keep working on them, as we’ve been trying to in the past. We will address and try to fix the systemic problems. We’ll learn from our mistakes. And, in the (hopefully) not too distant future, we will be meeting again together for worship in the church. Of course, doing any of these things in isolation won’t end the angst and anxiety. But when added together, and with time, they give us some guiding direction, and the path toward increased unity. And for the current moment—our shared NOW—it puts us on that path to travel together. The task for each one of us—our individual decision to make, now—is to decide to take the first steps on that path.

Here are a few of those steps we can all take...

1. Examine your own heart, and see how it might be affected by (even feeding on?) old tensions and historic discord; and if it is affected, start to let go of the past (it guarantees us nothing), reject the discord, and start working on some heart healing. A main key to that—the first step—is to want to let it go and to desire some healing...and, wow! God offers expert help with that!
2. Support the church leadership, with empathy and prayer—in general, church leadership in today’s world is harder than EVER in the past (that’s no joke—even without a pandemic and the current social unrest); and especially offer support as we learn to better discern the systemic problems we have and start to implement adaptations we need to make.
3. And finally—actually, maybe start here?—consciously and intentionally make the effort to consistently GROW in your own spiritual life and depth, if you’re not already doing this. And even if you are, or think you are, we can ALWAYS (all of us!) be more consistent. We need this. We need this a LOT. Every church needs this, especially churches that want to become and remain relevant in today’s world. A church MUST have regular, consistent, quality spiritual growth in its members...or it has become little more than a social club.

Not that there’s anything wrong with social clubs; they’re fun, and offer lots of benefits and good times for their members! But a CHURCH is not a club; it’s a gathering of called disciples, being transformed by the Spirit and then transforming their world. A church is not about benefits you receive, nor perks of membership, nor “having good times.” Certainly, being the church can lead to some “good times, even great ones! But, those are the result of growth in faith and discipleship, growth in the Spirit and in UNITY...they are the “fruit of the Spirit” (see below)...but they are not the starting place. Again, the church is a gathering of called disciples, a called people—called to manifest and mirror the Living Christ, all the time, everywhere, every day, sharing God’s full Love in a world that so badly needs more love, and less drama.

That “fruit of the Spirit?” I close by quoting our church’s namesake, St. Paul, from one of his authentic (and earliest) letters, Galatians...written in a tough and unique “moment” in history:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against things like this. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the self with its passions and its desires. If we live by the Spirit, let’s follow the Spirit. Let’s not become arrogant, make each other angry, or be jealous of each other. – Galatians 5.22-26

Letting go of the past and moving into our shared NOW...consistent regular spiritual formation (with it’s accompanying peace and JOY)...growing with your leaders...addressing needed (and do-able) changes...more love, less drama...harvesting fruit of the Spirit. Sounds good to me. How about you?

IN CHRIST, ALWAYS -- *Pastor Barry*

News and Updates

ZWOSTER SCHOLARSHIP

Congratulations to our two recipients, Madyson King and Chelsey Davis for receiving the Zwoster Scholarship.

Congratulations Madyson and Chesley!



WORK ORDERS

If you have a special project that you need the help of Jim or Anne, or something that needs to be taken care of, please fill out a WORK ORDER. These are located on the kiosk table in the Narthex.

They should be turned in to the office. If you need something by a specific date, please be sure to give them enough time to complete what is needed. They will be sure to work it into their schedule in as timely a manner as possible.

AUGUST EPISTLE DEADLINE

The Epistle deadline for the August edition is Wednesday, July 22, 2020. Please submit the information either by email to Anne or drop it in the Epistle box in the main office. There is also a folder in the blue mailbox outside the office.



In Loving Memory

GIFTS TO THE CHURCH

In Memory of Chris Hoeweler

Elaine Sloan

In Memory of Don Beresford

Jane & Wayne Schleutker

In Memory of Joanne Thueneman

Joann Ernst

Linda Woods

PLEASE HELP US with LIGHTS AND DOORS

On several occurrences lately, we have found an outside door unlocked. Please be sure to check doors before you leave, especially if you are the last one out.

Please do your diligence to make sure that the lights are off in the building when you leave.



FACEBOOK PAGE

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Paul-United-Church-of-Christ-NCH/451020504934791>.



ST. PAUL UCC'S REFORMING TEAM Report to the Church

Our ReForming Team, an *ad hoc* group of church Council members, started working over six weeks ago to begin discussions and planning on how to safely reopen SPUCC this summer, while we are still IN the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Team consists of Pastor Barry, Pastor Joan, Judith Lewis-Combs,

Linda Woods, and Judy Boyce.

The following are the recommendations of the Team—including the safety guidelines we are asking ALL members and visitors to follow for at least the rest of the summer and possibly beyond. The earliest date for reopening—our current target date—is **July 19**. This could change, as a resurgence of infections is now taking place in more and more places; and in the last week, the church's zip code (45231) has been one of the "hottest" zones in Ohio. We will keep everyone updated on any change of plans via email, phone, our website, and the church's Facebook page.

GUIDELINES FOR REOPENING

1. Only ONE entrance is to be used, the main entrance, off main parking lot. All other entrances will be locked. Please remain on the Sanctuary level while in the church.
2. Everyone must have their temperature checked (non-touch digital thermometers) upon entering the church.
3. Everyone is strongly encouraged to wear a face covering upon entering the church. Disposable face masks will be provided, if needed.
4. Everyone must sanitize their hands upon entering the church. Hand sanitizer will be available at the main entrance and at various spots throughout the main level.
5. Everyone must practice social distancing. We are asking that people REFRAIN from physical contact for the time being—NO hugging, handshakes, etc. (elbow or fist bumps permitted).
6. Everyone must adhere to seating arrangements. Pews will be marked to allow proper distancing. Persons in same household may sit together.
7. No drinking or eating inside church at this time.
8. Use sanitizing wipes in restrooms, after each use. Do not place wipes in toilets.
9. There will be no printed bulletins. Order of worship will be projected on screen in sanctuary.
10. A box will be located at rear of sanctuary for placement of giving envelopes. We are in the process of setting up online giving for those who may be interested.
11. We still encourage the following persons to stay at home and continue to worship virtually:
 - A. Persons with cold or flu symptoms;
 - B. Persons who have been caring with someone with cold/flu symptoms;
 - C. Persons with pre-existing conditions (diabetes, asthma, COPD or other lung/breathing issues, heart disease, kidney disease, weak immune systems)
 - D. Persons 60 and over with pre-existing conditions and weak immune systems.
12. These rules will be adjusted as time goes on, and as the safety of ALL allows.

PLEASE SEE THE NEXT PAGE for a short "Survey" for reopening the church!

ONLINE GIVING IS NOW AVAILABLE

During this rough time of Covid-19, the Council thought it would be best to move forward in implementing online giving.

Here is the link to online giving
<https://ca4b2388.churchtrac.com/give>

Once in the system, you can input your envelope number and it records directly to your record.
 If you have questions, please let us know.

COMMUNITY DINNER

Our weekly community dinners will resume as CARRY OUT only.
 They will begin on Tuesday, July 7th,
 5:00-6:30 PM.

It will be carry out for awhile until we are allowed to have bigger groups of people indoors. Stay tuned for updates.

“REOPENING THE CHURCH” CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN this survey to St. Paul UCC no later than July 15. Every member (if there is more than one in your household) should do the survey. Send to:

***ReForming Team – St. Paul UCC
6997 Hamilton Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45231***

If you prefer you can **CALL** in your responses to the church anytime, to Pastor Barry’s or Anne Zimmer’s office voicemail at (513) 931-2205; OR, you can **EMAIL** your responses to office@stpaulnch.com. Once again, we need your responses by July 15.

Are you willing to return to worship at the church as early as July 19th, observing the safety guidelines set by the ReForming Team?

If you are not comfortable returning to “in person” worship yet, when do you think would be a safe time to return?

My age is _____.

We have been posting “virtual worship experiences” online since March 22. Have you “connected” with any of these online services: If so, how often?

Once in-person services resume, are you willing to help with ANY of the following worship-oriented tasks (we’ll need some extra help)? Check any you would help with:

- _____ Greeter/Usher
- _____ Worship reader/Liturgist
- _____ Provide vocal or instrumental music
- _____ If needed, help with disinfecting the church before or after services

Would you accept the pastors or other church members coming for in-person visits with you at this time (any/all visitors would wear face coverings and gloves, and observe 6 ft. social distancing)?

MINDFUL MONDAYS

"Mindful Monday" meditation group!

Join us at **12:30 on Mondays**. Currently Mindful Mondays is being recorded and it is posted on the church's Facebook page.

Meditation has many proven benefits *apart* from spiritual growth. It lessens stress, lowers blood pressure, supports your body's natural immune response, helps chase depression away and has many other advantages. Christian meditation does all this, PLUS helps open doorways to a closer, deeper relationship with the Holy. Come and check it out! The greatest missing link in churches today is mystical, contemplative experience...here is your chance to help claim an immense, open future for your own spirit, create true *Shalom* (deep, holy peace), and impact the world around you for God. *Namaste!*



**ST. PAUL UCC
NEW DIGITAL SIGN**



JUNETEENTH WALK



Thank You

RETIREMENTS

At the end of May, our St. Paul Nursery School director and Pre-K Teacher, Karen and Sue, retired after 30 years of service and teaching.

A card, gift card, and flowers were presented to both of them at the end of a parade that the remaining teachers planned.



Dear St. Paul Church,

Many years ago one of my Pre-K classes made me this box of Thank-you cards. Each child made their own special card. So I thought it was appropriate to use them to Thank-you for the opportunity to teach at St. Pauls. Each child I taught was special.

Thanks for the flower basket and the Gift Card. But mostly thank-you for the opportunity to do what I think I was meant to do. And I feel fulfilled and happy after 33 years. I am also proud to leave the curriculum I wrote for the Pre-K. I am truly blessed by the families and children I've taught - but I also learned from. Again thanks St. Paul - Sue Ehrhardt

Dear St Paul United
Church of Christ,

Thank you for the beautiful
flower arrangement and
the gift card.

That was so kind of you
to give to me & I appreciate
it.

I have enjoyed every day
for the last 30 years at
St Paul. It was for sure
my second home.

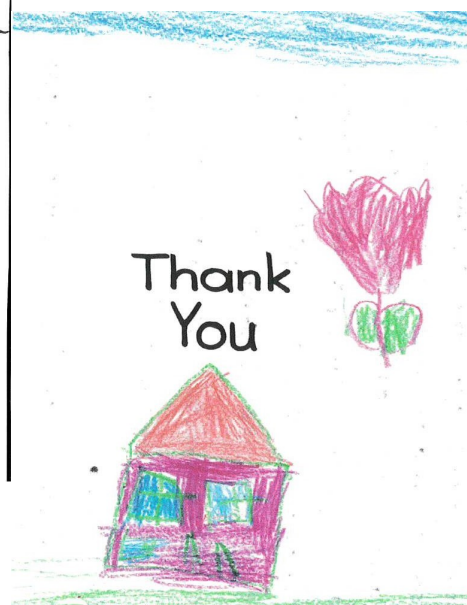
Thanks again for thinking
of me & take care.

Love,
Karen Brown

Dear Church Family,

Thank you so much for the
Zwoster Scholarship! It has been
a huge financial help while being
in college.

Love,
Madyson King



LITTLE LIBRARY

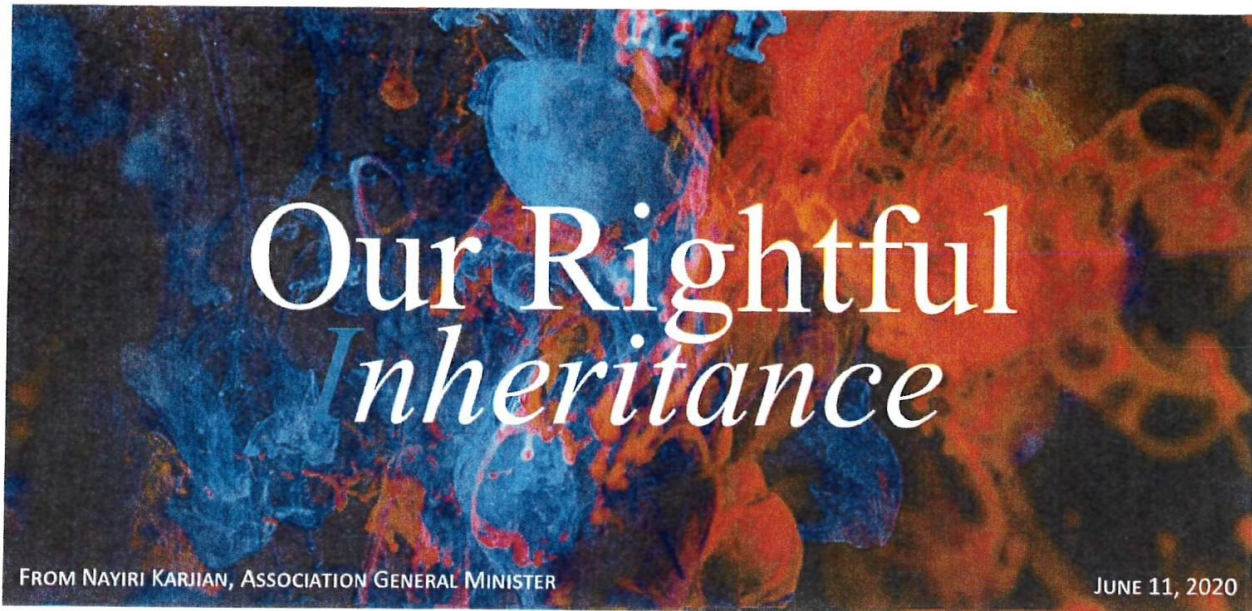
“Our Little Free Library doesn’t belong to just us, it belongs to the whole North College Hill Community” stated Mrs. Robin Lighthall, the person responsible for the inspiration behind this project and she actually built the NCH Little Free Library with her husband Mr. Steve Lighthall.

The Little Free Library nonprofit organization has been honored by the Library of Congress, the National Book Foundation, and the American Library Association, and Reader’s Digest named them one of the “50 Surprising Things We Love about America.” Each year nearly 10 million books are shared in Little Free Libraries.

St. Paul United Church of Christ has been ministering to North College Hill and the world since 1924. Our members come from all over the area to worship and serve. The Church also serves the NCH community in many other ways and **now with installation of the Little Free Library** the minds and hearts of those in the community will be open to learning through books. Books should be available to every person in America and now through the hard work and dedication of Mrs. Robin Lighthall North College Hill has their very own Little Free Library.

“You can find Magic Wherever you Look, Sit back and Relax all you need is a Book!” Dr. Seuss





Once upon a time there were five sisters Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. They were the daughters of Zelophahad whose story is "hidden" in Numbers 27 and 36 tucked in the story about the end of 40 year wilderness journey of the Israelites to the promised land.

Israelites had left Egypt and were near the plains of Jericho when God said to Moses and Eleazar, *We have to get ready for entering the promised land. Take a census of the whole community, count them ALL from the age twenty years and older, so that we can divide up the land between them justly.*

The counting of the whole community commenced, but not really. The census was to count males over 20 years of age who were old enough to bear arms. Women and children were not to be counted.

The sisters had no brothers. What were they to do? Were they to remain landless and homeless? They found this to be unjust and decided to do something about it.

So, they marched before Moses, in public, in front of the whole congregation, and made their case – *"Why should our father's name be lost because he had no sons? Give to us our rightful inheritance!"*

Moses was speechless! What could he say? How could he respond? Besides, how is it possible to change years of tradition and law, social order and structure?

Moses brings this complicated question to God and God says, *the daughters of Zelophahad are right. Give them their rightful inheritance. Give them what's their father's. And, from now on here is a new law – if a man dies and*

has no sons, then you shall give his inheritance to his daughters...

The law is amended because these women had the courage to speak out, and demand what's rightfully theirs. They wanted to be counted. They wanted justice. Moses was not so sure but God took the side of the women, the marginalized, the uncounted! Because of their courage to speak their truth God changed the law expanding women's economic status, hence culture, and society.

I think of this story as I watch the protests for equality, respect and human dignity. My heart breaks for the racism experienced daily by those who are born with darker pigments in their skin. I find hope in the throngs of people gathered demanding change. I celebrate that God loves all yet stands especially with those who are dismissed by society, those toward whom society remains indifferent, those who are uncounted, demeaned and degraded, even murdered.

Human dignity is a rightful inheritance for God's children created in God's image. Inheritance is passed on through bloodline. As God's children of all colors we all inherit the right to live with dignity, respect and nobility. This right is a birthright, a gift. Begrudging another their birthright is violence demonstrated in racism, classism, homophobia, and all the "isms" that demean, belittle and oppress.

May we continue to have the courage to learn about racism, to accept our part in it, and speaking truth to power ensure that all God's children of all colors inherit their birthright now!

SCOUTING NEWS

Even though the Scouts had to stop meeting in person mid March, does not mean that they are doing nothing. The different groups have been meeting via Zoom Meetings on the computer.



The Crew has begun actually meeting again. Since our numbers for the crew tend to be under 10, we are wearing masks and social distancing. We spent a late afternoon playing frisbee golf and having a great time. They have also been completing some trainings and working on advancements.

The Troops have been busy with individuals doing demonstrations on particular requirements. Many have been completing requirements. We are beginning to do some planning for outdoor activities where we will break down into smaller groups and keep our distance.

At this time we are beginning to plan some outdoor events for a couple of hours here and there. A mini merit badge challenge will be happening soon where they can earn Environmental Science, Nature and Mammal Study. They seem to be looking forward to it!

Nursery School

The Nursery School is planning on re-opening in the fall. Of course all of this will depend on Covid-19 and what that future looks like.

We did receive Retirement Notices from Karen Rieman and Sue Ehrhardt. We also received a resignation notice from Amy Miller who was an aide in Mrs. Ehrhardt's room.

We are currently accepting resumes for a Nursery School Director, a Pre-K Teacher, and a classroom aide. If you know of someone who would be interested, please have them mail their resume to the office via the mail or thru email to Office@stpaulnch.com.

Nursery School is still accepting registrations for enrollment.



Paycheck Protection Program

With Covid-19, there were many programs offered for small business'. For the first time, churches were also able to receive help as well.

St. Paul applied for the Paycheck Protection Program, aka, PPP. We did receive the loan. There was criteria we had to follow. The main criteria was that we had to maintain our employees. Salary employees were not affected, but hourly employees hours were cut. The original loan amount was based on payroll, pension, and health benefits. This loan is forgivable, which essentially it means it will be a grant. This will help us to cover payroll, pension payments, health benefits, and utilities over a 24 week period. As the end of the 24 week approaches, an application will be submitted with all the required documentation to make it "forgiveable"

JULY



7/1 Carol Lommer
7/6 Isaiah Johnson
Donald Lerch
7/8 Brittney Heitman

7/12 Roxanne Reed
7/19 Alice Blum
7/23 Nancy Klusmeier

7/27 Kristen Woods
7/28 Lyndelle Murphy
7/29 Sonya Heitman

August

8/5 Vicky Ritz
8/7 Brayden Spyers
8/15 Patricia Yung
8/21 Don Dumford

8/22 Travis Johnson
8/23 Deb Beresford
Melitta Marx
8/27 Skip Zimmer

8/28 Bonnie Reed
8/30 Ruth Hoeweler
Tommie Jenkins

SEPTEMBER

9/3 Jessika Combs
9/6 Dolly Johnson
9/7 Jazzman Johnson

9/8 John Allen
9/20 Joan Allen
9/22 Darwin Yung

9/27 David Holmes
9/30 Jo Miller

Please Continue to Remember in Prayer:

Our servicemen and women	Clara Kemplin	Barb Brewer
Peggy Adams	Rhonda Lahmann	Kostas Vasiliou
Chad Willcocks	Joann Ernst	Harper Manning
Kathy Aker	Owen Erickson	Scott Ober
John Allen	Marlene Sheward	Jennifer Nibouar
Alice Graber	Justin Nuckols	Deborah Ehler
Tony Mancini	Bodde Scudder	Larry Estes
Gay D. Smith	Bob Harbaum	Cathy Criswell
Rev. Virginia Duffy	Greg Rice	Lin Theders
Barbara Williamson	Barb Nuckols	Deborah Byndon
Elaine Sloan	Jesse McIlhane	Rebecca Horning
Nancy Lanza	Ann Way	Mike Lennett
James Stokes	Carol Schroer	Skip Zimmer
Tommy Moorehead	Stan Wernz	Paul Nuckols
Howard Seaman	Charleigh Waltz and parents	Pam Windish
Lindsay Pitcher	Barb Bruewer	Rick Davis
June Ward		
Kim Caudell		

Please keep the office informed on the status of those you have placed on the prayer list.


Please Continue to Remember in Prayer our HomeBound:

Bob Dickman	Doris Dunn	Mary Heineke
John & Melitta Marx	Charlotte McCauley	Ruth Meissner
Albert Mueller	Gay Steinhauer	Anne Timme
Sharon Wagner		

*If you would like to add
someone to the prayer list,
please call the office.*



July 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 Office Closed to Observe 4th of July	4 Happy 4th of July 
5	6 Mindful Mondays 12:30 PM Facebook Scouts 6:30 PM Online Meeting	7 Community Dinner Carry Out 5-6:30 PM	8	9	10 AA - 8 PM FH	11 AA - 8 PM FH
12	13 Mindful Mondays 12:30 PM Facebook Scouts - 6:30 PM Online Meeting	14 Community Dinner Carry Out 5-6:30 PM	15 Executive Mtg 5:30 PM	16	17 AA - 8 PM FH	18 AA - 8 PM FH
19 Possibly Begin Services	20 Mindful Mondays 12:30 PM Facebook Council Mtg 7 PM Scouts 6:30 PM Online Meeting	21 Community Dinner Carry Out 5-6:30 PM	22 Epistle Articles Due	23	24 AA - 8 PM FH	25 AA - 8 PM FH
26 Possibly Begin Services SPY - Pool Party	27 Mindful Mondays 12:30 PM Facebook Scouts 6:30 PM Online Meeting	28 Community Dinner Carry Out 5-6:30 PM	29	30	31 AA - 8 PM FH	

St. Paul United Church of Christ
6997 Hamilton Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45231



THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL



FreestoreFoodbank



St. Paul United Church of Christ
6997 Hamilton Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio 45231

Phone: (513) 931-2205
Fax: (513) 931-2206
Website: www.stpaulinch.com
Email: office@stpaulinch.com

Office Hours 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. Monday - Wednesday
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Thursday - Friday

Nursery School Staff:
Angela Oaks, Jenny Birdsong, Samantha Weisman, and
Megan Jungkuz.

Parish Nurses: Vicki Celenza, R.N.,
Coordinator
Roxanne Reed, R.N.

Church Staff:
Rev. Barry Bordenkircher, Sr. Minister
Joan Allen, Lay Minister
Rick Tallarigo, Organist/Interim Music
Director
Anne Zimmer, Office Administrator
Jim Maybury, Sexton
Anne Zimmer, Treasurer