

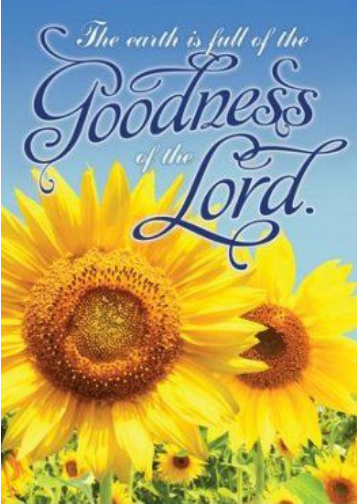


# The Good News

July 2018

PASTOR K.C. LAZZARA

St. Paul United Church of Christ  
31654 Mound Road  
Warren MI 48092  
586/264-4777  
Worship Service &  
Sunday School — Sunday, 10 am  
Office Hours: M-Th, 9am-1pm  
Rev Dr. K.C. Lazzara, Pastor  
www.spuccwarren.com  
email: stpauluccwarren@gmail.com



Summer has officially arrived! I'm grateful that while the church has heated up a bit, you are still coming to worship and Bible Study. I hope in addition to worship on Sunday and Bible Study on Monday, that we create other opportunities to come together this summer. The grounds of St. Paul are ready for a gathering! Vacation Bible School? A barbeque? Singing? Worship services outside? How about an all-out summer picnic? There are so many ways to enjoy fellowship; it's already July so we'd better enjoy the warmth while we can!

As I've done visitations to our members in nursing homes, some members of our congregation have expressed a desire to come with me. I would appreciate that and I'm certain the parishioners who are bound to their nursing homes would love it! If you are interesting in doing visitations as a group, please let me know and I will start planning some visitation times. What a blessing it would be for each resident to know that it's not just the Pastor visiting, but church family too. This summer weather makes travel easier and we can bring fresh flowers too. Let's open our hearts and embrace our family.

As you will read in the Open and Affirming article this month, my heart is on fire to consistently reach further into the world with God's love. I am eager to hear your responses, ideas, and reflections. As a congregation, we may not be able to travel very far, but there's no reason we can't open our doors, write some letters, send some cards, intercede in prayer and spread the love of God in many other ways! Let's carry Christ's message, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 12:28)

God be with you and your loved ones!

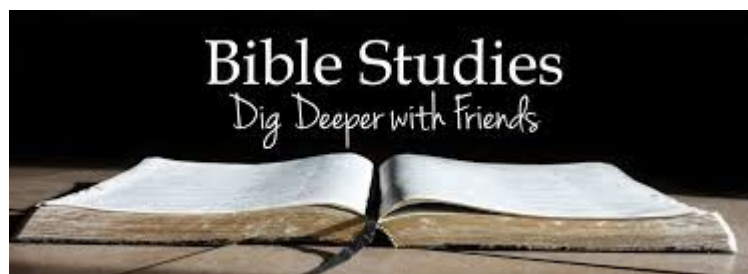
WED, JULY 11 — 4:30-6:30 PM



Our June Consistory meeting was held on June 12<sup>th</sup> with all expected members present along with one visitor who may join Consistory. The minutes were read and approved and the financial report showed that our church is in good financial order. Pastor K.C. reported that the bible/ religion study sessions are going well, that he is visiting the shut-ins on a regular basis, and that the wedding and funeral information sheets have been completed and the information is on our website. We will be renting out the large dining room on June 26<sup>th</sup> to a group that will be providing the public with information regarding the issues to be on the next ballot. The meeting will be held from 7-9pm. The church is in need of replacing some missing and/or broken Plexiglass outer coverings for the sanctuary windows. Erich Regier received information on one possible company to do this and he will have them give us an estimate. We will also continue to replace ceiling lights throughout the church as needed. Consistory decided to hold an outside BBQ event the first Sunday in October, October 7<sup>th</sup>, if we get enough volunteers. This would be similar to one held a few years ago with food also being made available to the general public. Consistory also decided to not have an August consistory meeting unless something needing immediate attention comes up. **HAPPY SUMMER!**

MARGE MURRELL

CONSISTORY  
PRESIDENT'S  
REPORT



Monday, July 2, 16, 23, 30

6:30 pm

BRANDON EBEL

Dear Members of St. Paul UCC,

This month I just want to share a rare experience I recently had right behind these walls. Something that I never could've imagined while in prison. I, of course, want to capture and express every detail of this experience. Without being able to completely do that, I just hope to describe a little of what transpired.

So let me start by saying that I sign up for any Christian event that comes to our prison. I definitely love fellowship and being around believers. So when I heard about this ministry program that was coming here for a FULL weekend, I immediately was ready for that journey. The name of the ministry is Keryx. And at the time, all I knew is that we'd be in the facility's gym for about 40 hours over the course of a 4 day weekend starting on Thursday night. Such a change of pace for individuals that have had the same routine for 10-30 years!

So as soon as we walked into that same gymnasium that I attended every day for the past 8 years, it sparked something like never before. The entire gym was transformed and there was a mixture of about 40 volunteer men along with about 30 inmates that have been through a Keryx weekend before. The very first introduction was amazing. They all had guitars and formed a tunnel and all the new participants had to walk through. They were singing and it was so overwhelming. From that moment, everything that unraveled did not disappoint one bit. Every prisoner was just in awe and were so curious to get to what was next.

The next two days, Friday and Saturday, we started at 7 am and did not leave until 8:30 at night! And even for some that can barely stay for the duration of a usual Sunday service; they didn't want to miss a single second of these unforgettable moments. Just the pure love that every heart felt from over 40 strangers, opened up every one of us and some haven't had something like that during their entire incarceration. That brought about tears for every individual in the building, staff included. A whole lot was released and burdens were lifted. It was a true spiritual awakening.

There's so much more of course, but the best example I can give is in the book of Matthew 17. Peter, James, and John were led upon a high mountaintop by Jesus. Jesus' "appearance changed dramatically in their presence; and His face shone with heavenly glory, clear and bright like the sun, and His clothes became as white as light." Then Moses and Elijah appeared and were talking with Jesus. (I so wonder what was said!) But they experienced the presence of God. Peter even offered, let me just build you 3 a tent and we can remain here! Peter didn't even acknowledge himself needing shelter. He just wanted to stay upon that mountaintop and remain in that glorious state. Soon thereafter, Jesus led them back down because there was work to do. Now that they experienced the mountaintop, they will be prepared when they find themselves in a valley. The word valley makes me think of the scripture in Psalm 23. "Yeah, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death." In order for a shadow to be made, there has to be light. So even in our valleys, there is light and God does not leave us.

I'm thankful I have gotten to share this with you! I really hope I was able to shed some light on Keryx's miraculous ministry and how they bring God's message for love and revival. Always praying you continue to have those mountaintop times and also praying that while in the valleys you know God is there too!

Brandon Ebel #752523

Thumb Correctional Facility, 3225 John Conley Drive, Lapeer, MI 48446

Mable Adamson  
Medilodge of Shoreline  
14900 Shoreline Dr  
Sterling Hts MI 48313

Phyllis Grant  
28848 Tawas Ct  
Madison Heights MI 48071

Esther Hornyak  
St. Anne's Mead  
16106 W 12 Mile Rd  
Southfield MI 48076

Wally Paczkowski  
36333 Garfield, Apt 115  
Clinton Twp MI 48035

Virginia Park  
Sunrise of Troy  
6870 Crooks Rd, #125A  
Troy MI 48098

Anne Pyciak  
Cherrywood Nursing Ctr  
34643 Ketsin Dr, S306-2  
Sterling Hts MI 48310

Mae St Clair  
42250 Hayes, #108  
Clinton Twp MI 48038



- 9 Erich Regier
- 12 Mackenzie Regier
- 20 Don Kolman
- 26 Stacey DeMarco

**I'LL BE OUT OF THE  
OFFICE THE WEEK  
OF JULY 9.  
THANKS, MARIA**



STEVE POPIK

For the first six months of 2018, we have collected and sent in the following 5 for 5 contributions:

- ♦ OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission) = \$1,200
- ♦ OGHS (One Great Hour of Sharing) = \$705
- ♦ STC (Strengthen The Church) = \$700

Thank you to everyone who made these designated offerings to St. Paul United Church of Christ.

BARBARA STEPHENS

GOD HAS CREATED ME to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I HAVE MY MISSION. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I AM A LINK IN A CHAIN, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good; I shall do His work. I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it if I do but keep His commandments.

HE DOES NOTHING IN VAIN. He knows what He is about. He may take away my friends. He may throw me among strangers. He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide my future from me. Still, HE KNOWS WHAT HE IS ABOUT."

*John Henry Newman*



Sunday, June 24<sup>th</sup>, was the day the United Church of Christ as a whole designated “Open and Affirming Sunday.” Surely you recall the historic vote at St. Paul UCC on November 17, 2013 declaring this congregation’s commitment to be open and affirming to all people.



Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup>, from the Gospel of Matthew, I read the parable in Chapter 25 which culminated in the following words of the King, “I tell you the truth, when you did it to me.” (Matthew 25:40) Other Scripture which speaks to the open call to serve is found in the Book of James: “What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don’t show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save someone? Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, and you say, ‘Goodbye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well’—but then you don’t give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do?” (James 2:14-16)

Of course, Scripture doesn’t speak to everyone, which is why I showed the YouTube video clip from the show, “Kung Fu.” We witnessed Master Kan teach young Caine (“Grasshopper”) about serving others, particularly when we feel they are undeserving. Master Kan so poignantly stated, “I am aware of his unsavory adventures. I am aware also of his hunger and cold.” When this was met with resistance from the boy, he then said, “When he leaves us in the morning, will the Earth fall away from under his feet? Will the sun, shining on all else, withhold light and warmth from him? Will water turn to mud when he stops to drink? If sun, and Earth, and water refrain from judgment, who am I to withhold a blanket and a bowl of rice?”

Our commitment to being Open and Affirming cannot be limited to a certain population or group. We must stretch our love wide enough to encompass **all**. As I stated on Sunday, the United Church of Christ’s slogan, “God is Still Speaking” so captures the hearts of those actively seeking, following, listening—**hearts that are in motion**. Our bulletin boards are not advertisements which say, “Look what we are doing!” but rather, “Look what God is doing!” Amen and Amen!

