



St. Paul United Church of Christ  
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 Sunday Service—10 am  
 Office Hours: M-TH, 9am-1pm  
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# The Good News

July 2021  
PASTOR K.C.



From the Gospel of John 1:1, “In the beginning, the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God.” How does this scripture resonate in your heart? For some of you who know this verse well, this may be an easy question. But if you take the time to meditate on what John has written in this first chapter, perhaps you can *really get down to the business of your faith.*

Because this month we celebrate Independence Day, we realize that *freedom* exists in many forms, and may or may not be attached to what you believe is *independence*. Sure, when we think of America, these terms arise and are often used interchangeably. However, when it comes to your faith and what you truly believe—are you really free? *What does your heart say?*

In context of scripture, often we hear the writers guide the reader in understanding the pendulum of God’s grace on one hand and observing “the law” on the other. What I’m referring to here is the *freedom that manifests deep in your soul*. What is holding you back from feeling free and consequently behaving in a way that demonstrates your freedom? I hope through worship this July, the Holy Spirit will reveal to you a truth that you’ve not embraced, accepted, or perhaps witnessed yet in your life. True freedom is not based on life’s circumstance or the environment—it is within your soul. *Thanks be to God.*

LINDA



We are coming along nicely with the children. They are so much fun and have such sweet, inquisitive minds. I love listening to them and their stories and ideas. They are a joy!

With school out for the summer, we have decided to forego the formal Sunday School program and have a Children’s Program for the summer with some fun things planned for the kids. Joyce and I got together and came up with some ideas. She has also been in contact with Brent. He has offered his help in choosing a curriculum come Fall for Sunday School, if we decide to go this route.

I would also like to give a huge thank you to Trudy for offering to help with the kids some Sundays as we do need 2 adults each and every Sunday. If you would like to help us out a Sunday here or there, please let me know. It would certainly be appreciated.





ERICH



The June 2021 Consistory meeting was held. The year has been moving fast. Consistory had an extensive talk about Sunday service guidelines and what we can start easing up on and what we feel should be kept in place. We updated the guidelines and sent them out to the congregation. As things improve regarding Covid-19 within the state,

we will continue to review our guidelines and update, as needed. If you have any questions or concerns about our guidelines, please feel free to reach out to any member of Consistory. A more recent update is about capacity of the Sanctuary. We have decided to increase the percentage to 50% which is about 125 people. Again, as things improve, we are hoping by the end of summer, we will be at 100%. Consistory has approved moving forward with some outdoor improvements in landscaping with the help of some recent donations. We will be working on the removal of all the old trees, bushes, rocks and edging in front of the Sanctuary and replacing with new. This is in the very beginning phase, but with the refinishing of the front doors, the front of the church really is in need of some freshening up. As we move into summer, other items have been completed, such as the removal of storm windows on the Sanctuary and all boilers have been shut down for the season. The Sunday School room has been getting some freshening up and, by the end of summer, we hope to be ready for Sunday School. We will be having a rummage sale this fall. Consistory has given the ok to start preparing for rummage now. With the amount of rummage this time around, it gives members more time to sort and prepare. Tables have been set up and members have already started to sort. Unfortunately, it has been decided no food will be sold this time around. Much of the space downstairs will be used to help space the rummage out for social distancing.

BRANDON

"So the King gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions' den."  
*Daniel 6:16*

Dear Members of St. Paul UCC,

As the rest of Daniel's experience plays out, the Bible quotes Daniel as saying, "the mouths of the lions' were shut by God." And Daniel survived unscathed. When I first read this story at the age of 16, I was amazed at the miraculous nature of it, but did not believe it.

This wondrous story was recently brought to my attention again when I read of a 12 year old Ethiopian girl being kidnapped and attempted to be forced into marriage. This young girl was beaten in a remote area until three lions chased off her abductors and actually protected her until police arrived to rescue her! The Ethiopian police Sergeant described it as, "the lions left her like a gift."

What another unbelievable account of how a lion can be used to defy all odds. it also makes me think of how many sort of lions enter our day, yet God shuts their mouth. I can attest to how God can take the things meant to destroy or harm us and use this to save us while accomplishing purpose. This can be said for me as prison has given me the purest form of both freedom and peace when it would seemingly do the exact opposite.

It is always such an uplift whenever I get to share these inspirations of my life with all of you. I'll always be so grateful.

*If you would like to write to Brandon or send him a card, his address is:*

*Ebel, #752523, Thumb Correctional Facility, 3225 John Conley Drive, Lapeer, MI 48446*

GAIL

"For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." (Galatians 5:1 NRSV)

As we approach Independence Day, what verse could be more appropriate for us to focus on? We might ask, however, from what did Christ free us? After all, slavery as a social institution continued for centuries after the time of Christ, and in Colossians (chapter 3, verse 22), Paul tells slaves to obey their earthly masters in everything! So from what does Christ free us? The answer is simple: sin. In John 8:34 Jesus says, "...Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin." And Acts gives us the final answer, "... by this Jesus everyone who believes is set free from all those sins from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses." (Acts 13:39 NRSV) Jesus, through his death and Resurrection, frees us from sin and its slavery.

So we are freed from the slavery of sin and the Law of Moses. Does this leave us totally unanchored, without any connection to a way to order our behavior? Of course not. Scripture lays out Jesus' teachings through the Sermon on the Mount and the rest of the Gospels, Acts and Romans, and the epistles of Paul, but Jesus himself gives us the simple answer, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:29-30 NRSV) In serving Jesus we find our freedom.





- 9 Erich Regier
- 12 Mackenzie Ballard
- 20 Don Kolman
- 25 Bill Carr
- 26 Stacey DeMarco
- 29 Kim Hoover



**If you use the chair lifts, please make sure they all the way to the top or bottom and locked into the charging base**

**I had a lot of stuff to do today. Now I have a lot of stuff to do tomorrow.**

SUE

A small dent has been made in the stage rummage. Slow but steady. We still have a long way to go, but we are picking up speed. I will try to be at the church every Monday about 9am. I think we all know how to sort rummage. The only difference this time is we will SIT at the tables by the stage to sort and fold, and then take items to the correct table. We will no longer take a bag to the table and stand there to sort. This will be much easier on our backs and legs. There are carts by the sorting tables to transport the items, so less lifting and carrying. We are still accepting rummage at this time but if we feel the need to stop, you will be notified. You must call Maria before bringing in any rummage and be prepared to get it downstairs (do not expect Maria to carry it down for you). All NEW rummage should be put in old rummage room (NOT ON STAGE). As we have so much time before the actual sale, we can work when we have time. If you would be able to work in the evening, you should contact Shirene for info. We have a tentative date of October 9, 2021. Hope that works for everybody. We have 3 months to get ready for this so we can work at our leisure and it should not be so hard. We always have fun sorting and guessing what some of these items are and believe me, we have gotten stumped on some things. Looking forward to seeing you downstairs.

**Rummage**  
**It's Back!**  
**SALE**

Just re-read this and I noticed the word leisure - wonder if we will get a "leisure suit" amongst our treasures - come on down and help us look.