



St. Paul United Church of Christ
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YouTube Channel

St. Paul UCC Warren
 New services premiere
 each Sunday at 10:15 am

The Good News

November 2020

PASTOR K.C.

November is here at last! It is the consummate season of change! The chill in the air, the leaves changing colors, and the frost on our windshields demonstrate the glory of Autumn in Michigan. Advent is only five weeks away which means we've got just a month to prepare our hearts for this truly epic time of the year. Although we are not having worship in the sanctuary, activity is happening in the form of Women's Fellowship's Christmas Raffle. I hope this activity will be an antidote to our feelings of isolation. St. Paul UCC is right alongside other churches doing our best to stay safe!



Near and far, many of our members and friends have transitioned to watching our worship services on YouTube. How does it feel to hear that beautiful sound of the organ? I hope you are singing at home! When we transition into Advent on November 29th, we will begin using the Christmas Carol books and surely this will lift our spirits in time to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Let's not allow this pandemic to keep us from worshipping God, reaching out to one another, and testifying our joy to the world! Amen!



Sunday, Dec 20, 2020

Tickets will be mailed out
 mid-November

Quilt
Ellen Fox
 Paintings
Betty Jean Wolgast
Dave Grawburg



MARGE



Your Consistory met on Oct 13, 2020 via zoom and in person in the large dining room sitting at separate tables more than six feet apart and members wearing masks. Where members sat was disinfected with Clorox wipes when we got up to leave. We discussed at length when we can reopen the church and we formed a subcommittee to create a policy in this regard. Their recommendations will then be presented to the whole Consistory to consider. Based on the current increase in cases throughout Michigan and the at-risk status of our congregation, any re-

opening must be delayed at least two months or longer. We all want to get back into the church for service but being inside adds to the risk of contagion even with the masks being used. Your Consistory will make the final decision as to when church can re-open.

Consistory requests that any rummage being brought to the church be taken downstairs by the person/people bringing it here. Bring a person who can do this if you are unable to do it.

Consistory would like to thank the person who sent us \$1,000 to use as needed on a church project. It was used to pay for the new door keys and system, the new doorbell camera system, and various painting projects.

As of last Sunday, we have started to get service through YouTube. Once we get used to this method, we hope that our congregation will take it to heart and feel fulfilled to again hear the organ, see the church inside, having a liturgist, saying the prayers, singing the hymns and hearing Pastor KC's message!

God With Us

✦ ONLINE ✦

It's a matter of perspective...Recently two friends visited our house. With masks and social distancing. Other than Steve, they are only the third and fourth people I have seen other than doctors, two plumbers and our pastor in more than seven months. One of them observed that they thought that whether or not someone wore a mask depends on whether or not the individual knows someone, or of someone, with COVID. That may be true. COVID is very real to Steve and me. Our former next door neighbor and the brother of another neighbor died of COVID. Additionally, two nieces of our sister-in-law have tested positive for the disease. I am over 60 (obviously) and have asthma and high blood pressure, so I have three co-morbidity factors. I am very high risk. Steve is super cautious about where he goes and always wears a mask. It is worth mentioning that most of our congregation, whom I dearly love, is also high risk because of age and/or ill health.

So how do I feel about our new online worship services? I am delighted. Over the last four years, I have had to adjust to giving up worship services because of my health. Now I don't have to give them up. For me, there are three aspects to worship. First, there's the worship experience itself. Our online services provide that. I can hear the pastor's message. I can appear before God and participate in the communal parts of the service, like the Call to Worship, the Opening Prayer, and the Offertory. I can even sing the hymns if I want.

The second aspect of worship for me is the sanctuary itself. I have that online, too. Granted I am not in the sanctuary, but I can see it, which I haven't been able to do over the last four years. The camera angle is now so good I get a real sense of the front of the church, and I can hear the glorious organ.

The last aspect of worship is the fellowship of my church family, and that I do not have online, but I wouldn't have it even if we opened the sanctuary to services now anyway. We would have to social distance and not have fellowship even before or after the service, so at most I would just see folks, not interact with them or even sing with them. I do miss that, but in the final analysis, I am not ready to risk my health, and the health of the church family I love, just to see folks from a distance. I will wait until our COVID numbers come down and we are all safer. Until then, I will approach God online, and hope my church family will, too.



- 4 *Sam DeVlaminck*
- 10 *Mike Gebert*
- 11 *Eileen Harrison*
- 18 *Pastor KC Lazzara*





Dear Members of St. Paul UCC,

This scripture early on in the Bible even has reverberations now and is a clear representation of some still asking this very question. Am I my brother's keeper? (Genesis 4:9)

Now it is important to acknowledge the context behind this question. God asked Cain where his brother Abel was. Of course this statement has come out of a place of guilt as Cain killed Abel and was trying to disregard God's question with a question of his own, "Am I my brother's keeper?" I think the answer is clear. We are our brother's and our sister's keeper. One scripture says to 'consider others more than ourselves.' (Philippians 2:3)

But I've often been in a tough situation where it is the hardest thing to acknowledge or consider someone else's thoughts, feelings, emotions, and pain more than my own. As it is so easy to disregard others and really only focus on oneself. This is clearly detrimental to the purpose and plan God has for our lives.

I feel that all of this is fitting in this difficult time that is affecting everyone in some way. Sometimes I tend to only focus on my vantage point; on my pain. Then I have to be reminded that the power, spirit, faith, and love that resided in Christ while He was on this earth is exactly what we all have access to. Over the course of these 11 years incarcerated, I can not begin to tell you how many times the strength of God has showed up and this tough time will be no different.

I think of all of you and pray you are enduring all of your battles and I know you have this love of Christ buried in your hearts. Therefore, we all can acknowledge each other and answer that question. We are our brother's and sister's keeper.

Thank you all for allowing me to write this and I count it a joy and a privilege to share my faith with all of you!

God bless, carry, and keep you.

*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*

SUE



As much as I enjoy the newsletter, I am still missing being connected to you all. Therefore, I am challenging someone each month to write a small blurb about your life/challenges during this time. Nothing personal, just something that has happened to make your life different while we are apart. We all miss seeing one another and are interested in your everyday happenings. This month I would like to hear from **Mike & Laurie Gebert**. We all miss the twins and wonder how you are managing school/Halloween and everyday life. Bet they have grown a lot! Can't wait for the next newsletter.