

The Clear Voice

February 2010

*St. Paul's United Church of Christ
101 Worthington Road
Exton, PA 19341*

*Jonathan Hauze, Pastor
(610) 363-7285
www.stpauluccexton.org*

Haiti Earthquake Relief Effort



Dear Family and Friends,

A short updated noted. Patrick and I were able to join the orphans of Solomon's orphanage in a military evacuation Saturday afternoon. We arrived in Denver yesterday safe and sound into the arms of welcoming friends and family.

More details to come as we allow ourselves to let down and process. Thank you for your thoughts, prayers and advocacy for safe transport to the States for our family and countless Haitian orphans. We have been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support and love from our communities both in Haiti and abroad. The earthquake may have robbed us of some personal possessions, but reminded us how rich we are in the gifts that matter.












With appreciation, gratitude and love,
Kim and Patrick

Kim and Patrick Benrott are UCC Global missionaries stationed in Part-Au-Prince, Haiti.



St. Paul's has raised \$841 for the relief effort so far. Thank you to all for their generosity.

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February events						
31 Worship at 9 and 10:30 a.m. Choir practice at 11:45 a.m.	1	2 Boy Scout Troop 482 meets 7 p.m. Bell choir 7 p.m., recorder after	3	4 Downtown Drum Circle at 7:30 p.m.	5 	6 
7 Worship at 9 and 10:30 a.m. Choir practice at 11:45 a.m. Mission planning meeting, noon	8	9 Boy Scout Troop 482 meets 7 p.m. Bell choir 7 p.m., recorder after	10	11 	12	13 
14 Worship at 9 and 10:30 a.m. Choir practice at 11:45 a.m. 	15 Consistory boards meet at 7 p.m. Full consistory meets at 8 p.m.	16 Boy Scout Troop 482 meets 7 p.m. Bell choir 7 p.m., recorder after 	17 Ash Wednesday Service 7:30 PM 	18	19	20 
21 First Sunday of Lent One Worship service at 10:00 Annual meeting 11:00 Potluck Luncheon 12:00	22 Dining Night Out Fundraiser 	23 Boy Scout Troop 482 meets 7 p.m. Bell choir practice at 7 p.m., recorder practice after	24	25	26 	27 Bible Study 9:30 AM "The Prophets"
28 Worship at 9 and 10:30 a.m. Choir practice at 11:45 a.m.						

Lectionary for February 2010

Readings can be found in their entirety online at <http://divinity.lib.vanderbilt.edu/lectionary/>

Feb 7 - Isaiah 6:1-8, (9-13) / Psalm 138 / 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 / Luke 5:1-11

Feb 14 - Exodus 34:29-35 / Psalm 99 / 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2 / Luke 9:28-36, (37-43)

Feb 21 - Deuteronomy 26:1-11 / Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16 / Romans 10:8b-13 / Luke 4:1-13

Feb 28 - Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18 / Psalm 27 / Philippians 3:17-4:1 / Luke 13:31-35

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Pastor's Ponderings

This year is a special one for me. It marks the beginning of my sixth year of ministry at St. Paul's. (Okay, technically the odometer turned over in November, but what's two months among friends?) Having reached this marker, I am tempted to pause and contemplate these good years—there is much to savor, much to appreciate, much to make me thankful. But greater than my inclination to linger over the past is my excitement about what lies ahead. The reason? Because, to paraphrase the old Pilgrim John Robinson, I believe that there is “yet more light and truth to break forth from God's holy Word,” and I am eager to see what God will reveal to us next as we make our pilgrimage together.

Here's a preview of some new paths we will travel in the coming year. First, beginning later this month, a five-week adult education series on the Hebrew prophets, offering an opportunity to learn about how the prophets functioned in their own time and how they can speak powerfully to our own concerns today. Next, on the slate for April is a church retreat on the practice of gentleness, love, and friendship in the Christian life. Participants in the retreat will be invited to read a book about the example of the L'Arche movement, where people with and without disabilities experience life together in a community of mutual need. Then, during the retreat, the book will be paired with a film about an extraordinary young man named Gannet with severe disabilities who begins an alternative living arrangement with a group of artists who care for him as their friend. (I am *very* excited about this retreat.) Then, in late summer, a group from the church will head to Rhode Island for a weeklong mission project. Read on in these pages to find out more about what promises to be a fun and enriching trip.

As we journey into 2010 there is another new path that I would like for us to take. Last month I proposed to the Consistory that we set aside some time this year for a church-wide visioning process. Visioning involves reflection and conversation about where we are as a church today and what God is calling us to do in the coming years. It means listening closely to one another and seeking together the Spirit's guidance in asking how we can move faithfully into God's future. We have seen significant growth and transformation at St. Paul's in the past five years, and I believe that this process will help us to focus and renew our energies for the next five years of our ministry.

I look forward to presenting this proposal at the congregational meeting this month. If you decide to affirm this idea, I will ask you to consider five or six nominees for a visioning team. These persons would work with me to (1) study the visioning concept, (2) recommend a game plan and timeline, (3) act as facilitators and listeners during the church-wide conversation, and (4) articulate the vision. The team would help to provide leadership, but the process will belong to all of the people of St. Paul's. A visioning process invites every voice to share in the task of discernment, as one never knows who the Spirit will choose to speak through.

This is an exciting time for St. Paul's and for the whole Church, and I am honored to serve as your pastor as we respond to the challenges and opportunities of a changing culture. May the blessing of the Spirit, who is always bringing new things to light, be upon you all.

Yours in Christ,

Jonathan

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Book Club news

The book club will meet later in February at a place and time to be announced. We will be discussing *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* by Lisa See.

In March we will be reading "Living Gently in a Violent World: the Prophetic Witness of Weakness" by Stanley Hauerwas and Jean Vanier. In March, we will be reading "True Compass" autobiography by Edward Kennedy. Happy reading!

Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch will meet at Max & Erma's Restaurant at 1206 E. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown. Wed. Feb. 17th, 11:30am

Drum circle

The Downingtown Drum Circle will take place the first Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. The next drum circle will be Feb. 4th.

Information can be found at <http://mysite.verizon.net/~dtowndrumcircle/>. See John Gangwisch with any questions.

Bell choir

Rehearsals are every Tuesday at 7 p.m. If you're interested in joining, please see George Houghton or come to a rehearsal. Newcomers and all ages always welcome!

Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting will be held on February 21st immediately following an all church 10:00 AM worship service. The 2009 annual reports for the church will be presented.

Introduction to the Prophets

Lenten Bible Study Series

Saturday mornings at 9:30 beginning Feb. 20
During the season of Lent, Jonathan will be leading a Saturday morning Bible study series on the Old Testament prophets. The first session on February 20 will be an overview of the prophetic tradition, and during each subsequent session we will look at a different Hebrew prophet. Join us for a lively discussion! Coffee and bagels will be served. Please RSVP to stpucc@verizon.net so that we will know how many bagels to pick up.

Donations needed

The men at the **W.C. Atkinson Men's Shelter** have been very appreciative of your previous donations of used clothing. Gently used twin bed linens, blankets, towels, coats and clothes are needed. Please bring them to church and place your bagged and laundered items in the social hall. In this ever-changing financial climate more men find themselves in trouble. Call Fran Pluchino if you have any questions.

The Lord's Pantry in Downingtown is in need of non-perishable food and baby items. If you are able to donate these items, please bring them to church and place them in the basket located in the social hall.



Dining Night Out Fundraiser

February 22nd, at Uno Chicago Grill
Bring Coupon in located on back page of newsletter and St. Paul's will receive up to 20% of your dinner bill.



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February Birthdays

February 1 – Karen Shoop

February 3– Tyler Hoover and Lisa Allen

February 4– Kiki Will and Kaley Fayewicz

February 11 – Campbell Drahus

February 12 – Mary Scripko

February 15 – Jessica Phillips

February 15 – Camron Brierley
and Joyce Leibsch

February 18 – Kalyn Keen

February 20 – Jim Scripko

February 22 – Julia Hoover

February 24 – Bryant Dembrosky

February 27 – George Haughton & Ben
Phillips



Fishes & Loaves

February 7 – Please see sign-up sheet

February 14 – Nancy Wilson

February 21 – Potluck luncheon

February 28 – Barb & Beth

Flowers

February 7 – Robert Norwood in honor
of Kim Norwood Moyer

February 14 – Alice Berhndt in memory of
her husband Bill

February 21 – Lorrain Nowlan in honor of
her son, Phil

February 28 – Please see the sign-up
sheet

The 2010 flower chart is posted on the bulletin
board in the Social Hall. The fee for Sunday
flowers is \$20.00.

Readers and Greeters

February 7

Greeters: Heidi & Katy Dembrosky

Reader: Barb Schneller

February 14

Greeter: John Gangwisch

Reader: Beth Kirschner

February 21

Greeter: Robin Madison

Reader: Ryan VanderMeulen

February 28

Greeters: Margarito & Tina Davila

Reader: Daniel Gladson

The schedule for scripture readings is on
page 2 of The Clear Voice. If you have any
questions, please contact Jonathan directly.

Please sign-up on the bulletin board or
contact Nancy Wilson if you would like to be
a reader or greeter at the 10:30 service.

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Christian Education

Sunday School

The Children Sunday School classes spent January learning lessons from Christ's ministry. For February, Diane Battilana will be leading the pre-school class and Greg Allen will be leading the School-Age class. If you are interested in volunteering as a lead teacher or helper in either Sunday School class, please see Lisa Allen. We still have LOTS of openings!

The Adult Sunday School class continues to discuss the Gospel of Luke at 9 each Sunday morning and always welcomes new participants.

Mission corner

Christian Ed Mission Project

We have selected Church World Service Hygiene Kits for our service project this year. In the face of natural disasters, violence, or grinding poverty, Hygiene Kits can mean the difference between sickness and health for struggling families.

Each kit will contain:

- one hand towel measuring about 16 inches by 28 inches (no fingertip or bath towels)
- one washcloth
- one wide-toothed comb
- one nail clipper (no metal files or emery boards)
- one bar of soap (bath size, in wrapper)
- one toothbrush (in original packaging)
- six bandages

Each kit will be packed in a one-gallon plastic bag with a zipper closure.

In addition to the kit contents and the Ziploc Gallon bags for packing, we will also need monetary donations to ship our completed kits and to cover Church World Service's sorting, packing, insurance, and cost of shipping kits to their final destination.

Kit donations can be left in the bin in the fellowship hall. Please see Liza Hauze or Lisa Allen to make a monetary donation or if you have any questions.

If we have kits ready before our planned dedication during One Great Hour of Sharing in March, we will package and ship them so they can be directed to Haiti sooner. Please help with this important project!

Equal Exchange's Interfaith Program:

The Mission Committee has been very pleased with the congregation's response to the fair trade coffee, tea and chocolate ministry.

interfaith@equalexchange.com • www.equalexchange.com/interfaith



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From The Deacons

Haiti Earthquake Relief: As of this writing we have received \$841.00 for Haitian relief after the earthquake. Thank you to all the good people of St. Paul's for their generosity to those in need.

Dine Out Fundraiser: We are planning another Dine Out fundraiser at Uno Chicago Grill for February 22nd. It's a great way to have fun with our church family and help the church as a percentage of every check with the appropriate coupon that evening will be donated to St. Paul's.

First quarter mission for One Great Hour of Sharing: Our first quarter mission is One Great Hour of Sharing. The theme this year is from the Gospel of John 21:15-17. "If you love me, feed my sheep." The Deacons will be talking with you about this important ministry in the weeks to come. OGHs Sunday offering will be March 14th.



Financial Concern: We do want to make the congregation aware of our financial concern. The economic downturn has affected many individuals at St. Paul's and we need to keep those people in our prayers and help where we can. In turn, it has affected St. Paul's, itself. **In 2009 our offering income was \$10,000.00 less than in 2008.** We do not want any of our parishioners to make donations that they cannot afford, but we hope that any who are able will give what they can. In the meantime, our budget for 2010 is a no frills budget, and we are asking all boards and committees to spend only what is necessary for the mission of our church, and to delay any spending if possible.

Giant Card Program: We would also like to suggest another way the congregation can help with the financial concern is to participate in the Giant Card fundraising program. A total of \$2,216 was raised last year that went directly into our operating funds. This is an outstanding program where Giant provides 5% of your purchase directly to the church.

St. Paul's attendance and financial notes for December 2009

Sunday attendance in December was 438, for an average attendance of 110. December's income was \$17,073 and operating expenses were \$24,671. Hence, St. Paul's expenses exceeded income for a **deficit of \$7,598** for December.

For the months of January through December, total income was \$174,377 and expenses were \$185,106 for a final year **deficit of \$10,730.**

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Financial Planning/Endowment Committee News

We are planning a planned giving workshop for March-April time frame. This workshop will feature an outside speaker to come talk to us about Wills and Estate Planning. Please stay-tuned for more news to follow.

Mission Trip Set for August 8-14

We are pleased to announce that we have selected The Providence Experience, an urban ministry opportunity in Rhode Island, as our mission trip site for the summer of 2010. The Rhode Island Conference of the UCC gives the following description: "The Providence Experience is an opportunity to grow in mind and spirit, serve Christ by serving others, stretch one's abilities, and learn new skills. You decide what activities your group will do. Part of the day can be spent at a one or more work sites or historical landmarks and the rest spent playing at camp or site-seeing."

One of the exciting things about this mission opportunity is that all ages can participate. Because we will plan our own service activities, we can tailor our experience to meet the abilities of our particular group. Young children, older adults, and everyone in between will be welcome.

Lodging will be at the Irons Homestead Camp and Conference Center, which offers sleeping for 32 people in 10 bedrooms, a kitchen, private shower stalls, a large meeting room, a fireplace, a screened-in porch, and lakefront swimming.

The cost is minimal: \$15/person per night. Our group is responsible for buying and preparing our own meals, which helps to keep the cost down.

The trip is scheduled for August 8-14. We will leave for Providence after church on Sunday, August 8, to return to Pennsylvania on Saturday, August 14. Even if you can only come for a portion of the week, arrangements can most likely be made to accommodate your schedule so that you can participate in some way. The maximum group size is 32. If you would like to participate in the trip but have not already given word, please e-mail me at stpucc@verizon.net or call me at 610-363-2525 to let me know. Thanks! -Jonathan

Youth Group News

This month the Youth Group will once again participate in the Souper Bowl of Caring. More than 20 years ago, the Souper Bowl of Caring began with a simple prayer from a single youth group: "Lord, as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us to be mindful of those without even a bowl of soup to eat."



Since that day, more than \$60 million has been raised for local charities across the country through the Souper Bowl of Caring. Be part of this youth led movement that is sharing God's love with those in need. Please give generously on Super Bowl Sunday. Your dollars and canned goods will all be donated to the Lord's Pantry in Downingtown.

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News from Troop 482

Our troop ended 2009 with a very successful fundraiser. For the fifth consecutive year our boys wrapped books and CD's at Barnes and Noble at Main Street in Exton. We wrapped hundreds of books and raised nearly \$1400 for the troop. The manager at Barnes and Noble told us we were their favorite group because of our enthusiasm and holiday spirit. We are all looking forward to doing this event again this year!



We then started 2010 with the awarding of Boy Scouting's highest rank, Eagle Scout, to Michael Scripko. Family, friends and fellow scouts joined us in St. Paul's sanctuary for an enjoyable ceremony, and then celebrated with good food and fellowship in the social hall. We were so happy that many of you were able to join us. The church family has played a vital role in helping Michael reach Eagle and our thanks go out to the wonderful members of St. Paul's. If you haven't yet had the chance, stop by the church office and examine the Old Cemetery Gravestone Registers that Michael completed as part of his Eagle project.

Our boys have several Troop events planned for the coming months. If the weather cooperates we will be learning cross country skiing in February and downhill skiing at Shawnee in March.

Abraham Feters-White School

The exterior and the major infrastructure are now complete. Unfortunately, due to some unforeseen expenses with needing to add supports for floor and ceiling, the restoration funds were depleted in 2009. The climate for obtaining grants is completely dried up so we are dependent on donations to move the project forward.



On the positive side, we have been offered the services of a licensed contractor which may allow completion of the schoolhouse over the next couple of months with a significant savings on the work required to FINISH the restoration. Funds for materials and a small amount of labor will still need to be raised. This is a tremendous opportunity for the preservation society and the church. We have also received commitments for donations that will cover a little more than HALF these costs. Please consider a donation to the Schoolhouse Preservation Society so we can move ever closer to opening our doors. Details of how we might open these doors will be forthcoming in the upcoming weeks. Please stay tuned.

A TASTY WAY To RAISE DOUGH.



To Benefit: St. Paul's United Church of Christ
Fundraiser Date: Monday, February 22, 2010

Valid only at: Exton Restaurant
Next to the Residence Inn
8 N. Pottstown Pike (Rt. 100)
Exton, PA
610-280-4555

Please present this certificate at the time of payment to have up to 20% of your check's value, excluding tax and tip, donated to the organization above. Not to be used with other coupons or discounts. Tickets are not to be distributed in the restaurant or within the perimeter of the parking areas.

Valid only for date listed above.

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