

The Clear Voice

March 2010

St. Paul's United Church of Christ
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Haiti Earthquake Relief Effort and the Christian Ed Mission Project to Prepare Hygiene Kits

New York-headquartered Church World Service has issued an urgent national appeal for donations of CWS Hygiene and Baby Care Kits, asking individuals, families and religious and civic groups to join in local efforts to assemble CWS Kits for distribution to survivors of the earthquake and other global disasters.

With hundreds of thousands of people homeless in Haiti following the devastating earthquake, the agency says the need for Kits is immediate. Supplies and hygiene and medical resources of all kinds still are desperately lacking in the country.

"When a disaster like the earthquake in Haiti hits, we have to replenish supplies very quickly so that we can both assist survivors and also have supplies on hand to help victims of other disasters that might occur," said Rev. John McCullough, Executive Director and CEO of Church World Service.

At a time when Haitian earthquake survivors are in desperate need of basic necessities, it actually is a year-round activity for Church World Service supporters. The Kits make their way from the hands of volunteers to the agency's warehouse in New Windsor, Maryland, where they are inspected and finally shipped.






Please see Christian Education and Mission Corner Section for more information!

Final Dates to donate kit items or money for mailing or to complete kits is Mar 7th

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March Events at St. Paul's UCC

February 28 Worship at 9 and 10:30 a.m. Choir practice at 11:45 a.m.	March 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 Bible Study 9:30 AM "The Prophets"
7 Worship at 9 and 10:30 a.m. Sacraments of Baptism and Communion Choir practice at 11:45 a.m.	8	9 Boy Scout Troop 482 meets 7 p.m. Bell choir 7 p.m., recorder after	10 Ministerium forum at 7:30pm (St. Elizabeth RC Church)	11	12	13 Bible Study 9:30 AM "The Prophets"
14 Worship at 9 and 10:30 a.m. Choir practice at 11:45 a.m. One Great Hour of Sharing Daylight Savings Time Begins	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 	18	19	20 Bible Study 9:30 AM "The Prophets" 
21 Worship at 9 and 10:30 a.m. Choir practice at 11:45 a.m.	22	23 Boy Scout Troop 482 meets 7 p.m. Bell choir practice at 7 p.m., recorder practice after	24	25	26	27
28 Palm Sunday Worship at 9 and 10:30 a.m. Sacrament of Baptism at 9 AM Choir practice at 11:45 a.m.						

Lectionary for March 2010

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

Mar 7: Isaiah 55:1-9 / Psalm 63:1-8 / 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 / Luke 13:1-9

Mar 14: Joshua 5:9-12 / Psalm 32 / 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 / Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Mar 21: Isaiah 43:16-21 / Psalm 126 / Philippians 3:4b-14 / John 12:1-8

Mar 28: Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 / Luke 19:28-40

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Pastor's Ponderings

I have given up television for Lent. But don't cry for me. I want to spend my gained time doing something I love, devoting more attention to that stack of books that eyes me woefully every time I walk by. Plus, I am taking advantage of a liturgical loophole: Sundays are not technically part of Lent—I believe it was Martin Luther who wrote that every Sunday during Lent should be thought of as a 'little Easter'—and I fully intend to tune in on the sabbath day. How could I not, with spring training games on the horizon?

There was another catalyst to my TV fast. I realized that I have not made enough time in my life to keep up correspondence with people who are dear to me. I send plenty of e-mails every day, but rarely do I sit down and write a letter. Rarely do I send a message, electronic or otherwise, without a clear purpose. Rarely do I write just for the sake of being a friend, sharing my experiences, expressing my love, offering a blessing. This is something that I have the power to change. So instead of clicking the remote each evening, I will pick up my pen.

We enter the season of Lent with a call for us to renew our relationships, with God and with each other. The readings for Ash Wednesday include a text from the prophet Joel, in which God implores the people to "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." They also include a text from St. Paul, who tells his brethren to "be reconciled to God." And we read these texts in the light of Jesus' teaching—and the Torah—which says that love of God and love of neighbor are inseparable. This means that any project of spiritual reconciliation is larger than our inner prayer life. Being reconciled to God will also involve concrete acts of caring for those around us.

I am blessed to have few broken relationships in my life. But I know that I have neglected some friendships, and taken others for granted. I pray that I will do better. Lent offers us all a second chance, if not to right all wrongs, then at least to lament our failures and to begin anew, to take a step toward each other and discover again what it means to be human, what it means to be a child of grace.

Shalom,
Jonathan

Church Retreat on April 17

Save the date! I'm planning a church retreat for the third Saturday in April, on the subject of the gospel call to friendship and tenderness.

In preparation for the retreat, we invite you to read a book entitled "Living Gently in a Violent World: the Prophetic Witness of Weakness" by Jean Vanier and Stanley Hauerwas. It's a quick read (100 pages), beautifully written, exploring the question of what it means to be human, and what it means to be a disciple of Christ, in a violent and wounded world. Focusing on the ministry of L'Arche, a worldwide group of communities in which disabled persons live together with non-disabled persons, the book argues that being Christian is about practicing radical forms of gentleness, peacemaking, and faithfulness. A provocative and transforming book, and I hope that you will take the time to read it even if you aren't able to attend the retreat. If you would like to purchase or borrow a copy of the book, please let me know. At the retreat, we'll also view the film that I mentioned in my ponderings last month. Come out and join us for a lively, thoughtful discussion!

—Jonathan

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Book Club news

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

Our next book to read is the church retreat book "Living Gently in a Violent World: the Prophetic Witness of Weakness" by Stanley Hauerwas and Jean Vanier.

Following the church retreat book, we will be reading "True Compass" autobiography by Edward Kennedy. Happy reading!

Drum circle

The DOWNTOWN Drum Circle will take place the first Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. The next drum circle will be March 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 Haughton or come to a rehearsal. Newcomers and all ages always welcome!



Introduction to the Prophets

Lenten Bible Study Series

Saturday mornings at 9:30 — March 6, 13, 20

In the month of March Jonathan continues to lead a Saturday morning Bible study series on the Old Testament prophets. Each session stands alone, so feel free to drop by and join us even if you can only make one or two. Coffee and bagels will be served. Please RSVP to stpucc@verizon.net so that we will know how many bagels to pick up for each session.

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 DOWNTOWN 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.



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March Birthdays

March 3 – Julie Danese, Elizabeth Dickinson

March 7– Susan Shoop

March 9 – Diane Battilana, Joanne Propsner
Everett Wilson

March 12 – Stephanie Esposito

March 16 – Adam Behrnt,
Doug Propsner

March 17 – Ron Trimble and
Hank Will

March 19 – Melanie Gurule

March 20 – Russ Brierley

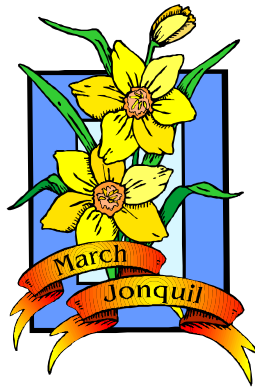
March 22 – John Huzinec

March 24 – Sue Berndt

March 27 – Bob Norwood

March 28 – Mayme Baumann, Kaitlyn
Dembrosky

March 31 – Carrie Madison



March Anniversaries

March 16 – Tom & Jessica Philips

Fishes & Loaves



March 7 – Please see sign-up sheet

March 14 – The Brierley Family

March 21 – Please see sign-up sheet

March 28 – Please see sign-up sheet

Flowers

March 7 – Given by Lorraine Nowlan in honor of her daughter Joanna

March 14 – Please see the sign-up sheet

March 21 – Given by the Phillips in memory of John & Jennifer

March 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

March 7

Greeter: Theresa Heinze

Reader: Barb Schneller

March 14

Greeter: The Brierley Family

Reader: Greg Allen

March 21

Greeter: Millie Lafreeda

Reader: Hank Will

March 28

Greeters: Ron & Joan Trimble

Reader: Louis Franconi

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

In February, the children learned stories of Jesus from John's gospel – healing the blind, the good shepherd, raising Lazarus, and the cost of discipleship. In March, we'll learn stories through end of Jesus' earthly ministry.

We have completed filling the Spring Teaching schedule! Many thanks to all who have volunteered to help with the Christian Ed program and our ever-growing Sunday School classes. What a blessing it is to have so many children participating and so many of our adults involved.

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 will continue collecting for the Church World Service Hygiene Kits through March 7th and will dedicate them during the One Great Hour of Sharing service on March 14th. Demand continues for these kits, please consider donating!

Each kit will contain:

- One hand towel measuring approximately 16" x 28" (no fingertip or bath towels)
- One washcloth
- One wide-tooth comb
- One nail clipper (no metal files or emery boards)
- One bar of soap (bath size in wrapper)
- One toothbrush (in original packaging)
- Six Band-Aids®

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.

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Vacation Bible School

Believe it or not, VBS planning has begun. Parents of children 4-12, mark your calendar for July 26-30, 3 – 5:30 pm. We have selected Renew: The Green VBS as our curriculum and are excited to get started on all the details. Please let Liza Hauze or Lisa Allen know if you are able to assist VBS week and look for an announcement for our first VBS planning meeting in the coming months.

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



A Note from Jesse Battilana on Relay for Life

"Hi, all! This school year has been really busy for me. Classes are great, and I've declared an American Studies and Religion. I also just finished up applications to study abroad next year in England and India!

*Last semester I pledged the community service fraternity at Dickinson, Alpha Phi Omega, and right now we are participating in **Relay for Life** to raise money for cancer research. If you'd like to donate a couple bucks, drop me an e-mail at battilaj@dickinson.edu. And if not, still feel free to contact me, and update me on your life. I love hearing from home! See you all soon.*

-Jesse Battilana"



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From The Deacons

Dining Night out Fundraiser at Chicago Uno: We had a delicious and enjoyable time at Pizza Uno on the 22nd and hope you did, too. Noticed a lot of waving, laughing and talking going on. Thanks to all of you who participated in our fundraiser for St. Paul's. Our gastronomical efforts totaled \$987.50 which raised \$197.50 for St. Paul's!

Haiti Earthquake Relief: As of this writing we have received \$1,329 for Haitian relief after the earthquake. Thank you to all the good people of St. Paul's for their generosity to those in need. A special thanks to our choir who donated all of their personal fund originally intended for a dinner together to our Earthquake Relief Fund for Haiti. Your generosity is a special kind of music to our ears!

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. This is a way for all of us to serve as the Lord's disciples as we donate to help others and send our love throughout the world.



Giant Fundraising Program Huge Success for St. Paul's!

The Giant Gift Card program continues to be a great success as a fundraiser for St. Paul's. Each time you purchase a Giant gift card, 5% of that purchase goes directly to St. Paul's. The gift card is redeemable for full purchase price for your groceries. You can even use the Giant gift card to pay for prescriptions in Giant Pharmacy or to purchase an assortment of other gift cards. In 2009, members of our church purchased a total of \$44,325 in gift cards which have raised a total of \$2216. This is an average of ~\$43 per week going to help sustain our church ministry. We would like to encourage our members to participate in this program for all your grocery needs and to **Thank** Giant for this tremendous program.



St. Paul's attendance and financial notes for January 2010

Sunday attendance in January was 371, for an average attendance of 74. January's income was \$13,237 compared to a budget of \$15,000. Operating expenses were \$11,899 compared to a budget of \$16,257. Hence, St. Paul's income exceeded expenses for a surplus of \$1,338 for January.

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Financial Planning/Endowment Committee News

You will recall reading a few articles printed in the Clear Voice during 2009 that made mention of a program we have come to call "Life Planning Workshops". These workshops will discuss such topics as Wills & Estate Planning, The Usefulness of Life Insurance, Investing for the long term and many other topics that will benefit us all. We are pleased to announce that the first of these workshops, a workshop on Wills & Estate Planning, will be conducted on May 1, 2010. Ms. Stacy Willitis McConnell, from the law firm of Lamb McErlane, PC, will present this workshop. In the next issue of the Clear Voice Newsletter, We will provide you with a biographical sketch on Ms. McConnell ESQ. We truly believe that, no matter where you are on life's journey, the subject matter presented in these workshops will be helpful to each of us and to our immediate families. We urge that you and your family take advantage of this opportunity to plan and welcome your attending. Don't forget to invite your friends and neighbors too. This is something we are delighted to share with the greater community. We will be presenting more programs and information on an ongoing basis in future months and years. We welcome any ideas or speakers on topics you may be interested in for future workshops.

Louis C. Franconi and the Financial Planning/Endowment Committee

Abraham Feters-White School

The Society is very grateful for the ongoing support and recognition extended to us throughout the years and especially over the past few months. A wonderful opportunity has presented itself which allows total completion and opening of the schoolhouse in the next few months.



At the February annual meeting the church considered a proposal for the completion of the final phase of schoolhouse restoration, made possible by a generous offer of time and labor by Victor Cozzone, a church member and licensed contractor, and by the generous pledges of financial support from church members. After an open and thoughtful discussion, the congregation approved the proposal for St. Paul's to assist with the final cost-to-complete of \$27,000, earmarking up to \$15,000 from non-endowment church funds for the final phase.

If you are interested in helping with this final phase of the project here are ways to become involved:

1. If you are able to make a tax-deductible donation in any amount toward the project completion, you can make checks payable to the Abraham Feters-White School Preservation Society.
2. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation and memorialize your gift, please fill out an order form to have a brick engraved with your family name. These will be completed and placed in the brick walkway entering the back of the building. A few are already in place.
3. You can help with your time and talents when we are looking for volunteers to assist with painting and other interior projects which will decrease the overall costs. Volunteer labor opportunities will be posted on the schoolhouse information board in foyer and in weekly bulletins as they are available.
4. Material, supplies and furnishings are also welcome donations, please ask one of the members.
5. We will need help with marketing ideas and planning the opening celebration.
6. Any ideas you may have toward "getting the word out" about the community meeting space are welcome.

We now look to early May, when we hope to host an opening celebration and tours for church members, local groups, and visitors. We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to St. Paul's members for your understanding and positive energy in moving this project toward completion.

Frank Perina, Amy Layman and Fran Pluchino

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Easter Candy

Our Famous Easter Candy Sale is about to begin!!

The fundraising committee is in full swing with the Easter Candy Sale activities. We could use your help with the final touches on dipping and boxing the Easter eggs. The dates for dipping eggs are Saturday 3/6 and 3/13 (only if needed) both dates from 1-5 pm. We need at least 10 people to complete the work.

You can also fill out an order form and sell the candy to your neighbors, friends and co-workers. Additional forms are available in the social hall. If you have any questions about the activities or ordering, please contact Fran Pluchino at 610-873-6323.



St. Paul's UCC Easter Candy Order Form

Peanut Butter or Coconut Filled Chocolate Easter Eggs:

$\frac{1}{2}$ pound (approx.wt.) box (4 eggs)- \$3.50 1 pound (approx. wt.) box(8 eggs)- \$7.00

Chocolate Covered Decorated Pretzel Rods:

6 per bag at \$3.00 3 per bag at \$1.50

Chocolate dipped peeps 3 per bag \$ 1.00

YOUR ORDER	QTY	COST
$\frac{1}{2}$ pound peanut butter eggs		
1 pound peanut butter eggs		
$\frac{1}{2}$ pound coconut eggs		
1 pound coconut eggs		
Choc. Covered Pretzel Rods 6/bag		
Choc. Covered Pretzel Rods 3/bag		
Chocolate Dipped Peeps		
TOTAL COST		

Make checks payable to St. Paul's UCC

Return completed order forms to the church by March 14, 2010.

Orders ready for pick-up on or before March 21, 2010

Name: _____

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Easter Flowers

Easter flowers will be sold again this year to benefit Boy Scout Troop 481. The Boy Scout troop is a great mission for our church and community. Please help support this effort! Order forms are attached.

St. Paul's Easter Flowers Last day to order: Palm Sunday, March 28th

1. Easter Lily - \$12.00 each

White only

Number: _____

2. Three Bulb Hyacinth - \$8.00 each

Blue, pink or white

Number: _____ Color: _____

3. Six Bulb Tulip - \$8.00 each

Red, pink, yellow, orange, purple or white

CANNOT guarantee colors but I will do my best.

Number: _____ Color: _____

Alternate Color (if first choice is unavailable): _____

4. Bulb Garden - \$14.00 each - Contains tulips, hyacinth, mini daffodil, crocus, and grape hyacinth.

Number: _____

Name: _____ Total Enclosed: _____

Phone: _____

Questions? Nancy Greger. 610-594-0612 nancy.greger@verizon.net

Give orders to Michael Scripko or David Harrison or deposit in envelope in social hall.

Checks may be made out to "BSA Troop 482".

Sales will benefit St. Paul's Boy Scout Troop 482.

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