



# Saint Paul's Possibilities

February 23, 2024

News & Ways to Plug In

## Powered by Grace and Coffee

Pastor Timothy Hogan-Palazzo

Dear Faith Family,

"I'm Trying." The tag line to last week's message about how Jesus loves you and "I'm trying." After the service on Sunday one of the retired teachers in our faith community approached me to talk about the word "trying." She shared with me that she had been at a conference once when they talked about the word "trying" and how the word usually meant to students that failure was expected.

While to some, the sermon title was catchy, and I pray everyone was able to follow along, I believe this teacher may have a point. If we are just trying to do something--perhaps with a sense that it's going to fail regardless--maybe we need to change our attitude and make it positive. Something more along the lines of, "Jesus loves you and I'm going to love you as well." Not as catchy, yet actually it makes it more definitive, more promising.

Truth is, I believe we all like to try--or to say we are trying. Yet our faith may wane when it comes to feeling we may or may not be able to accomplish something not so easy like loving those whom Jesus loved when we find others difficult. "I'm trying" indicates there may be a good chance this won't work, "but we'll give it a try."

"How many of us love everyone we meet?" This question still looms a bit large in this season for me.

So, how can we love others? All others? Sometimes society gives us an out. Not everyone is treated equal and societal norms say, "That's ok, you don't have to love them. Maybe try, but don't worry about it." How can we love those we deem hard to love? Better yet, do we act in a way others can always easily love us?

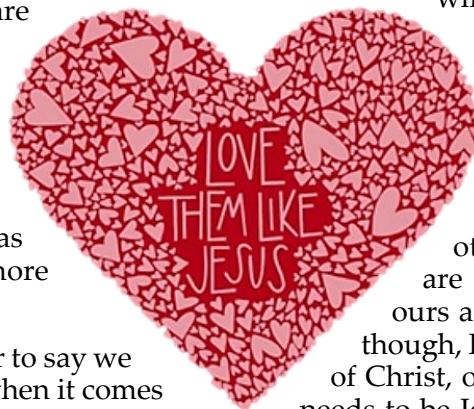
I so appreciated the commentary after the sermon last Sunday for many reasons--mainly because it made me think and wonder--did anyone else hear the "try" as an expected failure or half attempt to follow Jesus' teaching?

I wonder, in hindsight, if I should not have entitled the message, "Jesus Loves You, I Will Too." But if I

did that, what would happen when we fail? Would we try again? Would we not feel so bad about not being able to accomplish this simple but difficult goal in the first place that we just give up?

We, I believe, all need to work on our love for others. We acknowledge we will not be Jesus, but that does not exempt us from making that love, that dedication to love of others, our goal. Always striving to be like Jesus. For the gift of love truly is the greatest gift of all.

In John 13:34 we find Jesus' words: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another." How should we respond to Jesus and this commandment and his life's lived examples? "I'm trying..." or "I will...?"



Knowing the difficulties of what lies ahead, there is something else I believe we need to know. Grace will cover us. If we hit bumps in the road while attempting unconditional love of Jesus for all others, we too understand it's ok. We are covered in grace. And that grace is ours as well as all others. No matter what, though, I believe we are called out as followers of Christ, our brother, to the point that our goal needs to be Jesus loves you and I love you. I may not always get it right, forgive me, I do love you.

Here we are on the journey together to "Love More..." May your Lenten journey be good, and may your love of Jesus and all others grow stronger in this season.

*Peace and Blessings, Pastor Tim*

## Please Join Us in Praying For ...

Linda Beaver	Katy Mahon
Cookie Breining	Paul Shaner
The Brouse Family	Malaya Stahl
The Engle Family	Jaelynn Walker
Gail Ernest	Thomas Ward, Jr.
Greyson Greenawalt	World Peace
Al & Ruth Henry	Mental Health Needs
Those with Life-Long Illnesses	

*Updates to our prayer list are made from our Saint Paul's Prayers and Love FB Group, phone calls to the church office, or fill out a prayer card located in our sanctuary.*



# The Farm Report

## Youth & Family News

**This Sunday, February 25, from 5 to 7 p.m.** we will share in our bi-monthly Children, Youth & Family event for everyone. We will begin with a meal, then have classes and activities for all ages up to and including parents! Come be a part of what's happening here. The next Family Night after this will take place on March 10. Also, it's time for some family laughter and fun with events coming up in the spring for our children, youth, and family fellowship. We are planning our first event of the season at **Bounce Plex, Shamokin Dam, Sunday, March 3, from 3 to 5 p.m.** followed by dinner out. A sign-up sheet may be found at the welcome desk to help us with a general number for the event. Other upcoming events include a trip to Lake Tobias, a Skate Party, and a Mini Golf competition, yes, maybe at Knoebel's. Watch for more details to come.

## Grace Place @ The Farm

A place for all! Grace Place has already seen two Fresh Express Food Distributions, the set-up of our Emergency Food Pantry, an Arts for Mission event, and an opportunity for us to continue in relationship with Face To Face Church as they will be using the space for an office/study and possibly group meetings / ministries. How blessed are we as well to be able to offer this space for other Arts for Mission events (*stay tuned for the next one*) and possible partnerships with the Susquehanna Mediation Center. We have so many to thank for all the work that has been done to ready the space including wall repairs and a fresh coat of paint. What a great way to once again be the church! Let us give thanks to God and the Holy for leading us to step out on faith, creating Grace Place @ The Farm!

## Our Neighbors' Pantry

Our neighbors pantry, aka our Emergency Food Pantry, now located at Grace Place has certainly been blessed to receive gift cards for both gas and groceries this month. These cards are secured and will be shared as needed with our neighbors and family. There's still time to provide more gift cards if you choose before we begin our March collection of canned fruits, vegetables, and boxed stuffing mixes. Thank you for all you do in helping with food security for our neighbors. Just another way...Love is happening here.

## It's Time for Change

Change for "One Great Hour of Sharing" that is. Our annual Lenten coin box collection began Sunday, February 18, the first Sunday in Lent, but it's not too late to participate! Grab one today, help fill it up with loose change and even paper money during Lent, and as is our tradition, we plan the return of the coin boxes during our Palm Sunday celebration, March 24, 2024. Every penny counts and 100% goes toward our annual sharing our love gift with others. One Great Hour of Sharing, part of Our Church's Wider Mission, is the special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that carries God's message of love and hope to neighbors in need and crisis. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, health care, and emergency relief and rehabilitation to areas suffering from natural disasters. Change can help make a change for our neighbors.

## Lenten Wednesday Interactive

"*A Way of Love: A Practical Guide to Following Jesus*" is our study guide for this year's Lenten Study and there's still time to join! We gather Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall for our journey through the Lenten season seeking to open us up to a possible closer personal walk with Jesus. There are books available but not necessarily required. If you just choose to read the Biblical texts that guides us through this study that is okay as well. For Wednesday, February 28, our topic is "Learn" and if you choose you may read: Deuteronomy 11:18-21; Romans 12:1-12; and Philippians 4:8-9 in preparation for the gathering.

## We Like to Eat ... It's True

Will you join your family around the table in March for not one but two great meals in one month! First, our annual St. Patrick's Day meal, Sunday, March 17, following worship, with Shepherd's Pie and Corned Beef and Cabbage for the main course. Then on Easter Sunday morning, March 31, we will gather again for our annual Easter Breakfast with Ham as the main dish and all the fixins shared by you. And, of course, we will have an Easter Egg Hunt, our first one @ The Farm. Maybe we can even bring back some animals...at least some chickens because who knows... if it can happen, it will happen @ The Farm, because love happens here.

## We Received Thank Yous ...

"Thank you just doesn't seem like enough to say to let you know how grateful we are to you and the people of your church. You all helped me to make my babies dream of a church wedding come true. If ever I have experienced the true Love of God on earth, it was from you and your church. We are eternally grateful for all. Love, Mikayla and Gavin, Taylor and Pam (the Dunmeyer/Doane Families)"

"Dear Church Family, It was a pleasure and a privilege to serve you on the Consistory the past few years. I am so proud of how our wonderful family navigated many changes during that time. Thank you for your trust and prayers. Also, thank you for the "bucket of snowmen" that made it all the way to Florida to remind me what I am missing. With Love, Sue Overdorf"

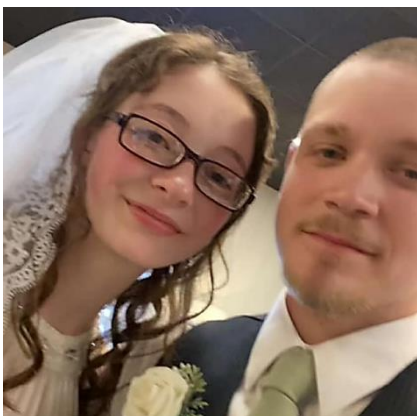


## You are Invited ...

Dear Church Family: I would like to extend the invitation to Teagan's 2nd birthday party here at Saint Paul's on Saturday, March 2, at 2 p.m. It is a duck-themed party, and we will be providing pizza and drinks. All are welcome! We will have plenty of food and drinks for all to enjoy, and we look forward to seeing everyone there. --Brent Sechrist

## Celebrations

Feb 28 – Happy Birthday Priscilla Lanks  
 Mar 3 – Happy Birthday Carol Clewell  
 Mar 6 – Happy Birthday Tammy Drees  
 Mar 7 – Happy Birthday Teagan Sechrist  
 Mar 8 – Happy Birthday Nancy Haven  
 Mar 8 – Happy Birthday Ericka Mull



## Something's Happening Here ...



*Pictures top to bottom:  
 A near record crowd for Word, Wine, & Wisdom; Friends gathering for breakfast and fellowship; a few of our Harvest Meal volunteers recently serving 150 neighbors in Milton; our first Arts for Mission gathering in Grace Place; and Mikayla and Gavin married here @ The Farm. Love really does happen here.*



**...And That Something is Love!**

## On the Weekly Journey

### Monday Morning Reflections, 11:30 a.m.

This is a weekly gathering with Pastor Tim to explore further the sermon and texts from Sunday's service. No experience necessary. All are welcome!

### Weekly Wednesday Lunch with the Pastor

A time to just sit, relax, and discuss random topics with Pastor Tim on the porch (or if the weather is not cooperating, in Fellowship Hall). Grab your lunch at the market and join us from 11:30 to 1 p.m.

### Bell Choir

Directed by Patty Wagner, rehearses 5:15 to 6:15 p.m. Wednesdays in the Sanctuary and performing twice a month for worship throughout the year. For more information see Patty.

### Wednesday Evening Interactive

Meeting at 6:30 p.m. weekly. All are welcome to jump in for this great time of conversation. Lenten Study began February 21 and continues through March 27.

### Fresh Express Thursdays

Come help us provide groceries for our neighbors every second and fourth Thursdays from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., come for an hour, two hours, or the entire time. All volunteers are welcome! **March 14 & 28**

### Sundays @ Saint Paul's

**9 a.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal** - Sunday mornings in the Sanctuary and helps lead worship weekly. Always open to new members. To learn more, please see Patty.

**10 a.m. Children's Choir** - children through 7<sup>th</sup> grade, directed by Sharon Styer, rehearses at 10 a.m. each Sunday morning in the Chapel, and sings on the fourth Sunday of every month. Parents, drop your kids off for choir and enjoy coffee or breakfast while they practice for 10 to 15 minutes each Sunday morning.

### **10:30 a.m. Sunday Morning Worship**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday's Family Meal** – We gather around the tables monthly for good eats and good times!

### **Up Next ... March 17 Irish Luncheon!**

### Monday Harvest Meal

Join us 1 to 5 p.m. on the fourth Monday of each month as we help prepare and serve meals in conjunction with Bucknell's Office of Civic Engagement to our neighbors in the Milton area. Shelly Sholley is our lead contact for this meal. **February 26**

### Breakfast with Friends

Gather at the Silver Moon Restaurant on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. for a time to catch up and share stories in a small group setting. **March 13 (weather permitting)**

### Fourth Friday Wine, Word, and Wisdom

From 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., come sit, relax, have a glass, and sink into the conversation about words that inspire our faith as we gather at Union Cellars, 4760 Furnace Road, Lewisburg. **Feb 23 and Mar 22**

## Stewardship

### Gifts & Offerings February 14 & 18, 2024

*"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."* (Luke 12:34) Giving thanks for the time, talents, and resources shared here.

Attendance on LIVE: 517 Virtual Reach: 4,434

Attendance In Person: 196 (8 Visitors)

Christian Education: 65

Plate Giving	\$ 2,172.00
Loose Plate	\$ 165.00
Online Giving	\$ <u>800.13</u>
Operational Total	\$ 3,137.13
General Restricted Giving	\$ <u>2,026.00</u>
Total Giving	\$ 5,163.13

## Upcoming Worship

### February 25, 2024 – Second Sunday in Lent

"To Tell the Truth"

Matthew 25:35-40

Worship Leader: Jen Arnold

Lector: Adam Taylor

Acolyte: Kasen Taylor

Flowers: Sharon Foust & Shelly Sholley

Breakfast: Shelley Peterson and Dane Santos

Offering Counter: E. Fisher; D. Spear

### March 3, 2024 – Third Sunday in Lent

"Finger Memory"

John 4:3-27

Worship Leader: Lisa Bernard

Lector: Frank Wetzel

Acolyte: Riley Gill

Flowers: Cathy Ward

Breakfast: Donna Spear

Offering Counter: S. Brown; D. Spear

*March Greeter/Usher Team: Earl & Terri Fisher, Alaina & Adam Taylor, Kim Ritter, Carol Clewell, Steve Brown, George Mull*

