



Saint Paul's Possibilities

January 26, 2023

News & Ways to Plug In

Powered by Grace and Coffee

Pastor Timothy Hogan-Palazzo

Dear Faith Family,

Thursday morning, I awoke to a text that had been sent to the parents of Milton Area School District children. It was succinct: the school district had received more than one text that a student planned to bring a gun to school and specific teens were targets. It continued, the school district had received several messages on their "safe-2-say" hotline over the night and "out of an abundance of caution" were closing the schools for the day.

My heart sank.

This news is on the heels of mass shootings in California and the announcement by the FBI that — in the first 24 days of 2023 — our country has experienced 40 mass shootings, more than four lives lost at each, by individuals with guns. That is a minimum of 160 people who lost their lives in the first month of 2023 for reasons we will likely never understand.

My sadness comes in the fact that if, as Christians, we believe all life is sacred. We — who many still self-describe as a Christian nation — have lost our way through our refusal to act and live in radical love for one another. To put it bluntly, for too long, too many have found love and respect to be non-masculine traits that are disposable. That has to stop. A book that was published recently explains how, early in the 1900s, America's church leaders tried to masculinize Jesus as a way to "attract men to church." They felt stories of love and grace were "too feminine" and men in this country wouldn't want to worship a feminine Jesus. I had not known that before, but, perhaps it explains the road we are traveling?

Gun violence in this country is not new. I personally can't help but believe it is a result of the lack of loving kindness at every level of life. Parents with

children, teachers with children, children with children, adults with adults in every walk and setting of life, it's not business, it's not politics, it's first and foremost love and kindness that we need and we need to stop bastardizing Jesus into our image of anything other than love.

Matthew 12:47 — regardless of the version of the Bible you read — states the same thing. Jesus did not come to judge the world. Jesus came to save the world. And it wasn't through threats of violence or anything other than one single commandment: love. Love one another, period. Full stop. I am afraid it's been so long since that message was shared broadly without exception that it has led us to where we are today. We are always making an excuse not to love someone or groups of someones citing not Jesus' way of living, but our own.

I am well aware of the fact that many may say or think, "Oh, isn't that nice?" We should just love one another. I am also aware of the fact that gun legislation is and continues to bring out even more hatred and visceral conversations. It becomes more about votes and power than about anything else — including the sacred lives at stake.

I don't think we have completely lost the ability to act from a place of love and kindness. I want to believe. However, for far too long it has not been our normal response and, therefore, it feels uncomfortable — laughable to some — when I speak of a response based in love.

This week I was having a conversation with someone about physical illness and she said to me, "I can't believe God didn't put something before us — something we already have in us — with an ability to discover a cure for some illnesses. And now we can't see it because of our focus on pharmaceuticals." I'm afraid this person may have a point — not that pharmaceuticals aren't gifts that God has bestowed on some talented souls to discover and create, but that those things eventually become driven by money, often, greed — another absence of love and kindness. In order to look

beyond and discover something more somehow feels like a financial threat to the pharmaceutical industry.

What if EVERY decision we make came from a place of kindness and love? I believe that it may take more courage than anything we've ever done in life. It is time we stand up — all of us — especially those of us who say we follow Jesus, and live and act in the way of kindness and love.

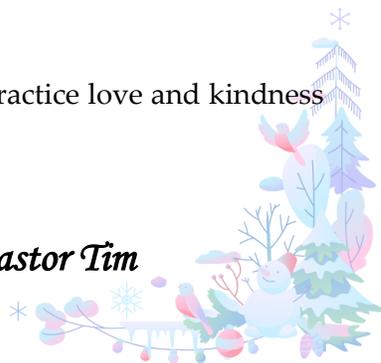
We must learn to do this fearlessly, void of concern that someone may take advantage of our kindness, because they will. Show love and kindness anyway. Someone may mistake our kindness for weakness. Show love and kindness anyway. Someone may not believe as we do. Show them love and kindness anyway. If we want others to know Jesus, they are going to want to know the one who loves with his arms open to all — not the one who might judge or reject them if they make a mistake.

Show love and kindness. I believe love is the one thing that can change the gun violence trend in our society.

See you in church as we practice love and kindness together.

Amen.

Peace and Blessings, Pastor Tim



Would You Join Us in Praying For...

The Anderson Family	The Leeser Family
Linda Beaver	Katy Mahon
Judy Brown	Kasey Milheim
Heather Council	Ruby Mitch
The Engle Family	Newton/Anderson Family
Gail Ernest	Betsy Pullen
Terri Fisher	Valerie Ritter
Dave Fulton	Chuck Schworer
April Giumento	Carolyn Wuerdeman
Greyson Greenawalt	Wynn-Haven Family
Joanna Johnson	Unspoken Requests

Updates to our prayer list are made weekly from our Prayers and Love Facebook group and by calling the church office.

On the Journey Together

Word, Wine, and Wisdom

Join your Saint Paul's Family on Friday, February 24, at Union Cellars, Lewisburg. Drop in anytime between 4 and 7 p.m. This is a brand new gathering which combines fellowship and conversation and an opportunity to get to know each other better. All are welcome.

Saint Paul's Spaghetti on the Farm and Talent Round Up

The theme for this year's "Talent Show, Spaghetti, and Mama Palazzo's Meatballs is "Spaghetti on the Farm," and Gloria Lehman says the Palazzo's won't be the only ones cooking something up. This annual event is Sunday, February 19, beginning at 5:30 p.m. Start planning now for the talent/gift you would like to share and contact Gloria Lehman to let her know.

Coffee Hour Sponsors

Each Sunday 10 a.m. to 10:30 and 11:30 to 12 noon, join your church family around the tables as we offer a light breakfast and coffee. If you would like to sponsor Coffee Hour or help in any way, please contact Donna in the church office. This doesn't have to be anything fancy, just a few nice nibbles to keep our bellies from growling during Pastor Tim's sermon.

Saint Paul's Online Directory

As we journey together and care for one another, we hope you will join our church online directory called "Engage" which provides secure access to a listing of individuals in our church family? You can easily locate an address, phone number, and email to stay in touch, send a note, or make a phone call. Engage also keeps track of your giving history and can be used for online giving. Create your own Engage account at: <https://engage.suran.com/spuccwm> on your computer or mobile device where you will create your username and password. Need help? Contact Donna in the church office.

Celebration Sunday!

What a beautiful celebration it was! We are so very blessed here at Saint Paul's...our family, our ministries, our love, our outreach. More than 100 gathered around the tables as we enjoyed a bountiful lunch. Chip won the contest of putting the most food on a plate!



Sharing Our Gifts

Sharing Our Tables

The next Sharing Our Tables Community Meal is Sunday, February 12, from 4-5 p.m. On the menu is Chili, Salad, Cornbread, and Brownies. This Sunday, a sign-up sheet will be available, as ways that you can support this community outreach. As always, thank you ALL for all you do in love and support of all our neighbors.

Volunteer Mondays



If you have the time and haven't joined us yet on Volunteer Monday, we hope you will! From noon to 2 p.m. each Monday, we gather to tidy up the Sanctuary, kitchen, emergency food pantry, and more. There's something for

everyone to help with, so come and enjoy a fun time with your church family. *(Riley & Lillie scrubbing dishes)*

January Little Red Wagon

For the month of January, the focus for our little red wagon will be for gas cards for Sunoco, Turkey Hill, Weis, or iFuel. We often get calls or have neighbors and family in need. Your help in this way will go a long way to showing God's love to others.

2023 Altar Flowers

If you haven't signed up to sponsor altar flowers this year, the 2023 sign up is available online on our website or by contacting the church office. Cost is \$50. Thank you for helping to make our sanctuary so beautiful!

Life Line Screening and Bloodmobile

Saint Paul's is happy to welcome to our Fellowship Hall "Life Line Screening" three times a year. The next scheduled screening is Tuesday, January 31, from 9 to 5 p.m. You may pre-register to receive several non-invasive screenings by calling 1-800-679-5191 and schedule a time to be screened on January 31. We also host a Red Cross Bloodmobile and Canteen several times a year. The next opportunity to give "the gift of life" is Wednesday, February 1. Visit <https://www.redcross.org/give-blood.html> to pre-register.

Stewardship

Gifts & Offerings January 22, 2023

To all who offer their time, talents and gifts to create this community, our special thanks! It is good always and everywhere to give thanks to God.

Attendance on LIVE: 345

Virtual Reach: 3,476

Attendance In Person: 106 (1 Visitors)

Christian Formation: 19

Plate Giving \$ 1,542.00

Loose Plate \$ 260.00

Online Giving \$ 1,018.50

Operational Total \$ 2,820.50

Restricted Giving \$ 145.00

Total Giving \$ 2,965.50

2022 Giving Statements and Annual Report were distributed on Sunday, January 22. If you did not receive yours, please stop by the church office during office hours.

Upcoming Worship

January 29, 2023

Third Sunday After Epiphany

"You Call This Being Blessed"

I Corinthians 1:18-31; Matthew 5:1-12

Worship Leader: Lisa Bernard

Lector: Dave Muffley

Acolyte: Rhett Sample

Flowers: Staci Wagner

Coffee Hour Sponsor: Available

Offering Counter: C. Franciscus; D. Spear

February 5, 2023 – Communion Sunday

Fourth Sunday After Epiphany

"Some Tough Self-Care"

Isaiah 58:1-9a; Matthew 5:13-20

Worship Leader: Kelly Kazibwe

Lector: Amy Armstrong

Acolyte: Riley Gill

Flowers: Available

Coffee Hour Sponsor: Available

Offering Counter: E. Fisher; D. Spear

February Greeter/Usher Team: Richard & Amy Armstrong, Earl & Terri Fisher, Amy Mahon, Sue Mahon, Judy Brown

Saint Paul's United Church of Christ

Church Address: 1125 Mahoning Street, Milton, PA 17847

Church Office Contact: 570-568-1433 / admin@spuccwm.org

Pastor's Email: PastorTim@spuccwm.org

Church Website: <https://www.spuccwm.org>



Saint Paul's Birthdays

January 28 – Earl Fisher
January 30 – Barclay Wilson
February 4 – April Masker
February 7 – Geri Neese
February 9 – Makaila Huff



Faith & Family -Time & Talents

#spuconthejourneytogether

Whether your interest involves music, fellowship, faith formation, and/or service to others, we believe a full-life faith community includes them all. We invite and encourage you to consider joining us for one or multiple opportunities as we begin the new year. There's lots to explore and do as a faith family gets to know and grow deeper relationships together. If there's something you want to learn more about, call the office, ask questions, explore ways to get connected and enjoy some family time. Check out as many as you would like, invite others to join you.

Faith Formation

- Sunday Morning Jump-Start – Meeting at 9:15 a.m. in the Parlor
- Children's Church (ages 3 to 2nd grade) – during a portion of our 10:30 a.m. Worship
- Confirmation – Meeting at 5 p.m. each Sunday evening through May
- Youth & Family Gatherings – 2nd and 4th Sundays at 5 to 7 p.m. February 12 & 26
- (New) Quarterly Special Events – 2nd to 5th graders, select Sundays 5 to 7 p.m.
- Monday Morning Reflections – Meeting at 11 a.m. in the Parlor
- Wednesday Interactive – Meeting at 6:05 p.m. in the Parlor
- Happy Hour – The Word, Wine & Wisdom – Friday, February 24, drop in anytime between 4 and 7 p.m. at Union Cellars, Lewisburg. This is a brand new gathering which combines fellowship and conversation and an opportunity to get to know each other better. All are welcome.

Music

- Chancel Choir – Rehearsing at 9 a.m. on Sundays in the Sanctuary choir loft.

- Bell Choir – Wednesdays at 5 p.m. in the Music Room. Returning in March.
- Children's Choir – Each Sunday morning at 10 a.m. in the music room

Fellowship

- Sunday Morning Coffee Hour – Every Sunday 10 a.m. in Fellowship Hall
- Faith Family Meal – 4th Sunday of each month immediately following Worship. Our next meal together is Sunday, February 19, at 5:30 p.m. Spaghetti and Meatballs, with our Annual Saint Paul's Talent Show following.
- Friends Who Breakfast – 2nd or 3rd Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. (returning March 2023)
- And we can't leave out the occasional Community Research Project – Dates and Times TBD

A Way to Serve Others

- Volunteer Monday – from noon to 2 p.m. Every level of assistance is needed, and we have a great time in fellowship and laughter. Come, roll up your sleeves and get the week started with us.
- Blood Mobile Canteen – Select Wednesdays (every other month) and scheduled again for February 1 from 1 to 6 p.m.
- Fresh Express – 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., 2nd and 4th Thursdays of every month and scheduled next for January 26 and February 9.
- The Little Red Wagon – Available weekly in support of our emergency food pantry and neighborhood needs
- Sharing Our Tables – Bi-monthly community meal program in conjunction with area churches and scheduled again for Sunday, February 12

Calendar – January 26 to February 2

January 27 – MHS STAGE Talent Show Fundraiser 7-9pm
January 28 – Dorothy Anderson Celebration of Life 11am
January 29 – Chancel Choir Rehearsal 9am
January 29 – Jump Start Sunday School 9:15am
January 29 – Worship 10:30am
January 29 – Confirmation Class 5pm
January 30 – Monday Morning Reflections 11am
January 30 – Volunteer Monday 12-2pm
January 31 – Life Line Screening 8a – 5pm
February 1 – Red Cross Bloodmobile & Canteen 1-6pm
February 1 – Wednesday Interactive 6:05 p.m.