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THE GOOD NEWS

JUNE 2025

PASTOR KC

It's hard to grasp that the month of June is here! We've celebrated the resurrection of Jesus and thoroughly explored some of the lessons he wanted his Disciples to learn after his road to Calvary. Through preparing these sermons, I've developed a deep

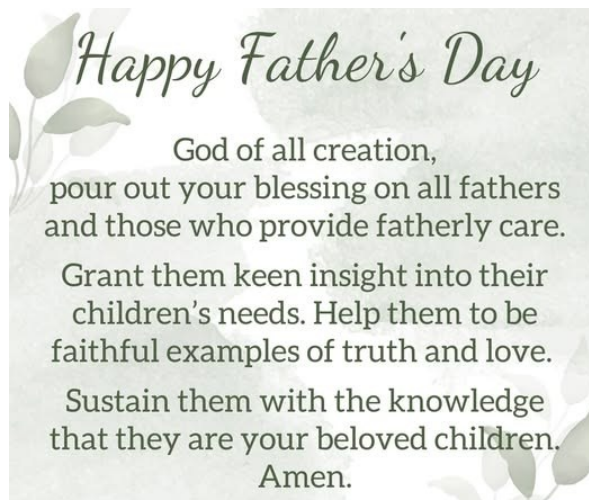


appreciation for the Lord's patience with the length of time between his death on the cross and when he appeared to his followers. Surely, he knew they were filled with anguish and doubt, and yet, just as he did when Lazarus became ill, Jesus waited until the time was right to make his iconic appearance.

When we consider our wants and needs, we often wonder what is taking God so very long to respond. As time goes by, we too experience anguish and doubt, wondering if the day will come when Christ will show his majesty. Certainly, in the life of our church, we've experienced many stretches in time that the Lord had to both *empower* us, but also *show us the way!*

My most earnest prayer for St. Paul is that the Lord will continue to lead us, particularly through this wilderness full of *unknowns*. For those of us who have walked many years in faith, we learn to surrender to the unknown, we mature into an understanding that not all things are for us to know, and we become comfortable that our Lord knows all. Is it acceptable that we experience anguish and doubt? Yes! We are in good company of Christ's devoted Disciples.

This month, we begin celebrating the season of Pentecost. Where would we be without the gift of the Holy Spirit? Christ knew his Disciples would need help once he ascended to Heaven, and this gift is for *all who believe*. As we move forward into the summer months, we'll see how the Spirit will lead us through the season — so much to be revealed by God! *Do you believe?*



Consistory held its monthly meeting in May and discussed several topics. We are looking into the church website modules that UCC offers at a modest price and as was announced on Sunday, we are looking for those who may be interested in being part of a committee to look into this. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like to help.

Consistory will be holding a special meeting in June to discuss the challenges of Pastor KC still being in Florida. We have some options that will be talked through. On Sunday, May 25th, we tried out a zoom meeting with KC and will test this option on June 1st. Because of this, communion has been moved to June 8th.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the church's outside clean up May 17th. Thank you to Audrey and her husband Mike for stripping and staining the church's front doors. They look great!

Rummage is moving along. Thanks to everyone who has already started the sorting process. KC and I moved some of the rummage out of the rummage room Sunday and I will continue to do that a bit at a time. If anyone would like to help after service on any given Sunday, it would be appreciated.

I will be coming in on a few Saturday mornings to give those that can't come during the week the opportunity to help sort. The Saturdays that I will be coming in from 9-12 are June 14th and 28th. As more dates become available, I will let you know.



We have purchased new first aid kits. One is in the blacktop cabinet below the sign-up sheet and the other one is in the kitchen.



Sunday, June 8, 2025

The Strengthen the Church (STC) Offering reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through their local congregations. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. By your generosity to this offering, you build up the Body of Christ.





Happy Birthday, dear Church, Happy Birthday to you! ♪ ♪ Soon it will be Pentecost (June 8), generally considered the birthday of the Church. Why is it considered so, and how old is the church? First, let's examine the age question. Unexpectedly, scholars believe Jesus was born sometime 4-6 years *before* the common era (in old fashioned terms "A.D."). Remember we're counting years down in this calculation, so he was born in 6-4 BCE (Before the Common Era). This is based on history as related in scripture, such as the reigns of rulers. Thus, Christ was born *before* the Year 1 of the Common Era (the old style "A.D.")! Scripture clearly states that he started his ministry at the age of 30, and that it lasted three years. Based on this, Jesus died sometime in the 27th to 29th years of the

Common Era. The Christian Church is therefore approaching its 2000th birthday. Mazel Tov! Of course, different branches of the church mark different landmarks - the Catholic Church celebrates a jubilee year every 25 years (we're in one now) and Russian Orthodoxy celebrated its 1000th birthday in 1988 - but the church as a whole, traces its birth to the first Pentecost, 50 days after the Resurrection of Christ.

Why Pentecost? Pentecost as a holiday is not unique to Christianity. Deuteronomy 16 lays out the festivals the Israelites must celebrate under the Law. One of these is the 'Festival of Weeks,' celebrated seven weeks (49 days) after the second day of Passover - 50 days after the start of Passover ("the day the sickle is laid to the harvest"). Passover and Easter are associated on the calendar. "Pentecost" means 50, coming from the Greek, fifty days after Easter. When we celebrate Pentecost, we are putting our own interpretation on an Israelite festival. The Christian Pentecost occurred on the Jewish Pentecost, according to scripture.

The story of Pentecost is recounted in the Book of Acts, written by the same Luke who wrote the gospel named after him. It was written for Theophilus, probably a rich individual in Antioch. The first verses of Acts review the Ascension of Jesus to Heaven, treated in an abbreviated version in Luke's gospel. This acts as an introduction to the birth story of the church, but there is one intervening event.

What happens before a birthday celebration? First the host comes forward, generally a relative or friend of the celebrant. In the case of what becomes the church, the "hosts" are the disciples. They have gotten over the shock of the Crucifixion because of appearances by Christ during the 40 days following his Resurrection. Their faith has been restored and they are reinvigorated. There is one loose end. They are short a disciple. Judas has committed suicide or disappeared (scriptures differ on exactly what happened). They gather together and identify two men who have been with them "from the beginning," although we have not heard of them before this. These men meet the character requirements necessary for a disciple. Lots are cast (an ancient method of choice) and Matthias is selected to serve. The stage is set for Pentecost.

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What happens on Pentecost is laid out in detail in the second chapter of Acts. At 9:00 a.m., the Holy Spirit descends on the disciples. It takes the visual form of split forks of fire above their heads. The Spirit enables them to preach the good news of the risen Christ in a singular way. Their words are heard in the native languages of the listeners, an array of individuals from many places throughout the world. Fifteen different nationalities are mentioned in the story, almost all of them Gentiles. The listeners are bewildered by a group of Galileans apparently speaking multiple languages. Some consider the disciples drunk, although it is unclear how this explains the phenomenon of being multi lingual. In any case, Peter contradicts the skepticism of these listeners, explaining that the Spirit has bestowed this ability.

Peter then rises before the crowd and tells them about Jesus. He relates Jesus's ministry to the Messianic prophecies of Joel and the words of David concerning his "Lord," placing Jesus firmly with the framework of Judaism. He shares the story of the Resurrection and how Jesus has overcome death. The Spirit gives Peter such eloquence that his listeners are "cut to the heart," wanting to know what they must do. Peter tells them they must be baptized to receive the Spirit. About 3,000 people choose to be baptized, devoting themselves to the work of what becomes the church. Pentecost is the birthday of the church because it is the first instance of the disciples reaching out in a concerted manner to Gentile and Jew alike in a mass setting, with a notable number of converts. The members met in their homes, breaking bread together and praising God continually. And God continued to add to their number, as the disciples continued to preach. Thus, our church was born.

All the dirt and grime of winter has been washed away and I can truly see clearly now! I was lucky to find a great cleaning service right here at St. Paul's. It's called HEIGHTS CLEANING SERVICE and they do just about everything! My windows are now clean as a whistle (tracks, frames, glass and screens) and I am happy as a clam. The winter has been so long and we have been waiting patiently (???) to see green grass and hear birds chirping. He is coming back next week to power wash my patio and driveway, so I will be ready to enjoy our great Michigan summer — YES, he does that too. Just thought I would put this info out for everyone, as some of us *can't or don't have time* to do these jobs and here is your answer. His name is Chris and he is ready, willing and eager to help you spruce up your home.

CHRIS RAMSEY 586/214-1768

I can see clearly now, **THE RAIN IS GONE,**
I can see all obstacles in my way,
Gone are the DARK CLOUDS
that had me blind,
It's gonna be a bright,
bright, BRIGHT, bright
sunshiny day!

CHRIS RAMSEY 586/214-1768



KIM

Not sure what to do with used greeting cards or have too many greeting cards with envelopes? Please consider dropping them off in the bin that is located in the Nursery Room. They will be used by a mom who helps at her son's daycare.

Thank you from Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church in Detroit for your donations of food and clothing. Their next Clothes Closet will be Saturday, June 21. For the next few months, any clothing can be put towards our fall Rummage Sale.



- To all those who helped with donating money, purchasing, planting and maintaining our entryway flowerbeds and Pearl's Butterfly Garden.
- Audrey & Mike Blasky for restraining the Sanctuary doors.



Would you like to tell the world how much St. Paul means to you? Do you think we have a wonderful story to tell? We do, too. The Consistory has purchased a special website design package from the UCC. We plan to revamp our website to bring our message to the virtual world in a vital and inviting

way. We are putting together a committee to work on this important initiative. Meetings by zoom will be available, so it will not be necessary to travel to church for the meetings. This committee will complete the design of the website, but will not be the committee that manages the website on an ongoing basis, so your time commitment will be limited to the design process. Please consider serving on this committee. If you would like to be involved, please contact Gail at gpopyk5@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you.