
PENNSBURG UCC



On Sunday May 3rd, a group of folks gathered in front of the church to make NOISE! This was part of a state wide Governor's "Thank You" to first responders, as well as to show community solidarity and a commitment to getting back to normal. Aiden Lash rang the church bell for 3 minutes while members of PUCC clanged pots and pans and spoons, all while safely wearing masks and keeping six feet apart. Photo courtesy of Sharon Burns.

Summertime...ish!

As I write this, I'm sitting outside on my porch in 78-degree sunshine. Summer is just about here!

If we're trying to look at the bright side, the arrival of summer is the brightest thing we see at the moment. If we need to be staying home, at least the weather will allow us to be outside in our yards, on our patios, and maybe even by our pools.

The question, however, is what our summers will look like beyond those backyard activities, because they probably won't look like our usual summer. Many popular tourist spots remain closed. Travel is still very limited. Vacations are being cancelled. Concerts are being postponed. Even

church functions like VBS and festivals are being ruled out for 2020. (More on the fate of our church-specific functions below.)

The truth is that even with the warmer weather appearing, there is still a sense of grief over all that we are missing due to the coronavirus. It's okay to feel sad and angry, but it's even more important to look at the bright side. This year, 2020, was supposed to be about seeing more clearly, so what is this time helping us to see? What are we learning? Because the bright side of all of this will be any lasting wisdom we can learn and the ways that that learning transforms us into better people, a better country, and a better church.

For one, when we see the ways in which nature has responded to the decrease in human activity, we begin to recognize how many known and unknown ways we've been hurting our environment. The bright side is that this learning may transform our relationship to our planet. When we see the new creative ways that we are finding to spend time with family, to do school, to do work, to do worship, we begin to recognize that we are not limited to "the way we've always done it." The bright side is that this learning may transform us into more bold and innovative people. When we see the ways that this virus has brought to the surface issues of income equality, labor injustice, and corporate greed, we begin to recognize that many of the root problems existed before COVID-19 even got here. The bright side is that this learning may transform us into more attentive justice-minded people.

All this to say that our world will have been changed by the time the coronavirus is past. There are pieces of what we thought was "normal" that we'll never get back, and that's sad. But, so long as we **also** have been changed, there will be a bright side. We will have learned. We will have been prepared, transformed, and made ready to live in that world and to be the church in that world.

Wellness and peace,
Pastor Matt

April 2020 Financial Report

Checking Account Balance as of 3-1-2020 -	\$ 7477.69
Expenses —————	\$ 9260.73
Income from Offerings —————	\$ 4367.00
Transfer from Memorial Savings ———	\$ 0.00
Ending Checking Account Balance ———	\$ 2583.96

Thank you to all who have been mailing offerings to the church during this time!

Anyone in Need

To that end, if you or anyone close to you is experiencing financial concerns at this time—having been laid off of work or cut back on hours—and needs some assistance to ensure that bills get paid or family gets fed, please let church leadership know. We want to be there. In addition to the monies we have, the Penn-Southeast Conference recently sent every congregation in the conference a

check for \$1000 out of its “rainy day fund” (monies accumulated from the sale of Camp Mensch Mill several years ago), to be used however the congregations see fit. Our neighbors at New Goshenhoppen UCC were also moved to forward the \$1000 they received to us. Our church leadership has opted to allocate the money for mission support of anyone who may experience need for as long as this period of closure may last, or if not used by the time things open back up, the money will be sent to the Open Link to help replenish their shelves.

Property Projects

With the retirement of Larry Hoff and the arrival of nicer weather, Hackmans Lawn Care has been hired to mow and trim the grass on the church property and in the cemetery. They come as needed, and the cost is \$200 each time they do their job.

Bachman's Roofing & Construction, the same company who repaired the slate roofing in the fall, will be repairing the interior sanctuary wall while we are away. The cost of the repairs is \$8725.00. Generous members have already donated \$3000.00 toward the repairs.

Spring/Summer Event Cancellations

With the end date of the closure still tentative and the timeline for re-opening still relatively unknown, there are several church events that have been cancelled for this year because to have them would either be unsafe, or planning them on short notice would be too difficult.

- Make Music Upper Perk will be held virtually rather than on-site.
- Vacation Bible School has been cancelled, but the group of local Lutheran and UCC will be putting together a series of virtual VBS videos for our community. Stay tuned for updates and information on how to access and participate.
- The Peach & Ice Cream Festival has also been cancelled for this year.

Special Thanks

During this time, there have been several PUCG members that have spent time and resources making safety masks for friends and family and neighbors. Thank you for that sacrifice of your time and energy. A special thanks to Gail Schmoyer, who when offered payment by recipients has instead suggested they donate to the church. The church has received several monetary gifts as a thanks for Gail's generosity. Thank you, Gail!

Condolences

Warmest condolences to the family of Jean Wentzel, who passed away on May 18th at the age of 84. Jean was a faithful member of PUCG and had been a resident at Pennsburg Manor. A private funeral service and burial were held on Friday May 22nd.

Graduates and Students

One of the other many events that have had to be cancelled during this time have been graduation ceremonies. So, we want to congratulate Hallie Huff for her graduation from Perkiomen Valley High School and Pastor Matt for his doctoral graduation from Boston University.

We also want to give a pat on the back of encouragement to all of our students and teachers for the patience they have shown over the past few months in learning to learn and teach in a new way.

Pentecost Communion Liturgy

Because we will not be worshipping in person together on Pentecost Sunday, this is a Communion liturgy that you may use so that all us may partake in our sacred space on May 31st. The same liturgy will be used during online worship that morning, but whether you are able to join us for that worship service or not, I encourage you to celebrate the feast of our Lord. Use bread and wine or juice that you have at your house. (Bonus points if you want to bake your own bread just for this!) Also, a good portion of this liturgy was written by Rev. Nathan Williams.

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

One: Let us pray together:

All: We praise you, O Lord, and all the earth with us, for your Holy Spirit calls all things into being. The entire created order serves you joyfully, and your gracious presence is the song of every heart. We bear witness that you alone are God, and we give thanks that you have claimed us as your people. By water and the Word, you make us your own; by fire and the Spirit, you call us into the world. Wherever we go, the risen and ascended Christ is our good shepherd. Therefore we join our voices with all your people in every time, every place, and every language, singing praises to your holy name: Holy, holy, holy Lord God. Heaven and earth are full of your glory!

One: Holy One, we enter your gates with thanksgiving and enter into this sacred feast with humble hearts.

All: Blessed Christ, we rejoice in your holy presence. By your gracious invitation, we gather at this holy meal where we give thanks and call upon your great name. Send forth your Holy Spirit once again.

One: Blow through this place;

All: Blow through this place. Reveal yourself in this bread and this cup; make your dwelling within us. Join us to one another, to our family and our church family. Join us across whatever

distance separates us. Transform us by your presence, that we may be the sign of your life in this world for all who are hurting, hungering, and searching. Reveal your goodness through us, O Lord, for your mercy is everlasting.

One: We pray with your faithful people in every place and time, joining our voices in the prayer you taught us, saying:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and glory forever. Amen.

One: On the night that he would be betrayed, Jesus sat at the table with his disciples, took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and said,

All: "This is my body, broken for you. Take, eat, remember me."

Break bread, distribute, and eat together.

One: Likewise, after they had eaten, Jesus took the cup, blessed it, and said,

All: "This cup is the new covenant through my blood, shed for the forgiveness of sins. Take, drink, remember me."

Distribute the juice, and drink together.

One: Let us give thanks together:

All: Holy Spirit, as you blow through this place on this day of Pentecost, may you descend upon our hearts and unite us as one Church across time and place. Strengthen us and embolden us for worship and service in Christ's name. Amen.

Church Family on the Frontlines

As many of us lament being confined to our homes, let us not forget that medical personnel and essential workers remain on the frontlines—risking their health and the health of their families—to fight the coronavirus and care for their communities. Please keep them in your prayers, especially those who are members of our church family:

- Suzie Cleary
- Paula Sell
- Kristen Ferguson
- Melissa Reinhart
- Eli Bernhard
- Katie Shaeffer
- Greg Goodwin
- Taylor Goodwin
- Adam Conrad
- Daryl Mensch
- Weston Mensch
- Alicia Siwak
- Brittany Hernandez
- Rob Shafer
- Harry Miller
- Matt Miller
- Alyssa Hart
- David Weller
- Kelly Hummer
- Glenn Beard
- Aleshia Brobst