



# Sunset Hills

## M E S S E N G E R

### February 2021

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### A Message from Pastor Laura

*Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.*

- Matthew 6:16-18



Lent is here, and thus we come full circle.

If you will remember, the pandemic began in Pittsburgh on Friday, March 13, 2020. The church had just celebrated a meal on the Wednesday prior and listened to the Rev. Dr. Dan Merry speak on God’s work in Malawi. We knew the pandemic was near but were unsure of what changes it would bring. The

session voted to move worship online for March 15. They then voted to stay online until the end of March. And then they voted to stay online through the end of May. We formed a Re-Entry Team in the belief that we would return to the sanctuary in mid-June. None of this came to pass.

Instead, the session, the congregation, and I adapted. We learned to worship from our cars. We grew exponentially in our technological capabilities. Zoom became a household word, and our main form of gathering. YouTube became a main conduit for worship when the parking lot was closed. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we showed what a resilient, capable, and loving church we are - inside the building or not!

As we approach Lent once again, now is the perfect time to reflect over the past year. Reflect over the person you have become. Reflect on what it is that you have missed. (*My guess is that you’ve missed people far more than you’ve missed material things!*) Reflect on what God has been up to in your life since Lent 2020 - have any of your beliefs about God and Jesus changed? What has been strengthened in your faith? What has been challenged? When has God been palpably with you, and how did you see it?

For those of you journeying through The Year of the Bible, my hope is that our daily readings will help you in your reflection on the work of God through this pandemic season. Please know that I am praying for you as we continue this Scriptural adventure together.

May the Lord be with you this Lent, beloved in Christ, and in the Eastertide that is to come!

In Christ’s Service,  
Pastor Laura

## February Worship

We officially reopened for in person worship on January 31, 2021. We are looking forward to continuing meeting in person in February.

We will be adhering to rules recommended by the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the CDC. A few rules to remember:

- Please wear a mask at all times. If you need a mask, please let one of our greeters know and a mask will be provided to you.
- You can enter the building by using the Findley Hall doors. You will then be directed to walk through Findley Hall and up the back stairs to enter the sanctuary.
- When the service is over, if you do not need access to the elevator, you will be directed to leave by exiting through the front of the sanctuary, going down the stairs and using the Findley Hall door to the back parking lot to exit the building.
- If you are feeling unwell please do not attend services that day.

For anyone who is unable to join us in person on Sunday, a video of the service will be posted to our YouTube channel on the Monday after the service and a copy of the bulletin will continue to be posted to our website. To access the video, please go to:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeEpiQYSD\\_9My9tb5GEhVRA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeEpiQYSD_9My9tb5GEhVRA).

Bulletins can be found on our website by clicking on the "Weekly Bulletin" tab on our home page.

We look forward to seeing you!

## Ash Wednesday Service

**February 17th**  
**7:00 pm - Sanctuary**

We will hold a service in the sanctuary on Ash Wednesday at 7:00 pm. Communion will be served, but there will be **no imposition of ashes**.



## Lenten Mission Nights

**Wednesdays - 7:00 pm**  
**Feb. 24<sup>th</sup> - March 31<sup>st</sup>**  
**Via Zoom**

On Wednesday evenings during lent, the Mission Commission has scheduled Mission Nights. Every Wednesday at 7:00 using Zoom, speakers from various beloved mission organizations will give us updates on their organizations. We have representatives from CREW Missions, Garfield Urban Farm, Bread for the World and Christmas International House to name a few. They will each give a half hour presentation followed by fifteen minutes for Q&A.

We hope you will join us to learn more about these worthwhile organizations supported by SHUP.

## Session Elders

### Class of 2021

Mary Abbott

*Chair, Finance/Stewardship*  
[mabbott1457@gmail.com](mailto:mabbott1457@gmail.com)

Bev Knasko

*Chair, Admin. & Personnel*  
[bevknasko31@gmail.com](mailto:bevknasko31@gmail.com)

Leslie Ney

*Clerk of Session*  
[lbney10@verizon.net](mailto:lbney10@verizon.net)

Ginny Bowman

*Chair, Congregational Care*  
[gbowman3150@gmail.com](mailto:gbowman3150@gmail.com)

### Class of 2022

Kara Burian

*Co-Chair, Finance/Stewardship*  
[kjburian@gmail.com](mailto:kjburian@gmail.com)

Jody Colby

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[jodycolby@verizon.net](mailto:jodycolby@verizon.net)

Ryan Gracey

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Beth Romig

*Chair, Nominating Committee*  
*Treasurer*  
[wisteria7@verizon.net](mailto:wisteria7@verizon.net)

### Class of 2023

Betty Coffey

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Luke Obarsky

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## Music Notes

By Shelby Gracey

For those who know me, you will remember that our summer family vacations always consisted of going to our friend's cabin in the mountains of Western North Carolina. One of our favorite activities was to make the 35-mile drive over to Asheville on Saturday nights for "Shindig on the Green." We would spend the evening listening to local musicians playing their beloved mountain music and watching talented clogging groups. In addition to the high-energy bluegrass instrumentals, we also enjoyed the beautiful folk tunes that had been passed down from generation to generation.

As we reflect on the upcoming season of Lent, one of the hymns that is sung and played during this time is *What Wondrous Love is This*. "This hymn, with its plaintive sound, is one of the best known of our authentic American folk hymns. Like all true folk music, the origins of this text and music remain unknown. It is simply the product of devout people who, when reflecting seriously on the sacrificial gift of God's Son, respond spontaneously with amazed adoration for this 'wondrous love'."

"One typical folk hymn characteristic found in these words is the repetition of key phrases such as "O my soul" and *I'll sing on.*" Since folk music is generally learned aurally without the assistance of the printed page or musical notation, such repetition is necessary. The melodic lines of this song also enhance the thought and personal application of the words.

"The hymn first appeared in 1835 in a collection titled *Southern Harmony* by William Walker. These simply stated words, with their appealing music, have since ministered to people everywhere, extolling the profound truth of Christ's love for each of us."

*What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul?  
What wondrous love is this, O my soul?  
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss  
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,  
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul?*

*When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down,  
when I was sinking down, sinking down,  
when I was sinking down beneath God's righteous frown,  
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul, for my soul,  
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul.*

*To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing,  
to God and to the Lamb I will sing,  
to God and to the Lamb who is the great I Am,  
while millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing,  
while millions join the theme, I will sing.*

*And when from death I'm free I'll sing on, I'll sing on,  
and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on,  
and when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joyful be,  
and through eternity I'll sing on, I'll sing on,  
and through eternity I'll sing on."*

(*"Amazing Grace: 366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions,"* Kenneth W. Osbeck, Kregel Publications, 2002, p. 52.)





## ***The Dish on the Doctorate***

Pastor Laura is in her second year of her doctoral studies being held at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Due to the pandemic, this program has been moved online for the time being.

The latest online class, entitled *Re-Thinking Ecclesiology*, took place on January 11 - 15. This class was taught by the Rev. Dr. Edwin van Driel and explored new ways of thinking of the church in the post-Christendom era. Pastor Laura is currently working on her final paper for this course, which will be due in early March.

Her second course for 2021 will take place during the second week of March. She requests your prayers as she continues her studies.

## ***Giving Statements***

The staff along with volunteers from Sunset Hills have been working on mailing out Giving Statements for 2020.

If you have not received one and/or the one you received does not match what you have in your records, please contact the church office at:

[sunsethillschurch@gmail.com](mailto:sunsethillschurch@gmail.com)

***If you use the Tithely app, please note that your statements will be delayed, but you will be receiving them shortly.***

Thank you in advance for your patience and understanding on this matter.



## ***The Year of the Bible***

February is an exciting month for *The Year of the Bible*! Participants have concluded their reading of Genesis and are just a week away from completing their reading of the Gospel of Matthew. The Old Testament is slightly challenging this month, as we embark into the second half of Exodus and read Leviticus. (Be strong dear readers! You can do this with God's help!) However, the New Testament is a delight as participants will hear the story of the early church from the Book of Acts.

Don't forget to join Pastor Laura every Sunday for Adult Sunday School for an in-depth discussion of the readings. The readings will also be incorporated into our Sunday services.

## ***Are you reading along?***

Pastor Laura would like to know who is joining her on this year-long journey so she can reach out to you along the way. If you have not already done so, email the church office and we will add your name to the list. We can be reached at:

[sunsethillschurch@gmail.com](mailto:sunsethillschurch@gmail.com)

## **Daily Year of the Bible Readings February 2021**

Feb. 1	Exodus 15, 16/Psalms 15, 16
Feb. 2	Exodus 17, 18/Matthew 24
Feb. 3	Exodus 19, 20/Matthew 25
Feb. 4	Exodus 21, 22/Psalm 17
Feb. 5	Exodus 23, 24/Matthew 26
Feb. 6	Exodus 25, 26/Matthew 27
Feb. 7	Exodus 27, 28/Matthew 28
Feb. 8	Exodus 29, 30/Psalm 18
Feb. 9	Exodus 31, 32/Acts 1
Feb. 10	Exodus 33, 34/Acts 2
Feb. 11	Exodus 35, 36/Psalm 19
Feb. 12	Exodus 37, 38/Acts 3
Feb. 13	Exodus 39, 40/Acts 4
Feb. 14	Leviticus 1-3/Acts 5
Feb. 15	Leviticus 4, 5/Psalms 20, 21
Feb. 16	Leviticus 6, 7/Acts 6
Feb. 17	Leviticus 8, 9/Acts 7
Feb. 18	Leviticus 10-12/Psalm 22
Feb. 19	Leviticus 13, 14/Acts 8
Feb. 20	Leviticus 15, 16/Acts 9
Feb. 21	Leviticus 17, 18/Acts 10
Feb. 22	Leviticus 19, 20/Psalms 23, 24
Feb. 23	Leviticus 21, 22/Acts 11
Feb. 24	Leviticus 23, 24/Acts 12
Feb. 25	Leviticus 25, 26/Psalm 25
Feb. 26	Leviticus 27/Numbers 1/Acts 13
Feb. 27	Numbers 2, 3/Acts 14
Feb. 28	Numbers 4, 5/Acts 15
Feb. 29	Take Leap Day off!!!

## January Events

### Adult Sunday School

**8:30 am**

Adult Sunday School will continue their discussions on the daily *The Year of the Bible* readings.

This class will continue using Zoom.

**\*\*NEW 8:30 am START TIME IN FEBRUARY\*\***

### Sunday Worship

**10:15 am**

We will have in person worship for the month of February. If you are not able to join us in person, video of the service will be posted to our YouTube channel on the Monday after the service:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeEpiQYSD\\_9My9tb5GEhVRA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeEpiQYSD_9My9tb5GEhVRA)

You can get a copy of the bulletin by clicking on the link on the homepage of our website [www.shupchurch.org](http://www.shupchurch.org).

### Fellowship Hour

Because we will be in the Sanctuary for worship in February, Pastor Laura would like to put Fellowship on hold for the month.

This will give everyone an opportunity to adjust to the Sunday schedule.

### Youth Group

**Sunday's - 6:30 pm**

All youth are invited to join us for Youth Group. They will be meeting in Findley Hall.

Luke & Sarajane Obarsky will be leading youth group for the month of February. If you would like more information, you can contact Luke at [l.obarsky@gmail.com](mailto:l.obarsky@gmail.com) or Sarajane at [sgracey08@gmail.com](mailto:sgracey08@gmail.com).

Youth Group will meet on Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> and Feb. 21<sup>st</sup>

### Findley Hall Bible Study

**Monday's - 1:00 pm**

This class will continue meeting using Zoom. They will finish their study of *The Mission of Jesus* by Ray Vander Laan on Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>.

On Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>, they will begin a new 6-week study by Andy Stanley entitled *Irresistible*.

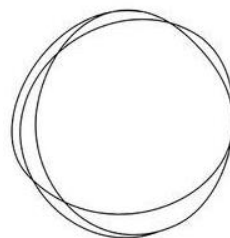
Please watch the videos on Study Gateway before class.

Contact Evelyn Lape at (412)531-9856 if you would like to join this class and/or to have the Zoom link sent to you.

### Kid's Club

**Wednesday's - 4:30 pm**

All kids in K-5<sup>th</sup> are invited to join Pastor Laura for fun in learning about Jesus. This class will continue to meet using Zoom. To learn more about Kid's Club, please contact Pastor Laura at [revlaurastrauss@gmail.com](mailto:revlaurastrauss@gmail.com).



### Prayer Circle

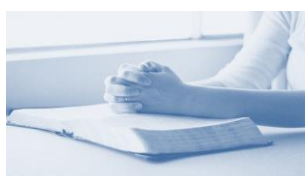
We will be continuing our prayer circle in 2021. Every week we will pray for 2 members (be it family or individuals). We started at the

beginning of the directory in September of last year and will continue until we reach the end and then repeat. This is a time of prayer for our friends and families. We ask that every week you take a moment and add these people to your daily prayers.

<b><u>Week of:</u></b>	<b><u>Praying for:</u></b>
Feb. 7 <sup>th</sup> .....	David Kastner The Kennedy Family; Nathaniel, Jenn, Drew & Ben
Feb. 14 <sup>th</sup> .....	John & Beverly Knasko Betty Lane
Feb. 21 <sup>st</sup> .....	Evelyn Lape Susan Long
Feb. 28 <sup>th</sup> .....	Linda MacDonald Don & Meg MacDougall

### February Birthdays

- |                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Nancy Newman     | 14 Karen Evans        |
| Marg Petty         | 15 Harriet Ross       |
| 5 Ginny Bowman     | 16 Jeffrey Stimmel    |
| 6 David Huston     | 18 Michelle Brumfield |
| Bill Ney           | 19 Brienne Sembrat    |
| 7 Connor Brumfield | 20 Aiden Bryer        |
| 9 Maralee Williams | 24 Bill Geary         |
| 11 Jessalyn Ellis  | Thomas Stacey         |
| 14 Sean Daniels    | 28 Jess Weidensall    |



### Prayer List

JoAnne Enterline

### Sunset Hills Nursery School



The Sunset Hills Nursery School will re-open for business beginning February 1<sup>st</sup>! The school will only be open in the mornings and class size will be limited.

We look forward to welcoming back Christine Huber, the staff and the sounds of children in the halls once again!

### Mission Baby Shower

Wow! SHUP Friends! Our Baby Shower was a success. Thank you! I wish you could have seen the dainty sleepers, outfits, tiny socks, hats, bibs, plush blankets and towels tucked tightly together with nursing mother needs! They were so tiny that the collection of one or more of each could fill a 12" x 12" cakebox. HelloNeighbor is our newest partner in Mission. They serve new immigrant and refugee families by matching them with local families who want to help them accustom to life in America. Our gifts were happily received as they are anticipating new infants very soon.

### Sunset Hills Book Club

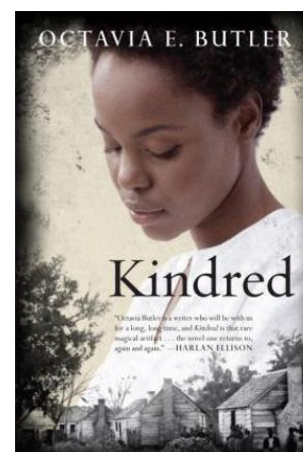
#### February Book of the Month

February 25<sup>th</sup> - 7:00 pm

*Kindred* by

**Octavia Butler**

*The visionary author's masterpiece pulls us—along with her Black female hero—through time to face the horrors of slavery and explore the impacts of racism, sexism, and white supremacy then and now.*



Dana, a modern black woman, is celebrating her twenty-sixth birthday with her new husband when she is snatched abruptly from her home in California and transported to the antebellum South. Rufus, the white son of a plantation owner, is drowning, and Dana has been summoned to save him. Dana is drawn back repeatedly through time to the slave quarters, and each time the stay grows longer, more arduous, and more dangerous until it is uncertain whether or not Dana's life will end, long before it has a chance to begin. (Amazon Book Description)

The Book Club will meet using Zoom. If you would like to join the discussion, contact Pastor Laura to have the link sent to you:

[revlaurastrauss@gmail.com](mailto:revlaurastrauss@gmail.com)

### Save the Date

March 25<sup>th</sup>

7:00 pm - via Zoom

Join Pastor Laura for the March 2021 book of the month:

*Falling Upward*

By

Michael Rohr

