

A THEOLOGY OF LAWN MOWING

One of the places we spend a lot of time during the summer is either walking behind or seated atop our lawn mowers. The other day I overheard someone lamenting that it seemed all they were doing lately was mowing their yard. It is true, we do spend a great deal of time cutting grass.

When it comes to lawn mowing, it seems that people either enjoy it or despise it, there is no middle ground. This Newsletter article is for folks in both camps. If you are a lawn mowing fanatic, I hope these words enable you to receive greater enjoyment. If you are one who detest the notion of mowing, perhaps you will find the inspiration to put on those old grass stained sneakers, fire up the "Snapper" for a couple of inspirational laps around the yard.

As I was mowing the yard at my home the other day I realized the theological significance of lawn mowing and how the act relates to scripture. Before you write me off as a sun stroke victim, read on.

Mowing our yards is a way for us to participate in God's creative splendor. The very first two verses in Genesis tells us "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty . . ." From a formless and empty earth, God created a bountiful planet. By mowing your lawn you have the same opportunity to be creative in your little world. Just think of the chaos that all those dandelions and other weeds create in your yard! With a shot of "weed and feed" you not only zap the dandelions but provide the nutrients for a beautiful lawn. You have the opportunity, with the help of God, to maintain order in your little corner of God's world.

A primary reason Christ came to this earth was to unite the world into one earthly kingdom. (John 17:21-22) By keeping a well manicured lawn, you have the opportunity to be united with the community that you live in. However, maintaining a well groomed lawn will do nothing to advance the kingdom of God as proclaimed by Jesus in the Gospels. But it will promote good will between you and your neighbors and it will lessen the chance of experiencing your neighbors wrath because you have let your lawn go to pot!

I was visiting in a home the other day who lives in a development. As we look out her back door at all the neighbors yards one yard stood out. The grass was about a foot tall and broken toys, and other debris littered the yard. By not keeping their yard nice this neighbor was not living in harmony with the rest of the community.

So the next time you start to mow grass and find your self mumbling obscenities behind your puttering mower, think of how Biblically sound the activity is. You are being creative and you are being a good citizen in the kingdom of God.

I hope you fanatics and you cynics have found some words of inspiration. I have to conclude my article now, I have to go mow my yard!

God's Blessings,
Pastor Pat



Thomas Agnew 07/01
 Ashley Fox 07/01
 H. Joel Herb 07/01
 Taylor Pavlick 07/01
 Kendall Spangler 07/01
 Rosemary Davies 07/02
 Cortney Gordon 07/02
 Christina Leshar 07/02
 Sherri Mckently 07/02
 Paul Schoellkopf 07/02
 Anna Mae Diehl 07/04
 Andrew Hagginbothom 07/04
 Christy Hetrick 07/04
 Benjamin Mell 07/04
 Curtis Olinger 07/04
 Fay Absalom 07/05
 Mae Border 07/05
 Allen Fox 07/05
 Ethan Makovsky 07/05
 Stephen Bleiler 07/06
 Julie Fisher 07/06
 Lyle Greiss II 07/06
 Richard Hicks 07/06
 Justin Hill 07/06
 Sue Kline 07/06
 Heidi Pierce 07/06
 Kaitlyn Pytleski 07/06
 Brian Schumacher 07/06
 Robert Schwartz 07/06
 Jordan Strause 07/06
 Audrey Agnew 07/07
 Dale Dietrich 07/07
 Jackie Gauker 07/07
 Brandon Boyer 07/08
 Gary Eberly 07/08/
 Valerie Frey 07/08
 Tyler Absalom 07/09
 Frederick Kerling II 07/09
 Steve Walters 07/09
 Steven Wentz 07/09
 George Endy 07/10
 Chris Nasados 07/10
 Evan Blickley 07/11
 Merrill Schaeffer 07/11
 Carrie Wentz 07/11
 Melissa Williams 07/11
 Jessica Keck 07/12
 Stephanie Negri 07/12
 Aiden Soumas 07/12
 Jan Williams 07/12
 Carolyn Christ 07/13
 Jane Folk 07/13
 Traci Hicks 07/13
 Ian Houck 07/13
 Donald Krout 07/13
 Sandra Ott 07/13
 Jenna Schumacher 07/13
 Mary Boeshore 07/14
 Allen Gracely 07/14
 Marsha Anderson 07/15
 Herbert Dunkelberger III 07/15
 Todd Gruber 07/15
 Brielle Mark 07/15
 Hannah Sell 07/15
 Lynda Shenk 07/15
 Phyllis Zimmerman 07/15



Courtney Eisenhofer 07/16
 Jody Laverdure 07/16
 Micah Barlet 07/17
 Kathleen Beitzel 07/17
 Susan Bigg 07/17
 Gwyneth Trafford 07/17
 Terry Smith 07/18
 Andrea Kurzweg 07/19
 Hannah Luckenbill 07/19
 Nevin Miller 07/19
 Sarah Moll 07/19
 Christine Phillips 07/19
 Chad Smith 07/19
 Daniel Dietrich 07/20
 Derek Geisinger 07/20
 Alex Plucker 07/20
 Allison Souders 07/20
 Michael Sunday 07/20
 Rachel Bergeman 07/21
 Rose Kurzweg 07/21
 Lauren Nahrgang 07/21
 Thomas Weir 07/21
 Debra Fink 07/22
 Robert Hagginbothom 07/22
 Tyler Lance 07/22
 Lindsay Schaeffer 07/22
 Linda Speece 07/22
 Wendy Strohl 07/22
 Julie Feldman 07/23
 Kermit Knerr 07/23
 Miriam Seifrit 07/23
 Ryelee Bowman 07/24
 Andrea Gracely 07/24
 Colton Plucker 07/24
 Kristen Tongue 07/24
 Jarren Valick 07/24
 Brandi Hill 07/25
 Joseph Ludwig 07/25
 Jeffrey Miller 07/25
 Conor Noll 07/25
 Samuel Kemmerer 07/26
 Courtney Posey 07/26
 Mark Power 07/26
 John Reinkemeyer 07/26
 Molly Robison 07/26
 Aleesha Fritz 07/27
 Mary Keck 07/27
 Joan Miller 07/27
 Carl Wink 07/27
 Leah Gurney 07/28
 Kyle Leshar 07/28
 Eva Melochick 07/29
 Lisa George 07/30
 Savanna Major 07/30
 Yolanda Schaeffer 07/30
 Karen Shollenberger 07/30
 Janet Koller 07/31
 Anna Mae Weiss 07/31
 Bruce Weiss 07/31

If your birthday is not listed or is incorrect, please call the church office at 610-944-0406 so it can be recorded for future birthday lists.



July 2

8:55 a.m. – Jack Creswell, Jenni Hoffman, Heidi Pierce, Cindy Rothenberger, Linda Schaeffer, Christoph Snyder, Dennis Wanner, Steve Wentz, Robert Wolf

10:25 a.m. – Tom Agnew, David Balmer, Allen Crockett, Chris Vojtasek

July 9

8:55 a.m. - Tom Agnew, Mary Ann Hayes, Mike Werner, Robert Wolf

10:25 a.m. – Betsy Becker, Allen Crockett, Donna Rader, Bruce Rader

July 16

8:55 a.m. – Tom Agnew, Grace Hetrick, Jenni Hoffman, Steve Wentz

10:25 a.m. – David Balmer, Ian McKinney, Jenni Hoffman, Heidi Pierce

July 23

8:55 a.m. – Tom Agnew, Mary Ann Hayes, Dennis Wanner, Mike Werner

10:25 a.m. – Betsy Becker, Donna Rader, Bruce Rader, Chris Vojtasek

July 30

8:55 a.m. – Stephen Maurek, Cindy Rothenberger, Christoph Snyder, Mike Werner

10:25 a.m. – David Balmer, Jack Creswell, Ian McKinney, Chris Vojtasek



July 2 – Dennis & Nancy Boyer and Elaine Kemmerer
July 9 – The Renninger Family
July 16 – Betsy Becker & Jeanette & Karen Burkert
July 23 – Tom and the Agnew Girls
July 30 – Dawn and Kerry Kachel

ACOLYTES



July 2
8:55 am – Emma Ertel and Herbert Dunkelberger
10:25 a.m. Alex Scheffler and Jonathan Maurek
July 9
8:55 a.m.– Nicholas Hill and Michaela Ernst
10:25 a.m. – Jaiden Valik and Parker Milyo
July 16
8:55 a.m. – Jonathan Maurek and Emma Ertel
10:25 a.m. – Jade Vojtasek and Ethan Raudenbush
July 23
8:55 a.m.– Parker Milyo and Nicholas Hill
10:25a.m. – Herbert Dunkelberger and Alex Scheffler
July 30
8:55 a.m. – Ethan Raudenbush and Jonathan Maurek
10:25 a.m. – Michaela Ernst and Jaiden Valik



July 2

8:55 a.m. – Tom Hoch

10:25 a.m. – Sue Kline

July 9

8:55 a.m. – Nancy Boyer

10:25 a.m. – Gary Reinert

July 16

8:55 a.m. – Family Worship

10:25 a.m. – Carol Strause

July 23

8:55 a.m. – Dale Hollenbach

10:25 a.m. – Jim Goldman

July 30

8:55 a.m. – Sandy Dugan

10:25 a.m. – Jack Creswell



The deadline for news and information to be included in the August Tower Tymes is July 15th. Thank you for your cooperation.



| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Wednesday 6.28-7.4 | General Synod of UCC Baltimore Maryland |
| Thursday 7.13 | Food Pantry 3-6pm Leona |
| 7.16-7.22 | Youth Mission Trip Bluefield, WV |
| Sunday 7.23 | No Youth (Pastor John away with College Mission Trip) |
| July 28-Aug 12 | German Visit |
| | |
| | |
| | |



Open and Affirming:

Save the dates:

Save the date: Jul 16th
Meeting #9 Drafting our
Statement #3

Upcoming Timeline:

Aug 2017 Submit Statement to Consistory

Aug 2017 Submit Statement to Congregation

Oct 2017 Vote on Statement by Congregation

A statement is a definite or clear expression of something in speech or writing. So, why do we write an

“open and affirming statement”? Our statement is a description and expression of the people who are welcomed and affirmed as part of St. Paul’s United Church of Christ in Fleetwood, PA. Our statement is far more than about sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. Our statement reveals our beliefs about such things as racial matters, physical and/or mental abilities, ethnicity, class, age, and marital status. Our statement will be our words, our thoughts, our feelings, and most of all an example to the world of what this Christian community believes. Please continue to pray for our church as we discern the words we use that will help write this next chapter in the life of our congregation. As always our meetings are open to anyone who would like to attend and are held after the 10:25 services on the third Sunday of the month. A light lunch is served prior to our conversation.

Here is the statement from Prince of Peace Lutheran in Philadelphia.

Who is welcome here?

If you are Asian, Hispanic, Black, or White...

If you are male or female or transgender...

If you are three days old, 30 years old, or 103 years old...

If you’ve never stepped foot in a church; or if you are Buddhist, Roman Catholic, agnostic or are a life-long Lutheran...

If you are single, married, divorced, separated, or partnered...

If you are straight, gay, lesbian, or bisexual...

If you are a Republican, Democrat, Independent, Socialist, or not registered to vote...

If you have, or had, addictions, phobias, abortions, or a criminal record...

If you own your home, rent, live with your parents, or are homeless...

If you are fully-abled, disabled, or a person of differing abilities...

You are welcome here!

This congregation is committed to being a radically loving and Welcoming community of faith, centered in the Good News of Jesus Christ. Therefore, in faithfulness to the Gospel and our Lutheran heritage, and to the best of our ability, we promise to provide programs, ministries, and pastoral care to all who seek God in this place.



ALL ABOARD! 7 day 6 night Caribbean Cruise

October 21 to the 28th! We start our trip by taking a bus from Blandon to New Jersey Port on Royal Caribbean’s Anthem of the Sea.

Balcony Sale - \$1068.00 - includes port charges and taxes, your food and room.

Ocean view - \$1157.00

Single person in a room pay \$1732.00 for a Balcony room

Insurance is available to cover the cost of the cruise and illness.

Now we sail to the port Canaveral, Coco Cay, and the Bahamas!

This is a nice way to do a Fundraiser for St. Paul's. Hope you will join us for a good time!

Please call Janie Folk at 610-926-2673 for more information, or call Joyce at White Star Travel at 610 775-5000. Please let her know you’re with Janie’s group.



Book Group for July 2017

The St. Paul’s Book Group will meet on Tuesday, July

25, 2017, at 7 p.m. at the home Malcolm and Sharon Dreibelbis. The book for this month is *A Gentleman in Moscow* by Amor Towles. A synopsis of the book can be found on amazon.com. Mary Ann Hayes will serve as our discussion leader.

If you have any questions regarding this meeting, contact Sharon Dreibelbis at 610-916-4848 or Mary Ann Hayes at 610-796-7044.

Everyone is welcome!



Annual Summer Concert in the Park by Philharmonic Band, under the direction of Jay A. Smith, sponsored by the American Legion will be Sunday, July 30 at 6 p.m. Rain date is Monday, July 31 at 6 p.m. Refreshments will be available at 5p.m. by our own Kitchen Committee. Please come out and support them and the band.



Thank You,

To My Church Family,

There are no words which express my appreciation for the kindness shown to us during the loss of my husband, Darwin. Pastor Pat and the church were there helping, caring, etc. The ladies were there to help before the service and also serving the food and the kindness of the Shawl Committee for the soft shawl. It will never replace my Darwin's embrace but will be a reminder of the love we shared.

Your thoughtfulness and kindness will be remembered. Thanks to each and every one.

Yolanda Schaeffer and Family

Many, many thanks for all your cards, calls, and pastoral visits while I was hospitalized following a fall at home. I broke my left hip and wrist, pneumonia and during transition to Grande View Manor, 129 Houck Road, Unit 1. I'm very happy to reside here. Visitors are welcome, a call prior may be helpful, my cell is 610-698-9184. Blessings,
Dolores (Dee) Eastland

Rummage Sale



RUMMAGE SALE/FLEA MARKET/YARD

SALE/BLOOD DRIVE

This event was a success as usual. The Blood drive had 13 donators. The yard sale had six vendors, and the Rummage sale/Flea market made a profit of \$2318, of which the Women's Guild will be giving \$1500 to the church.

The Guilds will also contribute toward the purchase of new tables for the social room.

We are also sponsoring the concession stand at Music in the Park on July 2 (rain date July 3). Baked goods are needed and appreciated, mainly finger food, (brownies, cupcakes, tarts, rice krispies treats). Please bring these items to the Park about 5 p.m. or contact Ro Wolf to make special arrangements.

The next Guild meeting will take place on Sept.25 at 7:00 p.m.. Everyone is welcome.

As always the Women's Guild "THANKS" everyone for the help with all our events.

Jump
for JOY!



Summer Camp is Sizzling

We are in full swing of registration for next year and we are excited to report we are filling up quickly. If you or some one you know is interesting in our school, please give them our name and number. We have programs from 20 months- 6 years old. We have one to five day programs. Playgroup through Kindergarten. Don't loose out, grab a spot. Call the school office at 610-944-5808 for information or visit us on the web at www.stpaulsfleetwood.org.

Kindergarten and Advanced PreK - Our kindergarten and Advanced Prek program will run Monday through Friday. It will provide a positive school experience for your child. Our unique curriculum prepares your child for the primary grades in a personalized private and nurturing environment. **We will offer Full Day and Half Day Kindergarten and Advanced Prek.**

Extended Care - Before and after school is provided for families of students of St. Paul's UCC Church and School. If you are having difficulty matching school hours and work hours, this is finally your answer. It will be supervised and maintained by the school and provide loving care for your child when you are not available. Please give us a call.

Summer Camp- We will be offering Summer Camp again this year. It will start June 5, 2017 and run weekly until July 13, 2017. It will be from 9-12, Monday through Thursday for 3-6 year olds. The cost is \$60.00 a week. You can register for one week or several weeks. We have all kinds of fun and themes planned this year. Applications are available on the information board in the narthex or at the school office.

We hope that everyone has a great, safe and enjoyable summer!!!

Respectfully Submitted,
Ms. Peggy Brown
School Director



Dear St. Paul's Congregation,

As you might already know the consistory and its associated committees have been working on developing a plan for the future of Saint Paul's. Some of the plans will involve maintaining the church property but others might be focused on improving the current church and its environment. We are interested in your thoughts on what you believe our focus should be for now and into the future.

Please rank the following categories from 1 – 8. (1 indicates the most important and 8 indicates the least important) There is also a space at the bottom to share any additional thoughts you might have about the church and suggestions you might have. Thank you for taking the time to fill this out.

_____ Maintain the current building structure, including but not limited to the roof, windows, HVAC systems, carpeting, etc.

_____ Upgrade building infrastructure to include more efficient windows, lighting, toilets, and cooling systems to reduce costs.

_____ Upgrade the current building to become more accessible for physically disabled congregation members and visitors including elevator access to all floors, handicap accessible bathrooms, and entries.

_____ Modify the building including but not limited to classrooms, storage space, meeting spaces, and parking lot expansion, etc. This would help enhance our community connections by allowing more people to utilize St. Paul's.

_____ Expand community and wider world mission by committing to support and increase our mission trips, exchanges with churches around world, school tutoring program, and adult education as well as other services.

_____ Focus on obtaining new membership in the church. Some of this will be accomplished by expanding the youth and education ministries.

_____ Increase use of technology possibly including live streaming, website expansion, electronic giving, improving the sound system and lighting in sanctuary.

_____ Update furniture and spaces in the building to make them more efficient and easier to relocate, including tables, chairs storage, flooring, and lighting.

Additional thoughts:

Return of survey:

Please place the completed survey in the church offering basket when you attend the next service. If you are not planning on attending church for a while please mail the survey to the church at your earliest convenience. Address: St. Paul's UCC, 5 West Arch St., Fleetwood, PA 19522



Christmas in July

Toy Drive

We often use the term "Christmas in July" to feel cooler in the hot summer, to celebrate a

joyful time of year in another month, at church to sing beloved Christmas carols, or in the case of stores, to run special sales. Perhaps we can take this idea a step further and reach out to children whose "real" Christmas is not always the happy time of year it may be for us.

Locally, each year Berks Connections/Pretrial Services and Opportunity House's [2nd Street Learning Center](#) are in need of gifts. BCPS hosts a Christmas party for the children of incarcerated parents. Gifts are distributed at the party. Opportunity House distributes gifts to the children at the learning center.

How can we help? An easy way to participate is to buy a gift for a less fortunate child in one of these programs. We hope to divide the gifts giving half to each group.

What kinds of gifts? Baby dolls, Barbie dolls, other dolls, clothes for these dolls, cars, trucks, footballs, soccer balls, craft kits, games, infant toys, most anything that your young children and grandchildren like to play with.

If you prefer, the Mission Committee will accept money donations and buy the gifts for these children.

Please see Laura Walizer or Leona Wright with any questions for information or clarification. The Mission Committee thanks all of you for reaching out to a child in love and caring.

Here is a list of toys that are always kid "favorites":

- 1) Legos for all ages
 - 2) Footballs, soccer balls, basketballs
 - 3) Disney Princess toys and dolls
 - 4) Disney DVD's and books
 - 5) Crayola Art Sets
 - 6) Playdoh sets
 - 7) Matchbox cars and racetrack sets
 - 8) Leapfrog toys for infants and toddlers
 - 9) children's books, coloring books, stickers
- Happy shopping! Toys can be dropped off in the Christmas box in the narthex and outside the church office.

Helping Hands for June

9 transports, 11 calls, 2 emails, 2 visitations
Thanks to all who helped.



Mission House

Our Mission House Family

For the last 19 months, our third family has lived in the New Beginnings Mission House. During this time, the family has and continues to fulfill the expectations and responsibilities requested of them to continue residence for up to 24 months.

As part of the program, the advisory team of 5 members meets with the family each month. During the meetings we discuss any issues that are important to the family. The team offers suggestions that may address those issues which may include services that could be helpful, provide help as needed, and coach in money matters. Our goal is to make the transition from the mission house to life outside our program as easy as possible and provide self-reliant support.

As we develop an exit plan with the Werner family, our focus changes from life in the mission house to life on their own. Our hope for their future is that we have started a support system that they will develop and be able to use effectively as they continue their lives.



July Christian Ed News

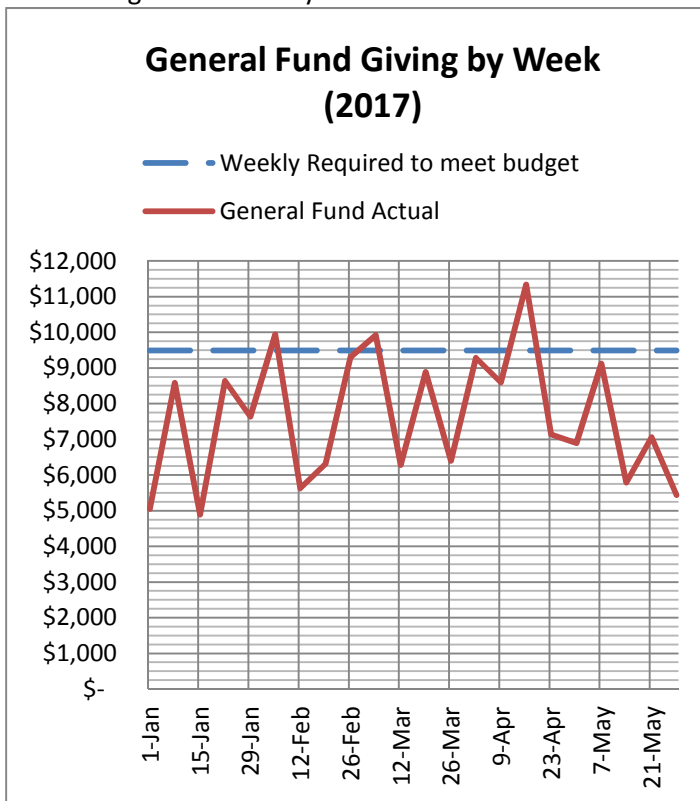
- ❖ We have talked about ALL the Fruits of the Spirit. Yeah! We will take this month to review what we learned.
- A BIG THANK YOU to all who helped out and participated in VBS. We learned so much about God's Love!
- **July 28 – August 12:** The Germans are coming! Thanks to everyone who is helping to make the youth German visit a success!
- Many churches take a Sunday School break during the summer. NOT St. Paul's! We welcome all students throughout the entire summer!
- Parents please help give our teachers a little bit of a summer break by volunteering to be the "2nd adult" in one of our Sunday School departments during this summer season.

Stacy Laucks slaucks@stpaulsfleetwood.org
Coord. Of Educational Ministries

*** * * * * Budget & Finance News * * * * ***

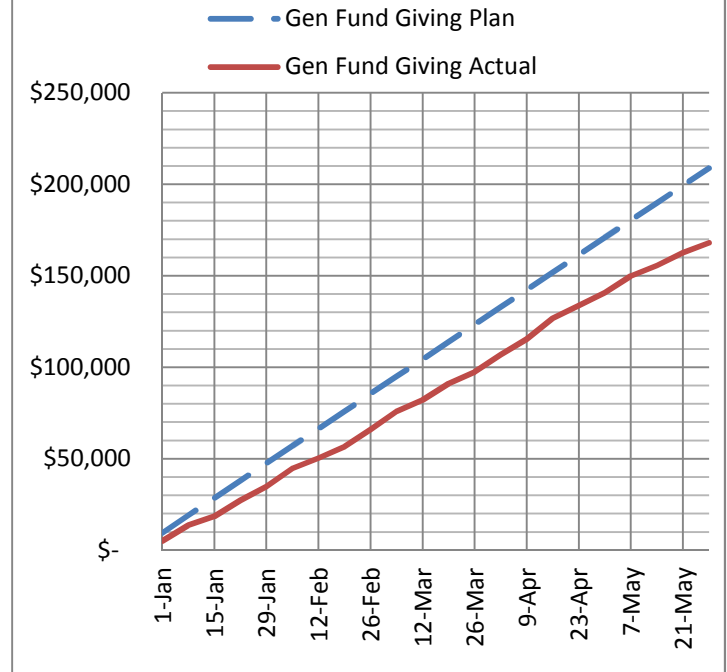
As we slide into the lazy, hazy days of summer, we also move into what is historically the season of lowest giving coinciding with vacations and a dip in attendance. The budget & finance committee is quite concerned about our rather lackluster giving trend thus far in 2017 and is providing the following data to help you understand the gravity of the situation.

If you recall, in November 2016, the congregation approved a general fund budget of \$ 493,347 (note this is only the general fund budget – as we also have expenditures for build maintenance, mission, youth to name but a few). To meet the general fund budget, we need to have weekly giving of \$ 9488. The plot below is a comparison of our weekly giving to the general fund versus the \$ 9488 weekly sustainment level. As you can plainly see, of the first 22 weeks of the year we have only met the target giving level 4 times, the highest of those being Easter Sunday.



The cumulative impact of this can be seen on the next plot where the cumulative planned giving (dashed line) is compared to the cumulative actual giving (solid line). The cumulative shortfall is about \$ 40,000 through the first 5 months of the year and at this rate it will balloon to more than \$90,000 by years end. In order to prevent a huge deficit by year's end, it behooves all of us to prayerfully consider increasing our level of weekly giving. This is especially critical during the summer months.

Cummulative General Fund Giving vs. Plan Giving by Week (2017)



Our spending rate in the general fund has been below plan, keeping the general fund deficit smaller than shown above. The cumulative spending against the general fund through May is \$188,216. If this spending rate is annualized it is expected that our total annual general fund expenditures will be approximately \$463,000 or \$ 30,000 below budget. This data will be updated and posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex. If you have questions, please see me.

Also, by the time the July tower times is issued, the 2016 Financial Reports will be available for pick-up in the Narthex or the office.



Thank you. Bob Wolf - Treasurer





JULY

2017

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|-------------------------|---|-----|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----|
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 Communion 8:55 & 10:25 am Music in the Park 5 – 9 p.m.  Music in the Park | 3 NO Prayer Shawl | 4  | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 Worship 8:55 & 10:25 am | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 Food Bank | 14 | 15 |
| 16 Worship 8:55 & 10:25 am | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 Worship Service 8:55 & 10:25 | 24 | 25 Book Group | 26 | 27 | 28 German Youth arrive. | 29 |
| 30 Worship 8:55 & 10:25 am | 31 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

St. Paul's United Church of Christ

5 West Arch Street

Fleetwood, PA 19522

Phone: 610-944-0406

Fax: 610-944-5808

Email: churchoffice@stpaulsfleetwood.org

Website: www.stpaulsfleetwood.org

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Reading PA 19612

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Our Staff

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Rev. Patrick W. Morris | Pastor |
| Rev. John Folk | Associate Pastor |
| Mrs. Linda Speece | Administrative Assistant |
| Mrs. Sue Creswell | Bookkeeper |
| Mrs. Stacy Laucks | Coordinator of Education Ministries |
| Mrs. Greta Ertel | Organist/Accompanist |
| Mrs. Jill Haley | Coordinator of Music Ministries |
| Ms. Peggy Brown | School Director |
| Mr. Thomas Agnew | Sexton |