



St. Paul United Church of Christ *Messenger*

February 2017

**St. Paul
United Church of Christ**

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Sunday Schedule
Worship 10:30 a.m.

*Junior Church during
worship on 2nd, 3rd & 4th
Sundays*

Office Hours
M, T, Th, F
9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Rev. Michelle L. Torigian
Pastor
Cell: (513) 373-7771

Jewel Brooks
Choir Director/Organist

Suzanne English
Administrative Assistant

Sandi Alvis
Custodian

Pastor's Message: The Greatest is Love

I've been a bit discouraged in recent weeks by some of the local news I've heard. First of all, at the beginning of the month, hate symbols were spray painted on the sign of Hebrew Union College in Clifton. Later in January, Withrow High School found themselves with similar symbols as well as slur words spray-painted on their property. These stories remind us that the greater Cincinnati area isn't immune to hateful actions.

This world feels like it's lacking a bit of love right now. Not only are hateful words and symbols being marked here in Cincinnati, it's also happening in other areas of our country. Furthermore, each day we hear of wars and oppression happening in other countries, like in Syria where many have died and even more have lost their homes and livelihoods.

We don't see their struggles each day, but what we do see right now are stores filled with red and pink, reminding us that Valentine's Day is right around the corner. This holiday is the time when we give our spouses, significant others, family, and friends cards of love, flowers, or even chocolate goodies.

But what if we stepped up what Valentine's Day means this year by sending notes of love and appreciation to people who we don't know? What if we sent cards of support to our sisters and brothers at Hebrew Union College or the youth at Withrow High School? What if we let them know that we stand by them as they heal after their attacks of hate? What if we were to support organizations that make sure refugees are finding new lives after their experiences of trauma?

Valentine's Day would take on a deeper meaning if we expanded our views of love to include those we don't know. Jesus was asked who is my neighbor. If we were to ask him "Who is my valentine?" I think we may have some ideas of what his answer would be.

Happy Valentine's Day!
Pastor Michelle