Thank you, 2020 Donors!

Even though 2020 was a tremendously difficult year for everyone, the Charitable Giving Office at St. Paul's witnessed many reasons to celebrate due to the outpouring of financial support, prayers and love from our donors.

As expected, some donors were impacted financially by the pandemic and had to reduce or withdraw their support entirely, resulting in fewer donors making gifts this year.

Still, by the end of 2020, our incredible donors had given $385,013 MORE dollars than they gave in 2019.

Thank you so much to the 817 individuals and organizations who made a donation in 2020! From the smallest gift to the largest, you made this miraculous blessing possible with a total of $785,484 raised to support the residents and charitable mission of St. Paul’s.

Here are some notable factors that helped contribute to this success in 2020:

- St. Paul’s received one of its largest bequests to date from a former Colony resident who passed away.
- The average gift size per donor increased from $110 to $148.
- The number of major gifts received increased by 33%.
- The response to email, website & Facebook solicitation increased by 673%. WOW!
- The Community Foundation of Western PA & Eastern OH held PA OH Gives, an event raising funds for St. Paul’s and 39 other local non-profits.

In 2020, your generous gifts:

Provided Peace of Mind – Your gifts to benevolent care ensured that residents who exhausted their financial resources could continue to stay at St. Paul’s.

Created a Meaningful Life – Your gifts to the Eden Alternative and Life Enrichment created opportunities for residents to develop meaningful relationships, grow and learn new things, and enjoy spontaneity and variety in daily life.

Energized Our Staff – Your gifts to the Staff Education Fund and the Staff Appreciation Fund helped employees feel valued and supported.

Brought the Magic – Your gifts to the Christmas Appeal ensured each resident got a gift for Christmas, as well as special wish list items for all to enjoy.

Happy New Year!
This Christmas Eve Eugene and Alice Mecklem of Fredonia, the newest members of St. Paul's 1867 Society, celebrated their 73rd wedding anniversary.

As anniversaries go, it could have been better since Alice was separated from Eugene inside St. Paul's due to COVID-19 restrictions.

As he has done throughout his life though, Eugene chooses to count his blessings, one being that he is celebrating 73 beautiful years with the love of his life.

Since coming to St. Paul's in 2013, the Mecklems have been regular supporters. They give monthly in support of benevolent care at St. Paul's.

“Alice and I have always been charitable people,” said Eugene. “I appreciate St. Paul’s Keeping the Promise Fund so much - that residents never have to leave St. Paul’s if they run out of money.”

In September this year, the Mecklems became members of St. Paul’s elite 1867 Society. The 1867 Society was created in 2020 to recognize individuals who have made a significant impact on St. Paul’s mission through lifetime giving of $10,000 or more.

“It was my honor to welcome the Mecklems into the 1867 Society,” said Dawn Hartman, Director of Planned & Major Giving at St. Paul’s. “Their steadfast support for St. Paul’s and for each other is inspiring. They were one of the first couples I met when I started working at St. Paul’s. Their love and devotion to each other is beautiful.”

That love began on a hot Sunday afternoon in July 1947. A nineteen-year-old Eugene and his friends were cruising around in a friend’s car, and they were hungry. “I know where we can get some cake and ice cream,” one of the boys piped up.

He had been invited to a birthday party that day for Alice’s brother. The group showed up at the party, thinking they were pretty special for driving around in a fancy car.

Then Eugene spotted Alice with her sparkling, crystal blue eyes. “That’s the first time I had ever seen her. She just captured me,” he said. They were married later that year. They lived in Greenville just a couple months before buying some land in Fredonia from a family member and building a home.

Eugene was a tree trimmer for Penn Power, where he worked for 44 years before retiring. Alice quit her job when they got married to devote herself to raising their children.

“Alice is a grand old country girl,” said Eugene. “She was a wonderful homemaker, baker and candy-maker.” A skill she carried over from working in a candy shop in her younger years.

The Mecklems’ marriage withstood the test of time, as together they raised their five children Daryl, Duane, Marilyn, Keith and Rainette.

Eugene believes that team approach was one of the keys to their happy marriage. He also believes it was God-ordained.

“When we pledged in our wedding vows to “love and cherish each other as long as we both shall live,” they meant it and did so even as they encountered their most difficult days.

Beginning in 2010, Alice began having health issues which required multiple surgeries, as well as memory problems, eventually diagnosed as Alzheimer’s Disease.

As Alice began to need more and more help, Eugene’s own health began to suffer from not taking care of himself and not getting enough sleep.

When their children returned for Christmas in December 2012, Eugene and Alice both ended up in the hospital. At that point, Eugene knew he could no
longer continue to take care of Alice on his own. While they were hospitalized, his children starting checking into senior living communities. Eugene’s first choice was St. Paul’s.

“I always admired the place, even when I was a boy,” said Eugene. “You could just look at it and know it was a place well cared for.”

Eugene knew the residents on the inside were well cared for as well. For many years, he served as an elder in his church, and he visited the sick and homebound at St. Paul’s. He got to know the people who lived there and worked there. When Alice’s brother and sister needed care, they both went to St. Paul’s.

When the time came for the Mecklems’ own move, Eugene knew St. Paul’s was where they wanted to be. Luckily, The Ridgewood had an opening and they moved in January 2013; but after a few days, it became apparent Alice needed the skilled nursing care at The Villas.

After Alice’s move, the staff at The Ridgewood would take Eugene down to The Villas every day to have lunch with her. “St. Paul’s has been so wonderful to us,” he said.

By late February, Eugene had regained his strength and was able to return to their family home in Fredonia.

He became a fixture at The Villas. Eugene visited Alice so frequently that the residents, family members and staff all knew him.

Although Alzheimer’s Disease has affected her ability to communicate, Alice will still hold his hand and give him a bright smile.

Eugene looks forward to the day that he can sit beside her, talk to her and hold her hand again when the COVID restrictions are lifted.

In honor of Alice, Eugene and his family participate every year on St. Paul’s team for the Walk to End Alzheimer’s.

In 2020, the Mecklems helped St. Paul’s team raise $16,370. Eugene himself was named to the Grand Champion Club for personally raising $1,000 or more.

His granddaughter Kailyn Swift also joined in the effort, raising $29 by making friendship bracelets and selling them at her family garage sale for 50 cents each.

Eugene knows the pain of Alzheimer’s Disease too well and hopes that someday there will be a cure.

“Before I die, I sure would like to see the first survivor,” said Eugene.

St. Paul’s would like to recognize and thank the Mecklem family for their efforts in the Walk to End Alzheimer’s Disease, as well as their faithful support of St. Paul’s benevolent care fund.

The Mecklem family at the Walk to End Alzheimer’s in 2019. From left: Duane Mecklem, his wife Kathy, their oldest daughter Rebekah Lyons and her husband Mike, and Eugene.

Welcome, Vicki!

The Charitable Giving Office recently welcomed new Administrative Assistant Vicki Hildebrand. For the last 12 years Vicki worked in the Public Safety Department at Thiel College, and before that was the Administrative Assistant for the Greenville Borough office.

Vicki resides in Greenville with her husband Ted. In her spare time, Vicki enjoys baking, photography and spending time with her family, especially her five year old granddaughter Lily.

Vicki is excited to be a part of the St. Paul’s family and is enjoying getting to know our incredible donors! She can be reached at 724-589-4667 or vhildebrand@sp1867.org.
A Gift that Saves Money

Doug Anderson, President of Anderson Coach & Travel in Greenville, and his wife Lori have been long-time supporters of St. Paul’s. Over the years, they have tapped into a way of giving that actually saves them money AND increases the value of their gift. They donate appreciated securities to St. Paul’s. Appreciated securities are stocks, bonds or mutual funds that have been held for more than a year.

The Andersons have used appreciated securities to support capital campaigns at St. Paul’s to build porticos, to support benevolent care, and to construct The Villas.

Gifting appreciated securities is an often overlooked, but very tax effective way to give and rebalance your portfolio at the same time.

The tax benefits are two fold. You can claim an income tax deduction for your gift and avoid paying capital gains tax.

“The ability to gift stock that has had nice increases in value allows you to fully recognize the value of the contribution and avoid capital gains tax which can be 15 - 20% of the increased value,” said Doug. “This is a great way to enjoy the fruits of philanthropy without having to pay a penalty to do so.”

Doug and Lori are passionate about supporting the mission of St. Paul’s due to their own personal experiences. The ability to save on their taxes is an added bonus.

“St. Paul’s is a caring and compassionate community that has served many of my family members in various capacities,” said Doug. Most recently, his mother Dorotha “Dot” Anderson enjoyed life at The Heritage from 2009 until her passing at age 96 in 2013.

The Andersons’ good experiences with the care at St. Paul’s played a part in Doug’s decision to join the board of directors in 1993, and he continues to serve today.

As both a past resident family member and a board member, Doug has a well-rounded understanding of St. Paul’s mission and culture of care, which give him confidence in donating.

“I am certain that our donations to St. Paul’s are greatly valued and utilized wisely,” said Doug.

We are so thankful for the Andersons and their generous support through donating appreciated securities.

Could You Benefit from Gifting Securities like the Andersons?

Perhaps you too want to make an impactful gift to St. Paul’s like the Andersons. The ideal gift choice would be appreciated securities that have gained a lot in value since you purchased them. Let’s say you have appreciated stock in your portfolio that you originally purchased for $8,000 and is now valued at $15,000. The stock has almost doubled in value, and you would be able to make a $15,000 gift from something you originally only paid $8,000 for. Here’s what you would save by using this stock to make a gift:

Income Tax Savings: $3,600

The total value of the stock x your federal income tax bracket. For this example, we used the 24% federal income tax bracket. $15,000 x .24 = $3,600

Capital Gains Tax Savings: $1,050

The amount the stock has increased in value from the time of purchase x the 15% capital gains tax rate. $15,000 - $8,000 = $7,000 x .15 = $1,050.

YOUR TOTAL TAX SAVINGS: $4,650

For More Information:

Contact Director of Planned & Major Giving
Dawn Hartman
724-589-4611 or dhartman@sp1867.org
St. Paul’s will hold its annual Facebook campaign “It’s All About Heart” during the month of February. This online campaign raises funds to support the Eden Alternative, which is the culture of caring at St. Paul’s.

At St. Paul’s, we believe that loneliness, helplessness, and boredom are painful and destructive to our health and well-being. Using the philosophy of the Eden Alternative, we strive to create a caring, inclusive and vibrant community that enables all of us, regardless of age or ability, to experience well-being, which is the path to a life worth living.

Your donation to the “It’s All About Heart” campaign will be used to support meaningful activities and events that help residents and team members build relationships, experience personal growth, and find purpose and meaning in their lives.

Make your personal gift during the month of February and it will be matched dollar for dollar by a generous donor, up to $5,000! Your $25 gift can become $50!

St. Paul’s Billing Specialist Sandi Landfried donated to last year’s campaign. “I donate to support the Eden Alternative because I know how much joy it brings the residents,” said Sandi. “And as a team member, it gives me pleasure seeing the smiles on their faces.”

Each employee and resident at St. Paul’s are part of an Eden family with whom they can celebrate, support and build meaningful relationships. Sandi is part of the Rambling Roses family in The Heritage. One of her favorite memories was their Christmas celebration in 2018.

Instead of gifts for each other, the group wanted to enjoy a home-cooked meal together, like they would have traditionally had with their own family at Christmastime.

With input from the residents, Sandi and her co-workers in the accounting department made the whole meal from scratch - beef, turkey, ham, mashed potatoes and gravy, homemade applesauce, roasted vegetables and several pies.

“They enjoyed themselves so much,” said Sandi. “They talked about that dinner all year long. The homemade apple sauce was the biggest hit. They raved about it!” Special experiences like these are why Sandi continues to support the Eden Alternative.

How You Can Make a Personal Gift:

Facebook - Click on the fundraiser on St. Paul’s Facebook page and donate.

Website - Visit www.stpauls1867.org and click the blue Donate button at the top right. Choose “It’s All About Heart” for what your donation is for.

Check - Send a check made payable to St. Paul’s to the Charitable Giving Office, 341 E. Jamestown Rd., Greenville, PA 16125. Be sure to put “It’s All About Heart” on the memo line.

Text-to-Give - Text SPHEART to 44-321.

Can’t give right now? You can still help by sharing the fundraiser on Facebook.
At the beginning of 2020, discussions were underway about upgrading the audiovisual system in Headland Friendship Commons.

This is the primary social and entertainment hub for residents at The Villas. It’s where meaningful relationships are built, toes tap to live entertainment, souls are nurtured through spiritual teaching and worship, and so much more.

Headland Friendship Commons is also used frequently by St. Paul’s staff as the site for the monthly staff retreat, other educational programs and team meetings.

Residents and staff members alike had begun to voice concerns about the sound system. The most common complaints were related to the volume and clarity of the microphones.

In addition, the two speaker sound system wasn’t adequate for the size of the room and the hearing loss that many residents have. This meant if you weren’t lucky enough (or early enough) to be sitting near one of the speakers, you may not be able to hear and participate in what was going on.

St. Paul’s began exploring options and costs for purchasing and installing a new audiovisual system. Then COVID-19 happened and for the first time since The Villas opened in 2005, the room sat empty and silent.

With large group activities restricted and small gatherings happening only on the neighborhoods, the pressing need for a new system faded into the background. But not for long.

The church services at St. Paul’s were already being broadcast on the internal TV channel 1851 for residents who were unable to attend in person, but now this broadcast would be the only way St. Paul’s Pastors Julia Fraser and Nathan Seckinger would be able to minister to the residents at St. Paul’s.

“The changeover to worship via broadcast only has been both humbling and inspiring,” said Pastor Julia, Director of Spiritual Services. “It has caused us as pastors to have to learn to do a lot of new things with technology. It has also caused us to reconsider what makes for worship to begin with.”

Initially Pastor Julia wrestled with not being able to see her flock and interact during the service. Over time, she began to reframe her idea of worship. “God calls and gathers people for prayer and praise,” she said. “He can do this in-person, remotely, and any other way that’s needed.”

Once the pastors adapted to the technology and the new way of delivering worship, the need to replace the audiovisual system moved to the forefront again.

The same old challenges with volume and clarity were compounded on the TV broadcast.

St. Paul’s IT Department led the effort to replace the current equipment, partnering with Electronic Communication Services of Albion, Pa., and Clarity AV to purchase and install a new audiovisual system complete with new microphones, speaker system, video camera and projector.

The new system cost nearly $17,000 and was paid for entirely from generous donations to the annual Resident Christmas Appeal.
This appeal goes out each November to raise funds for Christmas presents for residents at The Heritage, The Ridgewood and The Villas.

Any additional funds raised go toward wish list items that residents can benefit from all year long, such as this new system for Headland Friendship Commons.

The 2020 Resident Christmas Appeal raised almost $45,000, the highest amount to date.

Residents are already reaping the benefits of the new audiovisual system.

“Simply put it has been wonderful!” said Pastor Nathan. “It has enabled us to impact more people in a positive way. It is simple to use and it transmits clear sound which makes it so much easier for people to understand. It has been such a blessing to the pastoral staff and the ministry as a whole.”

The new microphone system produces crystal clear audio that can be easily adjusted for the community broadcast channel.

Once residents are able to return to Headland Friendship Commons in person, they will also be impressed with the new speaker system, which provides uniform audio throughout the whole room - a major upgrade to the previous two speaker system.

“You can now be in the rear of the room and hear as good as those up front,” said VP of Information Technology Gregg Buchanan. A volume control has also been added on the wall for easy adjustment by the staff.

Another major improvement for the system is a new High Definition (HD) video camera, which can pan 360 degrees around the room, as well as zoom in and out, which is already enhancing the filming of the church services.

When The Villas is able to fully reopen, the new camera will make it possible for musical entertainment or presenters to be filmed anywhere in the room and broadcast on the community channel in HD for the enjoyment of residents who are unable to come to Headland Friendship Commons and those who are located across campus.

Rounding out the new system is a Panasonic Business projector, which will make it possible for presenters to share HD images and videos from multiple sources.

“The new sound/video system is a true blessing - enhancing our viewers’ ability to see and hear, and reducing the pastors’ anxieties about technology all at the same time,” said Pastor Julia.

Resident Margie Hays agrees. She frequently tunes in to St. Paul’s church services and Bible study from her home in The Colony.

“I’m so thankful to the donors that blessed us with the new and wonderful sound system,” said Margie. “The quality is so much better now, so I am able to fully enjoy the services and message.”

Thank you so much to everyone who made a generous donation to the Resident Christmas Appeal! You have blessed all residents with improved communication access in Headland Friendship Commons and on the community broadcast channel for many years to come.
Set and Forget

Do you want an even easier way to support the mission and residents at St. Paul’s? Set up a recurring monthly gift through our website. It’s so convenient! And it’s a great strategy if you want to make a larger gift but would rather spread it out over the course of a year. It only takes a couple minutes to set up, and then you don’t have to think about it again all year!

You’ll receive a thank you email when your gift is processed each month, and an end of the year giving statement for your taxes.

To set up a recurring donation, simply go to www.stpauls1867.org. Click the blue “Donate” button at the top right. As you fill out the form to set up your credit card donation, check the box “Show my support by making this a recurring donation.” You can set the frequency as monthly, weekly, quarterly or yearly.

You can designate your gift to a particular fund at St. Paul’s, such as the Good Samaritan Fund for benevolent care, or you could choose “Use my gift where needed most” which gives St. Paul’s the flexibility to direct it to the greatest need.

Once you set up a recurring gift, it can be canceled or changed at any time simply by emailing Director of Planned & Major Giving Dawn Hartman at dhartman@sp1867.org or call 724-589-4611.