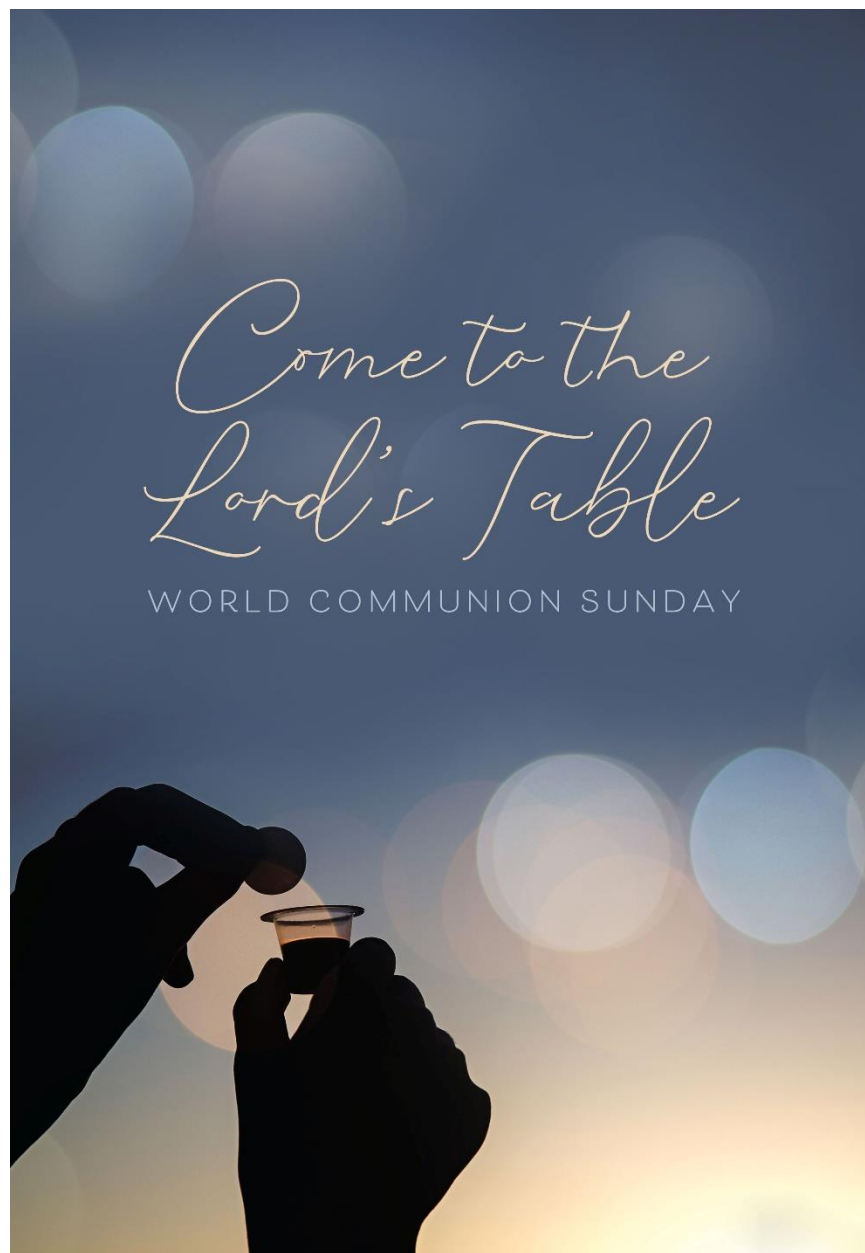


Welcome to
St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

October 1, 2023



GOD IS STILL SPEAKING



*NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE, OR WHERE YOU ARE ON LIFE'S
JOURNEY YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!*

Worship Leadership

Preacher: The Rev. John J. Ward-Diorio
The Rev. Allyssa A. Boyer
Lector: Nancy Richey

Ministry of Music

Minister of Music: Eric R. Dundore
Choristers' Director: Jonneke A. Dundore
Assistant Music Director: Mark A. Dundore
Organist: Sarah A. Myers
Assistant Organist: Patrice G. Miller

Ministry of Audio and Video

Jeffrey A. Dundore

Ministry of Service

Lead Greeter: Rebecca Drazba
Greeters: Steven Roush, Nancy Richey, Paula Boyer, Dennis Plymette
Acolyte: Elsa Riesmeyer
Kids' Place: Bonnie Plymette
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel
Flower Delivery: Ben and Erin Anderson
Counting Team:
Fellowship Time Sponsors: Stewardship Committee

Pastor Emeritus

The Rev. Dr. Thomas E. Herrold

Ministers

The Entire Congregation

*Visit the church website, under the 'Sign Up' menu heading, to help
as a Sunday volunteer or Worship Participant.
We're grateful for your generosity.*

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
(717)766-7931**

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Office: stpaulstaff@outlook.com

Rev. John: revjohnwd@outlook.com

Rev. Allyssa: allyssaboyer@outlook.com



ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
SERVICE OF WORSHIP

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

October 1, 2023

Please note: the livestream broadcast begins with the Announcements.

*If you do not wish to appear in the livestream,
it is best to sit in one of the back three pews of the Sanctuary.*

*Please write up any Prayer Requests ahead of time, leave them in the Red Bowl
or give them to the Lead Greeter. They will bring them forward.*

****Those who are comfortable doing so are invited to stand.***

THE RINGING OF THE CHIMES

THE WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE ORGAN PRELUDE "Bread of the World"

Todd Kendall

CHORAL INTROIT

*THE HYMN No. 459 "Come, O Fount of Every Blessing"

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

God of all Creation, of all People, open us to the blessings of the diverse gifts You have dispersed around the world enabling unique creations such as bread, and the blessings of the diversity of people who share their unique gifts as well. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

There are grave and increasing dangers in our beliefs that everyone is just like us, or should be, and that they live similar lives to ours, or they should. Diversity is seen as a threat, as something to be eliminated. Yet God has made such a diverse and unique world, filled with diverse people, all of whom are God's Children. Let us join in the time of Silent Prayers of Confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: God forgives us and continues to seek to open our hearts, minds, and spirits, to the connections we have with one another, even with our differences.

ALL: Let us broaden our vision, our understanding, our acceptance that all people are Children of God, and then may we find more and more ways to act like we believe this is true. Amen.

If you are able, please rise and greet one another with other signs of Peace.

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

*THE GLORIA PATRI (#759 is the tune, but not all the same words)
**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.**

*Children are invited to the front at this time.
Everyone who comes forward will be on camera.*

SING THE CHILDREN TO THE FRONT Jesus Loves the Little Children
*Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world
Shy and Joyful, Bold and Bright
They are precious in his sight
Jesus loves the little children of the world.*

THE WORD FOR THE YOUNG

SING THE CHILDREN TO THEIR SEATS Jesus Loves Me
*Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so
Little ones to him belong. They are weak but He is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me
Yes, Jesus loves me. The Bible tells me so*

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING Exodus 17:1-7

THE PSALM READING Psalm 25:1-10

THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

THE GOSPEL READING & MESSAGE: Matthew 21:28-32
"Good Intentions Do Not Equal Good Actions"

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE CHORAL RESPONSE (unison)

I In sol - i - tude, in sol - i - tude, I come to God in prayer.

In si - lence and sim - plic - i - ty, my spir - it blos - soms there.

Please place your pew pad sheets in the Offering Plate. Thank you.

THE OFFERTORY “On Each Continent We Worship”
Chancel Choir

Johnson

*DOXOLOGY

*From all who dwell beneath the skies,
Let the Creator’s praise arise!
Let the Redeemer’s name be sung.
Through every land, by every tongue! Amen.*

*THE PRAYER OF DEDICATION (Unison)

We empty our pockets, trusting You, O God. We empty our selfish ambitions, believing that the common good is of greater concern. We give because You have richly blessed us. We present ourselves in Your service because You have gifted us in so many ways. We reach out helping hands because we care about all those You have called us to love. May every tongue confessing Christ as Savior, share in that mind which so powerfully demonstrates Your love. Amen.

*THE HYMN “We Come to This Table” (to the tune of no. 421, “We Gather Together”)

*We come to this table, O God, with thanksgiving.
We lift up our hearts, we remember, we pray.
We hear Jesus' welcome — inviting, forgiving;
We know your Spirit's peace as we feast here today.*

*We dine at your table as sisters and brothers,
Diverse in our cultures, yet nourished as one.
The bread and the cup that we share here with others
Are gifts uniting all who are claimed by your Son.*

*We grieve for your world here; we cry, "How much longer?"
We pray for the cycles of violence to cease.
Yet here, in Christ broken, we're fed and made stronger
To labor in his name for a world filled with peace.*

*We rise from this table with new dedication
To feed the world's children, to free the oppressed,
To clear out the minefields, to care for creation;
We pray, O God of peace, that our work will be blest.*

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Please note: our ushers will be passing out the Communion Elements on trays to each individual or family unit. You do not need to pass the plates down.

THE SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

THE INVITATION

One: It started last night, when we were sleeping. In Japan, New Zealand, and Siberia, people came.

Many: As the sun stretches across the earth, more people are joining the table.

One: In cathedrals made of marble and gold where mosaics glitter on the walls; in clapboard churches on vast and windswept plains,

Many: In houses and shelters, in alleys and refugee camps, people are coming together.

One: From India to Ukraine, Ethiopia to Portugal, Nova Scotia to Ecuador; running, rolling, walking, limping, we come to Your table, O God.

**Many: Hungering for your bread, we come;
thirsting for your wine and juice, we come;
singing your song in every language,
speaking your name in every tongue,
in conflict and communion,
in trouble and tranquility, we come.
O God who remembers us, we come to remember You.**

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER:

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. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

DISTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS:

We gather both in person and in Spirit. For those of you present in the Sanctuary, if you are able, we invite you to come forward. We are Blessed to have breads representing various countries from around the world this morning. Bread Bearers will pass you the piece of bread of your choice. There will be a gluten free option as well. Please then proceed to the right or the left and Rev. Allyssa or Rev. John will have both wine and grape juice that you may dip your bread in. You may then eat your Communion elements.

If you prefer not to come forward, remain in your pew and a server will bring you the elements. Please raise your hand if you believe the server did not see you.

For those of you joining us via livestream, we hope you have some bread from around the world and wine or juice of your choice before you. We trust that God is powerful enough to extend God's Blessings upon these Communion Elements, even as we and they are scattered in geographic space.

All are welcome to participate. Thank you.

THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (Unison)

God, our Mother and Father, You have given us this earth rich and vibrant. Its renewing goodness nourishes us. Jesus, our Savior and Healer, You ate with friends and enemies. At a meal, you brought the gift of hope and gave the word of life. Spirit, our Comforter and

Afflicter, You do not leave us on our own. Here are companions to know our joy. Here are companions to share our sorrow. Our companions have come to this table, and tables to our north and south, east and west. We are all Children of God, and You have saved us all a place at Your Table. We give you thanks for our human community, that we may all be one. Amen.

***THE HYMN “Christ Be With Us” (to the tune of no. 4, “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”)**

***Christ be with us, Christ behind us, Christ before us — all around!
Christ in busy, noisy cities, Christ where hardly rings a sound.
Jesus, you're our Lord and Savior; On your love we can depend.
Help us see your presence clearly In each stranger and each friend.***

***Christ in lines of people fleeing, Praying that a war will cease;
Christ in battered women's shelters, Looking for a place of peace.
Christ with people sick or dying, Loved ones trying hard to cope
In this world of so much suffering, Christ, you give your people hope.***

***Christ with children who must struggle, Working hard for daily food;
Christ in classrooms, learning, growing, Asking questions, seeking good;
Christ in diners, waiting tables; Christ in homes where children play
In this world of people working, Christ, you work through us today.***

***Christ with all who keep on struggling, Helping others to be free;
Christ with churches working, searching For a greater unity;
Christ, in bread and wine, be with us, Giving strength for each new day
In this world of daily crosses, Be our joyful, living Way.***

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***THE BIDDING TO MISSION**

***THE WORLD PEACE PRAYER**

One: Lead us, O God.

All: **Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth.**

Lead us from despair to hope, from fear to trust.

Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace.

Let peace fill our hearts, our world, our universe. Amen.

***THE BENEDICTION**

*** THE THREE-FOLD AMEN**

Please note: the livestream continues until the end of the Postlude.

Please know you are free to leave following the Three-fold Amen and exit to the Narthex to speak with one another. You may be visible and audible on the livestream as you exit early. If you choose to remain, please stay seated and listen quietly to the Postlude.

References:

The Communion Prayer is adapted from a prayer by the Lancaster Theological Seminary Worship Planning Team, 2016.

The Prayer of Thanksgiving is adapted from an Agape Liturgy: Prayer Offering Praise in “ Gifts in Open Hands” by Maren Tirabassi and Kathy Wonson Eddy.

The Prayer of Dedication is from “Led by Love” by Lavon Bayler, 1996, United Church Press.

The World Peace Prayer is a paraphrase of a verse from the Upanishads, the most ancient scriptures of Hinduism, also prayed daily by Roman Catholic Benedictine nuns.

ALTAR FLOWERS

The Altar flowers are given to the Glory of God by
Gary and Carol Fleisher, “In memory of Parents.”

HELPERS NEEDED FOR ST. PAUL’S BAZAAR!

It’s that time of year and there is a real buzz in the air around St. Paul’s! As you may know, the 54th annual St. Paul’s Bazaar is fast approaching – to be held on Friday, October 6 from 9 am – 6 pm. This is a full-on community effort, and we need your help – in big ways and small ways – however you can contribute! Here are a few ways you can help:

1. Good quality donated items for the Flea Market, baked goods for Country Cupboard, and cute and useful crafts for the Country Store.
2. Kitchen helpers needed leading up to and on the day of the Bazaar to prepare and package chicken pot pie and other foods for sale. We will also train folks to run the dishwasher to clean up the pots and pans.
3. Cashiers are needed to sell the pot pie and other food items.
4. Folks are always needed to staff areas like the Flea Market, Country Store, Garden Shop, Parking, and Clean-up.
5. Finally – Special help is needed after today’s service (Oct. 1) to bring things down from the stage onto tables in Fellowship Hall for the Flea Market and to place tables in the rooms where the various sales will take place. This is an all-hands-on-deck activity and will only take a short time with many hands helping!

You can talk with any of our chairpersons listed below about their particular areas and needs. You can also put your name on the sign-up sheets in the Common or go online to Time to Sign Up to volunteer. We cannot thank you enough for your volunteer time and effort to make our annual Bazaar a success!!

NEIGHBORS IN NEED OFFERING

Today we will be taking the Neighbors in Need Offering. Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion in the United States. If you wish to give to this initiative, mark your donation and place it in the plate. Thank you for your generosity.