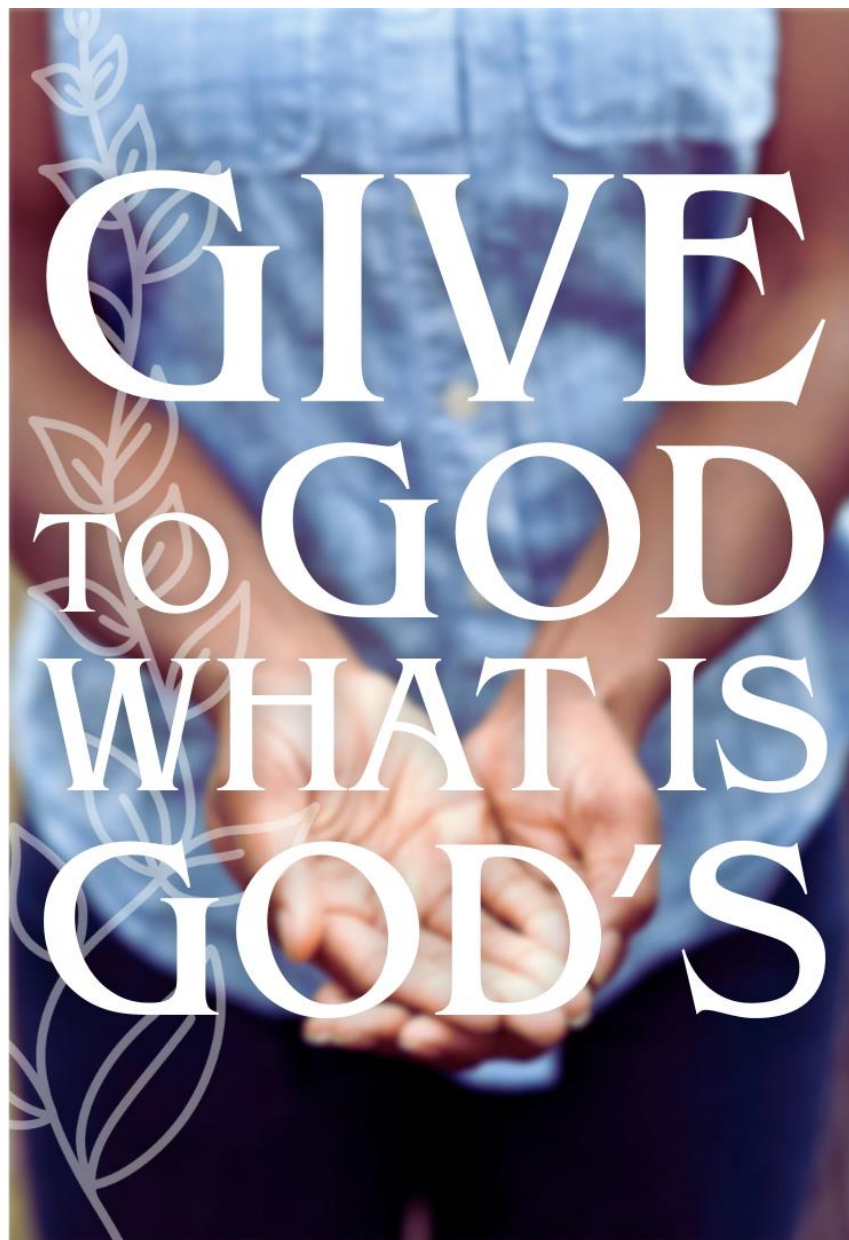


**Welcome to
St. Paul's United Church of Christ**

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

October 22, 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: Kim Pirtle

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: Jody Biss, Steven Roush, Fenton Fox
Acolyte: Elsa Riesmeyer
Kids' Place: Art Williams
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel
Flower Delivery: Joan Moyer
Counting Team: Jeff Leister

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

**626 Williams Grove Road
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
(717)766-7931**

saintpaulsucc-mech.org

Office: stpaulstaff@outlook.com

Rev. John: revjohnwd@outlook.com

Rev. Allyssa: allyssaboyer@outlook.com



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

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

October 22, 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

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

THE ORGAN PRELUDE "Pass Me Not"

Todd Kendall

CALL TO WORSHIP

Jesus taught: "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's and to God the things that are God's." The emperor, or government, or creditors are not shy about telling us what we owe them. We are called to Worship in order to learn together what belongs to God and how we offer that.

*THE HYMN No. 1 "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

Creator God, help us to remember we and everyone belong to You. Guide us in discerning how You are calling us to offer our gifts and talents in service to others, which is service to You. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

We are indeed fiercely independent. We struggle with the idea of whether we belong to anyone or anything. We resist giving of ourselves, our time and our treasure, because we have been led to believe the only person, thing, we owe anything to is ourselves. As Jesus explained to us, God has other ideas. 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 remind us, we belong to God, and as such, are to offer ourselves to God.

ALL: Let us not trick ourselves, or others. Let us be open to God's Calls to us and how we can best respond. 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 EPISTLE READING

1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

THE PSALM READING

Psalm 96

***THE HYMN No. 565 "God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending"**

THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: Thanks be to God!

THE GOSPEL READING & MESSAGE:

Matthew 22:15-22

"What Goes to God?"

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE 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.

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 "Holy Manna"

arr. Geschke

Hand Chimes

*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 have rendered to Caesar much that we do not care to give, O God. Now we return to You the gifts that are Yours. All our wealth and possessions belong to you. Bless our use of these resources, both what we bring for the church's ministry and outreach and what we keep to support ourselves and provide for those we love most. Amen.

*THE HYMN "Is It Lawful to Pay Taxes?"

(to the tune of no. 43 "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling")

*"Is it lawful to pay taxes when they prop up Caesar's rule?"
So some people asked of Jesus, wanting him to seem a fool.
Saying "no" would be sedition; saying "yes" would be a sin.
Jesus changed the conversation, calling them to look within.*

"Find a tax coin in your treasure; see the image that it bears.

(Cont.)

Give to Caesar what is Caesar's. (Give to rulers what is theirs.)"
Yet he pressed on with his message; "Give to God what is God's own."
We who bear our Maker's image worship God and God alone.

Lord of all, in every nation, may your word be understood —
That we have an obligation to support the common good.
May our taxes, all together, fund our working hand in hand
So that life will be made better for all people in this land.

Still, we also hear your teaching: "Give to God what God is due."
May no ruler — overreaching — try to take the place of you.
May we listen to your message, may we honor what is yours;
May we, living in your image, seek your kingdom that endures.

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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.

THE ORGAN POSTLUDE "Jesus Shall Reign"

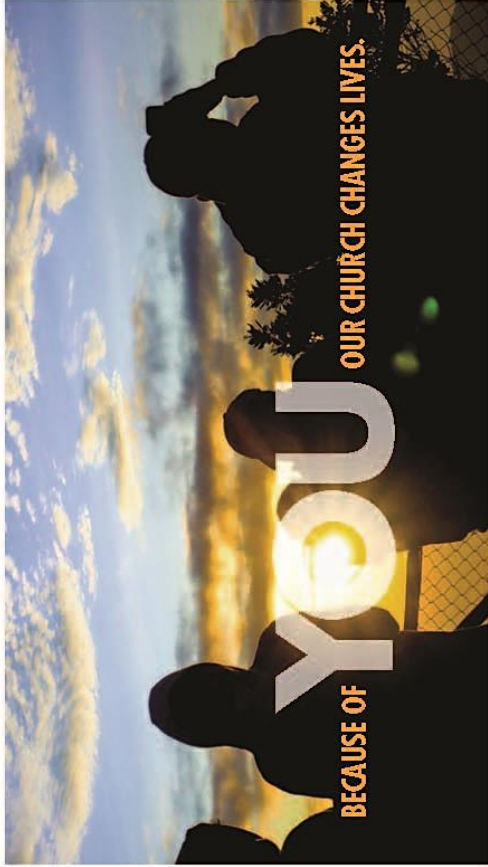
Dorothy Wells

References:

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
Betsy Rushong, "In celebration of Russell and Mandy's October Birthdays."
Nancy and Tom Richey, "In celebration of Daniel's 30th Birthday."



and free from the wanton greed of others who covet their neighbors' goods.

At the heart of God's vision of all nations laying down their weapons and no longer learning the ways of war is the collective distribution of God's bounty to ensure that all are fed and sheltered. These are the underlying conditions that render the sword and the spear obsolete and that mandate their repurposing as implements of agriculture rather than of devastation.

I remember with great fondness and deep appreciation the first Sunday I walked into the church I served right out of seminary, Zion United Church of Christ in Mayview, Missouri. A town of 250 people ten miles from a gallon of gas and a loaf of bread, this farm rich community was deeply dedicated to the work of a just peace. On the wall inside the front door as you entered the sanctuary was a poster that hung for all the years I served there. It was a quote from UCC theologian and biblical scholar Luke T. Johnson and it read quite simply: "Whatever you possess that someone else needs already belongs to them."

Generosity, as a spiritual practice, provides a way for us to think together as a Church about a theology of sufficiency so that there can be enough resources for all. Together, we can relate to each other so that "all sit under their own vines and their own fig trees, and not one shall make them afraid."

A Theology of Sufficiency

by **Rev. John Dortbauer**

Rich Biblical traditions shaped Jesus' vision, including Micah 4: 3-4:

"God shall judge between many peoples and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away; they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not life up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more; but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

It is my personal belief that this concept, one that I call a theology of sufficiency, provides a strategic pathway to the just peace we seek. It is the unjust distribution of wealth that keeps the wheels of war turning.

Micah rightly discerns in the heart of God that the beating of swords in plowshares can only be possible when the conditions envisioned by God and described in that final verse come into play. When all on Earth have their own vine and their own fig, just enough to sustain themselves



ANNOUNCEMENTS:

BROAD STREET SUPPER

The Broad St. supper will be held on Thursday, November 2, 2023. Once again, our church was asked to provide macaroni and cheese as well as cookies. There are several ways to help. We need people to help make the macaroni and cheese at St. Paul's on November 2 at noon. The ingredients will be provided. Also needed are 10 dozen cookies. If you can bake or buy some cookies that would be helpful. Please respond on the Time to Sign Up link for both. Finally, if you would like to help at the dinner use this link:

<https://www.timetosignup.com/broadstreet/sheet/1343370/>

Any questions, contact Paula Boyer 717-433-1136.

POLLYANNAS LOCATION CHANGE

Pollyannas will be meeting at 11:30AM on Tuesday, October 24th, at Cracker Barrell, instead of Perkins. Contact Bonnie Plymette with any questions.

NEW HOPE THANKSGIVING BASKETS

New Hope Ministries is seeking donations of traditional Thanksgiving meal items to fill baskets that will be distributed to needy families in our area. Suggested items include stuffing, gravy, cranberry sauce, vegetables, fruit, yams, pie ingredients, etc. Donated items should be placed in the boxes in the commons by Wednesday, November 8th. Donated turkeys and other perishable items may be taken directly to New Hope at 5228 East Trindle Road, Mechanicsburg. Any questions, please contact Karen Allison.

TRUNK OR TREAT

Instead of going door to door, kids can go "trunk to trunk" in this new Halloween tradition. Decorate the trunk/tailgate of your vehicle and pass candy out to the kids who visit. Be as elaborate or as simple as you'd like. Costumes are encouraged for people of all ages. Trunk or Treat will take place in our upper parking lot on Saturday, October 28th. Set-up begins at 5:00 PM; the event will be held at 6:00 PM. We'll have a wicked good time! (Rain date: Sun. 29th.)

PRISM COLLECTION

This fall PRISM will be collecting warm clothes, blankets and sleeping bags for people who are un-housed. Please place your donations of gently used items in the box in the collections area outside the Fellowship Hall. To learn more, contact Carol Sizemore.

FALL STEWARDSHIP AUCTION

We are excited to return to in-person bidding at the Fall Stewardship Auction during the Harvest Dinner on Sunday, Nov 12!! We need your creative donations of themed baskets or other specialty items to make this event a success. Gift cards and consumable items are often the most popular. Do you have a unique talent or gift to share as part of the auction? We'd love to hear about it! Donations are needed in the church office no later than Sunday, October 29th. Reach out to tell us what you're planning or if you'd like ideas. We can't wait to see what amazing creations you come up with! Melissa Cawley (melissacawley@aol.com) and Victoria Velez (vmvluv@comcast.net)