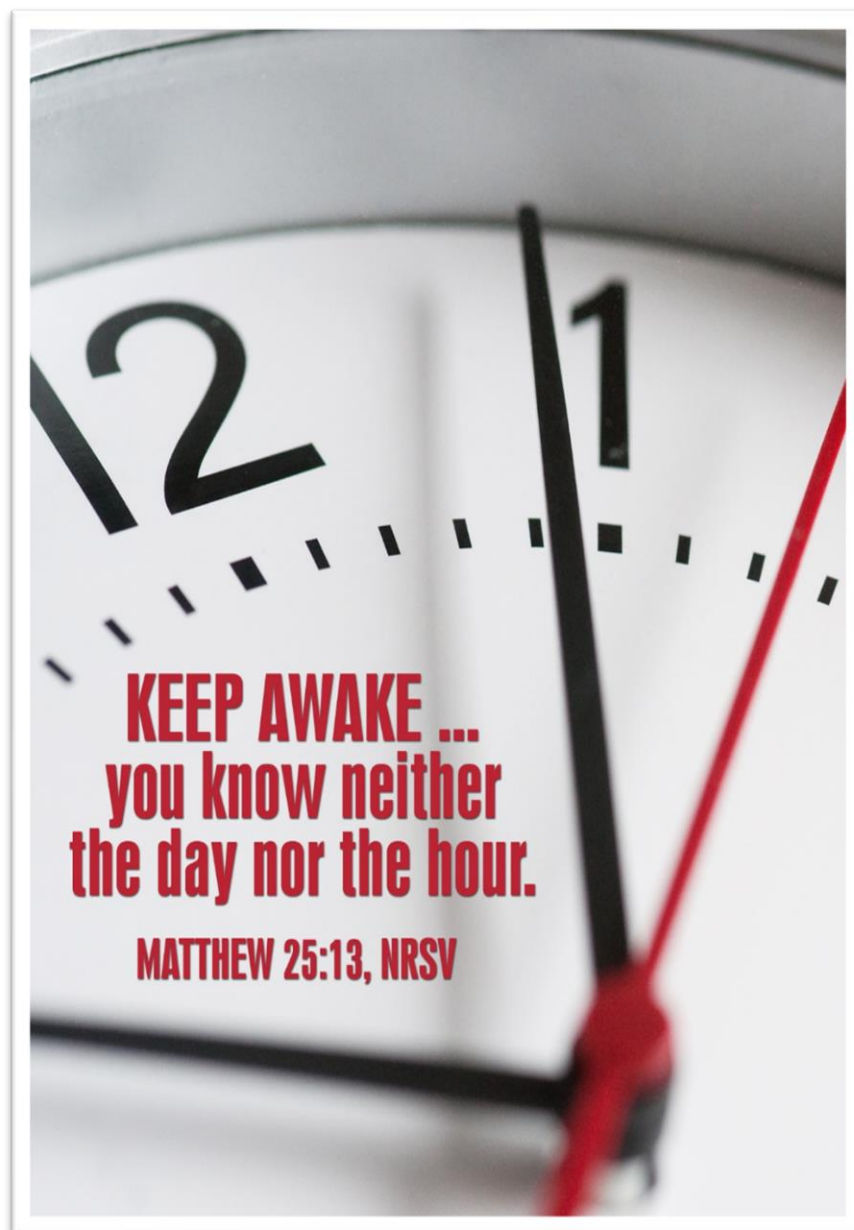


Welcome to
St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

November 12, 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: Pam Smith

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: Jim Pirtle
Greeters: Corky Short, Candy LaRue,
Acolyte: Elsa Riesmeyer
Kids' Place: Ivonne McFarland
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel
Flower Delivery: Nancy Richey
Counting Team: Mary Runkle

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**

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-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

November 12, 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 "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

John Zundel

CHORAL INTROIT

*THE HYMN No. 556 "God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens"

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

Gracious God, You have gifted so much to us. Guide us as we seek to offer of ourselves, our resources of time and finances. May they all serve to further Your Will in the world. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

We hesitate to give too much of ourselves. We can play it too safe, because it is hard to know how much we will actually need and how much time we will actually be able to offer. Let us join in the time of Silent Prayers of Confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: God forgives us and recognizes our fears, those that are legitimate and those that can be overblown.

ALL: Let us listen for God's direction, God's reassurance, and remember the promise of God's Presence with us, as we continue to discern what it is we can offer in service to God's hopes for the world and all that are in it. 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

Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-18

THE PSALM READING

Psalms 78:1-8

*THE HYMN “Ten Bridesmaids Waited for the Time”

(to the tune of no. 12, “I Sing the Mighty Power of God.”)

*Ten bridesmaids waited for the time the party would begin,
They took their lamps to meet the groom, for they expected him.
The wise ones went outside to wait, with oil and some to spare,
They found the groom had been delayed while he was traveling there.*

*The foolish bridesmaids waited, too, with lamps that lost their light.
For, unprepared, they'd left their fuel back at the house that night.
The bridegroom came with festive shout; the party soon began.
The fools had lamps that soon went out; the wise had lights at hand.*

O Lord, remind us that your Day will come with great surprise.

So may we faithfully obey as people who are wise.

For deeds of justice, words of prayer and acts of kindness, too,

Are ways we daily can prepare as we wait here for you.

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THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

THE GOSPEL READING & MESSAGE:

Matthew 25:1-13

“Stay Awake, Adapt”

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 ANTHEM “Sanctuary”

Larson

Youth Choir

PRESENTATION OF OUR PLEDGES

All who are able are invited to bring their pledge cards and time and talent sheets forward and place them in the basket on the Chancel.

You may also place them in the offering plate as it is passed around.

*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 set our hope in You, God of all ages, and seek to serve You through our offerings and our efforts to encourage and equip one another for ministry. Help us decide daily to live according to Your will, preparing ourselves for the opportunities and challenges You give us. May Your rule shape our lives in ways that introduce many to the joys of eternity in the midst of time. Amen.

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

*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 "Toccata Jubiloso"

Lani Smith

References:

The Prayer of Dedication is from "Taught by Love" by Lavon Bayler, 1998, 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.

The white rose, loving placed on the altar today, is in memory of Rick Holtzapple, who's funeral service was held at St. Paul's yesterday. Thank you for keeping Rick's husband Fenton and all other family and friends in your prayers.

ALTAR FLOWERS

The Altar flowers are given to the Glory of God by
Mary Runkle, "In honor of my father, Glenn Randolph."
Jonneke Dundore, "In memory of Patricia Dundore."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADVENT BOOK GROUP

We will meet on Mondays starting November 27, from 1:00 to 2:30 PM and 6:30 to 8:00 PM. Sign up in the Common or on the church website. We will be reading **Celebrating Abundance: Devotions for Advent** by Walter Brueggemann, \$13.00 Orders are due by November 15. Each day includes a short Scripture passage, reflection, and prayer. Questions can be directed to Rev. John.

ADVENT DEVOTIONALS

This year's Advent and Christmastide Devotionals are available for purchase in the Common. They are \$4.00 each.

The "O!" of Wonder

The glow of Advent is a watchfire's embers as a new day begins to dawn.

The glow of Advent is the flush of a pregnant body coursing with 50% more blood than usual.

The glow of Advent is the beauty of dusty shepherd faces reflecting the splendor of a swaddled child.

The glow of Advent is the peace of candlelit faces singing, "O Come, All Ye Faithful."

The glow of Advent is spelled with the "O!" of yearning and, then, with the "O!" of realization as we grasp the Season's meaning: everything has changed.

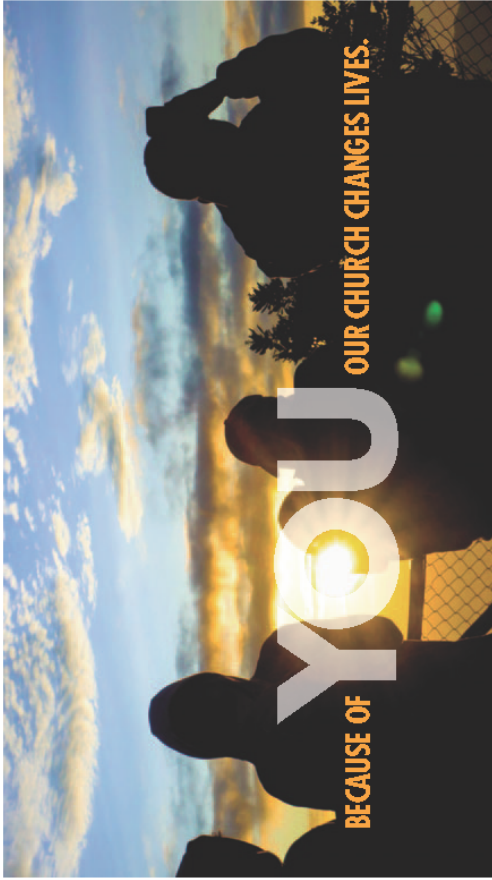
ADVENT CHOCOLATE CALENDARS

This year's advent chocolate calendars are in and available for purchase in the Common. They are \$8.00 each.

A delectable Christmas countdown! Each window of our advent calendar reveals a portion of the Christmas story - and yields a scrumptious, melt-in-your-mouth milk chocolate heart. 5% of sales from this Advent Calendar will go towards empowerment initiatives for the women cocoa farmers of Kuapa Kokoo in Ghana.

THE HARRISBURG FOOD PANTRY

The Harrisburg Food Pantry (formerly Ecumenical Food Pantry) is desperately in need of help. Our volunteers have always been faithful, but we need a few more. The need has been great, the community is coming for help in record numbers. They are asking that, if anyone would like to volunteer, they would be happy to train and use you. The hours are Monday - Friday 9:00-12:30 and one Saturday a month. You can volunteer as often as is comfortable for you. Some go once a week, some once a month, it's up to the individual how often you volunteer. For more information, see Pat Miller, or email deidre@hfoodpantry.org to schedule an orientation.



Deciding What to Give

While there are many ways to support the congregation, our annual campaign provides a chance to think in a particular and prayerful way about the choices we make with our money in support of the church.

Without your gifts, we would not be able to engage in the programs, projects, ministry, and worship experiences that define our community life.

Deciding how much of our income to donate to charitable organizations can be difficult. We encourage our community to think of giving as a percentage of annual income.

The average gift to charitable causes in our country is 2% of annual income (per household). It is hard to imagine what our world would look like without these generous gifts that do so much good. Fortunately, we are not being asked to consider what the world would be without these gifts! Instead, we are being asked to imagine what just 1% or more might make happen! How many more lives can be changed because you and

I have decided to grow in our own giving? Imagine more people being able to say, **“Because of you, our church changes lives”**.

We are each on a journey toward abundant generosity. What next step can you take in your generosity journey?

Every gift to our congregation helps strengthen who we are and what we can do together. Because of you, our church changes lives.

CONSIDER YOUR PLEDGE AS A PERCENT OF YOUR MONTHLY INCOME.

Annual Income	Monthly Income	2%	3%	4%	5%	10%
20,000	1,667	33	50	67	83	167
25,000	2,083	42	63	83	104	208
30,000	2,500	50	75	100	125	250
35,000	2,917	58	88	117	146	292
40,000	3,333	67	100	133	167	333
45,000	3,750	75	113	150	188	375
50,000	4,167	83	125	167	208	417
60,000	5,000	100	150	200	250	500
75,000	6,250	125	188	250	313	625
100,000	8,333	167	250	333	417	833
125,000	10,417	208	313	417	521	1042
150,000	12,500	250	375	500	625	1250
200,000	16,667	333	500	667	833	1667

On average, Americans give 2% of their income to charity. Giving even 1% more of annual income to charity would be transformative for our congregation and other organizations doing good in our community.

