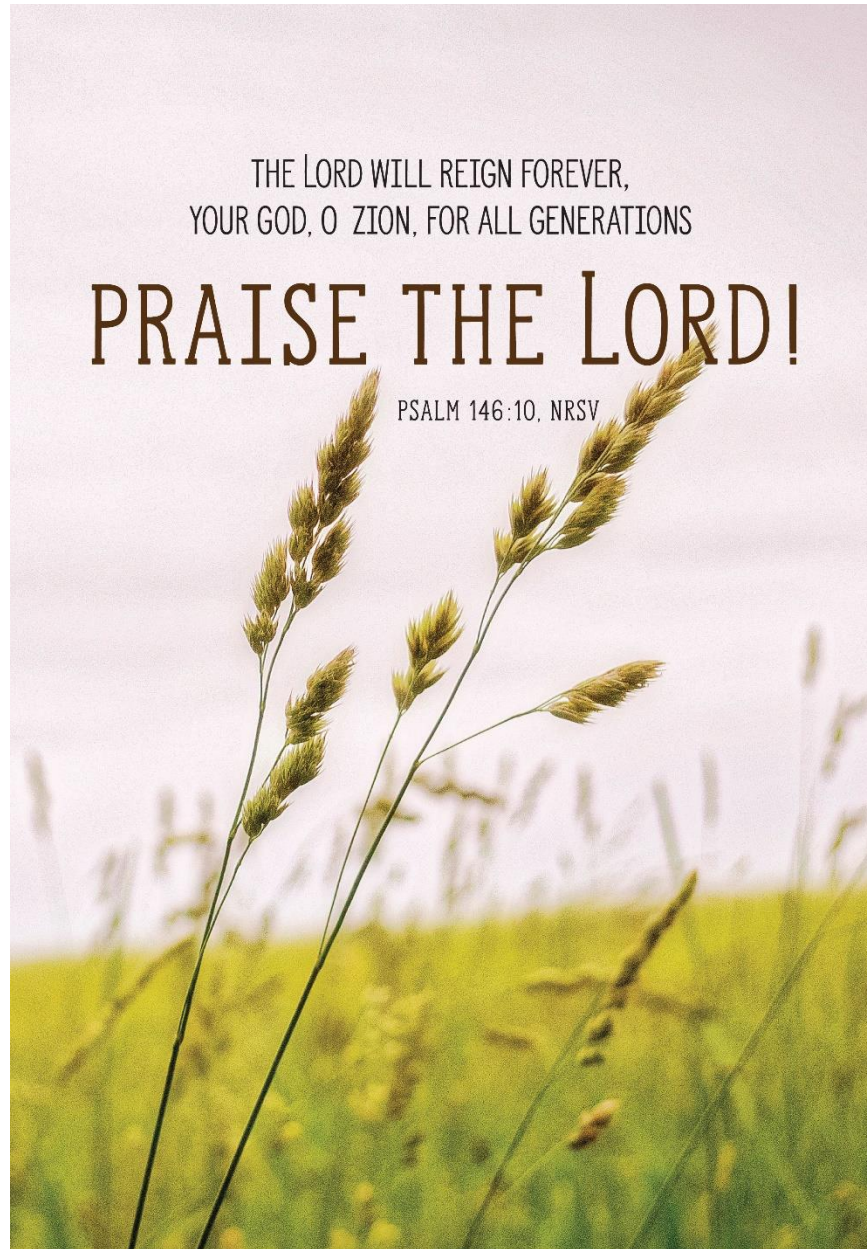


Welcome to
St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

October 20, 2024



GOD IS STILL SPEAKING



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

Worship Leadership

The Rev. John J. Ward-Diorio

The Rev. Allyssa A. Boyer

Lector: Jane Leister

Ministry of Music

Minister of Music: Eric R. 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: Charles Ricedorf-Reed

Greeters: Don Dupes, Jeff Leister, Nancy Richey

Acolyte: Elsa Riesmeyer

Kids' Place: Jonneke Dundore

Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel

Flower Delivery: Patrice Miller

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

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Rev. Allyssa: allyssaboyer@outlook.com



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

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
CHILDREN'S SABBATH

October 20, 2024

The livestream starts with the Announcements. If you'd prefer not to be on camera, kindly choose a seat in the back three pews of the Sanctuary. Leave prayer requests in the bowl in the Common area or give them to the Lead Greeter.

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

THE RINGING OF THE CHIMES

THE WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

THE ORGAN PRELUDE "We've Got a Story to Tell"

Humphrey Turner

CHORAL INTROIT

*THE HYMN "Do Not Turn Away the Children"

(to the tune of no. 459, "Come, O Fount of Every Blessing")

Do not turn away the children; let them come to me instead.

For to them belongs the kingdom. Make them welcome!" Christ, you said.

As we hear your words of blessing that you spoke when they drew near,

Can we hear your love addressing needs of children we see here?

Do not turn your back on children who know violence, pain and war.

Give them justice, food and welcome, make their homes and lives secure.

Don't neglect the world of children who have AIDS and HIV,

For to them belongs the kingdom, give them health care that they need.

Do not tell the nation's children, "schools are what we can't afford!"

Give them all good education; teach them well, both rich and poor.

Do not hurry past the children longing for your love this day;

For to them belongs the kingdom; give them time, don't turn away.

Do not miss the faith of children who have questions deep inside,

For to them belongs the kingdom wonder with them, be their guide.

Jesus, as we hear your blessing for those ones you welcomed in,

May our deeds reflect your caring as we welcome them again!

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*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

We come with gladness, loving God, drawn by a desire to praise You and give thanks. We come to lift up the children of the world, knowing they are loved by You and entrusted to us for

protection, provision, and care. Enlarge the circle of our concern that we may see the stranger as next of kin, the hungry person as part of our own family, the one who is sick as a whole individual deserving of our care. Grant us the presence of Christ that we may learn more fully to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

When we are honest with God and ourselves, we realize that too often our hearts are hardened to the struggles of others, including children living in places torn apart by war, crisis, and disaster. Our hearts grow discouraged, and we give up on the things that matter, like justice, peace, and ending poverty for children and families in places near and far. Let us join in silent prayers of confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: God hears the confession of our hearts. Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven all our sins, and by the Holy Spirit we are empowered for new life.

ALL: **We believe the good news of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

If you are able, please rise and greet one another with 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

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

INVITATION

Friends in Christ, we are all received into the wider church through the Sacrament of Baptism. These people have found nurture and support in the midst of the family of Christ. They wish to establish a special covenantal relationship with Christ and the members of this church. In our mutual journeys, let us find support as we attempt to serve Jesus Christ, using the gifts that the Holy Spirit bestows.

QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

Pastor: Do you, Erin and Matt, profess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?

Candidates: I do.

Pastor: Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciple, to follow in the way of our Savior, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best as you are able?

Candidates: I promise, with the help of God.

Pastor: Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow in the Christian faith, and to be a faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, celebrating Christ's presence and furthering Christ's mission in all the world?

Candidates: I promise, with the help of God.

Pastor: Do you promise to participate in the life and mission of this family of God's people, sharing regularly in the worship of God and enlisting in the work of this local church as it serves this community and the world?

Candidates: I promise, with the help of God.

*CONGREGATIONAL ASSENT

Pastor: This congregation is part of the Body of Christ in this time and place. We are Christ's hands, ears, and eyes. We are called to serve Christ as best as we are able and in accordance with the gifts we have been given. Let us say the Congregational Assent together.

Members: We, as members of St. Paul's United Church of Christ, of Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, and the Church Universal, hear your promises with joy and gladly welcome you as a sister and brother in Christ into the family of faith. We covenant with you to share in the hopes, labors, and joys of the Christian life, supported by God's love through this congregation. We will weep with you when you weep, rejoice with you in your rejoicing, and encourage your growth in the new life Christ gives. These things we promise in the name and spirit of Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

PRAYER

Eternal God, we praise You for calling us to be Your servant people, and for gathering us into the body of Christ. We thank You for sending to us these believers, Erin and Matt, Your children, that we may work together in serving the needs of others. Confirm in us the power of Your covenant

that we may live in Your Spirit, share regularly in worship, and so love each other that we may have among us the same mind which was in Christ Jesus, to whom be all honor and glory. Amen.

WELCOME & RECEPTION

In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of the congregation of St. Paul's United Church of Christ, of Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, we extend to you, Erin and Matt, the right hand of Christian love, welcoming you into the company of this local church and the saints of light.

We are grateful the Iacavone family has officially joined us as new members and that Becka and Jeff Anderson have agreed to serve as their sponsors. Thank you all!

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Leviticus 19:1, 33-34

THE READING OF THE PSALM

Psalms 146:5-10

*THE HYMN "If I Saw My Toddler" (to the tune of no. 124, "Away in a Manger")

***If I saw my toddler with hands in the air
In fearful surrender to someone, somewhere,
I'd search for a people in some other place
Who practiced their preaching and showed love and grace.***

***If I had to flee from the madness of war—
From terror and violence and things I abhor,
I'd search for a nation with arms open wide,
With safety and beauty and friendships inside.***

***Be with me, Lord Jesus, as I seek to be
A friend to the stranger and poor refugee,
And as I remember you once had no bed,
May I give up fear and give welcome instead.***

This hymn was inspired by a photo of a small Syrian child, hands in the air, fearing that a camera lens was a gun. Copyright © 2015 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved.

THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: Thanks be to God!

THE GOSPEL READING

Matthew 25:31-40

THE MESSAGE

Mr. Hassan Aden, Community & Volunteer Engagement Specialist, Church World Service

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)

In - to my heart, in - to my heart, come
in - to my heart, Lord Je - sus; come in to - day, come
in to stay, come in - to my heart, Lord Je - sus.

Please place your pew pad sheets in the Offering Plate.

THE OFFERTORY “Jesus Loves Me”

arr. Raney

Choristers and Youth Choir

*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)

Holy God, You revealed Yourself in Jesus, a baby born to a poor family who needed to flee their homeland as refugees. Jesus calls his disciples to serve the hungry, the orphan, the vilified, and the outcast. May Your blessing be upon these gifts returned to You. Use this offering, we pray, to bless the children of our world, that they may know safety, peace, justice, and the fullness of life. Amen.

*THE HYMN “Lord, Hear the Cries of Children”
(to the tune of no. 386, “The Church’s One Foundation”)

***Lord, hear the cries of children who struggle every day,
Caught up in failing systems that steal their hope away.***

***Some find they're lost to violence, then lost in foster care.
They long for life's abundance! Lord, hear their pleading prayer.***

***Lord, hear the cries of children who find they're moved along
Through courts and plans and programs where many things go wrong.
Where doors are closed to justice, where children fear, in pain,
Where some are simply processed, Lord, hear their cries again.***

***Lord, hear the cries of children who long to laugh and dance,
Yet from their very naming, don't seem to stand a chance.
When people all around them have egos, budgets, plans —
We pray you'll hear and save them, O God who understands!***

***Lord, hear the cries of children who simply ask for bread
Yet find the world around them provides a stone instead.
When wars are fully-funded and schools are running bare,
When benefits are ended — Lord, hear your children's prayer!***

***Lord, hear the cries of children — and hear the voices, too,
That seek to offer welcome, that seek a world that's new,
That work to change the system, that sing sweet lullabies.
May we, with love and wisdom, respond to children's cries.***

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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

The livestream ends after the Postlude. You're welcome to converse in the Narthex after the Three-fold Amen.

However, if you choose to stay for the Postlude, please remain silent until the conclusion.

THE ORGAN POSTLUDE "Praise Canon"

Paul Tayloer

References:

The Prayer of Invocation is adapted from Lavon Bayler, "Taught By Love," Cleveland: the Pilgrim Press, 1998.

The Words of Assurance are from "Book of Worship," New York: United Church of Christ Office for Church Life and Leadership, 1986.

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.

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ALTAR FLOWERS

The Altar flowers are given to the Glory of God by
Ton and Nancy Richey, “In honor of Daniel’s birthday.”

WE WARMLY WELCOME TODAY: Mr. Hassan Aden

Hassan has worked with ISC, Catholic Charities, and CWS Lancaster. Before joining the Community Engagement team at Church World Service, Hassan provided Intensive Case Management for some of the most vulnerable clients at CWS. He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to share with all of us.

ORGANIZATIONS THAT SERVE CHILDREN IN CONFLICT ZONES AND CRISES

Church World Service (CWS)

CWS is a cooperative ministry of 37 Christian denominations and communions, providing sustainable self-help, development, disaster relief, and refugee assistance around the world. The CWS mission is to eradicate hunger and poverty and to promote peace and justice at the national and international level through collaboration with partners abroad and in the US. CWS serves tens of thousands of refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers in the US and around the world each year.

To donate, go to cwsglobal.org/donate/

World Central Kitchen (WCK)

WCK is a not-for-profit, non-governmental organization that provides food relief. It was founded in 2010 following the earthquake in Haiti and has subsequently responded to numerous natural disasters and humanitarian crises around the world.

To donate, go to donate.wck.org

UNICEF

UNICEF is an agency of the United Nations responsible for providing humanitarian and

developmental aid to children worldwide.

UNICEF’s activities include providing immunizations and disease prevention, administering treatment for children and mothers with HIV, enhancing childhood and maternal nutrition, improving sanitation, promoting education, and providing emergency relief in response to disasters.

To donate, go to unicef.org and click “donate”

Doctors Without Borders / Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)

Doctors Without Borders is a charity that provides humanitarian medical care. It is a non-governmental organization known for its projects in conflict zones and in countries affected by endemic diseases. They provide care for diabetes, drug-resistant infections, HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C, tropical and neglected diseases.

To donate, go to doctorswithoutborders.org and click “donate”



Imagine Together: A World Made Whole

**The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus
it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and shouting.** (Isaiah 35: 1-2)

saiah 35 reflects on the intricate relationship between human activity and the environment, drawing parallels between the biblical narrative and contemporary ecological challenges. The passage emphasizes the profound impact of human actions on the landscape, illustrating how the expansion of deserts and ecological mismanagement contribute to famine and wildfires. Despite technological advancements, the text contends that human greed, indifference, and hopelessness impede necessary environmental healing. The theme of "A World Made Whole" calls for a collective responsibility to address ecological crises, urging a shift from destructive practices to stewardship.

Rev. Dr. Patricia K. Tull observes, "The apostle Paul pointed out once that 'hope that is seen is not hope' (Rom 8:24). If this is true, it is also true that hope that is left unseen, unimagined, undared, is not hope either... Underlying Isaiah 35's

dramatic imagery, hope is being expressed not simply for divine acts, but for those the prophet seeks to inspire from a small band of Judeans who could recultivate the burned land and push back the chaos, and thus strengthen their own weak hands, feeble knees, and fearful hearts."

How can we Imagine Together A World Made Whole? Can we be physicians of the environment? Caregivers of the land? Our collective stewardship and generosity can be healing. Together we can actively recreate healthy environments in our yards, churches, and towns. It is our collective effort that in stills order in chaos and fosters hope in hearts that may be steeped in despair:

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.

Imagine Together