

Welcome to St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

January 12, 2025



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: Becky Thompson

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: Steve Roush
Greeters: Paula Boyer, Mary Runkle
Acolyte: Elsa Riesmeyer
Kids' Place: Susan Ward-Diorio
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel
Flower Delivery: Becky Thompson
Counting Team: Betty Olsen, 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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ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
SERVICE OF WORSHIP

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY
BAPTISM OF JESUS

January 12, 2025

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

THE ORGAN PRELUDE "Air"

George Blake

CHORAL INTROIT

*THE HYMN "Down By the Jordan" (to the tune of no. 22, "Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty")

***Down by the Jordan, a prophet named John was baptizing,
Preaching a message the people found bold and surprising:
"God will forgive! Show that you'll change how you live!
Surely God's new day is rising!"***

***There by the river, the crowd came with great expectation:
"Are you God's Chosen One, sent here to rescue our nation?"
"No!" John replied. "He who is mightier than I
Judges and offers salvation."***

***Jesus, you went to be baptized along with the others,
Taking your place among sinners, God's lost sons and daughters.
Then with great love, God's Spirit came as a dove!
Your work began in those waters.***

***Here in the Church, we are baptized and filled with God's Spirit.
Freed and forgiven, we're welcomed with joy! Can you hear it?
This is God's sign! This is how God says, "You're mine!"
Let's take the good news and share it!***

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*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

Holy God, Mother and Father of us all, we are grateful to know that You love us. Help us to remember that, particularly in our moments of fear, uncertainty, and doubt. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

While we are often tempted to be self-centered and self-absorbed, when we find ourselves in crisis, we forget that we are connected to one another and with God. We forget that we are loved. Remembering our Baptisms can help us to realize this love surrounds us and is within us. Let us join in the time of Silent Prayers of Confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: God forgives us, and in particular, every time someone is Baptized, every time we remember Jesus' Baptism, God speaks those words of assurance and love to us again.

ALL: Let us be open to hearing; let us be open to believing; let us live as the Beloved Children of God that we each are.

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**

THE NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE READING

Acts 8:14-17

THE PSALM READING

Psalm 29

*THE HYMN No. 328 "Wonder of Wonders, Here Revealed"

THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

THE GOSPEL READING & MESSAGE:

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

“The Acknowledgement of Baptism”

REMEMBERING, REAFFIRMING AND/OR REIMAGING OUR BAPTISMS

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)

Thru Christ our ear-nest prayers are said with words we scarce can frame; Our
work of Christ-mas now be-gun, We serve now in Christ's name.

Please place your pew pad sheets in the Offering Plate.

THE OFFERTORY “A Time for All Things”

Wagner

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)

For bringing us safely to this hour, we give you thanks, O God of wind and fire. May our offerings honor you. May our lives reflect your mercy. May our hands bestow on others the blessings we have received. May our prayers unite us with one another and with Christ, in whose name we celebrate the privilege of giving. Amen.

*THE HYMN “John Was Preaching in the Desert”

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

***John was preaching in the desert, calling people to repent.
When they heard his word of judgment, many wondered what it meant.
John said, "Someone who is greater comes with fire and Spirit, too.
See! I baptize you with water; he will make your whole life new."***

***Jesus went down to the Jordan to be baptized on that day.
All at once, the heavens opened as he paused to humbly pray.
Then a voice came down from heaven with the Spirit, like a dove.
At those waters, God affirmed him God's beloved, sent to love.***

***On this day when we remember how our Savior was baptized,
God, we pause and pray and wonder at the ways you change our lives.
As your Son went through the waters, We rejoice! We're baptized, too.
We are called your sons and daughters; may we go out serving you.***

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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 “All People That On Earth Do Dwell”

Robert J. Hughes

References:

The Prayer of Dedication is from “Gathered by Love” by Lavon Bayler, 1997, 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.

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