

Welcome to St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

April 27, 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: Patrice Miller

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: Mark Dundore
Greeters: Paula Boyer, Crystal Cline, Jill Morell
Acolyte: Elsa Riesmeyer
Kids' Place: Don Dupes
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel
Flower Delivery: Susan White
Counting Team: Betty Olsen

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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**ONLINE
GIVING**



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

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER
HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY

April 27, 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 "Welcome, Happy Morning"

Roger C. Wilson

CHORAL INTROIT

*THE HYMN "We Lack the Gift of Laughter" (to the tune of no. 245, "The Day of Resurrection")

***We lack the gift of laughter; Faith sits all pale and glum,
Hope dozes on a rafter, and Love is stricken dumb
Come, Christ, into our drabness, tell us that matchless jest
of life and resurrection, your sweetest and your best.***

***We know the trick of tumbling, red nose and redder face;
by virtues of our bumbling ours is the jester's case.
Come, Christ, come down immortal, teach us that matchless jest
of life and resurrection, your sweetest and your best.***

***You joined our sad profession, made good our foolishness,
brought clowning into fashion, put on our joker's dress.
Come, Christ, come holy laughter, to share that matchless jest
of life and resurrection, your sweetest and your best.***

***Upon a foolish cross, Lord, you hung to make us mirth;
but there you conquered loss, Lord, old death became new birth.
Come everlasting joy; Christ, confirm that matchless jest
of life and resurrection, your sweetest and your best.***

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

Gracious God, we give You thanks for the gift of humor. Help us to be open to the joy and laughter that is found in our lives, even in those places like Worship, where we engage in deepening our relationship with You. Humor can help with that too. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

We often take our faith so seriously that we fail to see the intended humor that is present. This can lead to misinterpretations and misperceptions about God, Jesus, and Scripture. We can also overlook the humorous warnings in Scripture not to take ourselves too seriously. Let us join in the time of Silent Prayers of Confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: God forgives us and seeks to offer humor and joy to us.

ALL: Let us be open to the many ways God speaks to us, including through laughter and mirth. 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.***

THE CHORISTERS “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands”

Spiritual

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Numbers 22:21-35

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

2 Kings 2:23-25

*THE HYMN “Laughter Lends Itself to Praise” (to the tune of no. 250, “Listen to Your Savior Call”)

***Laughter lends itself to praise, Bringing healing from within;
Hope will surely rise again - Laughter lends itself to praise.***

***Laughter leaps into the void, Finding only Spirit there;
Shame and fear would never dare - Laughter leaps into the void.***

***Laughter comes in spite of pain, Dancing even as we mourn;
Something dies but something's born - Laughter comes in spite of pain.***

***Laughter lends itself to praise, All the love and all the fear,
All the signs that God is near - Laughter lends itself to praise.***

Daniel Charles Damon

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THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: Thanks be to God!

HOLY HUMOR SHARED

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)

Halleluja

236

Traditional

Please place your pew pad sheets in the Offering Plate.

THE OFFERTORY “He Lives” and “Up from the Grave He Arose”

Chancel 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 the breath of life, for eyes to see, for insight to believe, for courage to witness, we give thanks, gracious God. The signs of your presence are everywhere. Your glory and dominion are forever and ever. May this offering witness to Your grace and peace. Grant Your Spirit as a transforming power among us that inspires and enables our service. Amen.

*THE HYMN “Take Time to Be Funny” (to the tune of no. 1, “Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise”)

**Take time to be funny, rejoice in the Lord
Let laughter explode and have fun with God's Word
For laughter is healing, gives strength to the weak
God loves to see smiles, for they lift up the meek.**

**Take time to be silly, it's good for the soul
Too many are somber, just grabbing control.
Let go and let God's love wash over your soul
Heavenly transcendence can be your life's goal.**

**For humor is holy, it sanctifies life,
Replenishes hope and oft softens advice
It undercuts sorrow, deflates haughty pride
So smile and hang on, and rejoice in life's ride.**

Colin Gibson, Words © Hope Publishing Company,
from his collection of songs, Reading the Signature.

*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 “Postlude For A Festive Occasion”

Robert A. Roesch

References:

The Prayer of Dedication is from “Gathered 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.

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ALTAR FLOWERS

The Altar flowers are given to the Glory of God by
Joan and Ernie Moyer, “In loving memory of our parents.”