

Welcome to St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

June 29, 2025

BE joyful in hope,
patient in affliction,
faithful in prayer.

Romans 12:12, NIV



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
Preacher: The Rev. Allyssa A. Boyer
Lector: Paula Boyer

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: Crystal Cline
Greeters: Rebecca Drazba, Steve Stough
Acolyte: Elsa Riesmeyer
Kids' Place: Don Dupes
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel
Flower Delivery: Joan Moyer
Counting Team:

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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Rev. Allyssa: allyssaboyer@outlook.com

**ONLINE
GIVING**



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

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
OPEN AND AFFIRMING SUNDAY

June 29, 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 "Chanson Triste"

P.I. Tchaikovsky

CALL TO WORSHIP

"I see your true colors / Shining through / I see your true colors / And that's why I love you /
So don't be afraid to let them show / Your true colors / True colors are beautiful /
Like a rainbow"

— "True Colors" by Cyndi Lauper, written by Billy Steinberg and Tom Kelly

*THE HYMN "O God, In Your Love" (to the tune of no. 1, "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise")

O God, in your love, you have made us unique:

In gifts and traditions, in service we seek,

In race and in culture and family design

Diverse are the branches in Jesus the Vine.

Lord Jesus, you came to bring God's love on earth;

You welcomed the outcasts and showed us our worth.

You reached out to people whom others despised

You said all are precious in God's loving eyes.

O Christ, with your welcome your church feels unease:

We stand at closed doors tightly holding the keys.

Yet this is your body, the church that you love

O Lord, do you weep for your church from above?

So may your church welcome in loving accord

All people who want to serve Jesus our Lord.

***O Spirit, unite us in Jesus the Son
In mission and ministry, God, make us one.***

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*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

Gracious God, You have invited and welcomed us to this place of worship. As we gather together to be renewed by Your spirit, we pray for relationships that are marked by genuine love. We pray that this church holds fast to what is good, and loves one another as kin, recognizing that You made each person in Your image, beautiful and beloved. May our worship today strengthen our resolve to live peaceably with all.

CALL TO CONFESSION

God calls us to bless those who persecute us, to bless them and not to curse them. This is hard. Extremely hard. In times of stress, when we have been deeply wounded, it seems natural to lash out, to seek to defend ourselves by hurting those who hurt us. Sometimes, even our best intentions go astray. Now we come to God, bringing the wounds of our common life to this time of confession, so that we may receive God's healing.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: God is merciful to us and listens to our honest prayers. Our thoughts and deeds are fully known to God, who is eager to forgive and to lead us to new understandings.

ALL: **When we earnestly seek God's help, we are set free to discover new opportunities. Even in the worst of circumstances, God works with us to overcome evil with good.**

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 GOSPEL READING

Mark 12:28-31

THE READING OF THE PSALM

Psalms 100

*THE HYMN No. 575 "O for a World"

THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

THE EPISTLE READING & MESSAGE:

Romans 12:9-21

"It Starts with Love"

REAFFIRMATION OF OUR OPEN & AFFIRMING COVENANT (unison)

The people of God at St. Paul's United Church of Christ in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, affirm our regard for the worth and dignity of all persons as beloved children of God. We recognize, celebrate, and give thanks for the many diverse gifts of God among us. We declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming congregation, welcoming into full membership and participation in the Body of Christ persons of every race, language, age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, and economic status.

We acknowledge that throughout history, the Christian church has often condemned and excluded gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and non-heteronormative people from the community of faith, or has condoned such condemnation and exclusion by its silence. We hold that such discrimination is incompatible with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We commit ourselves to work diligently to end all oppression and discrimination that afflict God's people in our society. We commit ourselves to nondiscrimination in the full life, ministry, and sacraments of this church, including membership, leadership, and employment practices. We will condemn all acts of harassment, discrimination, and violence against God's people. We will seek to include and support those, who, because of fear and prejudice, find themselves in exile from a spiritual community. We affirm all relationships founded on

the principles of God's love and justice. We pledge ourselves to be a wellspring of faith for a diverse people.

This covenant was adopted by vote of the congregation on May 18, 2003.

Terms revised and covenant reaffirmed by the congregation on May 20, 2018.

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)

pp Devoutly 5-5-5-5- GEORGE WHELPTON, 1847-1930

Hear our prayer, O Lord; Hear our prayer, O Lord;

Hear our prayer, O Lord, And grant us Thy peace. A-MEN.

Please place your pew pad sheets in the Offering Plate.

THE OFFERTORY "You Say"

Daigle

Charles Ricedorf, soloist

*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)

It is a gift to be able to give something away. We are called to be a part of something bigger than ourselves. Spirit of Love, look upon us now. Bless these gifts; those we can see, and

those we cannot see. May our hopes come true for the better world we dream of, as we work together in love. Amen.

*THE HYMN No. 391 “In the Midst of New Dimensions”

*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.

THE ORGAN POSTLUDE “Ceremonial March”

Edward H. Wetherill

References:

The Call to Worship is a verse from the Cyndi Lauper song “True Colors” by Billy Steinberg and Tom Kelly, from the album True Colors, Epic Records, 1986.

The Call to Confession and Words of Assurance are adapted from “Taught By Love” by Lavon Bayler, United Church Press: Cleveland, OH, 1998.

The Prayer of Dedication is adapted from “Worship Resources for Open and Affirming Sunday” by Mak Kneebone and Kimi Floyd Reisch, 2020.

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
Herb Bomberger, “In honor of Melba’s birthday.”

St. Paul's United Church of Christ
ONA Sunday Annual Celebration
United Church of Christ Open and Affirming Ministry Update
Sunday, June 29, 2025

Today, we celebrate our denomination's annual recognition of the Open and Affirming Ministry. Last Sunday in June was selected to highlight the covenants of each ONA church and their support of their LGBTQIA+ members and individuals within their community.

The last Sunday in June is also the anniversary of the riot that occurred at the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village of New York City, NY on Sunday, June 28, 1969. The police raided the inn in the early morning hours of that day and the LGBTQ+ community fought back when the police became violent. This event brought to light the gay liberation movement of LGBTQIA+ rights in the United States.

We approved our Covenant on Sunday, May 18, 2003, becoming the 464th ONA church. We revised and reapproved our Covenant on Sunday, May 20, 2018 to reaffirm our commitment to our LGBTQIA+ church members and wider community. Each year we read our Covenant on the third Sunday of May to continue that relationship.

Within our 4,840+ church denomination there are 1,912 ONA churches and in our 38 conferences 27 are ONA. Since last year's ONA Sunday, we have celebrated churches within the Commonwealths and States of California, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Wisconsin and Washington D.C for becoming ONA.

We also celebrate the Indiana Kentucky Conference and the Southeast Association of the Michigan Conference for becoming ONA.

Our ONA Ministry continues to grow and thrive and is led nationally by the ONA Coalition located at our National Office in Cleveland, OH. The Rev. Derek Terry is the Acting Executive Director/Program Director and Ann Randall is the Finance Director. The website is www.onacoalition.org.

Shirley Keith Knox is our Convener and Steve Roush is the Coach leading the Penn Central Conference ONA Ministry Team. Steve also coaches' churches on their ONA journey remotely for the Penn Northeast, Penn Southeast, and Penn West conferences.

Here at St. Paul's, Shirley serves on The Welcome Team and Steve serves on the Social Justice Committee.

This ministry strives toward the day when all people can believe that they are fully welcomed and are ***Beloved Children of God***.