

Welcome to St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

August 3, 2025



GOD IS STILL SPEAKING

9

*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: Don Dupes
Greeters: Susan Miller, Dale Thorpe
Acolyte: Elsa Riesmeyer
Kids' Place:
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel
Flower Delivery: Susan Miller
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

626 Williams Grove Road
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
(717)766-7931

saintpaulsucc-mech.org

Office: stpaulstaff@outlook.com

Rev. John: revjohnwd@outlook.com

Rev. Allyssa: allyssaboyer@outlook.com

**ONLINE
GIVING**



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

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 3, 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 "Jesus, Lead Thou On"

Roger C. Wilson

CALL TO WORSHIP

"The point of this opening scenario in Luke's series of rich man stories isn't just that selfish wealth is morally problematic. It is that the virus of affluenza upholds an economic system of disparity and oppression and represents a terminal disease threatening all personal and political futures. And it can infect *any* of us: shaping the appetites of the wealthy, but also the desires of the non-wealthy. This pandemic requires radical solutions, beginning with a recovery of our symbiosis with nature's Commonwealth, to which Jesus now turns." Ched Myers

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

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

God of Abundance, guide us in understanding when we slip into operating out of places of being greedy or, especially when unrealized by us, we allow greed to guide our actions. We do not wish to act in these ways, yet it seems many around us are choosing to do so, making it harder for us to resist. Please, again, teach us how to live as You would have us live. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Greed is regularly and profoundly criticized in both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament, and yet we do not talk about it all that much. It is a subject that makes us very uncomfortable, particularly in that we are privileged, even though it might not feel that way, particularly in a relative sense in our immediate surroundings. We struggle with determining what is enough and will we have enough. The evidence around us scares us when we witness those who do not have enough. Do we truly believe God provides more than enough for all, if we share? Let us join in the time of Silent Prayers of Confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: God forgives us and stirs our spirits to remember the stories of how God has provided what is needed, time and time again, when people share and have faith that they will have enough.

ALL: **Let us remember we Worship a God of Abundance, not scarcity. As Jesus taught us and showed us, let us live lives of sharing, witnessing to an alternative way of being in a world, where straining to be wealthy at all costs is accepted behavior, and even praised. 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

THE EPISTLE READING

Colossians 3:1-11

THE PSALM READING

Psalm 49:1-12

THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

THE GOSPEL SCRIPTURE READING & MESSAGE:

Luke 12:13-21

“We Have to Talk About Greed”

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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 “Just a Closer Walk with Thee”

Gordon Kaslusky, 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)

These gifts represent the work of our hands: the abilities You have given us and our efforts to use them well. We share them here to support one another in our efforts to hear Your will and do it. Help us as a church to make a faithful witness out of love for one another and You, and in service to the whole world. Amen.

*THE HYMN “O God of the Children of Gaza” (to the tune of no. 124 “Away in a Manger”)

***O God of the Children in Gaza, We Pray:
We’re witnessing famine, yet we turn away.
We’re witnessing genocide. Show us what’s true:
What happens in Gaza, we’re doing to you.***

***O God of the parents with no food to give,
Who wonder each day if their children will live,
We've stood among nations that cried out, "No more!"
Yet we are repeating the horrors of war.***

***O God of Isaiah who truthfully said,
"You worship in vain if you won't share your bread,"
May prayer turn to action. We can't wait one day.
For you're with the children. We can't turn away.***

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THE SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

THE INVITATION

One: God be with you.
All: **And also with you.**
One: Lift up your hearts.
All: **We lift them up to God.**
One: Let us give thanks to God.
All: **It is good to give God thanks and praise.**

PASTORAL PRAYER AND 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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

DISTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS

We gather both in person and in Spirit. For those of you present in the sanctuary, we invite you to come forward if you are able. When you come forward, a piece of bread will be given to you. Once you have received your bread, please proceed to the right or the left and servers will have both wine and grape juice that you may dip your bread in. All the bread is gluten free. After dipping your bread in the wine/juice, you may then eat your communion element and proceed back to your pew. If you prefer not to come forward, please remain in your pew and a greeter will bring you the elements. Please raise your hand if you believe the greeter did not see you.

For those of you joining us via livestream, we hope you have some bread and wine or juice of your choice before you. We trust that God is powerful enough to extend God's blessing upon these communion elements, wherever they may be.

THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (unison)

Holy God, we give You thanks for the miracle and wonder of this meal. We give You thanks for Your coming to us in the person of Jesus, and for Jesus' willingness to offer his whole self for our benefit. We can see how we can best live our lives. We can believe all "deaths," those losses, endings, and struggles in this life, and the ones at the end of our physical lives, are not the final word. We can trust that Your Spirit is within all of us, and always will be. May the gifts of this table always remind us of the gifts You have given us all. Amen.

*THE HYMN "Bigger Barns" (to the tune of no. 442, "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come")

"Bigger barns are what I need!" So a rich man said one day.

"From my worries I'll be free when my wealth is stored away."

"Fool!" God said, "Today you'll die! Will your wealth mean anything?"

All life's blessings really lie in my life that wealth can't bring."

"Bigger barns are what we need for our money, gadgets, more!"

Lord, we're tempted to believe having wealth, we'll be secure!

Somewhere children cry for food or to have a doctor's care.

Can our bigger barns be good when poor neighbors know despair?

God of love, we long to know what will make us truly blest.

Jesus taught us long ago wealth won't give us peace or rest.

You are our security! Safe in you, we serve, O Lord.

May we find we're rich indeed when we're sharing with the poor.

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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.

References:

Evans, Edwin, 1844-1923. Grain Fields, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=57001> [retrieved July 30, 2025].

Original source: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Evans-GrainFields.png>.

The Call to Worship is found on page 128 of Healing Affluenza and Resisting Plutocracy: Luke’s Jesus and Sabbath Economics, by Ched Myers, 2025, Fortress Press.

The Prayer of Dedication is from “Taught 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
Gary and Carol Fleisher, “In memory of our parents.”

Announcements

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

Children, youth, and adults: Bring your backpacks, bookbags, briefcases, lunchboxes, or any other baggage you use for school or work, to worship on Sunday, August 17th. We will offer a blessing of the bags as a reminder that God’s peace and presence will be with all people as they go back to school and work.

SCOOP, THERE IT IS!

Come join us for our Ice Cream Social on Sunday, August 17th, following worship, in Fellowship Hall. Chill out with us as we celebrate summer and get ready for back-to-school. Everyone is invited!

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

St. Paul's will be welcoming new members on a Sunday in August. The specific date will be announced once it has been confirmed with individuals who expressed interest in joining during the spring but were unable to.

Individuals interested in membership who have not yet spoken with a pastor are encouraged to contact Rev. John. (Please note: Rev. Allyssa will be on a well-deserved vacation for much of August.) A meeting can be scheduled to discuss the mission and values of St. Paul's, the meaning of church membership, and to answer any questions.

For those interested in joining but anticipate being unavailable on a Sunday in August, discussions are still welcome. Arrangements can be made for new members to be received on an alternative Sunday in the fall. For any inquiries, please contact Rev. John.