

Welcome to
St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

December 7, 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: Rebecca Drazba

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: Sue Miller
Greeters: Rebecca Drazba, Nancy Richey, Wendy Hayden
Acolyte:
Kids' Place: Becky Thompson, Rachael Hersh, Melissa Cawley
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel
Flower Delivery: Betty & Tom Olsen
Counting Team: David Scott
Candle Lighting: Crystal Cline & Zack Fisher (8:30AM)
Juliette, Eloise, Barbara & Chris Wheeler-Bride (10:30AM)

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



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

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
HOLY COMMUNION

December 7, 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 "Fantasia on 'Forest Green'"

Edward Broughton

CHORAL INTROIT

*THE HYMN No. 115 "The Baptist Shouts on Jordan's Shore" (vs. 1-4)

LIGHTING THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE – LOVE (responsive)

One: Advent reminds us that we are people who share a story, the story of Jesus, who displays love by judging in favor of the poor and deciding with equity for the meek of the earth. We long for the day when "the wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them."

All: Today, we choose to live the story of love, believing that true love emerges when we seek the flourishing of all God's creation.

One: We light this candle of love as a sign of our commitment to bring Light to the places the world seeks to hide until that day when all creation lives together in harmony and abundance.

SUNG RESPONSE

The candle of love tells what we are worth:

God loves us so much, God came to the earth!

An angel brought news of a child who would be

The one who would save us and set us all free.

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

God of Love, help us to recognize that through Your Spirit, You have instilled within us the ability to love in the ways You do. Guide us in practicing such love. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

God's Love is beyond our capacity to fully understand. Because it seems beyond our reach, we settle for acting in ways that fall short of demonstrating God's fully inclusive love and acceptance. In so doing, we diminish the chance for God's Dream for the world to be fully realized. Let us join in a time of Silent Prayers of Confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: God forgives us and keeps on loving us, no matter what.

ALL: We too are called to love one another, no matter what. It is not always easy. Let us commit to practicing God's Love, and to work to keep getting better at it. 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 GOSPEL READING

Matthew 3:1-11

THE READING OF THE PSALM

Psalm 72:1-7

THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: Thanks be to God!

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING & MESSAGE:

Isaiah 11:1-10

“Who Is Coming?”

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE CHORAL RESPONSE (unison)

Advent Blessing

Bless us, Fa - ther, as we pray. Help us seek You day by day. Bind us all in
6 Heart and mind. Bid all our quar - rels cease. Fill the world with Hea - ven's peace. Bid all war and
12 hun - ger cease. Oh, come, Ho - ly Sav - ior, come.

Please place your pew pad sheets in the Offering Plate.

THE OFFERTORY "Let Every Heart Prepare Him Room"
Chancel Choir

Larson

*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)

With these offerings we move beyond words to deeds, O God. We share good news and seek the peace You alone can give. We express our faith in Your goodness and in the witness our church can make in a needy world. May these gifts be wheat and not chaff in the realm of heaven. Amen.

*THE HYMN No. 109 "With Joy Draw Water"

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 No. 110 "Now Bless the God of Israel"

*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 "Hark, Glad the Sound!"

Tom Birchwood

References:

The Prayer of Dedication is from "Led 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.

Songs, music, and lyrics used by permission. CCLI License #11380019 CSPL128945