

Welcome to
St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

February 22, 2026

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: Eric Dundore

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: Daniella Benfer
Greeters: Dale Thorpe, Andrew Ginder
Acolyte:
Kids' Place: Rachael Hersh, Don Dupes, Barbara Wheeler
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel
Flower Delivery: Jonneke van Olden
Counting Team: Mary Runkle
Fellowship Time: Congregational Conversation

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

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

February 22, 2026

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

SPIRITUAL ROYALITES INITIATIVE CONGREGATIONAL PLEDGE

We, the Congregation of St. Paul's UCC, Mechanicsburg, acknowledge the history and significance of the Negro Spirituals sung in worship today:

When Israel Was in Egypt's Land, There Is a Balm in Gilead, and I Want Jesus to Walk with Me

We affirm their artistic and spiritual worth in the life of the world today.

With great respect and deep gratitude for the tremendous musical contributions made to American music by Black people, we offer our thanks and praise to God for the creators of the Negro Spiritual and their descendants.

We pledge that each time we sing Negro Spirituals in our worship we will sing them with holy reverence and open hearts.

Through our prayers, we will honor the unnamed enslaved people who composed them, and we will pay royalties from the funds collected to the Capital Area Music Association and Sankofa Theater Company, both organizations dedicated to promoting the advancement of young Black artists and musicians, and to preserve Negro Spirituals in the Black community.

We understand that the debt owed to Black musicians and artists can never be fully repaid. Through our prayers, our gifts, and our actions, we will keep striving to end systemic racism in America.

THE ORGAN PRELUDE "Precious Lord, Take My Hand"

Thomas A. Dorsey

CHORAL INTROIT

*THE HYMN No. 572 "When Israel Was in Egypt's Land"

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

Calling God, help us to clear our minds and spirits of what can cloud our discernment of who You have created us to be and called us to do. In this Lenten Season, may we choose to see

beyond what has been before us, to better comprehend how we can become more aligned with what Jesus showed us and taught us. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Giving into temptations, particularly temptations that only benefit ourselves, has long plagued humanity. Stories in the Book of Genesis point to this fundamental difficulty. God gives humans the ability to choose, and we are not prevented from resisting self-centered temptations by original sin. In Jesus' wilderness time, he demonstrates that self-centered choice is not God's hope for us. We still wrestle mightily with this. Let us join in a time of Silent Prayers of Confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: God forgives us and created us with the ability to do better. God still believes we can, still calls on us to try.

ALL: **Let us clear our minds and hearts and focus on resisting temptations to only think of ourselves. Let us ask God to help us, to lead us through temptation. 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 HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-17

THE READING OF THE PSALM

Psalms 32:5-11

*THE HYMN No. 553 "There Is a Balm in Gilead"

THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

THE GOSPEL READING & MESSAGE:

Matthew 4:1-11

"Lead Us Through Temptation"

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)

It's me (it's me), it's me, O Lord, stand-ing in the
 need of prayer. It's me (it's me), it's
 me, O Lord, stand- ing in the need of prayer.

Please place your pew pad sheets in the Offering Plate.

THE OFFERTORY "I Want Jesus to Walk with Me"

spiritual, arr. Price

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)

By Your surprising grace, O God, our eyes are opened, our ears unstopped, our hearts attuned to the needs of others. We give so more people may know Your acceptance and forgiveness. We support the ministry of preaching, teaching, and healing among us and through the outreach of the church. Expand our horizons, we pray, and tear down the limits of our caring. Amen.

*THE HYMN No. 593 "Lift Every Voice and Sing"

*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 "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms"

Mary Beth Williams

References:

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.

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

ALTAR FLOWERS

The Altar flowers are given to the Glory of God by
Leann Davinroy, "In honor of Zach's birthday."

Candy LaRue's Family, "In celebration of Candy's birthday on February 27."