

# Welcome to St. Paul's United Church of Christ

*An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ*

May 17, 2026



**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: Nancy Richey

### **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: Susan Miller, Crystal Cline, Nancy Richey  
Acolyte:  
Kids' Place: Melissa Cawley  
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel  
Flower Delivery: Patrice Miller  
Counting Team: Melissa Cawley

### **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.*

**Text "SPUCCGIVE" to 73256 to give using your mobile device.  
or at <https://onrealm.org/saintpaulsuccmech/-/form/give/now>**

### **ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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**Rev. Allyssa: [allyssaboyer@outlook.com](mailto:allyssaboyer@outlook.com)**

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

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER  
ASCENSION SUNDAY

May 17, 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

THE ORGAN PRELUDE "Reflections on 'O Store Gud'"

Brian Glyncannon

CHORAL INTROIT

\*THE HYMN No 257 "Alleluia! Gracious Jesus!"

\*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

**As Christ ascended to heaven, our spirits are lifted to You this day, O God. Your Spirit fills all the universe. We dwell within Your embrace; we are never left outside of Your loving care. You are with us here, choosing us as apostles, and instructing us in the way we should go. Focus our understanding on the person of Jesus, that all he did and taught might come alive in us. Help us to feel Your presence guiding us, as we welcome Your winds of change in our lives. Amen.**

CALL TO CONFESSION

On this day of mystery and wonder, we reflect on our record as an Easter people. Is there evidence that Christ is alive within us and among us? Is the work of the Spirit obvious to any who observe our words and deeds? Let us admit how things are with us, as we seek God's forgiveness. Let us join in silent prayers of confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: Repentance and forgiveness of sin are proclaimed to all people in the name of Jesus Christ. Forgiveness is God's gift to us, one we do not earn, but are welcome to accept.

**ALL: When we accept the freedom of God's forgiveness and love, we also accept that God's love can and does change us. We are blessed by this opportunity for new life. 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

**THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM**

PRESENTATION OF THE WATER

GATHERING OF WITNESSES

BAPTISMAL ADDRESS

QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES' PARENTS

CONGREGATIONAL ASSENT (unison)

**We, as members of St. Paul's United Church of Christ, and the Church Universal, hear your promises with joy, and gladly welcome you as sisters and brothers in Christ into the family of faith. We covenant with you to share in the hopes, labors, and joys of the Christian life, supported by God's love through this congregation. We will weep with you when you weep, rejoice with you in your rejoicing, and encourage your growth in the new life Christ gives. These things we promise in the name and spirit of Jesus, our Savior. Amen.**

PRAYER OF BAPTISM

ACT OF BAPTISM

PRAYER FOR THE BAPTIZED

CELEBRATORY PROCESSIONAL

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

Acts 1:1-11

THE READING OF THE PSALM

Psalms 93

\*THE HYMN No. 328 "Wonder of Wonders, Here Revealed"

THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

THE GOSPEL READING & MESSAGE:

Luke 24:44-53

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)

Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja. Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja.  
Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja. Hal-le - lu-ja, hal - le - lu - ja.

*Please place your pew pad sheets in the Offering Plate.*

THE OFFERTORY "The Power of the Cross"

Getty

Hand Chimes

\*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)

**Blessing God, even as Christ ascended, You did not leave us alone. While he was blessing them, You were preparing us to carry the story forward, to be Your witnesses, to live in hope and power. In this sacred act of giving, we return a portion of what You have entrusted to us. May these gifts be a blessing to others, as Christ has been to us. Clothe us with courage. Remind us that Your Spirit goes with us. And send us, renewed and ready, to be Your church in the world. Amen.**

\*THE HYMN "O Christ, When You Ascended" (to the tune of no. 245, "The Day of Resurrection")

***O Christ, when you ascended, you took your rightful throne;  
Your time on earth had ended — yet we weren't left alone.  
You reign o'er earth and heaven; your Spirit guides our way.  
Your prayers uphold your people; you lead your church each day.***

***We look at earthly rulers and see what they command:  
We note their years of power, the borders of their land.  
Yet, Lord, you are not bounded by things like time and space;  
Your reign is never-ending, you rule in every place.***

***It's often quite a challenge to follow in your Way;  
We're easily distracted! It's hard, Lord, to obey.  
Sometimes we give you Sundays — an hour, maybe two —  
But your ascension means, Lord, all life belongs to you.***

***One day, O Lord, we'll know you, as we are fully known;  
One day this world of sinners will bow before your throne.  
One day, God's whole creation will sing and praise your name;  
On earth as now in heaven, we'll celebrate your reign.***

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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.*

THE ORGAN POSTLUDE “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty”      Hugh S. Livingston, Jr.

References:

Copley, John Singleton, 1738-1815. The Ascension, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=50177> [retrieved May 13, 2026]. Original source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jesus\\_ascending\\_to\\_heaven.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jesus_ascending_to_heaven.jpg).

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

The Prayer of Dedication is adapted from Offertory Prayer, “Discipleship Ministries: Worship: Ascension of the Lord Year A” by Lisa Hancock, The United Methodist Church, 2026.

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**

Becky Thompson, “In memory of Margo Thompson & our grandparents.”

Tom & Tillie’s Children “In memory & celebration of the lives of Tom and Tillie Valenteen on their Wedding Anniversary on May 22nd”