Welcome to

St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

July 12, 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: Kathy Williams

Ministry of Music
Minister of Music:
Assistant Music Director: Mark A. Dundore
Organist:
Assistant Organist: Patrice G. Miller

Ministry of Audio and Video
Jeffrey A. Dundore

Ministry of Service
Lead Greeter: Don Dupes
Greeters: Dale Thorpe, Susan Miller
Acolyte:
Kids' Place: Rachael Hersh, Crystal Cline
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel
Flower Delivery: Darryl and Winnie Wentz
Counting Team: Dave Scott

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

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

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST July 12, 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 "To Seek Within" Gerald Peterson

CALL TO WORSHIP "Sabbath Poem #VII 1979" by Wendell Berry

What if, in the high, restful sanctuary
That keeps the memory of Paradise,
We're followed by the drone of history
And greed's poisonous fumes still burn our eyes?

Disharmony recalls us to our work.
From Heavenly work of light and wind and leaf
We must turn back into the peopled dark
Of our unraveling century, the grief

Of waste, the agony of haste and noise.
It is a hard return from Sabbath rest
To lifework of the fields, yet we rejoice,
Returning, less condemned in being blessed

By vision of what human work can make:
A harmony between forest and field,
The world as it was given for love's sake,
The world by love and loving work revealed

As given to our children and our Maker.
In that healed harmony the world is used
But not destroyed, the Giver and the taker
Joined, the taker blessed, in the unabused

Gift that nurtures and protects. Then workday
And Sabbath live together in one place.
Though mortal, incomplete, that harmony
Is our one possibility of peace.

When field and woods agree, they make a rhyme
That stirs in distant memory the whole
First Sabbath's song that no largess of time
Or hope so sorrow wholly can recall.

But harmony of earth is Heaven-made,
Heaven-making, is promise and is prayer,
A little song to keep us unafraid,
An earthly music magnified in air.

*THE HYMN No. 66 "O Day of Radiant Gladness"

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

Creator God, guide us in becoming good soil. Help us to tend to our minds, hearts and spirits in ways that build us up so we might be prepared to hear Your Word and produce good fruit. Amen

CALL TO CONFESSION

We can neglect the work we need to do that helps us better hear, understand, and follow Jesus' Words and Ways. Despite being worn out and worn down by the struggles, pressures and responsibilities of life, we can believe we are just fine the way we are. That is rarely true. Let us join in a time of Silent Prayers of Confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: God forgives us and continues to come to us seeking to build us up so we might best receive the gifts God offers us.

ALL: Let us spend the necessary time we need in prayer, in silence, in paying attention to the world around us, in service, in study, in Worship, and in community, so we might build ourselves up into good soil. 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 READING OF HEBREW SCRIPTURE Isaiah 55:10-13

THE READING OF THE PSALM Psalm 65:9-13

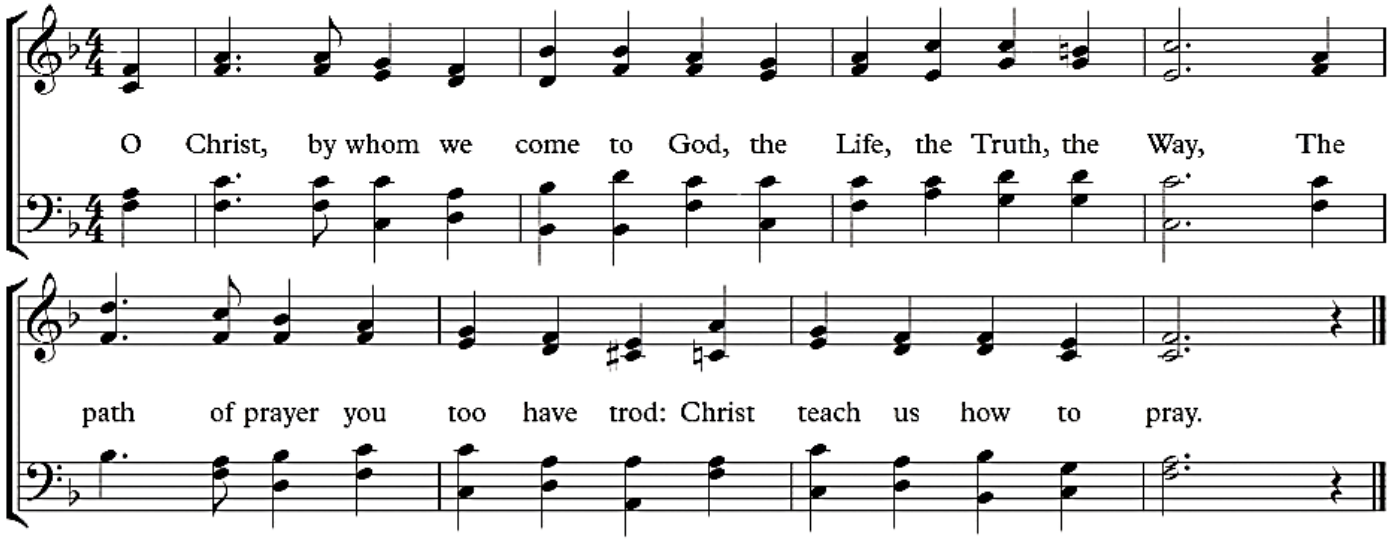
*THE HYMN No. 379 "Come, We Who Love God's Name"

THE RESPONSE:
One: God is Still Speaking.
All: Thanks be to God!

THE GOSPEL READING & MESSAGE: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
"How Do We Become Good Soil?"

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)



Please place your pew pad sheets in the Offering Plate.

THE OFFERTORY soloist, Charles Ricedorf-Reed

*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)

Accept our offering of praise and our offering of ourselves, O God, along with our tithes and contributions toward our church's mission. You have given us life and guidance for living. You have made us partakers of Your own Spirit. We rejoice in the opportunity to receive and share Your Word. May the ministry in which all of us have a share bear much fruit, bringing in an abundant harvest for Your realm. Amen.

*THE HYMN No. 81 "God Be With You"

*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 online livestream ends after the Postlude.
You're welcome to converse in the Narthex after the Three-fold Amen.

THE ORGAN POSTLUDE "A Day for Rejoicing" Lani Smith

References:
The Call to Worship is "VII" found on pages 14-15 of A Timbered Choir: The Sabbath Poems 1979-1997, by Wendell Berry, 1998, Counterpoint.
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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