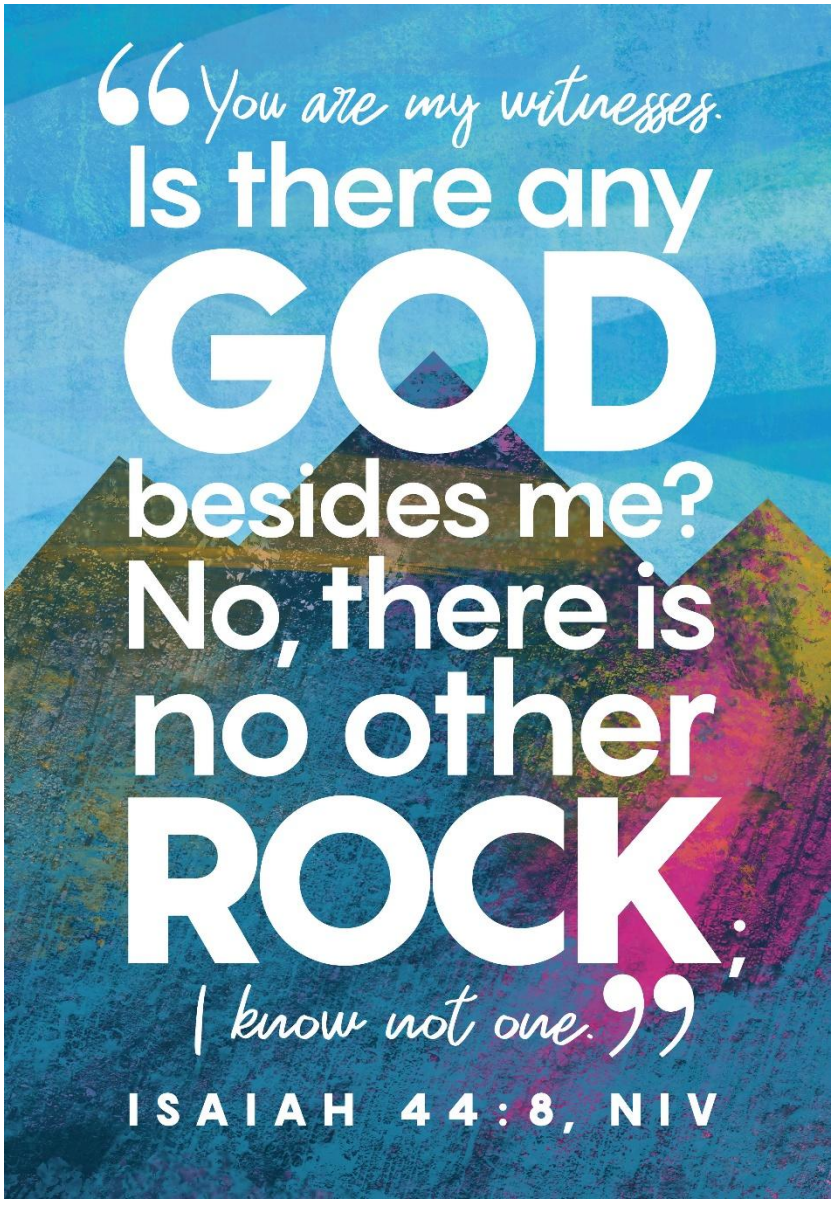
Welcome to

St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

July 19, 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 Aumiller

Ministry of Music

Minister of Music: Ben D. Eisenhour
Assistant Music Director: Mark A. Dundore
Guest Organist: Kelly Murray
Assistant Organist: Patrice G. Miller

Ministry of Audio and Video

Jeffrey A. Dundore

Ministry of Service

Lead Greeter: Mel Shaver-Durham
Greeters: Don Dupes, Steven Stough
Acolyte:
Kids' Place: Jonneke Dundore, Becky Thompson
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel
Flower Delivery: Susan White
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.

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

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST July 19, 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

CALL TO WORSHIP "When I Am Among the Trees" by Mary Oliver

When I am among the trees,
especially the willows and the honey locust,
equally the beech, the oaks and the pines,
they give off such hints of gladness.
I would almost say that they save me, and daily.

I am so distant from the hope of myself,
in which I have goodness, and discernment,
and never hurry through the world
but walk slowly, and bow often.

Around me the trees stir in their leaves
and call out, "Stay awhile."
The light flows from their branches.

And they call again, "It's simple," they say,
"and you, too, have come
into the world to do this, to go easy, to be filled
with light, and to shine."

*THE HYMN No. 68 "God Is Truly With Us"

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

Holy God, help us to remember that You indeed are LORD of all, of all people, of all creation. Your Authority, Your Rule, is not like earthly rulers, and so we need to be reminded to whom we owe our ultimate allegiance and what that means. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

In times such as ours in which those in authority continually act recklessly and with great violence directed at those who they name as enemies, who support other rulers who do the same, and who show little concern for the welfare of those in greatest need, we can lose ourselves in despair and hopelessness. We can begin to believe nothing will ever change for the better. Yet Scripture and our tradition teaches us otherwise. Let us join in a time of Silent Prayers of Confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: God forgives us and forgives our being overwhelmed by the actions of those in authority whose only concerns are their desire for extravagant wealth and power.

ALL: Let us remember the God we worship is a God who does not forget or neglect those in need, those being abused, those being oppressed. God, working through individuals and groups, has raised up those who have been beaten down. We need to believe in that possibility and act. 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.

BLESSING OF THE PRAYER SHAWLS (unison)

May God's grace be upon these shawls…warming, comforting, enfolding, and embracing. May these mantles be safe havens…sacred places of security and well-being…sustaining and embracing in good times as well as difficult ones. May the ones who receive these shawls be cradled in hope, kept in joy, graced with peace, and wrapped in love. Blessed be!

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

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

INVITATION

QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

*CONGREGATIONAL ASSENT

Pastor: This congregation is part of the body of Christ in this time and place. We are Christ's hands, ears, and eyes. We are called to serve Christ as best as we are able and in accordance with the gifts we have been given. Let us say the Congregational Assent together.

Members: We, as members of St. Paul's United Church of Christ, of Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, and the Church Universal, hear your promises with joy and gladly welcome you

as siblings 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

WELCOME & RECEPTION

In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of the congregation of St. Paul's United Church of Christ, of Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, we extend to you, Katie, EvAnn, Rick, Sam, Sarah and Eric, the right hand of Christian love, welcoming you into the company of this local church and the saints of light.

THE GOSPEL READING Matthew 13:24-30

THE READING OF THE PSALM Psalm 86:11-17

*THE HYMN No. 31 "All Things Bright and Beautiful"

THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: Thanks be to God!

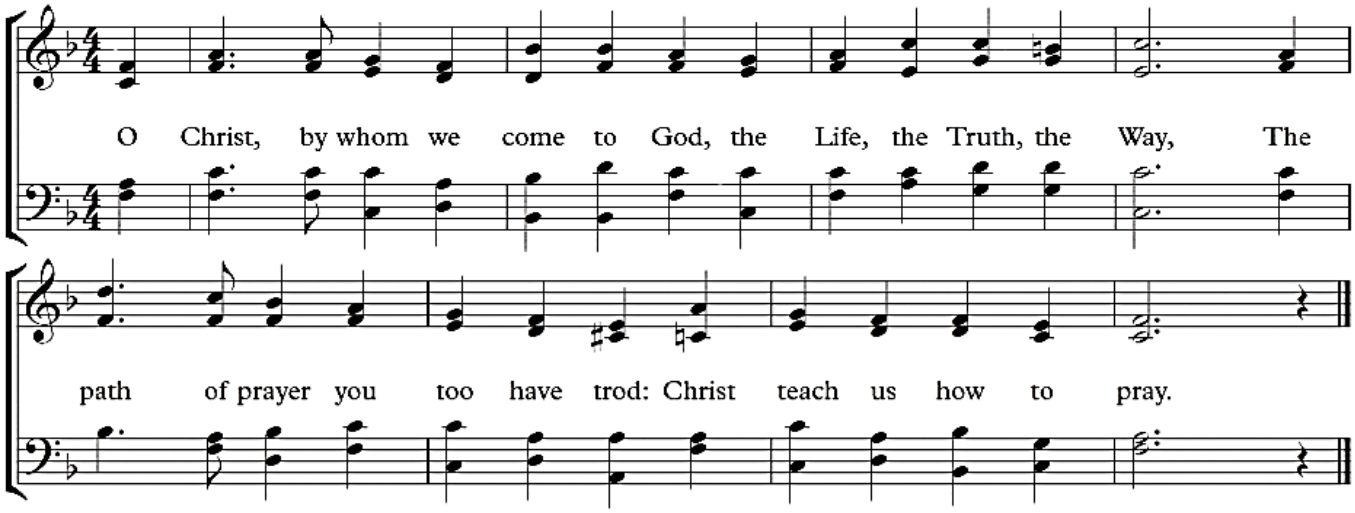
THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING & MESSAGE: Isaiah 44:6-8

"Who or What Do We Put Before God?"

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

*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)

Thank you, God, for the rich heritage of faith we have received from our ancestors. We are grateful that Your Spirit is ever with us, assuring us of Your acceptance and love. May our offerings share this good news with other children of God who have not yet discovered their identity. Amen.

*THE HYMN No. 77 "Lord, Dismiss Us With Your Blessing"

*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

References:
The Call to Worship is a poem written by Mary Oliver, found on page 44 in Poetry of Presence: An Anthology of Mindfulness Poems, edited by Phyllis Cole-Dai and Ruby R. Wilson, 2017, Grayson Books. The poem was originally found in Thirst, by Mary Oliver, 2006, Beacon 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
Jonneke van Olden, "In honor of Greg and Carrie Dundore's 10th anniversary."