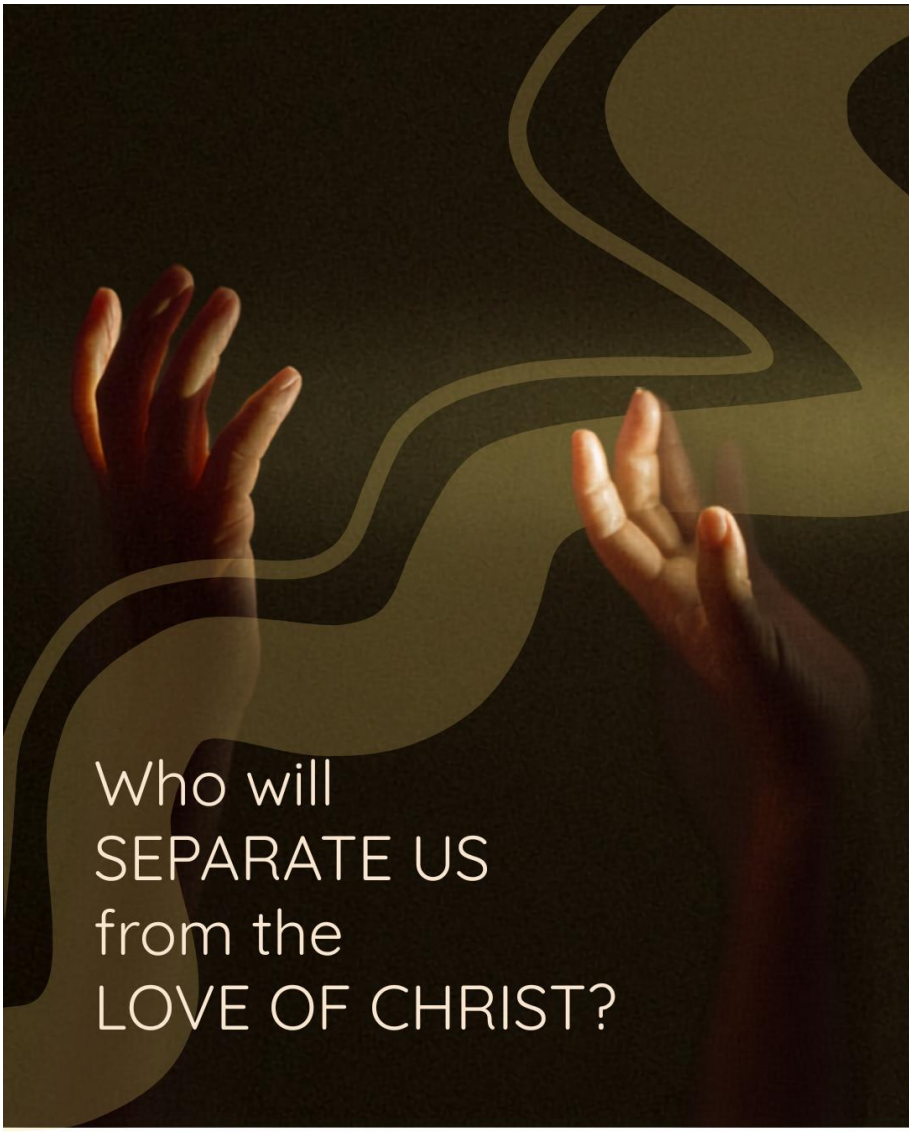
Welcome to

St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

July 26, 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: Paula Boyer

Ministry of Music

Minister of Music: Benjamin D. Eisenhour
Assistant Music Director: Mark A. Dundore
Guest Organist: Dr. Robert Lau
Assistant Organist: Patrice G. Miller

Ministry of Audio and Video

Jeffrey A. Dundore

Ministry of Service

Lead Greeter: Steve Stough
Greeters: Don Dupes, Mark Dundore, Nancy Richey
Acolyte:
Kids' Place: Jonneke Dundore, Barbara Wheeler
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel
Flower Delivery: Joan Moyer
Counting Team: Joan Moyer, David 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

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST July 26, 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 "Cantilena" Robert Lau

CALL TO WORSHIP "You come and go. The doors swing closed" Rainer Maria Rilke

You come and go. The doors swing closed
ever more gently, almost without a shudder.
Of all who move through the quiet houses,
You are the quietest.

We become so accustomed to you,
we no longer look up
when your shadow falls over the book we are reading
and make it glow. For all things
sing you: at times
we just hear them more clearly.

Often when I imagine you
your wholeness cascades into many shapes.
You run like a herd of luminous deer
and I am dark, I am forest.

You are a wheel at which I stand,
whose dark spokes sometimes catch me up,
revolve me nearer to the center.
Then all the work I put my hand to
widens from turn to turn.

*THE HYMN No. 70 "God Is Here! As We Your People Meet"

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

Great God, we recognize we must use our imagination to discern who You are and how You act, for You are beyond our abilities to fully comprehend. Help us to understand that imagination is not just "made up stuff" but that which we think seriously about and which pushes our vision to go beyond what we are used to. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

As it is true that we cannot fully comprehend God, it is also true that we cannot fully comprehend what God's Reign or Kingdom here on earth is and will be like. We are offered glimpses and small pieces, and to understand their depth, we must carefully consider what we hear. Jesus' parables

offer such glimpses, but they are not obvious. We are tempted to let them pass without much thought. 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 offer us the opportunities to listen and consider Jesus' parables, with the hope that our understanding of their teachings will grow.

ALL: Let us immerse ourselves in the parables, allowing their provocation to help us rethink how we view the world and people in it, and their inspiration to lead us into unexpected actions. 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 — 1 Kings 3:5-12

THE READING OF THE EPISTLE — Romans 8:35-39

*THE HYMN No. 617 "Unite and Join Your Cheerful Songs"

THE RESPONSE:

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

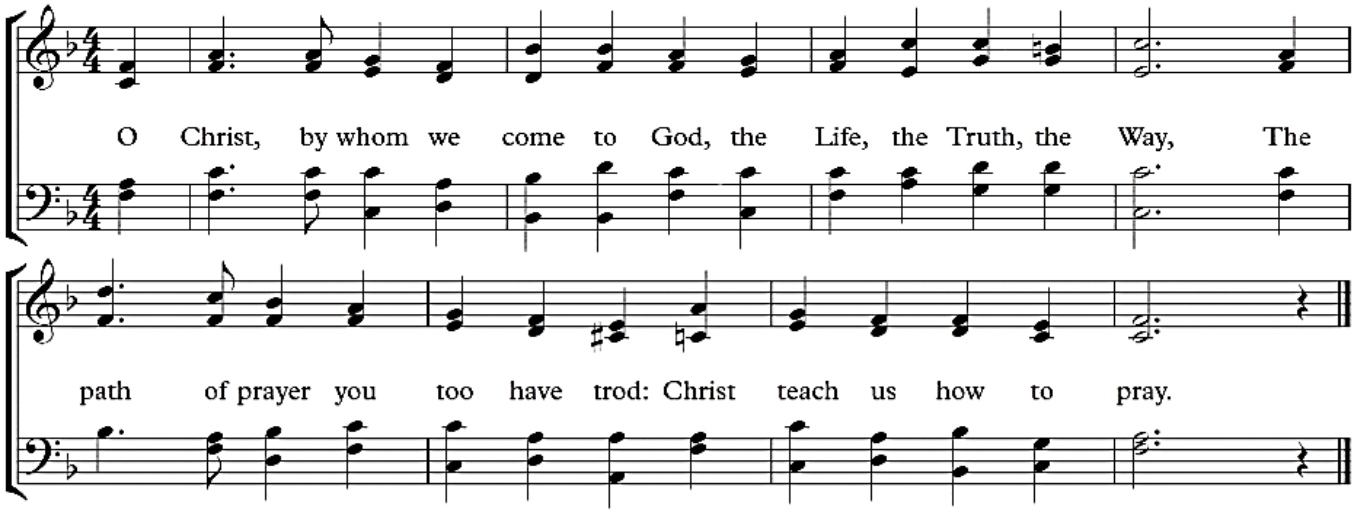
THE GOSPEL READING & MESSAGE: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

"God's Reign as a 'Mosaic"

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 "Jesus, Lead Thou On" Paul Manz

*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)

The gift of Your realm is precious to us, O God. It is worth our greatest efforts and our caring sacrifice. As we search for the best in life, we also want to share our faith discoveries with friends and neighbors. We do that personally and with our giving. May our outreach proclaim to all that nothing can separate us from Your love. We give You thanks that You have entrusted to us all that we are privileged to share. Amen.

*THE HYMN No. 76 "Sent Forth by God's 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 "St. Anthony Chorale" Johannes Brahms

References:
The Call to Worship is found on page 81 in Rilke's Book of Hours: Love Poems to God, by Rilke, translated by Anita Barrows and Joanna Macy, 1996, Riverhead Books.
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
Martha Keith, "In honor of Shirley Keith Knox and Greg Knox's 40th wedding anniversary, and Shirley's 70th birthday."

Consistory Corner

1. The ADA compliant restroom renovations in the Fellowship Hall should be completed by the end of July!
2. Welcome to our new Music Ministry Team: Ben Eisenhour (Director of Music) & Eric Riley (Organist)! We're all looking forward to hearing their new ideas for the beautiful music we enjoy @ St. Paul's 🎶 Thank you to the Search Committee and HR Committee for all of their hard work during the selection process!
3. Consistory is exploring the suggestion to welcome "distance membership" which can include people who have mobility challenges or those that live far away and regularly engage with our online worship.