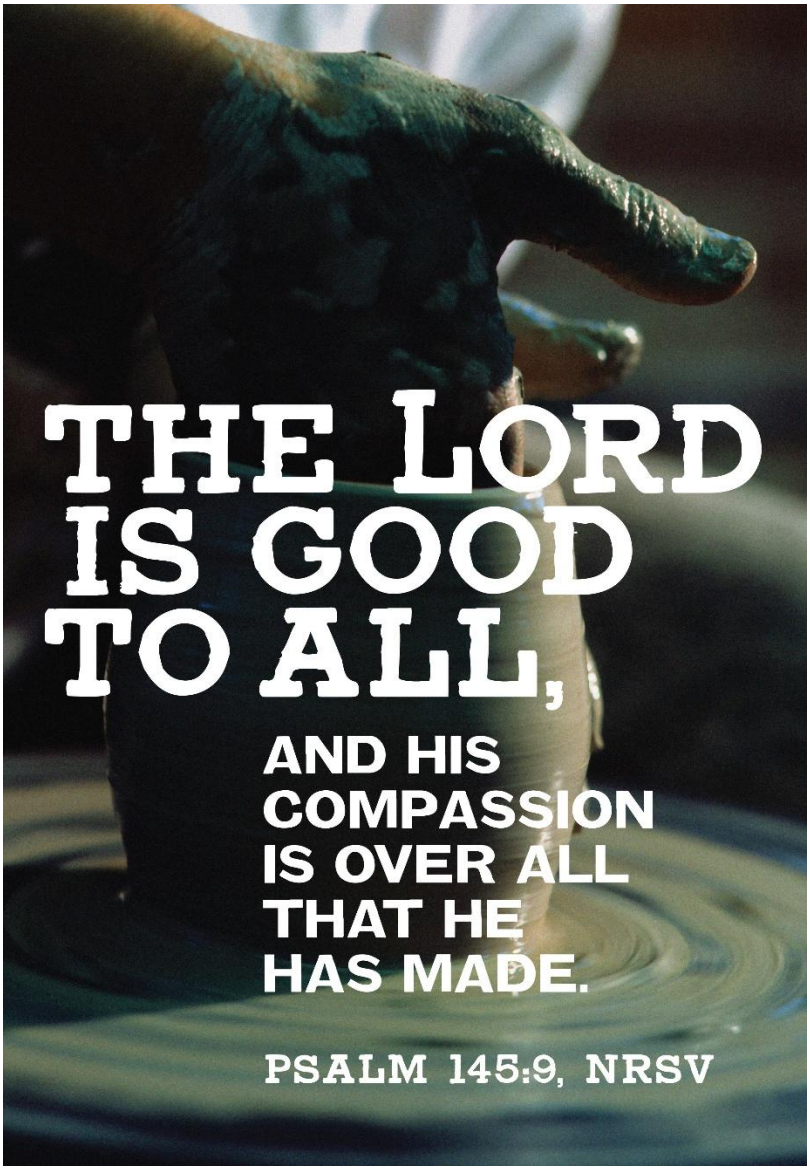
# Welcome to

# St. Paul's United Church of Christ

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

August 2, 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: Nancy Richey

**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: Sue Miller
Greeters: David Scott, Nancy Richey
Acolyte:
Kids' Place: Crystal Cline
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel
Flower Delivery: Bonnie Plymette
Counting Team: 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**

**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

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST August 2, 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 "Breathe on Me, Breath of God" John Andrews

CALL TO WORSHIP "Hurricane" Mary Oliver

It didn't behave
like anything you had
ever imagined. The wind
tore at the trees, the rain
fell for days slant and hard.
The back of the hand
to everything. I watched
the trees bow and their leaves fall
and crawl back into the earth.
As though, that was that.
This was one hurricane
I lived through, the other one
was of a different sort, and
lasted longer. Then
I felt my own leaves giving up and
falling. *The back of the hand to*
*everything.* But listen now to what happened
to the actual trees;
toward the end of that summer they
pushed new leaves from their stubbed limbs.
It was the wrong season, yes,
But they couldn't stop. They
looked like telephone poles and didn't
care. And after the leaves came
blossoms. For some things
there are no wrong seasons.
Which is what I dream of for me.

*THE HYMN No. 63 "Holy Spirit, Truth Divine"

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

**Mysterious God, You come to us in unpredictable ways, act in surprising manners, and leave us changed if we recognize You and listen for Your teaching. Guide us in being aware. Amen.**

CALL TO CONFESSION

When we encounter stories about God, and about Jesus, that do not match our perceptions of who we think They are and how we think They act, or should act, we fail to pay attention to the teaching or lessons that are at the core of such encounters. The limits we place on God and Jesus are dangerous because they can blind us to what is being offered to us. Let us join in a time of Silent Prayers of Confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: God forgives us, and keeps coming to us in surprising ways, hoping we will remain open and awake to such encounters.

**ALL: Wrestling with God, wrestling with different concepts of God, is not easy. Let us engage in such efforts and embrace the changes that emerge. 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***

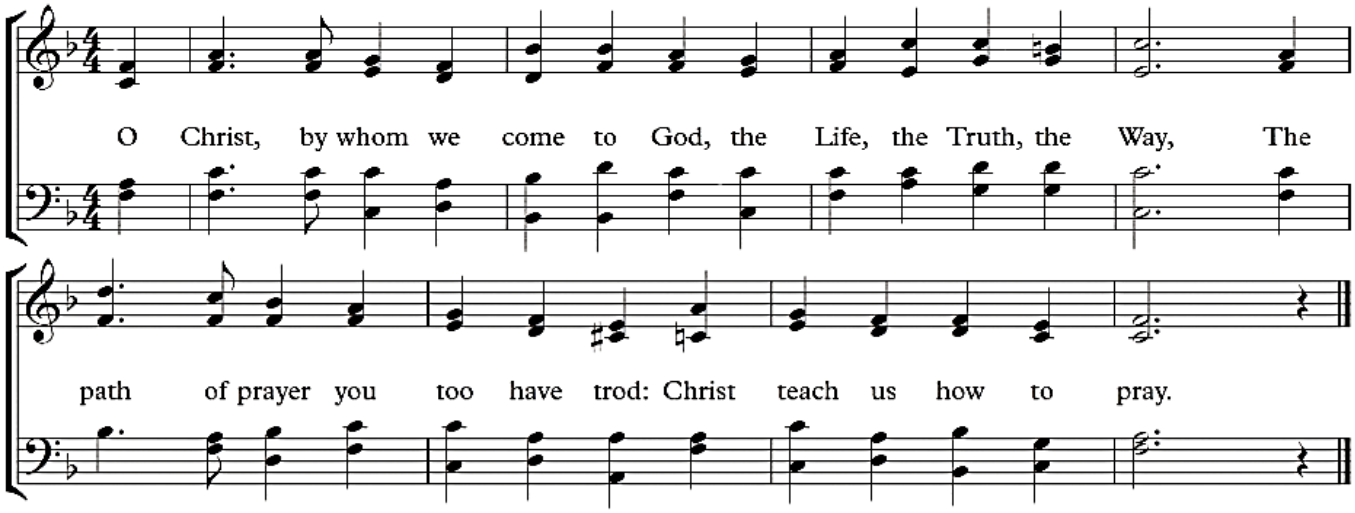
THE GOSPEL READING Matthew 14:13-21

THE READING OF THE PSALM Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21

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

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING & MESSAGE: Genesis 32:22-31
"Wrestling With God Leads to Change"
THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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 all you have given to satisfy our needs. You quench our thirst and alleviate our hungers when we turn to you. You turn scarcity into plenty and give us the opportunity to help others. May our offerings proclaim your goodness and mercy. May they be devoted to extending the beloved community of your people. Keep our words and actions attuned to your will, that we may offer to all what they need from your hand. Amen.**

*THE HYMN No. 321 “Break Now The Bread of Life”

## THE SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

THE INVITATION

One: God be with you.
**All: And also with you.**
One: Lift up your hearts.
**All: We lift them up to God.**
One: Let us give thanks to God.
**All: It is good to give God thanks and praise.**

PASTORAL PRAYER AND 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.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

DISTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS

*We gather both in person and in Spirit. For those who are present in the sanctuary, greeters will pass out bread (all the bread is gluten-free), and then red wine and white grape juice. They will bring the trays to you. Please hold the elements until all have been served; we will eat and then drink together. All are welcome to participate. Thank you.*

*For those of you joining us via livestream, we hope you have some bread and wine or juice of your choice before you. We trust that God is powerful enough to extend God’s blessing upon these communion elements, even as we and they are scattered in geographic space.*

THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (unison)

**Holy God, we give You thanks for the miracle and wonder of this meal. We give You thanks for Your coming to us in the person of Jesus, and for Jesus’ willingness to offer his whole self for our benefit. We can see how we can best live our lives. We can believe all “deaths,” those losses, endings, and struggles in this life, and the ones at the end of our physical lives, are not the final word. We can trust that Your Spirit is within all of us, and always will be. May the gifts of this table always remind us of the gifts You have given us all. 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 "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing" Robert Lau

References:
The Call to Worship to is a poem on pages 21-22 in A Thousand Mornings: Poems, by Mary Oliver, 2021, The Penguin 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
Don and Merikay Wood, "In appreciation and with of good health to our friends."

**CHICKEN PICKING**

The Bazaar Kitchen Committee is planning its first 'Chicken Picking Day' for Monday, August 17th from 9:00 a.m. until noon. We always have a good time together--and we do provide on-the-job training if you've never helped before! Please sign up either on the church's website or on the sign-up sheet on the Common Bulletin Board. If you have any questions, please contact Dave/Patty Scott at dsps5221@comcast.net or text to 717-805-2632. THANK YOU!!

**REV. ALLYSSA WILL BE ON VACATION JULY 31-AUGUST 23. PLEASE LET REV. JOHN KNOW IF YOU HAVE PASTORAL NEEDS.**

**BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS**
Children, youth, and adults: Bring your backpacks, bookbags, briefcases, lunchboxes, or any other baggage you use for school or work, to worship on Sunday, August 23rd. We will offer a blessing of the bags as a reminder that God's peace and presence will be with all people as they go back to school and work.

**SUNDAY SUNDAES!**
Join us for an Ice Cream Social on Sunday, August 23rd, following worship. Chill out with us as we celebrate summer with cool treats and get ready for back-to-school. Everyone is invited!

**POLLYANNAS**
Pollyannas will be having their next lunch meeting 11:30 am, Tuesday, Aug 25 at Perkins on Erford Rd. We will be having our annual mystery auction. Please bring a wrapped item to bid on, with all proceeds going to our child sponsorship. Please contact Bonnie Plymette if you are planning to attend.

**GATHER THE SPIRIT FOR JUSTICE TOILETIRES COLLECTION**
Each Saturday morning, while the Gather the Spirit kitchen is serving a great breakfast, our Allison Hill neighbors line up for just two toiletry items each. Donations are down, costs and the temperature are rising. Your help would be so much appreciated.
The items we most need are:

- dish washing soap (Dawn, Ajax, etc.)
- large bars of soap
- toothpaste tubes
- laundry pods (we repackage into bags of 5)
- shampoo/ body wash
- cleaning spray
- lotions
- toilet paper/tissue boxes
- wipes
- hand sanitizer