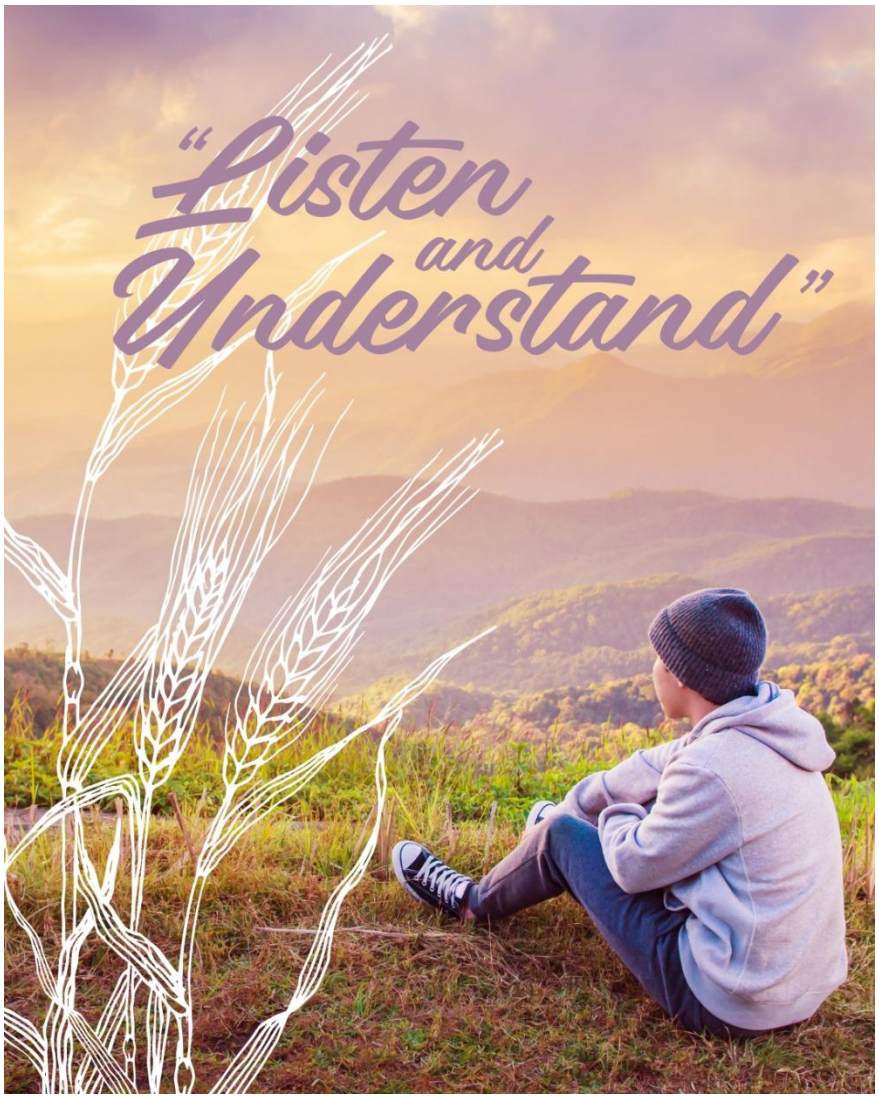
# Welcome to

# St. Paul's United Church of Christ

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

August 16, 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: Lois Ritter

**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: Daniella Benfer
Greeters:
Acolyte:
Kids' Place: Maggie Gassert, Barbara Wheeler-Bride
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel
Flower Delivery:
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

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST August 16, 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 "Andante Moderato" Gabriel Faurẻ

CALL TO WORSHIP "Words" Jeff Brown

**Words – so powerful.**
They can **crush** a heart,
or **heal** it.
They can **shame** a soul,
or **liberate** it.
They can **shatter** dreams,
or **energize** them.
They can **obstruct** connection,
or **invite** it.
They can **create** defenses,
or **melt** them.
**We have to use words wisely.**

*THE HYMN No. 23 "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy"

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

**Loving God, we are experiencing more regularly the use of words to demean, to intimidate, and to marginalize others by those in power. Guide us in using words that lift up, offer peace and show love. Amen.**

CALL TO CONFESSION

While sticks and stones hurt us, so do words. Words used to hurt others, lies told to deflect blame or inaccurately build one up, mark individuals as "defiled," living life in ways that are the opposite of God's desires. Sometimes we forget that. Sometimes we allow others to get away with that. Let us join in a time of Silent Prayers of Confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: God forgives us and hopes we not only refrain from using words to harm others but work to amend any harm we cause by their use.

**ALL: Let us recognize the power of the words we use, how they can both tear down and build up. Let us remember God is aware of this. 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 56:1-2, 6-8

THE READING OF THE PSALM Psalm 67

*THE HYMN No. 388 “Help Us Accept Each Other”

THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

**All: Thanks be to God!**

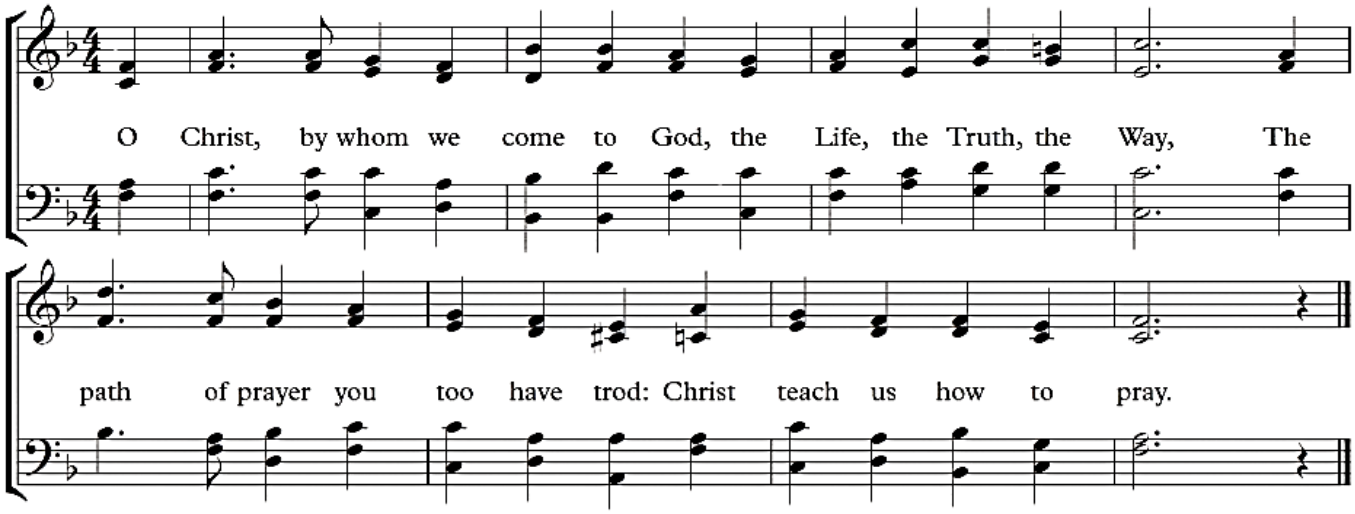
THE GOSPEL SCRIPTURE READING & MESSAGE: Matthew 15:10-28

"What Defiles Us?"

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 "Every Time I Feel the Spirit" spiritual

EvAnn Hawley, accordion

*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)

**As You have blessed us, O God, we are eager to share. May we offer more than crumbs from Your table. May none be sent away from the blessings You intend for all. We want our offerings to preserve and extend life to Your children, here in this place and wherever our influence can reach. What is in the offering plates is only a part of what we dedicate ourselves to do and be that Your reign of unity and Peace may come. Amen.**

*THE HYMN No. 533 "Children of God"

*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 "My Country, Tis of Thee" Humphrey Turner

References:
The Call to Worship by Jeff Brown is from a plaque put out by "ButterfliesOfInspiration.com" and included in a reflection by Yecheilyah, found\ on thepbsblog.com/2014/11/06/power-of-words/
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
Darryl & Winnie Wentz, "In honor of our Great Granddaughter, Nora Kate' s first birthday."