Welcome to

St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

August 30, 2026

GOD IS STILL SPEAKING

NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE, OR WHERE YOU ARE ON LIFE'S JOURNEY YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

Worship Leadership

The Rev. John J. Ward-Diorio
Preacher: The Rev. Allyssa A. Boyer
Lector: Paula Boyer

Ministry of Music

Minister of Music: Benjamin Eisenhour
Assistant Music Director: Mark A. Dundore
Assistant Organist: Patrice G. Miller
GospelSlide Trombone Ensemble: Ralph Bailets, Dale Groome, Aaron Keister, Jeff Schwartz, Mark Dundore (trombones), Bill Kauffman (percussion)

Ministry of Audio and Video

Jeffrey A. Dundore

Ministry of Service

Lead Greeter: Daniella Benfer
Greeters: Crystal Cline
Acolyte:
Kids' Place: Becky Thompson, LidiaAnn Edwards
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel
Flower Delivery: Patrice Miller
Counting Team: Joan Moyer

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

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST August 30, 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 PRELUDE "The Water is Wide" traditional

CALL TO WORSHIP
One: Welcome, friend and stranger,
All: Welcome, honored guest.
One: We gather as a community to worship God,
All: To be reminded of God's goodness,
One: To be reminded of the call to be a part of that goodness.
All: Let us worship God.

*THE HYMN No. 312 "We Love Your Realm, O God"

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)
Pour your light, Holy Spirit of God, into our hearts and minds. Help us to know more clearly and grasp more fully the Good News of Jesus. And help us then to know how to share it. We ask this through Jesus Christ, who with You and the Creator, are One God. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION
Too often we are complainers instead of seekers. We proclaim our innocence and justify our anger when so much in life does not go the way we had hoped. We blame God for conditions entrusted to our stewardship. We become stumbling blocks, rather than facilitators, of God's Beloved Community. Let us seek reconciliation with God. Let us join in silent prayers of confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: An altar, a pew, a seat on the bus, a kitchen table: all become holy places when we confess before God. Today, in this holy place, God meets us, hears us, and forgives us.

All: In this holy place, God empowers us with genuine love to help heal a hurting world. We seek to be a holy, loving people.

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 16:21-28

THE READING OF THE PSALM Psalm 112:1, 4-10

*THE HYMN No. 170 “Your Ways Are Not Our Own”

THE RESPONSE:

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

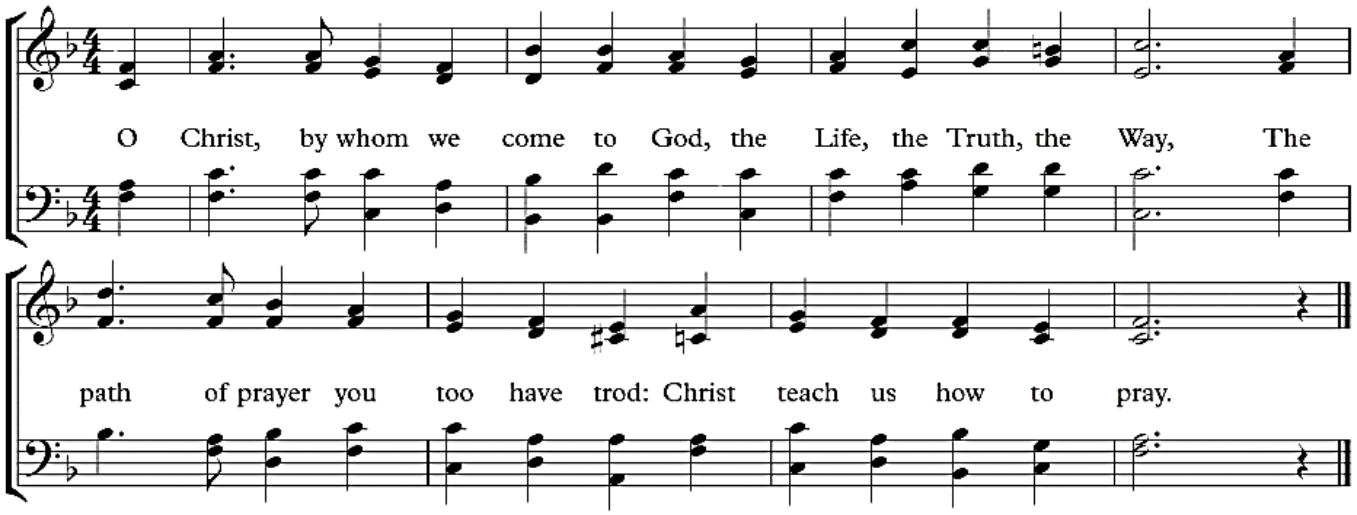
THE EPISTLE READING & MESSAGE: Romans 12:9-21

"Hold Fast to What is Good"

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 "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms" arr. Camp Kirkland

*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)

May our offerings be an expression of genuine love that reflects your love for us, O God. We seek to honor You as we serve one another in Christ's name. We reach out to overcome evil with good. Direct our use of the resources You entrust to us that we may not only contribute to

the needs of the saints but also devote our lives to the building of a peaceable worldwide community in which all are valued. Amen.

*THE HYMN No. 606 “Nearer, My God, to 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 POSTLUDE “Soli Deo Gloria” Williams Himes, arr. Mick Cochran

References:
The Call to Worship was written by Beth Merrill Neel on her blog, “Hold Fast to What Is Good.” Used with permission.
The Prayer of Invocation is from the Diocese of Zululand, South Africa, in “Prayer Encircling the World: An International Anthology,” Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.
The Call to Confession and Prayer of Dedication are adapted from “Taught by Love” by Lavon Bayler, Cleveland, OH: United Church Press, 1998.
The Words of Assurance are from Kwasi I. Kena, “The Africana Worship Book: Year A, Discipleship Resources, 2006, p. 156.
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

Susan Gabriel, “In memory of mother, Joyce Carpenter, and friend, Raquel Westfall.”