

**ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**Sunday, May 18, 2025**



# Loving Hearts

**John 13:31-35**

**1235 Summer Hill Road, Auburn, PA 17922**

**Pastor:** Rev. Ken McDowell, cell phone: 610-207-4783

**Church Office Phone:** 570-754-7225

**Office Hours:** Monday – Thursday 9am–2pm; Closed Friday

**Church Email:** [summerhillucc@gmail.com](mailto:summerhillucc@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.summerhillucc.com](http://www.summerhillucc.com)

**Livestream:** [www.facebook.com/summerhillucc](https://www.facebook.com/summerhillucc)

1782  
Sunday, May 18, 2025

243 YEARS OF FAITHFUL SERVICE

2025  
10:30am

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Rev. Ken McDowell, Pastor

Music Director- Rae Ann Borger  
Organist- Colin Andrew

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

This morning we remember in prayer **St. Paul's, Mahanoy City** from our Schuylkill Association Prayer Calendar.

Please read the announcements that are in this downloadable bulletin, as well as those we post on our Facebook site, our emails, and our phone calls, and then help spread the word to those who do not have access to any of those messages.

INVOCATION

GATHERING FOR THE WORD

PRELUDE

*The congregation may stand.*

SOLEMN DECLARATION.....Sung "Amen"

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: From the highest heavens to the deepest seas,

**People: let all creation praise the Lord.**

Pastor: From the rising sun to the waning moon,

**People: let all creatures praise the Lord.**

Pastor: From the new heaven and new earth,

**People: let everything that draws breath praise the Lord.**

Pastor: Come! Let us worship. Amen.

OPENING HYMN NO. 23....."All Creatures of Our God and King"

CALL TO CONFESSION

CONFESSION OF SIN (Unison)

**Teach our hearts to love, O God, as you would have us love. Train our eyes to see, Holy One, as you would have us see. For we yearn to love without prejudice and accept others without judgment. Make your home among us, for we long to be made one and whole. Amen.**

MOMENT OF PERSONAL CONFESSION

KYRIE

Pastor: Lord, have mercy upon us.

**People: Lord, have mercy upon us.**

Pastor: Christ, have mercy upon us.

**People: Christ, have mercy upon us.**

Pastor: Lord, have mercy upon us.

**People: Lord, have mercy upon us.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: When we are thirsty, God renews our souls with living waters.

**People: We are the beloved of God and God's care will always surround us with living waters.**

Pastor: The One who made heaven and earth is with us, bringing love and life.

**People: The Lord our God is among us now, renewing us in faithful love.**

Pastor: Drink deeply, knowing that in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Amen!

## THE GLORIA PATRI

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, it is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*

*The congregation may be seated.*

## ENGAGING THE WORD

### CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

### PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

READING OF THE WORD.....Lector, Jeff Palerino

Acts of the Apostles: Acts 11:1-18 (Page 958)

Psalm: Psalm 148 (Read responsively)

Lector: Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!

**People: Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!**

Lector: Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars!

**People: Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!**

Lector: Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created.

**People: He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.**

Lector: Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps,

**People: fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!**

Lector: Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!

**People: Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!**

Lector: Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!

**People: Young men and women alike, old and young together!**

Lector: Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven.

**People: He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful, for the people of Israel who are close to him.**

**All: Praise the Lord!**

Epistle: Book of Revelation 21:1-6 (Page 1085)

Gospel: John 13:31-35 (Page 938)

Lector: This is the Word of God for the people of God.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE.....“Let Thy word abide in us, O Lord.”

SENIOR CHOIR ANTHEM.....“The Love of Christ” by Robert Sterling

SERMON.....“Love Is Blind”

## RESPONDING TO THE WORD

*The congregation may remain seated.*

*Ushers will receive tithes and offerings at this time.*

HYMN OF REFLECTION NO. 589.....“O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee”

*The congregation may stand.*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH.....Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
 eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,  
 true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.  
 Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven:  
 by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.  
 For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.  
 On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;  
 he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
 He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.  
 We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
 who proceeds from the Father and the Son.  
 With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets.  
 We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
 We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
 We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

*The congregation may be seated.*

#### PASTORAL PRAYER

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Let us pray.

#### SILENT PRAYER

#### 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.**

#### PRAYER RESPONSE

*Hear our prayer, O Lord; Hear our prayer, O Lord; Hear our prayer, O Lord, And grant us Thy peace. Amen.*

#### CALL TO OFFERING

*The congregation may stand.*

#### OFFERING RESPONSE & DEDICATION.....DOXOLOGY

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

#### OFFERING PRAYER

### GOING WITH THE WORD

#### COMMISSION

Pastor: As you leave this place, know that our worship is only beginning.

**People: We go to love others as God has first loved us.**

Pastor: Go forth to serve. Go forth to love.

**People: We go with God's love and blessing.**

#### BENEDICTION

THE THREEFOLD AMEN.....*Amen. Amen. Amen.*

CLOSING HYMN NO. 603....."In Christ There Is No East or West"

## SILENT MEDITATION

## POSTLUDE

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*Portions of today's worship resources were reproduced or adapted from the UCC's Book of Worship, Worship Connection by Nancy C. Townley on MinistryMatters.com, and by B.J. Beu from the 2025 Abingdon Worship Annuals edited by Mary J. Scifres and B. J. Beu.*

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-The altar flowers and bulletins are in memory of mother, Mary Ella Hoy.

-Offering on Sunday, May 11, 2025: \$2,693.00

-Weekly envelope & plate budget for 2025: \$3,285.91

**-The May Communion offering supports Phoebe Ministries. The June Communion offering is designated to the Pastor's Emergency Relief Fund.**

**-In order to help fund VBS, a sandwich sale will be held this Saturday and Sunday, May 24 and 25.** The cost is \$6 each and **orders are due TODAY.** Order forms with information are on the bulletin table.

**-There will be a blessing of the bikes and a motorcycle ride following worship TODAY.** The third Sunday of the month as "Bring your motorcycle to church" Sunday. Spread the word, invite your friend, and join us for some fun and fellowship. If you would like to be notified of other rides throughout the summer, please notify the church office to have your name added to the "Biker" email list!

**-There will be a Cub Scout Dining Out day fundraiser at the Friedensburg Country Restaurant this Tuesday, May 20.** There are tickets on the table by the bulletin basket which are good for the entire day. The Pack will receive 20% of each order. Please speak to Lorna Palerino or contact the church office for more info.

-There will be a **Consistory Meeting this Tuesday, May 20** at 7pm in the conference room.

**-Red geranium order forms are available on the table by the bulletin basket. The geraniums will be available to pick up following worship on Pentecost Sunday, June 8.** The cost is \$7.50 per flower and **orders are due next Sunday, May 25.** The order forms and money can be given to Ardith Moyer or the church office.

**-Join us for a Service of Remembrance at the Veterans Memorial next to the Summer Hill Cemetery next Sunday, May 25** at 10:00am. We will join together with our neighbors from the St. Paul's Lutheran Church. This is a wonderful and very meaningful way to begin our holiday week, and start off summer on the right note. Children are more than welcome to bring flowers to lay at the memorial.

**-Next Sunday, May 25 is Youth Sunday.** Come out and support our Confirmation students as they lead our worship service that day.

**-We are continuing our SUMMER FOOD DRIVE CHALLENGE! (Now through May 31<sup>st</sup> with donations due Sunday, June 8)** There are always families struggling to put food on the table. The Food Pantry plays a significant role in meeting this need. However, with changes to programs and funding, the Food Pantry needs

our help as well! PLEASE CONSIDER TAKING ON THIS CHALLENGE!!! Summertime can be particularly difficult for families. Children are home from school and not receiving school breakfasts and lunches. **St Paul's - LET'S DO OUR PART! 31 DAYS, 31 HOUSEHOLDS, 31 FOOD ITEMS**, and we can provide nearly 1000 items to help families this summer. Please pick up a flyer in the Narthex of the church for a guide to 31 items which will help provide some nutritious meals for local families this summer! ANY DONATION WILL HELP but let's see if we can again MEET THE CHALLENGE! Contact Brook Koch-Guers for more information or to schedule a pickup of your donation at 570-449-0825.

**-VBS 2025 is fast approaching! "True North- Trusting Jesus is a Wild World" will be held June 16-20** from 6-8:30pm each day. All children 4-12 are welcome to attend. Community posters and registration forms are available on the table in the narthex. **Be sure to register now.** More information can be found in the May newsletter and on the members of St. Paul's Facebook page. Please speak to Bill Reber for more information.

**-There will be a Pennsylvania Southeast Conference Spring meeting on Saturday, May 31** at Zwingli UCC, Souderton. Please see Pastor Ken for more information.

**-Our summer worship schedule will begin on Sunday, June 1.** During the months of June, July and August, worship will be held at 9:30am on Sunday mornings. There will be no Sunday school during this time. Worship will resume at 10:30am on Sunday, September 7.

-Anyone interested in learning more about our Sunday School program is welcome and invited to attend the **Board of Christian Education Meeting on Tuesday, June 3** at 6:30pm. The meeting will take place downstairs in room B1. Please speak to Laura Carll, any Sunday School teachers, Pastor Ken or the church office for more information.

**-There will be a Vacation Bible School Planning Meeting on Tuesday, June 3** at 7:00pm in downstairs room B1. Anyone interested in helping at VBS, which will be held June 17-21, is invited to attend. Please speak to Bill Reber for more information.

**-It's time for the 3rd Annual St Paul's UCC Golf Outing.** Gavin, Gage, and Chase Guers are again coordinating an afternoon of fellowship and golf at Hidden Valley Golf Course. **This year it will be held on Sunday, June 29th**, beginning at 1:30 pm. We will go to Buddy's Log Cabin in Pine Grove for Ice Cream following golf. Please RSVP by signing up on the signup sheet in the church's Narthex or by calling or texting Gavin Guers at 570-789-4239 or Brook Koch-Guers at 570-449-0825. The cost is \$40 for adults and \$20 for those 15 and under. We hope you'll join us! Whether you're a seasoned pro or a newbie, there's fun for all on the golf course! (and who doesn't like ice cream for dessert BEFORE dinner) **DEADLINE TO SIGN UP IS JUNE 8TH:** (We may be able to accommodate a few additional golfers after the deadline, but the golf course has requested numbers by the 8th.)

**-Pentecost and Confirmation Sunday: On Sunday, June 8** we will celebrate the birthday of the church and confirm the baptismal vows of our Confirmands as we welcome them into church membership.

**-Join us for conversation, along with a cup of coffee and light refreshments following our 10:30am worship service on Pentecost Sunday, June 8.** We will gather in the rear of the Sanctuary the second Sunday of each month. Catch up with old friends, make new ones, and stay up to date on everything happening at St. Paul's. We have been having a wonderful response to our monthly fellowship times! Donations of treats (cookies, brownies, cupcakes, muffins, etc.)

**-On Tuesday, June 10, the Schuylkill Haven Borough will host the 18th Annual Senior Citizen Appreciation Day and Picnic** at the Island Park Pavilion from 4-7pm. All persons 60 years of age or older who live within the

Schuylkill Haven Borough, are members of churches from the Schuylkill Haven and Vicinity Council of Churches or are a member of the Schuylkill Haven Senior Citizens Organization are invited to attend, free of charge. There will be hamburgers, hot dogs, pasta salad, ice cream, watermelon and lots of goodies! There will also be health screenings, information booths, prize bingo and entertainment. RSVP is appreciated at 570-385-1313. More information is available on the flyer on the church bulletin board.

**-Calling All Graduates: During our 9:30am worship service on Sunday, June 29, we will be recognizing and congratulating the graduates from our congregation.** If you or someone you know is graduating from High School, College, a Technical School or some other institution of higher learning, **please contact the church office by June 15**, so that we may recognize them for their fantastic achievement.

**-The Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry** is in great need and accepts all non-perishable food items and paper products. Items can be dropped off at the church during the week or placed in the shopping cart at the back of the sanctuary. **NO OUTDATED FOOD PLEASE.** **We will be helping on Monday, June 16** at 8:30am and **Friday, June 20** at 12pm. Please speak to Verna Ebling, Bill Reber or the church office if you would like to help/ donate.

**-Outdoor worship services will be held once a month, the fourth Sunday of the month.** Grab your lawn chair or favorite blanket and join us once again amidst the beauty of God's creation. **Our first outdoor service will be held on the front church lawn on Sunday, June 22** at 9:30am. We will also worship outdoors on **Sunday, July 27** and **Sunday, August 24**. Please note: in case of inclement weather, the services will be moved inside and held in the sanctuary.

**-Sunday School Raffle: Every week that our youth participate in Sunday School, they will get a raffle ticket that will be entered into a drawing for a prize.** Drawings will then happen quarterly at the Youth Group Events. (winners do not need to be present) Please speak to Laura Carll (484-269-4405) for more information.

-Following many natural disasters, **Clean-Up Buckets** provide those affected with the essentials to begin getting their lives back in order. The Schuylkill Association, working with the UCC Disaster Ministries, helps provide these kits through Church World Services anywhere they are needed, to include right here in Schuylkill County. Our Association currently has over sixty empty five gallon buckets that need to be filled. **If you would like to help in this ministry by coordinating the filling of some of the buckets or can donate materials or money to buy the required materials, please contact the church office.** Learn more at <https://cwskits.org/>.

**-Our members, friends and visitors give their offerings and donations to the church in many different ways,** to include electronically via apps like [Tithe.ly](https://www.tithe.ly/) and bank transfers. To help accommodate the varied ways of giving, we have an offering box in the narthex as well as offering plates by the pews in the rear of the sanctuary to place Sunday morning offerings as you enter or leave the sanctuary. We will also have two ushers accept offerings during the Hymn of Reflection after the sermon as another option. Thank you for your financial support of the ministries of St. Paul's and your faithful giving in response to what God has given us!

**-In an effort to keep our records up to date,** please contact the church office if you have had a change to any of your information, to include phone or cell phone numbers, email or home addresses, or any family updates.

**-When you or a loved one is sick or in the hospital for an extended stay,** do not assume that the pastor will know you are there. Please call or email the church office so that Pastor Ken can provide you with spiritual care!

**-Prayer is Powerful!** Please call or email the church office with your prayer concerns. We believe in the power of prayer and want to pray for you. **We have a prayer concerns email group AND also a prayer phone call chain for anyone interested.** Please contact the church office if you would like to be added to these lists.

**PRAYER CONCERNS:** All those earnestly seeking God's help in difficult times, Military personnel & National leaders, ***Ron McDowell***, Garrett Guers, Kenny Brown, Scott Dickinson, Kathy Martin, Cathy Krause, Brandon Wright, Donald Borger Sr.

**CANCER PATIENTS:** Marie Bleu, Cindy Boyer, Deb Dimitri, Alex DuVee, John Eckert, Glennis Eifert, Thomas Galligan, Meg Goodwin, Rebecca Henderson, Lisa Hoynoski, Sherri Jo Jennar, Deb Kemmerling, Joan Krause, Lori Krug, Carol Mallory, Tara Moss, Tom Nagle, Judy Ohl, Nick Reading, Pat Reading, Jen Semenco, Kathy Smith, Jim Thompson

**FOR THE WEEK OF SUNDAY, MAY 18**

**Sunday, May 18 \**"Ride your motorcycle to church Sunday"***

**\*Sandwich Sale orders due**

-Blessing of the bikes and motorcycle ride following worship

4:00 PM -Cub Scout Meeting

**Tuesday, May 20**

-Cub Scout Dining Out Fundraiser at the Friedensburg Country Restaurant

7:00 PM -Consistory Meeting

**Wednesday, May 21**

7:00 PM -Senior Choir Rehearsal

**Saturday, May 24**

10:00-11:00 AM -Sandwich Sale Pick-up

**Sunday, May 25 \*Red Geraniums orders due**

9:15 AM -Sunday School

10:00 AM -Memorial Service at the Veterans Memorial on the Summer Hill Cemetery

10:30 AM -Worship led by youth of our Confirmation class

-Sandwich sale pick-up following worship

**\*Lectionary Readings for next week:**

Acts 16:9-15

Psalm 67

Revelation 21:10, 22—22:5

John 14:23-29 or John 5:1-9