

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Sunday, July 19, 2026

Parables of the Kingdom
MATTHEW 13

The Gospel  According to
MATTHEW

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
Website: www.summerhillucc.com
Livestream: www.facebook.com/summerhillucc

1782

Sunday, July 19, 2026

244 YEARS OF FAITHFUL SERVICE

2026

9:30am

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Rev. Ken McDowell, Pastor

Music Director- Rae Ann Borger

Organist- Colin Andrew

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

This morning we remember in prayer **St. Peter's (Locust Valley)** from our Schuylkill Association Prayer Calendar.

Please read the announcements that are in this bulletin, the online bulletin, as well as what we post on Facebook, emails, and 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: God knows us better than we know ourselves.

People: Even in the darkest places, the light of God's love is there.

Pastor: There is nowhere we can flee from God's presence.

People: In the heavens and in the depths, the Holy One abides with us.

Pastor: We are God's children, serving the Lord from generation to generation.

People: God is the one who keeps promises and who provides for us wherever we go.

Pastor: How awesome is this place!

People: This is God's house and the gateway to the heavens. Amen.

OPENING HYMN NO. 358....."Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

CALL TO CONFESSION

CONFESSION OF SIN (Unison)

Holy God, we yearn to grow closer to you this day. When our spirits grow unsettled, meet us in our need. When we seek isolation from the rancor of our time, remind us how the wheat and weeds grow together until the harvest. When we feel captive to the pressures of this world, remind us that we need not succumb to our fears, for you have given us a spirit of adoption as children of God. Pursue us and hold us near, Gentle One, that we may truly be set free. 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: The one who hems us in, behind and before, loves us with a fierce tenderness.

People: The one who pursues us to the farthest limit of the sea, fills us with peace and grace beyond measure.

Pastor: Rejoice to the Lord, for we are the beloved forgiven children of God. 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, Mike Fessler

Old Testament: Genesis 28:10-19a (Page 23)

Psalm: Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24 (Read responsively)

Lector: O LORD, you have searched me and known me.

People: You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away.

Lector: You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways.

People: Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely.

Lector: You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.

People: Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.

Lector: Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?

People: If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.

Lector: If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,

People: even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast.

Lector: If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night,"

People: even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you.

Lector: Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts.

People: See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Epistle: Romans 8:12-25 (Page 983)

Gospel: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43 (Page 847)

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."

SERMON....."What's a Weed?"

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

The congregation may remain seated.

Ushers will receive tithes and offerings at this time.

HYMN OF REFLECTION NO. 385....."Search Me, O God"

The congregation may stand.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Unison).....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: Keep your eyes on the gate of heaven.

People: We will see angels climbing Jacob's ladder, as they bring our prayers to God.

Pastor: Fix your gaze on the entry to the Holy One.

People: We will see angels climbing Jacob's ladder, as they bring our hopes before the Lord.

Pastor: Wherever you go on life's journey, take time to mark sacred encounters with joy.

People: We will go as children of light, children of the living God.

BENEDICTION

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

CLOSING HYMN NO. 552....."We All Are One in Mission"

SILENT MEDITATION

Acolytes take the Light out into the world.

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 2023 Abingdon Worship Annuals edited by Mary J. Scifres and B. J. Beu.

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-The altar flowers are in loving memory of Paul Clauser Jr. by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Clauser and family.

-The bulletins are in loving memory of Paul Clauser Jr. by brother Dick Clauser.

-Offering on Sunday, July 12, 2026: \$2,389.00

-Weekly envelope & plate budget for 2026: \$3,368.52

-The July Communion Offering is designated to the One Rock One Community Gospel event. The August Communion Offering is designated to the Alzheimer's Association.

-A group motorcycle ride will follow the service today.

-The Consistory will meet this Tuesday, July 21 at 7:00pm in the conference room.

-An Outdoor worship service will be held next Sunday, July 26 beginning at 9:30am. Grab your lawn chair or favorite blanket and join us once again amidst the beauty of God's creation. In case of inclement weather, the service will be moved inside and held in the sanctuary.

-Fellowship Hour: Join us for conversation, along with a cup of coffee and light refreshments following our 9:30am worship service **on Sunday, August 9**. We will gather in the rear of the sanctuary. Catch up with old friends, make new ones, and stay up to date on everything happening at St. Paul's. Donations of treats (cookies, brownies, cupcakes, muffins, etc.) are greatly appreciated.

-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. We will be helping on **Monday, August 17** beginning at 8:30am and **Friday, August 21** beginning at 12pm. Please speak to Verna Ebling, Bill Reber or the church office.

-We could use a few more weeding volunteers to help with the church flower beds. Please contact the church office if you would like to help. Many hands make light work.

-We are looking for youth to serve as acolytes on Sunday mornings during the worship services. If your child is interested in helping and would like to learn more, please speak to Laura Carll, Pastor Ken or the church office. Training will be provided.

-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, including 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 Concern Privacy: As Christians, we fervently believe in the power of prayer — that's why we include prayer concerns in the weekly bulletin and lift folks up in prayer during worship! That said, the Consistory respectfully asks that before you add somebody to the prayer list or bring up their name during worship, please obtain that person's permission. We take medical privacy very seriously and make every effort to respect the wishes of individuals who do not want to be named publicly in a bulletin or live-streamed worship service. Thank you for your cooperation!

PRAYER CONCERNS: All those earnestly seeking God's help in difficult times, Military personnel & National leaders, *family and friends of Rev. Robert Burke, family and friends of Meg Goodwin, Dick Clauser, Brenda, John Borchick, Ron Koch, Brian Moyer, Earl Phillips*

CANCER PATIENTS: Rev. Gene Aulenbach, Al Basci, James Connelly, Bill Dobrotsky, Alex DuVee, John Eckert, Glennis Eifert, *Kristen Gately*, Laura Haupt Grapsy, Rebecca Henderson, Lisa Hoynoski, Donna Jenan, Sherri Jo Jennar, Deb Kemmerling, Clara Kramer, Joan Krause, Lori Krug, Mary Anne Maccarone, Carol Mallory, *Meir Mazuz*, Nicole McFarland-Bish, Tara Moss, Judy Ohl, Dana Osborne, Nick Reading, Pat Reading, Amy Reed, Noah Richardson, Jen Semenco, Jim Thompson, Tim Wapinsky, *Brian Wood*

FOR THE WEEK OF SUNDAY, JULY 19

Sunday, July 19

-Group motorcycle ride following worship

Monday, July 20

6:00 PM -Boy Scout Board of Reviews

Tuesday, July 21

7:00 PM -Consistory Meeting

Sunday, July 26

9:30 AM -Outdoor Worship

***Lectionary Readings for next week:**

Genesis 29:15-28

Psalms 105:1-11, 45b

Psalms 128

1 Kings 3:5-12

Psalms 119:129-136

Romans 8:26-39

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

QR Code for Online Giving

Our members, friends, and visitors give their offerings and donations to the church in many different ways, including electronically via apps like Tithe.ly and bank transfers. To accommodate the varied ways of giving, we have an offering box at the rear of the sanctuary for placing Sunday morning offerings as you enter or leave. We will also have ushers accept offerings during the Offertory 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!

