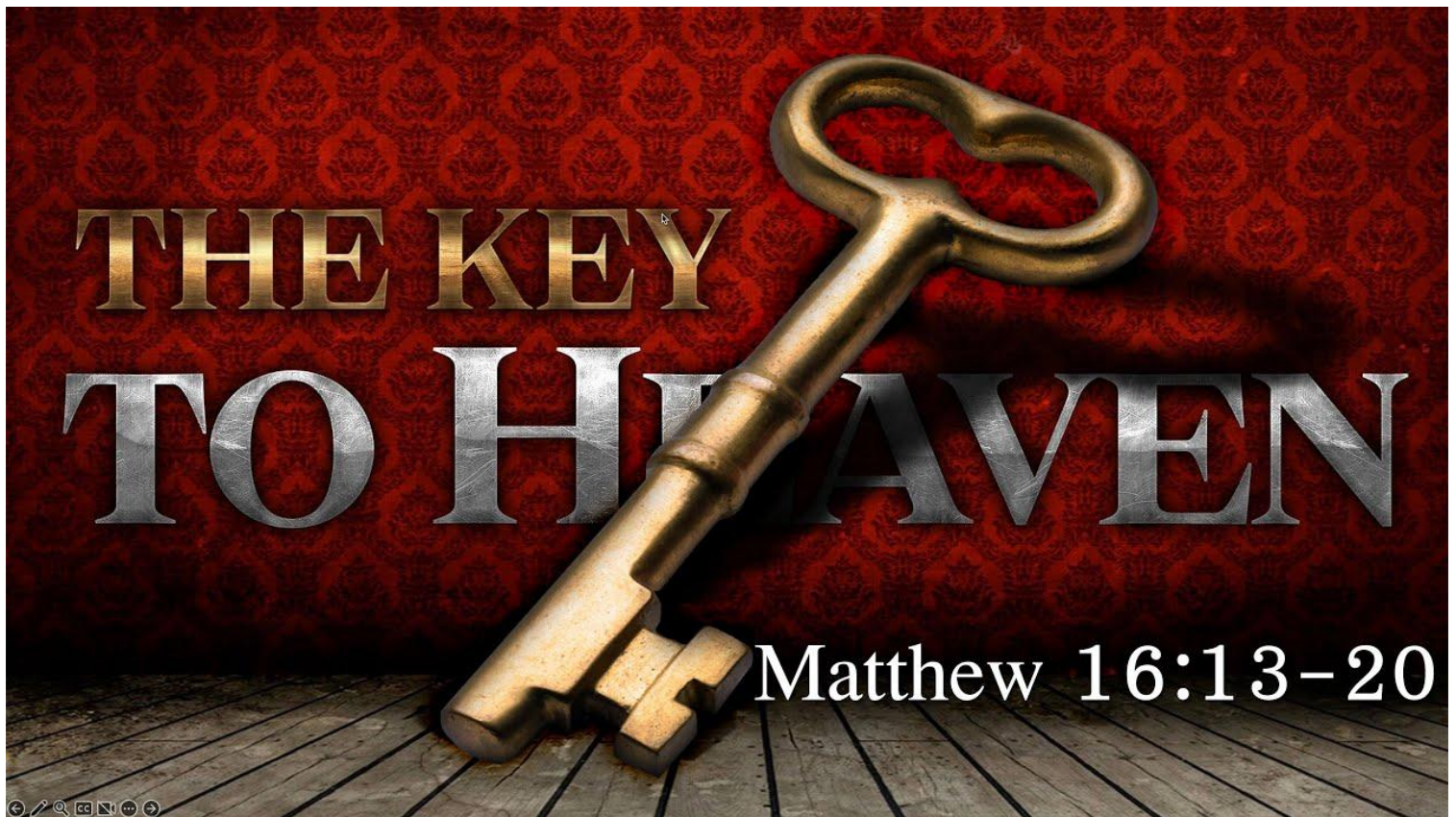


ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Sunday, August 23, 2026



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

Sunday, August 23, 2026

9:30am

Rev. Ken McDowell, Pastor

Music Director- Rae Ann Borger

**Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Outdoor Worship Service**

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

This morning we remember in prayer, from our Schuylkill Association Prayer Calendar, **UCC Local Church Ministries**.

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.

***For safety, the congregation may remain seated throughout the entire service,
but feel free to stand at any time in response to the urging of the Holy Spirit.***

INVOCATION

GATHERING FOR THE WORD

PRELUDE

SOLEMN DECLARATION.....Sung "Amen"

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: You have called us to this place, O Lord.

People: Each one of us is unique, with differing gifts and talents.

Pastor: Yet each talent represented here is valuable in God's realm.

People: Lord, help us find ways in which to use our talents for healing and hope.

Pastor: Come, let us praise the Lord who has called us here.

People: Let us open our hearts and spirits to God's word for us. Amen.

OPENING HYMN NO. 598....."Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken"

*Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God;
he whose Word cannot be broken formed you for his own abode.
On the Rock of Ages founded, what can shake your sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded, you may smile at all your foes.*

*See, the streams of living waters, springing from eternal love,
well supply your sons and daughters and all fear of want remove.
Who can faint while such a river ever will their thirst assuage?
Grace, which like the Lord, the giver, never fails from age to age.*

*Round each habitation hovering, see the cloud and fire appear,
for a glory and a covering, showing that the Lord is near!
Thus deriving from their banner light by night and shade by day,
safe they feed upon the manna which God gives them on their way.*

*Savior, since of Zion's city I through grace a member am,
let the world deride or pity, I will glory in your name.
Fading are the world's best pleasures, all its bloated pomp and show;
solid joys and lasting treasures none but Zion's children know.*

CALL TO CONFESSION

CONFESSION OF SIN (Unison)

Merciful God, forgive us for the injuries we have inflicted upon one another. We long to replace our bitterness in word and deed with acts of grace and mercy. We yearn to replace our willful neglect of others with acts of support and grace. We desire to walk in your path of joy and compassion, that we may bathe in the waters of your healing love. 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 Lord is on our side, offering words of forgiveness, protecting us from danger.
People: We are the body of Christ, bound together in God’s love.
Pastor: Rejoice, we are a forgiven people, the beloved 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.

ENGAGING THE WORD

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

READING OF THE WORD.....Lector, Mike Reber

Old Testament: Exodus 1:8-2:10
Psalm 124 (Read responsively)

Lector: If it had not been the Lord who was on our side —let Israel now say—
People: if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when our enemies attacked us,
Lector: then they would have swallowed us up alive, when their anger was kindled against us;
People: then the flood would have swept us away, the torrent would have gone over us;
Lector: then over us would have gone the raging waters.
People: Blessed be the Lord, who has not given us as prey to their teeth.
Lector: We have escaped like a bird from the snare of the fowlers; the snare is broken, and we have escaped.
People: Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Epistle: Romans 12:1-8
Gospel: Matthew 16:13-20

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.....“Start Acting Like It!”

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

HYMN OF REFLECTION NO. 384.....“Rock of Ages”

*Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee;
let the water and the blood, from thy wounded side which flowed,
be of sin the double cure, save from wrath and make me pure.*

*Not the labors of my hands can fulfill thy law's demands;
could my zeal no respite know, could my tears forever flow,
all for sin could not atone; thou must save and thou alone.*

*Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to the cross I cling;
naked, come to thee for dress, helpless, look to thee for grace;
foul, I to the fountain fly, wash me, Savior, or I die!*

*While I draw this fleeting breath, when my eyes shall close in death,
when I soar to worlds unknown, see thee on thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee.*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Unison)..United Church of Christ Statement of Faith– adapted by Robert V. Moss

**We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, who is made known to us in Jesus our brother,
and to whose deeds we testify: God calls the worlds into being,
creates humankind in the divine image, and sets before us the ways of life and death.**

God seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

**God judges all humanity and all nations by that will of righteousness
declared through prophets and apostles.**

**In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord,
God has come to us and shared our common lot,**

conquering sin and death and reconciling the whole creation to its Creator.

**God bestows upon us the Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ,
binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.**

God calls us into the church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,

**to be servants in the service of the whole human family, to proclaim the gospel to all the world
and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table,
to join him in his passion and victory.**

God promises to all who trust in the gospel forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,

**courage in the struggle for justice and peace, the presence of the Holy Spirit in trial and rejoicing,
and eternal life in that kingdom which has no end.**

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto God. Amen.

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

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: Blessed are you who resist the forces of death and destruction.

People: Blessed are you who heed the cries of the weak and the helpless.

Pastor: Blessed are you who build the kingdom of God with your love and compassion.

People: Blessed are you who commit yourselves to do what is right and honorable and true.

BENEDICTION

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

CLOSING HYMN NO. 466.....“Take My Life and Let It Be”

*Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee;
take my hands and let them move at the impulse of thy love, at the impulse of thy love.*

*Take my feet and let them be swift and beautiful for thee;
take my voice and let me sing always, only, for my King, always, only, for my King.*

*Take my lips and let them be filled with messages for thee;
take my silver and my gold, not a mite would I withhold, not a mite would I withhold.*

*Take my love, my God, I pour at thy feet its treasure store;
take myself and I will be ever, only, all for thee, ever, only, all for thee.*

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 2026 Abingdon Worship Annuals edited by Mary J. Scifres and B. J. Beu.

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-The altar flowers are in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Reichert by the family.

-The bulletins are in memory of Robert D. Kreager by Linda and Arlene.

-Offering on Sunday, August 16, 2026: \$2,469.00

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

-The August Communion Offering is designated to the Alzheimer's Association. The September Communion Offering is designated to the Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child Shoebox gift collection.

-Senior Choir rehearsals have begun and continue each Wednesday at 7:00pm. New members are always welcome! Please speak to Rae Ann Borger for more information.

-We will collect a special 5th Sunday offering next Sunday, August 30 which is designated to the Pastor's Emergency Relief Fund.

-It's time to register for Confirmation class. 1st year confirmation classes are available to any young adult turning 12 or entering 7th grade this year. To register, please turn in a completed form to the church office by **Sunday, September 6**. Forms are available on the bulletin table or in the July/August Newsletter. **Confirmation Classes will begin on Rally Day Sunday, September 13** at 9:15 AM, with a confirmand, parent and mentor meeting. At this time, confirmation requirements and expectations will be reviewed with confirmands, their parents and mentors signing the Confirmation Covenant. A blessing of the Confirmands will be conducted during the Worship service following the meeting. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Pastor Ken.

-Worship Services will resume at 10:30am on Sunday, September 6. There will be **no** Sunday School on September 6. **Sunday School will resume at 9:15am on Rally Day, September 13.**

-The Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet the second Tuesday of each month from 10am-12noon in the conference room beginning on **Tuesday, September 8**. If you are interested in knitting and/or crocheting, we can hook you up! If you know of someone who could use a prayer shawl, please contact the church office.

-Board of Christian Education Meeting: A Board of Christian Education meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 8, at 7:00pm. During this meeting, a vote will be taken on proposed amendments to the Board of Christian Education Constitution and Bylaws to align board terms with the Sunday School year. This change is intended to provide greater continuity in planning, leadership, and support for our Christian Education ministries throughout the school year. All members of the congregation are welcome to attend. If you have any questions or would like to review the proposed amendments before the meeting, please contact Laura Carll at (484) 269-4405.

-Everyone is invited to the Lutheran Church on Saturday, September 12 at 5pm for a worship service, annual picnic and musical entertainment by singer/guitarist, Dave Hartranft. Eating will be indoors, and music will be outside the church pavilion. Bring a chair and bring a friend! You're also welcome to bring a favorite food dish, but it is not expected.

-There will be a New Member Reception on Rally Day, Sunday, September 13 during our 10:30am Worship Service. Please speak to Pastor Ken if you would like more information on joining the church.

-Mark Your Calendars for Sunday School Rally Day on Sunday, September 13! All are invited and encouraged to attend and there is something for everyone as we begin a new year of faith, learning, and fellowship. **Sunday School will resume this day for children and adults and continue each Sunday at 9:15am, followed by worship at 10:30am.** Confirmation classes will also begin at 9:15am with a meeting for confirmands, parents, and mentors. During our 10:30am worship service, we will offer a blessing for our Sunday School teachers, leaders, and confirmands as they begin a new year of ministry and faith formation and a New Member Reception. After worship, we will gather in the church picnic grove for food, fellowship, and fun! Hamburgers, hot dogs, and snacks will be provided. Feel free to bring a favorite dish or dessert to share, along with a lawn chair, blanket, or kid-friendly outdoor games if you wish. We look forward to celebrating the start of a new year together. We hope you'll join us!

-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, September 14** beginning at 8:30am and **Friday, September 18** beginning at 12pm. Please speak to Verna Ebling, Bill Reber or the church office.

-There will be a Blood Drive sponsored by the Schuylkill Haven Council of Churches on Thursday, September 17 from 1-6pm at Jerusalem Lutheran Church in Schuylkill Haven. Please call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter: Haven, to schedule an appointment.

-Sunday, September 20 is “Bring your motorcycle to church” Sunday. A group ride will follow the service. Spread the word, invite your friends, and join us for some fun and fellowship. If you would like to be notified of other rides, please notify the church office to be added to the “Biker” email list!

-On Sunday, September 20, we will collect the special offering to support the ministries of Bethany Children’s Home. Offering envelopes will be available on the table by the bulletins.

-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 Cyril Nathaniel, Ilene Witmier*, Dick Clauser, Silas Meck, Ronnie Mengel, Brenda, John Borchick, Ron Koch, Brian Moyer, Earl Phillips

CANCER PATIENTS: Rev. Gene Aulenbach, Al Basci, James Connelly, Bill Dobrolsky, 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, AUGUST 23

Sunday, August 23 -Outdoor Worship

5:00 PM -Boy Scout Court of Honor and covered dish

Wednesday, August 26

7:00 PM -Senior Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, August 30

9:30 AM -Worship with the 5th Sunday Offering

***Lectionary Readings for next week:**

Exodus 1:8-2:10

Psalm 124

Isaiah 51:1-6

Psalm 138

Romans 12:1-8

Matthew 16:13-20

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!

