



St. Paul's Summer Hill UCC

October 2026 Newsletter



Pastor's Page

Greetings Summer Hill!

As the autumn air turns crisp and the leaves across our hillsides begin to display their brilliant colors, we are reminded once again of the beauty of God's creation and the rhythms of grace that guide our lives. Autumn has always been a season of harvest, gathering, and renewal. Here at St. Paul's, it marks a vibrant return to the full rhythm of our church year—a time when our sanctuary fills with song, our classrooms hum with learning, and our hearts are drawn together in shared faith and purpose.

We are officially in full swing with our regular fall schedule, worshiping together each Sunday morning at 10:30 AM (moving back from our summer 9:30 AM schedule). There is a renewed energy in our sanctuary each week, and it was wonderfully evident on Rally Day, Sunday, September 13th. What a joyous celebration that was! Thank you to everyone who helped plan, organize, participate, and lend a hand to make it such a resounding success.

That same vibrant spirit continues through our ministry programs. Our Sunday School classes are off to a fantastic start, and we are deeply grateful for our dedicated Sunday School teachers and volunteers who give so generously of their time and love to nurture the faith of our children. Alongside our Sunday School, our Confirmation program is also underway. We are truly blessed to have nine wonderful Confirmands embarking on this milestone journey of faith and spiritual growth. Please keep these young people, their parents and mentors in your prayers as they discern their calling and prepare for Confirmation.

God is moving in wonderful ways among us. Recently, we had the joy of welcoming new members into our church family, and we look forward with anticipation to welcoming even more in the weeks ahead. St. Paul's Summer Hill continues to be a warm, welcoming home for all seeking Christ's love.

If you are a long-time member who has missed some of these recent gatherings or found yourself out of the rhythm of weekly worship, consider this a warm and open invitation to come home. We miss your presence, your voice, and your fellowship. This time of year offers a perfect opportunity to reenergize your spiritual disciplines—to commit to weekly worship, rekindle old friendships, and actively participate in the life of this community of faith. We truly need everyone's unique help, presence, and support.

As the Apostle Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 12, the Church is one body with many members, and every single part is vital. God has gifted each of you with unique Spiritual Gifts to share. You might be called to sing in the choir, teach or join a Bible study, serve at the Food Pantry, lend a hand with our growing youth ministry, or serve on a church committee. Or perhaps your calling is welcoming others as a greeter or usher, reading Scripture as a lector, or offering quiet prayers for those in need. Whatever your talents and passions may be, there is a place reserved specifically for you here at St. Paul's.

A wonderful moment to gather as one global and local family will be World Communion Sunday on October 4th. On this special day, Christians of every denomination and nation around the globe gather at the Lord's Table. We would love to see all of our members filling the pews as we share Holy Communion together in unity and peace.

Come and fulfill your calling here on the Hill. Together, with God's grace and everyone's active heart and hands, we will continue to be a shining light on Summer Hill for generations to come.

Abundant Blessings,

Pastor Ken

Communion Offering

The October Communion Offering is designated to the Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry.

The November Communion Offering is designated to My Father's House, a non-profit shelter ministry that opened to meet the needs of homeless families.

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 also have 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!



Operation Christmas Child® Shoobox Gifts Collection

This Christmas season, our church is excited to participate in **Operation Christmas Child**, a ministry that gives us the opportunity to share the joy and love of Jesus with children around the world.

Our goal is to collect 50 shoeboxes! Each shoebox is packed with small gifts and personal items that can bring joy to a child while also sharing the message of God's love.

During the month of October, shoeboxes and packing instructions will be available at the church. We invite individuals, families, Sunday School classes, and groups to consider packing a box—or even several boxes—as we work together toward our goal of 50.

Once your shoebox is packed, please return it to the church by **November 1st**.

Whether you pack a box yourself or help by donating money towards packing a shoebox, every gift makes a difference. What may seem like a simple shoebox to us can be a meaningful reminder to a child that they are loved and remembered.

Let's fill 50 boxes with gifts, hope, and the love of Jesus!

Questions? Contact Laura Carll at (484) 269-4405.

31 Days of Thanksgiving Food Drive

It's that time again St Paul's! It's time for our Thanksgiving Food Drive collection. As always, the **CHALLENGE** is for **AT LEAST 31 families** to donate 31 items **throughout the month of October!** Flyers with suggested items are located on the bulletin table in the narthex or on the next page of the newsletter. The goal is to collect 1000 or more items. If we have 31 families donate, our family will donate the remaining items to make sure we meet our 1000 items. This year, as a **BONUS** incentive, if the congregation donates at least 1000 items, our family will donate an additional 100 items. If the congregation donates 1500 items, we will donate an additional 200 items! If you are unable to shop but would like to donate, we will do the shopping for you! If you need us to deliver your items to the church let us know. Feel free to contact Brook Guers at 570-449-0825. **LET'S GO ST PAUL'S!** We can make this our most successful food drive yet!!!

Neighbors in Need Offering

Sunday, October 4 is World Communion Sunday, and on that day, we will receive the annual Neighbors in Need Offering, the 3rd of 4 special offerings taken for the national church. The offering enables ministries of justice and compassion. Offering envelopes will be available on the bulletin table.

St Paul's UCC

YOU'VE BEEN CHALLENGED

31 DAYS OF GIVING

FOOD DRIVE

31 DAYS, 31 HOUSEHOLDS, 31 FOOD ITEMS

THIS LIST IS A GUIDE:** While following the list will make it easier to provide families with similar boxes filled with items covering all three meals in a day and some Thanksgiving Day needs, **ANY 31 non-perishable items are GREATLY appreciated!

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Box of oatmeal | 17. Can of corn |
| 2. Box Cereal | 18. Gravy mix |
| 3. Box Cereal | 19. Gravy mix |
| 4. Pancake Mix | 20. Can of peas |
| 5. Pancake syrup | 21. Can of peas |
| 6. Packet or Box of Muffin Mix | 22. Can of cranberry sauce |
| 7. Peanut butter | 23. Box of cornbread mix |
| 8. Jelly | 24. Applesauce |
| 9. Ramen Noodles | 25. Box of Mac n Cheese |
| 10. Can of green beans | 26. Box of Mac n Cheese |
| 11. Can of green beans | 27. Box of Pasta |
| 12. Boxed potatoes | 28. Pasta Sauce |
| 13. Boxed potatoes | 29. Can fruit |
| 14. Boxed stuffing | 30. Can fruit |
| 15. Boxed stuffing | 31. Bottle of juice |
| 16. Can of corn | |

Collection dates October 1 through October 31
All donations due by November 1st so items can be prepared in time to meet family's Thanksgiving needs.

Please feel free to drop off your donation at the back of the sanctuary or contact Brook Koch-Guers at 570-449-0825 to schedule a pick-up of your donation from your home. Can't do the shopping yourself? If you make a donation the Guers family will shop for you and send you a copy of the receipt for your donation.

Fellowship Time

Join us for conversation, along with a cup of coffee and light refreshments following our 9:30am worship service on **Sunday, October 11**. 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 are greatly appreciated.

Schuylkill Haven Area Food Pantry

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, October 12** beginning at 8:30am and **Friday, October 16** beginning at 12pm. Please speak to Verna Ebling, Bill Reber or the church office.

Prayer Shawl Committee

The Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet the second Tuesday of each month from 10am-12noon in the conference room. The next meeting will be **Tuesday, October 13**. If you are interested in knitting and/or crocheting, we can hook you up! Please speak to Nancy Dewald for more information. If you know of someone who could use a prayer shawl, please contact the church office.

Budget Committee Meeting

A Budget Meeting will be held on **Tuesday, October 13** beginning at 6:00 PM.

Summer Hill Youth Group: Disaster Relief Bucket Challenge

This October, the Summer Hill Youth Group will have the opportunity to **learn, serve, and have fun together** as we assemble five-gallon Disaster Relief Buckets filled with supplies to help people in need.

On **October 17 from 4:00–7:00 PM**, youth will gather at **St. Paul's Summer Hill UCC** for a hands-on service project designed to show kids that helping our neighbors can be both meaningful and fun. Working in teams, participants will pack the buckets in a **friendly relay-race competition**, working together to see how many complete buckets their team can assemble.

While the competition will add plenty of excitement and laughter to the evening, the real goal is to help our young people understand what it means to serve others. Each bucket represents practical help for someone who may be going through a difficult time. Through this project, kids will have the chance to put their faith into action and see how even a small act of service can make a difference in the life of a neighbor.

Event Details:



October 17



4:00–7:00 PM



St. Paul's Summer Hill UCC

1235 Summer Hill Road, Auburn, PA 17922



Food will be provided!

RSVP to Laura Carll at (484) 269-4405 is appreciated, but not required.

Come ready to work together, compete, laugh, and serve! We hope our youth will discover that **following Jesus means looking beyond ourselves and being willing to help our neighbors in need.**

Schuylkill Association Fall Meeting

There will be a Schuylkill Association Fall Meeting on **Sunday, October 18** beginning at 3:00 PM at Christ Church Barnesville. Please speak to Pastor Ken to learn more.

Consistory Meeting

The Consistory will meet on **Tuesday, October 20** at 7:00pm in the conference room.

All Saints' Day and Offering

This year we will celebrate All Saints' Day on **Sunday, November 1**. That morning during the service of worship and communion, we will honor the saints of our congregation who passed away in the past year. We will also collect the All Saints Offering, which assists retired pastors from our conference who are in need of financial assistance. You do not need a special envelope, although they are available from the church office or by the bulletin basket closer to the collection date. You can make a note or write it on your regular offering envelopes.

Board of Christian Education Meeting

Anyone interested in learning more about our Sunday School program is welcome and invited to attend the Board of Christian Education Meeting on **Tuesday, November 3** at 7:00pm. The meeting will take place in the conference room. Please speak to Laura Carll, any Sunday School teacher, Pastor Ken or the church office for more information.

Outdoor Church Clean-up

Mark your calendars! We need your help!! Our outdoor church grounds fall clean-up day will be on **Saturday, November 14** at 9:00am. With enough help, we can have it completed in just a few hours! Bring rakes, tarps, clippers and pruners. Invite your friends and family and neighbors too!

Keystone Conference Fall Meeting

The Keystone Conference Fall Meeting will be held online only on **Saturday, November 14** beginning at 9:00 AM. Please speak to Pastor Ken to learn more.

Youth Acolytes Needed

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.

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.

St. Paul's has a prayer concerns email group AND also a prayer phone call chain for anyone interested. The phone call chain can be as simple as receiving a text and praying for the person. Please contact the church office if you would like more information or to be added to these lists.



Your Consistory met on September 15, 2026 and discussed the following items:

Mentioned the continued work with Servant Keeper, including record updates and trainings

Discussed the condition of the AC units due to recent inspection. Consistory decided to replace rather than repair.

Noted the church Fall Cleanup with help from the Scouts will be on November 14

The Budget Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, October 13 at 6pm

October Communion offering will support the Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry

November Communion offering will support My Father's House

The next Consistory Mtg. will be held on October 20, 2026.

Respectfully yours,
Trevor Smith, Secretary

Sunday School News

“The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever.” - Isaiah 40:3

I hope everyone enjoyed Rally Day and the rest of the Sunday school year. As usual I'm always looking ahead, this year for Christmas we will be helping 40 children from Schuylkill County Children and Youth again. I will have more information of kids and dates by the beginning of November, so keep an eye out.

Christian Education Secretary,
Amy Zimmerman

Thank You!!

-to Mike and Jackie Fessler for sponsoring the shut-in mailing for October 2026

-to Jason Kline for mowing and weed whacking the church lawn in September

-to our “weeding elves” for working to make our flower beds look beautiful! We are so grateful for you!

The Revised Common Lectionary Readings:

October 4- Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20

Psalms 19

Isaiah 5:1-7

Psalms 80:7-15

Philippians 3:4b-14

Matthew 21:33-46

October 11- Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 32:1-14

Psalms 106:1-6, 19-23

Isaiah 25:1-9

Psalms 23

Philippians 4:1-9

Matthew 22:1-14

October 18- Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 33:12-23

Psalms 99

Isaiah 45:1-7

Psalms 96:1-9, (10-13)

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Matthew 22:15-22

October 25- Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost

Deuteronomy 34:1-12

Psalms 90:1-6, 13-17

Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18

Psalms 1

1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

Matthew 22:34-46

November 1- All Saints Day

Revelation 7:9-17

Psalms 34:1-10, 22

1 John 3:1-3

Matthew 5:1-12

November 1- Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost

Joshua 3:7-17

Psalms 107:1-7, 33-37

Micah 3:5-12

Psalms 43

1 Thessalonians 2:9-13

Matthew 23:1-12

Bible Quiz

Psalms 103 (ESV) begins: “Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his _____.” What should we “not forget”?

- A. goodness
- B. kindness
- C. gifts
- D. benefits

Answer: D (Psalm 103:2)

October Birthdays

- 1 - Wayne Herring
 - Nathan Crouse
- 2 - Joshua Nagle
- 3 - Connor Palerino
- 4 - Skye Heim
- 5 - Silas Meck
- 7 - Paige Koch
- 6 - David Smith
- 9 - Kathleen Reber
 - William Barnes
- 10 - Sarah Malis
- 13 - Casey Horvath
- 14 - Ardith Moyer
 - Dustin F. Faust
- 15 - Suzanne Koperna
- 16 - Clint Clauser
 - Jill Brossman
 - Tom Saunders
- 17 - Debbie Clauser
- 18 - Kassandra Hower
- 19 - John Ulsh
- 20 - Carol Ann Mengel
 - Franklin Reichert
- 21 - Craig Borger
 - Verna Fidler
 - Nicholas Horvath
- 22 - Donna Koch
 - Ray Koch
 - Elaine Reichert
- 23 - Tom Nagle
- 24 - Charlee Ferguson
- 25 - Aaron Rodnick
- 26 - Debbie Deibert
- 27 - Jackie Fessler
- 28 - Amy Rubinkam
- 30 - Blake Frantz
 - Gabriel Crouse
 - Kevin Richards

October Anniversaries

- 2 - Dale and Judy Frantz
- 3 - Guy and Nancy Fidler
- 7 - Lucille and Ronald Faust
- 10 - Jeff and Kelly Palerino
- 11 - Mike and Snippis Reber
- 13 - Mark and Stephanie Palerino
- 14 - Mike and Jackie Fessler

- 18 - Scott and Jill Cutter
- 19 - Tammy and Roger Krause
- 22 - Adam and Laura Carll
 - Scott and Stephany Krause
- 29 - Robert and Melissa Eckert
- 30 - Brock and Pam Koch

Special Dates for October 2026

- Pastor Appreciation Month
- World Communion Sunday, *October 4*
- Pastor/Clergy Appreciation Sunday, *Oct. 11*
- Columbus Day, *October 12*
- Indigenous Peoples Day, *October 12*
- Canadian Thanksgiving, *October 12*
- Reformation Sunday, *October 25*
- Reformation Day, *October 31*

Christian Symbol



LAMP — In Bible times, lamps were small but essential sources of light, especially during the dark hours of

night. Scripture often uses the image of a lamp to represent God's guidance, truth and wisdom. Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path," reminding believers that God's Word directs each step of life. Jesus' parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids also connects the lamp with wisdom and spiritual readiness (Matthew 25:1-13). In addition, the lamp is sometimes used to symbolize the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the gift of life itself. Because of these meanings, the lamp has become a lasting symbol of God's guidance, faithful living and the light of Christ shining in the darkness.

A Letter from Christ

Paul the Apostle gave a beautiful compliment to the believers in Corinth. He wrote:

"And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the

Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts” (2 Corinthians 3:3, ESV).

What a meaningful picture. A letter carries a message, and Paul reminded the church that their lives were sharing the message of Christ with others.

The same is true for us today. Through our words, actions and faith, people can see evidence of God at work in our hearts. None of us is perfect, but living faithfully can point others toward Him.

What a wonderful goal for every Christian: to be known as “a letter from Christ.”

Luther and the Bible

Reformation Day is celebrated by many Protestant churches on October 31. It commemorates the Reformation and honors leaders such as Martin Luther, whose courage and conviction helped shape church history.

Luther’s life was threatened because he spoke out against practices he believed did not reflect the true mission of the Church. Forced into hiding, he found refuge at Wartburg Castle as the guest of the ruler of Saxony.

While there, Luther took on an enormous task: translating the Bible from the original languages into German. This was no simple project. At the time, Germany was made up of many regional dialects, making communication difficult from one area to another.

Luther wanted ordinary people to clearly understand God’s Word. To make sure his translation used everyday language, he is said to have listened carefully to common speech, even consulting the castle’s butcher for familiar expressions and wording.

Luther’s translation became a tremendous gift to the German people. Not only did it place Scripture into the hands of everyday readers, but the language he used also helped unify the many German dialects. In that sense, Martin Luther is often considered one of the fathers of the modern German language.

Seeds of Victory

Months before the U.S. victory at the World War II Battle of Midway, important work was happening far from the ocean. Code analysts were quietly studying Japanese messages, using early tools that came long before the computers we know today. Their careful work helped crack a code and gave American forces the warning they needed to avoid an ambush.

It makes you wonder what those long days felt like. Did the analysts ever grow tired of searching for answers? Did they wonder whether their efforts mattered? Did they feel discouraged when the breakthrough had not yet come?

We can understand that feeling. Christians sometimes grow weary, too. We wonder whether teaching children about Jesus is making a difference. We wonder whether small acts of kindness, quiet prayers or faithful service will ever bear fruit. We see sin, sorrow and brokenness around us and wonder how victory will come.

But God sees what we cannot. No faithful work done for him is wasted. The Spirit who helps us plant seeds of truth and love is also able to bring the harvest. And because of Christ, the final victory is already secure.

Charging Forward in Stewardship

Rhinoceroses are remarkable creatures. Strong, sturdy and surprisingly fast, a rhino is built to protect. When it senses danger, especially near its herd or its young, it does not hesitate. It moves with focus, strength and purpose.

There may be a stewardship lesson for us in that.

God has entrusted each of us with gifts, time and resources to use for his kingdom. When opportunities come to serve, give, encourage or help, faithful stewards do not stand still and wait for someone else to go first. They respond with willing hearts and steady faith.

Stewardship is not passive. It calls us to move with purpose, give with conviction and serve with the strength God provides. May we be quick to answer God’s call, bold in putting our faith into action and faithful in caring for the people and work God has placed before us.

Stewardship

Your Consistory thanks each and every one of you for your faithful support during a very difficult year marked by continued inflation and a sluggish economy. We know this has not been easy. Many churches continue to experience steep declines in attendance and financial support, forcing them to reduce services, staff, and support for local and worldwide ministries. Some churches are entering into shared ministry agreements with nearby congregations or using part-time or Lay Ministers to meet their pastoral needs, while others have lost their pastors or are preparing to close permanently.

But because of your continued support of St. Paul's—with your time, talent, and treasure—we are weathering these tumultuous times far better than most. We have not eliminated any services or ministries, and the Consistory is working to reduce costs wherever possible. We should all be grateful for our volunteers, who dedicate so much of their time to keeping our church strong.

However, costs continue to rise and now we are about \$12,959 behind budget at this point, and our overall giving is \$2,276 behind where it was at this time last year.

The good news is that we can overcome these fiscal concerns by working together, with each of us helping where we can, as God has gifted us to do. With a small increase in each of our weekly gifts, we can ensure that our doors remain open to help our families and friends grow in Christ for many years to come.

The table below shows the overall impact that a small weekly increase in giving would have.

If this number of Giving Units	Gave this much more each week.....					
	\$1	\$5	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25
131	\$6,812	\$34,060	\$68,120	\$102,180	\$136,240	\$170,300
100	\$5,200	\$26,000	\$52,000	\$78,000	\$104,000	\$130,000
80	\$4,160	\$20,800	\$41,600	\$62,400	\$83,200	\$104,000
60	\$3,120	\$15,600	\$31,200	\$46,800	\$62,400	\$78,000
40	\$2,080	\$10,400	\$20,800	\$31,200	\$41,600	\$52,000
20	\$1,040	\$5,200	\$10,400	\$15,600	\$20,800	\$26,000
	We could add this much to our yearly Giving!!					

Please prayerfully consider whether you can help us help those in need and continue spreading the Good News of the Gospel by increasing your tithes and offerings. Together, we can all continue to make a difference!

The Consistory of St. Paul's

October 2026

**St. Paul's United Church of Christ
1235 Summer Hill Road
Auburn, PA 17922**



**Church Phone: 570-754-7225
Rev. Ken McDowell, Pastor: 610-207-4783
Office Hours: Monday– Thursday 9am - 2pm
Email: summerhillucc@gmail.com
Website: www.summerhillucc.com**

Address Service Requested

Consistory Elders: Robin Ferguson, Jeff Palerino and Mike Reber
Consistory Trustees: Clint Clauser, Kelly Palerino and Trevor Smith
Stewardship/Mission- Deacons of Consistory:
Lori Moyer, Tom and Terri Saunders, Kathy Kline, Mike Rubinkam and Pam Clauser
Board of Christian Education Chairperson & Summer Hill Youth Group: Laura Carll
Board of Christian Education Vice-Chairperson: Vicky Borger
Board of Christian Education Secretary: Amy Zimmerman
Sunday Morning Coordinator: Trevor Smith
Assistant Sunday Coordinator: David Deibert
Budget Committee: Pam Clauser
Personnel Committee: Lori Moyer
Prayer Shawl Ministry Chair: Nancy Dewald
Altar Committee Chairperson: Kelly Palerino

October 2026

Visit the Keystone Conference of the United Church of Christ- <https://keystoneucc.org/>

Visit the United Church of Christ – www.ucc.org

Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Ken McDowell

Church Administrator: Kelly Palerino

Cleaning Person: Stacy Fidler

Director of Youth Ministries: Laura Carll

Music Director/ Pianist: Rae Ann Borger

Organists: Colin Andrew/ Jacob Challenger (Supply)

Church Leadership

Consistory President: Pam Clauser

Consistory Vice President: Jeff Palerino

Consistory Secretary: Trevor Smith

Consistory Assistant Secretary: Terri Saunders

Treasurer: Lori Moyer

Financial Secretary: Kathy Kline