

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday, September 6, 2026

FOR WHERE TWO OR THREE

GATHER IN MY NAME,

there am I with them.

MATTHEW 18:20

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

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Rev. Ken McDowell, Pastor

Music Director- Rae Ann Borger
Organist- Colin Andrew

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

This morning we remember in prayer **Trinity, Pottsville** 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.

(Communion note: This morning, as some of us are gathered together here at church while many are gathering with us virtually from their homes, we all are invited to the same table. Those present this morning are invited to pick up a bag of individually prepared elements from the table in the narthex, as we will not be distributing the elements during the service. Those at home may gather bread and drink and partake as we do when we are gathered together.)

INVOCATION

GATHERING FOR THE WORD

PRELUDE

The congregation may stand.

SOLEMN DECLARATION.....Sung “Amen”

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: The night is nearly over; the day is almost here.

People: We lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Pastor: We owe no one anything, except to love one another, for love is the fulfillment of the law.

People: We come to worship with hearts awakened, ready to cast off the old and embrace the new.

Pastor: Let us awaken to the call of God, to live as people of the day, and to shine God’s love in all we do.

People: We worship the One who calls us into the light, to love one another as God has loved us. Amen.

OPENING HYMN NO. 706.....“I Come with Joy”

CALL TO CONFESSION

CONFESSION OF SIN (Unison)

Merciful God, we have not always sought reconciliation as you have called us to do. We have allowed pride and fear to keep us from addressing conflicts with love and grace. Forgive the times we have withheld forgiveness and failed to seek peace. Helps us approach others with an open heart, ready to heal and restore relationships. 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: Hear the good news: Where two or three are gathered in God’s name, God is there among us.

People: When we seek reconciliation, God is present, offering grace and healing.

Pastor: In Christ, we are forgiven and restored, called to live in peace with one another. Embrace this mercy and know that through God's love, all of us—beloved children of God—are made whole. 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: Exodus 12:1-14 (Page 55)

Psalm: Psalm 149 (Read responsively)

Lector: Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of the faithful.

People: Let Israel be glad in its Maker; let the children of Zion rejoice in their King.

Lector: Let them praise his name with dancing, making melody to him with tambourine and lyre.

People: For the Lord takes pleasure in his people; he adorns the humble with victory.

Lector: Let the faithful exult in glory; let them sing for joy on their couches.

People: Let the high praises of God be in their throats and two-edged swords in their hands,

Lector: to execute vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples,

People: to bind their kings with fetters and their nobles with chains of iron,

Lector: to execute on them the judgment decreed. This is glory for all his faithful ones. Praise the LORD!

Epistle: Romans 13:8-14 (Page 987)

Gospel: Matthew 18:15-20 (Page 852)

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.....“Relationships Matter”

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

The congregation may remain seated.

Ushers will receive tithes and offerings at this time.

HYMN OF REFLECTION NO. 354.....“Just As I Am”

The congregation may stand.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Unison).....The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:

And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,

born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;

he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven,

and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;

from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;

the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. 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

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

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation:

Pastor: As Jesus welcomed the thousands to share in a feast created from a few loaves and some fish, Christ welcomes us now to this abundant feast of holy communion, where we are fed with God's grace and love.

People: This is the joyful feast of the people of God. Men and women, youth and children, come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and gather about Christ's table.

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to God Most High.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

The Communion Prayer:

The Seraphic Hymn

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full, are full of the majesty of Thy glory, Hosanna, Hosanna, hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!

The congregation may be seated.

Words of Institution:

Pastor: We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, Jesus took bread, gave you thanks, broke the bread, and gave it to the disciples, saying: "This is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, Jesus also took the cup, after supper, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood which was shed for you and for all people, for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

All: With thanksgiving, we take this bread and wine, gifts of the good earth, offering ourselves as a living sacrifice dedicated to your service.

Prayer of Consecration:

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.

Breaking of the Bread:
Lifting of the Cup:
Call to the Supper:
The Sharing of the Elements:
Blessing of the Children:

The congregation may stand.

The Prayer of Thanksgiving (Unison):
Thank you, Triune God, for feeding us abundantly from the storehouse of your mercy in Jesus Christ. You restore us, body and soul. You make us whole. Now send us forth into the messiness of our lives, as living witnesses of your renewing love that brings hope and wholeness today, tomorrow, and for generations to come. Amen.

GOING WITH THE WORD

COMMISSION
Pastor: Go now with hearts open to reconciliation and peace.
People: We go knowing that Christ is present whenever two or three are gathered.
Pastor: May you seek this presence in all your relationships.
People: We will walk in love, speak the truth with grace, and strive to live in harmony with one another.

BENEDICTION
THE THREEFOLD AMEN.....*Amen. Amen. Amen.*
CLOSING HYMN NO. 393.....“Blest Be the Tie That Binds”
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 Leigh Ann Shaw from the 2026 Abingdon Worship Annuals edited by Mary J. Scifres and B. J. Beu.
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- The bulletins are in honor of Justin and Erin Nagle’s Wedding Anniversary (Sept. 4) and Marion Bartolet’s Birthday (Sept. 5) by Tom and Lucinda Nagle.
- Offering on Sunday, August 30, 2026: \$2,355.00
- Weekly envelope & plate budget for 2026: \$3,368.52
- The September Communion Offering is designated to the Samaritan’s Purse Operation Christmas Child Shoebox gift collection.
- Please register for Confirmation class by TODAY. To register, please turn in a completed form to the church office or speak to Pastor Ken. Forms are available on the bulletin table.

- The Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet the second Tuesday of each month from 10am-12noon** in the conference room beginning **this Tuesday, September 8**. 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.

- Board of Christian Education Meeting: A Board of Christian Education meeting will be held this 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.

- 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.

- Everyone is invited to the Lutheran Church this 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 next Sunday, Rally Day, September 13** during our 10:30am Worship Service. Please speak to Pastor Ken if you would like more information on joining the church.

- Sunday School Rally Day will be celebrated next 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, **Ron Koch, Dick Clauser,** Caitie Handling, Ilene Witmier, Silas Meck, Ronnie Mengel, Brenda, John Borchick, 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, SEPTEMBER 6

Sunday, September 6 -Resume regular worship time (NO Sunday School until September 13)

Monday, September 7 -Labor Day -Church offices closed

Tuesday, September 8

10:00 AM -Prayer Shawl Ministry Meeting

7:00 PM -Board of Christian Education Meeting

Wednesday, September 9

7:00 PM -Senior Choir Rehearsal

Saturday, September 12

5:00 PM -We are invited to St. Paul's Lutheran Church for a special Worship Service and annual picnic-entertainment by singer and guitarist, Dave Hartranft

Sunday, September 13 -Rally Day

9:15 AM -Sunday School Classes begin/ Confirmation Meeting

10:30 AM -Worship with the Celebration of Baptismal Anniversaries, a New Member Reception and the Blessing of Confirmands, Teachers and Leaders

-Annual Picnic to follow worship in the picnic grove

4:00 PM -Cub scout Meeting

***Lectionary Readings for next week:**

Exodus 14:19-31

Psalm 114

Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21

Genesis 50:15-21

Psalm 103:(1-7), 8-13

Romans 14:1-12

Matthew 18:21-35

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!

RALLY DAY
2026
Sunday, September 13, 2026

Everyone is invited to join us for a new year of faith, learning, and fellowship!
There is something for everyone.

Sunday School
Children & Adults)
9:15am (Welcome "This Day")

Worship
With Teacher & Confirmant Blessing

Confirmation Classes
Begin at 9:15am - For confirmands, parents, mentors

Church Picnic Grove
After Worship)
For Food, Fellowship, and Fun!

Outdoor Games

Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Snacks provided!

Also

Bring a shared dish, lawn chair, blanket, or outdoor games if you wish!

We look forward to celebrating the start of a new year together. We hope you'll join us!

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