ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Sunday, November 29, 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
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Livestream: www.facebook.com/summerhillucc

1782 **244 YEARS OF FAITHFUL SERVICE** **2026**

Sunday, November 29, 2026 10:30am

First Sunday of Advent
Advent Candle Lighting
5th Sunday Offering (Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry)

Rev. Ken McDowell, Pastor Music Director and Pianist- Rae Ann Borger

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

This morning we remember in prayer **the First Sunday of Advent and Faith, Delano** 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.

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING……..Mike, Jackie and Katie Fessler

Introductory Sentences:

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 60:1–2:

Lighting the Candle: *The first candle—Hope*

Congregational Hymn…….“We Light the Advent Candles” (Verses 1 & 2)

We light the Advent candles against the winter night,
to welcome our Lord Jesus who is the world's True Light,
to welcome our Lord Jesus who is the world's True Light.

The first one will remind us that Christ will soon return.
We light it in the darkness and watch it gleam and burn,
We light it in the darkness and watch it gleam and burn.

Prayer:

GATHERING FOR THE WORD

PRELUDE

The congregation may stand.

SOLEMN DECLARATION.....Sung “Amen”

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Thanking God for one another,
People: We gather to worship and pray.
Pastor: Richly blessed in everything we need,
People: We gather in trust and hope.
Pastor: Loved faithfully in Christ Jesus,
People: We gather to sing and rejoice. Amen.

OPENING HYMN NO. 153……..……“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

CALL TO CONFESSION

CONFESSION OF SIN **(Unison)**

Shepherd of Israel, hear our prayers. Hear the cries of our hearts and the confusion of our mind. Forgive us when we wander from you. Hear our yearning to be healed and held by you. Calm the chaos that swirls around us, that we might perceive your presence and guidance. Heal the pain and worries that break us apart, and re-form us into the beautiful people you’ve created us to be. In faith and hope, we pray. 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: Christ's light is shining, God's love is true, and the Spirit is making us new.
People: We have been enriched in every way through the grace and peace of Christ.
Pastor: We are the beloved and forgiven children of God. Let us abide in this grace and live in this peace, and be worthy of God's kingdom. 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, Brook Koch-Guers

Old Testament: Isaiah 64:1-9 (Page 643)
Psalm: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 **(Read Responsively)**

Lector: Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock! You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth
People: Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh. Stir up your might, and come to save us!
Lector: Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.
People: O Lord God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?
Lector: You have fed them with the bread of tears, and given them tears to drink in full measure.
People: You make us the scorn of our neighbors; our enemies laugh among themselves.
Lector: Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved…..
People: But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one whom you made strong for yourself.
Lector: Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name.
People: Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Epistle Lesson: I Corinthians 1:3-9 (Page 991)
Gospel Lesson: Mark 13:24-37 (Page 882)

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……."Give Thanks" (with "O Come, Let Us Adore Him")
Words and Music by Henry Smith, Arranged by Phillip Keveren

SERMON.....“The Wait Is Over!”

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

The congregation may remain seated.

Ushers will receive tithes and offerings at this time.

HYMN OF REFLECTION NO. 491…….…….“Open Our Eyes”

The congregation may stand.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH.…….…….Heidelberg Catechism: Questions 1, 31, and 34

Pastor: What is your only comfort in life and death?

All: That I am not my own, but belong with body and soul, both in life and in death, to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from all the power of the devil. He also preserves me in such a way that without the will of my heavenly Father not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, all things must work together for my salvation. Therefore, by his Holy Spirit he also assures me of eternal life and makes me heartily willing and ready from now on to live for him.

Pastor: Why is he called Christ, that is, the Anointed One?

All: Because he is ordained by God the Father and anointed by the Holy Spirit to be our ultimate prophet and teacher, who fully reveals to us God’s secret council and will concerning our redemption, and also to be our sole high priest, who has redeemed us by the one sacrifice of his body and ever intercedes for us with the Father, and also to be our eternal king, who governs us by his word and spirit, and defends and sustains us in the redemption he has gained for us.

Pastor: Why do you call Him our Lord?

All: Because, not with gold or silver but with his precious blood, he has redeemed and purchased us body and soul from sin and the power of the devil to be his own.

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: Revived and restored by God's love,
People: We will share holy love with the world.
Pastor: With Christ's light to guide the way,
People: We will brighten the world with love.

BENEDICTION

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

CLOSING HYMN NO. 486.....“Have Thine Own Way, Lord!”

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 Mary J. Scifres 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 Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Reber by the family.

-Offering on Sunday, November 22, 2026: $4,233.00
-Weekly envelope & plate budget for 2026: $3,368.52

-The November Communion Offering is designated to Servants to All- “My Father's House” which is a nonprofit organization that provides homeless services in Schuylkill County. The December Communion Offering is designated to Samaritan's Purse.

-The 5th Sunday offering collected TODAY is designated to the Schuylkill Haven Food Pantry. Special envelopes are available on the table in the narthex.

-**You are invited to an Ecumenical Christmas Cantata featuring the Zion Festival Orchestra this evening** at 7:30pm. “All Is Well- A Christmas Musical” will be held at Zion UCC Church, 225 Iron Street, Lehighton, PA 18235. Members of our choir will be participating in this annual musical Cantata.

-The Boy Scout Troop is doing Wreaths Across America. The sponsorship cost for a wreath is $17. Please use the following link to order online: www.wreathsacrossamerica.org/PA1030P. There is also a flyer on the bulletin board with a QR code. **The deadline for orders is this Wednesday, December 2.**

-**The Summer Hill Youth Group will gather this Friday, December 4** from 6–8:30 PM at St. Paul's Summer Hill UCC to assemble five-gallon Disaster Relief Buckets for people in need. Youth will learn about serving their neighbors while working together in a fun, friendly relay-race competition! Food will be provided. RSVP to Laura Carll at (484) 269-4405 is appreciated but not required.

-All gifts for the Schuylkill County Children & Youth in Pottsville need to be returned to the church by next Sunday, December 6. Please place gifts in the back of the Sanctuary. Please speak to Amy Zimmerman.

-**We are collecting new or gently used hats, gloves and scarves to be given to those in need. All items will need to be received by next Sunday, December 6**, and can be placed on the Christmas tree or in the box located in the back of the sanctuary. Please speak to Kelly Palerino for info.

-**St. Paul's Annual Congregational Meeting will be held next Sunday, December 6** following Worship **(the snow date will be Sunday, December 13).** The purpose of the meeting will be to review and vote on the proposed budget for 2027, and to elect new Consistory members. Please plan on attending this very important meeting.

-**Next Sunday, December 6 we will be Christmas Caroling to the shut-ins and elderly.** We will be joining our sister congregation, St. Paul's Lutheran Church for this event. Everyone is invited to join us. We will be carpooling and leaving from St. Paul's UCC at 2:00pm. Please speak to Pastor Ken for more information.

-We are still looking for young artists to draw bulletin cover artwork: Children of all ages are invited to take part in the creation of biblically based (either Advent or the biblical account of the Christmas story) worship bulletin cover artwork, which will be used throughout the season of Advent and Christmas. Colorful drawings are encouraged, but we can also use black and white sketches. Children should print their first and last name somewhere on the front of the drawing. **A special recognition of children who participate will take place during the December 20 worship service.** Please either scan and email your child's drawing, or drop them off at the church office. Please see Kelly, call or email the church office if you need more information.

-**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, December 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.

-**Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 13 for our Church Christmas Party sponsored by the Sunday School.** The party will follow our 10:30am worship that day. Hot Dogs and fix'ins will be provided along with drinks and snacks. You are welcome to bring your favorite treat or covered dish to share, but it is not necessary to bring anything other than yourself! Come enjoy the fun as we welcome our special visitor, Santa! Kids will receive a goodie bag. If you have any questions, please speak to any Sunday School teacher or Board of Christian Education Chairperson, Laura Carll. **The snow date for the party is Sunday, December 20.**

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

-Christmas Eve, December 24: We will have two Christmas Eve candlelight services again this year, at 7:00pm and 11:00pm. Communion will be celebrated at both services. The 7:00pm service will be live streamed.

-The Bulletin and Altar Flower Sponsor List for 2027 is posted in the hallway next to the secretary's office door. If you are already on the list, and would like to make any changes, please do so at this time. There are openings for sponsorship throughout the year if you are interested. Please contact the church office if you have any questions about open dates, or would like to make any changes, removals or additions.

-**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, ***Brenda, Frank Koperna,*** Brad Epler, Dave Heim, Nicole Laocuv, Marci Luckenbill-Felty, Marion Bartolet, Mikayla, Lou Borgatta, Autumn, Taylor and Parker, Ron Koch, Dick Clauser, Ronnie Mengel, Brian Moyer, Earl Phillips

CANCER PATIENTS: Rev. Gene Aulenbach, Al Basci, James Connelly, Bill Dobrolsky, Alex DuVee, John Eckert, Glennis Eifert, Kristen Gately, Chelsea Garven, 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

FOR THE WEEK OF SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29

Sunday, November 29 -First Sunday of Advent -5th Sunday Offering (Sch. Haven Food Pantry)

Wednesday, December 2

7:00 PM -Choir Rehearsal

Friday, November 4

6:00 – 8:30 PM -Summer Hill Youth Group Event

Sunday, December 6 -Children and Youth gift deadline; Hat, glove and scarf deadline

9:15 AM -Sunday School

10:30 AM -Worship with Holy Communion, Blessing of the gifts and Advent Candle lighting
-Congregational Meeting following worship

2:00 PM -Christmas Caroling

***Lectionary Readings for next week:**

Isaiah 40:1-11	Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13	2 Peter 3:8-15a	Mark 1:1-8

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!

SUMMER HILL YOUTH GROUP EVENT

DISASTER RELIEF BUCKETS

We'll be building five gallon Disaster Relief Buckets packed with supplies to help people in need!

We'll build them in a team relay-race style!



RESCHEDULED!

New Date:
DECEMBER 4TH
6:00PM – 8:30PM

DECEMBER 4
6:00PM – 8:30PM

ST. PAUL'S
SUMMER HILL UCC
1235 SUMMER HILL ROAD
AUBURN, PA 17922

FOOD
WILL BE PROVIDED!

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

Make a difference. Together.