

# THIS WEEK'S NEWS

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St. Paul's United Church of Christ

Somerset, PA

Friday, August 19, 2022

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No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here!

## Our Ministry Team

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Rev. J. Matthew Deal: *Pastor*

Mrs. Jenn Boland: *Director of Programming for Children, Youth, & Families*

Mr. Dave Neimiller: *Organist & Director of Music*

Mrs. Cindy Lambert: *Administrative and Financial Secretary*

Ms. Marcy Shellenberger: *Children's and Youth Choir Director*

Church Council Officers:

President – Mike Boyer

Vice President – Pam Webreck

Secretary – Emily Kornis

Treasurer – Henry Cook

**Church Office: 814-445-4534**

Dear St. Paul's Friends & Family,

*"When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, 'Woman, you are set free from your ailment.'"*

Most of Jesus' healings were associated with demon possession or evil that had befallen the victim. In the absence of modern science helping them to understand the existence of germs, viruses, and genetic inflections, ailments were often blamed on unseen malevolent forces sent to do great evil. The bent-over woman whom Jesus healed was commonly recognized as being touched by an evil spirit.

Today's gospel reading highlights the clash between the spiritual realm, religious law, and the healing work of God. The ancient's lack of the real causes of illnesses, doesn't change the pain of the inflicted. However, the real evil done was in the alienation of those who were considered demon possessed.

Jesus highlights the power of such evil when he dares to violate religious law by healing the woman in the synagogue and on the Sabbath. The leader of the synagogue quickly points out that it is unlawful to do any work, even to heal someone, on the Sabbath. Jesus points out the

hypocrisy of such criticism. Even the religious leaders feed their animals on the Sabbath, and yet the religious community has so marginalized the demon-stricken woman that she cannot possibly be healed on the Holy Day of rest. Jesus heals the woman, demonstrating that God's will for healing and abundant life will not take a backseat to religious laws.

Jesus gives us a lot to think about in this scripture passage. Despite living a couple of thousand years later, we still struggle with religious laws and norms getting in the way of healing and wholeness. Every church tradition has had its own struggles over the years. Some limit people's access to Holy Communion, placing many rules between the individual and the table, others, put up obstacles to full membership. Many churches don't recognize the gifts of women for leadership positions in the church, let alone, ordain them for ministry. Church members have often been sucked into the wider cultural debates over race, sexuality, and politics. Great harm is done when a person is seen not as a person, but as an issue to be resolved or an impediment to religious purity. Perhaps this was the same kind of evil that Jesus confronted in that ancient synagogue. An evil that sought to maintain the purity of religious life and the privilege of those in power over healing a

woman in pain. In denying love, mercy, and healing to our neighbors, we also deny them an encounter with the living Christ, and perhaps that's the greater sin.

We may fancy ourselves as enlightened and advanced in our understanding of the world, however the gulf that separates us from our neighbors is still great. May the Holy Spirit teach us which religious laws to break and which norms to shatter as we seek to do Christ's inclusive work of healing and wholeness-making in our world.

Blessings on your journey,  
*Pastor Matt*

### **Here are our worship opportunities for the week ahead:**

Gathered worship in the Sanctuary, Sunday, 9:30am.

Online Worship at 9:30am on Facebook and YouTube.

Telephone Worship is at 11:00am.

*For telephone worshippers: the toll-free conference call number is 1-844-855-4444.*

*The automated service will then ask for your access code or PIN. Please enter: 512013#.*

## **Worship Resources for August 21, 2022**

### ***Eleventh Sunday After Pentecost***

***Please join us for worship this week as we celebrate the Service of Healing and Anointing!***

Prelude

Call to Worship & Welcoming Children *Rev. Catherine Rolling*

Leader: We may be thirsty and parched, like an unwatered garden, so we come into God's presence:

***All: The Divine One is a spring of water!***

L: We may be weary from worry and work so we come into God's presence:

***All: The Holy One offers us Sabbath rest!***

L: We may be lost or confused so we come into God's presence:

***All: The Wise One offers us welcome and guidance!***

L: We may be bent over with struggle or pain so we come into God's presence:

***All: The Healing One empowers us to stand strong!***

Opening Hymn: "Alleluia Sing to Jesus" **233**

\*The Greeting

Call to Confession *Rev. J.M. Deal*

L: God loves us and accepts us. Let us in confidence make our confession to God.

The Prayer of Confession *Rev. Dr. Steve Taylor*

***Transforming God, too often we have been afraid to speak out against the injustices of this world. We have worshipped in ways that made us feel good rather than honor you in our words and deed. Show us the path***

*to faithful living. Show us how to build beloved and just communities. Teach us how to do your work in this world. Empower us to plant seeds of love, faith, and hope. May we bloom where we have been planted to your glory. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.*

*a time for personal reflection and confession*

## Kyrie

Leader:                      Congregation:                      Leader:                      Congregation:

Lord have mer - cy    Lord have mer - cy    Christ have mer - cy    Christ have mer - cy

Leader:                      Congregation:

Lord have mer - cy    on us                      Lord have mer - cy    on us

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff is divided into four parts: Leader, Congregation, Leader, and Congregation. The lyrics are: 'Lord have mer - cy', 'Lord have mer - cy', 'Christ have mer - cy', and 'Christ have mer - cy'. The second staff is divided into two parts: Leader and Congregation. The lyrics are: 'Lord have mer - cy on us' and 'Lord have mer - cy on us'.

## Words of Assurance    *Rev. Dr. Steve Taylor*

Leader: Loving God, today we will hear a Gospel story of joy, of a woman broken and bent, who heard your words "You are free."

**All: And so we come with joy.**

L: In our bent-over worries of the world, our worry of jobs, health, children and the future of our planet, to hear your words –You are free.

**All: We say thanks! Thanks for freedom. Thanks for joy in worship. Thanks for liberty in love! Amen!**

## The Passing of the Peace

L: May the Peace of Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

\*Hymn of Praise:                      *"There Is a Balm in Gilead"*                      501

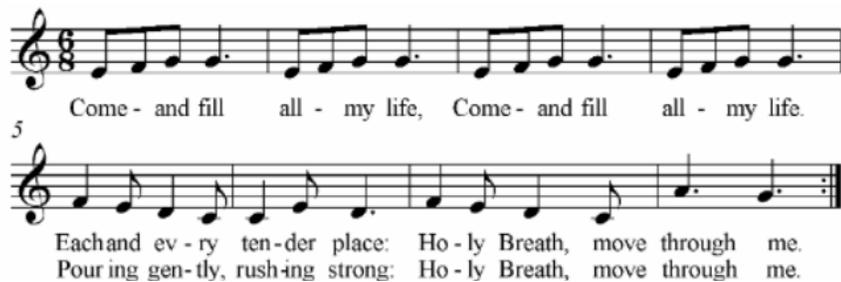
## Today's Scripture Lesson                      Luke 13:10-17

Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And just then there appeared a woman with a spirit that had crippled her for eighteen years. She was bent over and was quite unable to stand up straight. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Woman, you are set free from your ailment." When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight and began praising God. But the leader of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had cured on the sabbath, kept saying to the crowd, "There are six days on which work ought to be done; come on those days and be cured, and not on the sabbath day." But the Lord answered him and said, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger, and lead it away to give it water? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen long years, be set free from this bondage on the sabbath day?" When he said this, all his opponents were put to shame; and the entire crowd was rejoicing at all the wonderful things that he was doing.

Sermon:                      *"Religious Tedium"*

## The Pastoral Prayer

## The Prayer Response



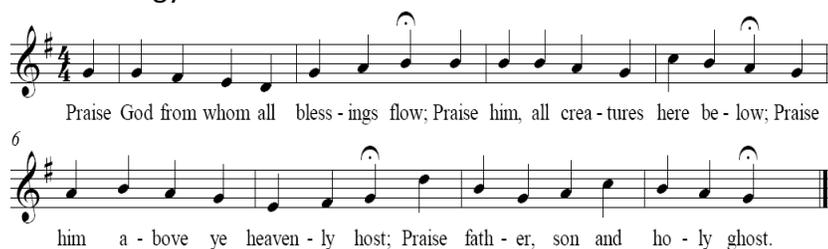
Come - and fill all - my life, Come - and fill all - my life.

Each and ev - ry ten - der place: Ho - ly Breath, move through me.  
Pouring gen - tly, rush - ing strong: Ho - ly Breath, move through me.

### Invitation to the Offering

#### Offertory

#### \*The Doxology



Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow; Praise him, all crea - tures here be - low; Praise him a - bove ye heaven - ly host; Praise fath - er, son and ho - ly ghost.

#### \*The Prayer of Dedication (unison) Rev. J. M. Deal

***Ever-present and loving God, your Word tells us to cast our cares on you because you care for us. In faith and trust we present these gifts, and ourselves, to you. Bless and multiply them to meet the needs, both hidden and apparent, of your beloved ones. Inspire each of us to live as Christ's witnesses, today and ever more. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.***

#### The Prayer of Our Savior

***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.***

### Order for Healing & Anointing

#### Greeting

L: Jesus said: Heal the sick and tell them, "God's heavenly reign is near you."

#### Prayer Over the Oil

L: Eternal God, you are the Sun of Righteousness who rises with healing in your wings to put to flight all enemies that assault us. We thank you for oil, used by prophets and apostles as a sign of your grace and favor. Send your Holy Spirit on us and on this medicine of mercy that through this anointing your servants may again know the health that comes from you; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**All: Amen.**

#### Invitation to Anointing

L: Those who desire to be anointed for spiritual healing may come forward. If you wish us to come to you, raise your hand or ask your neighbor to identify you for us. You may come for yourself, or you may come as a channel of God's healing power for someone else. During the anointing, we invite all present to make silent prayers for each one who is seeking God's healing.

#### Prayer of Thanksgiving

**All: We give praise and thanks to you, O God! In Jesus Christ, you have given us life; brought ministry, forgiveness, healing, and peace; commanded the disciples to heal the sick; and continued the healing ministry among us to this day. Keep us mindful of your love and mercy that we may be faithful throughout all our days, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen**

Closing Hymn: "We Sing Your Mighty Power, O God" 64

\*The Benediction

"Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit."

And may the blessing of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit remain with you forever. Amen.

\*Organ Interlude and Extinguishing of the Candles

Postlude

**Watch Facebook and YouTube for special devotionals and offerings during the week.**

***Check Facebook and watch your email for changes of services that may have changed from week to week, possibly even day to day.***

**We are grateful for your continued support of St. Paul's ministry and mission giving!**

*Please note, we continue to accept offering during our in-person services, USPS mailed in offerings and online with Tithe.ly. If you have any questions, please call the church at 445-4534.*

**Please check our website periodically throughout the week for updates: [www.stpaulsuccsomerset.org](http://www.stpaulsuccsomerset.org)**

**Greeters & Ushers**

**Today:** Henry Cook – Chair Wynne Sechler

**Next Sunday:** Edgar Flick – Chair Brad Winters

## **Nursery Volunteers**

**This Sunday: Josh Boland & Sue Willison**

**Next Sunday: Suzy & Eve Housley**



## **August's Mission Offering is Penn West Conference's Caring for Churches, Caring for Clergy Campaign.**

Penn West Conference launched the Caring for Churches, Caring for Clergy Campaign in 2020. Their goal is to encourage the churches and people of the United Church of Christ in Western Pennsylvania and Western Maryland to help raise \$500,000 to make available mission grants to Penn West Conference churches. These grants will go toward providing programs and resources to help sustain the churches and clergy who serve them. Mission grants have helped churches make building repairs and fund new ministries to serve their communities. Our mission offering for August will go to help support this important work. Please speak with Pastor Matt if you'd like to learn more about our Conference's Caring for Churches, Caring for Clergy Campaign.

## **Save the Dates!!!**

- Our **annual church family** covered dish picnic will be on **Sunday, September 11th** at 11:30am. There will also be a special 225th Anniversary history walk that will occur right after worship concludes at 10:30am. The church kitchen and fellowship hall will be available to plug in crockpots or to keep items heated in the oven or cooled in the refrigerator. The church will provide fried chicken, drinks, plates and utensils. Please plan on joining us!

**On Sunday, November 6th we will be celebrating the 225th Anniversary** of our congregation! Special events are being planned for that morning, beginning with worship and 9:30am and culminating with an anniversary meal! Please watch for more details!!!

## Pause for Persons



There is a 2022 sign up board on the stage in Fellowship Hall.

*For people interested in Hosting/Clean up only, cookies, snacks, KoolAid and half/half are provided and the coffee will be ready to plug in/turn on before church. The host puts the items out to serve, and then stays to clean up and put away the food.*

*For people interested in Baking/Hosting/Clean up, you are welcome to prepare and bring in food to serve. Coffee can be made for you to plug in/turn on, and the KoolAid and half/half are provided.*

**The Men's Brotherhood will meet this Saturday for breakfast at 8am at Eat 'n Park! Please join us!**



Thank you to everyone who helped in any way, large or small! St. Paul's UCC partnered with SASD, Tableland, and the Family Center of Somerset County to provide back-to-school items for local children in need.

***If you need to drop off any bookbags or school items, please do so today in the Narthex.***

***Thank you!***

# MISSION 225!

This year marks the 225th Anniversary of St. Paul's United Church of Christ! Periodically, we will feature a St. Paul's moment in history in our weekly update and bulletin. A special thank you goes out to Helen Brown and Andra Snyder for spearheading this effort!

*Since our founding in 1797, we have been St. Paul's, however, our denominational affiliations evolved over the years as the forerunner denominations merged with other traditions, thus making a new denomination. We were originally called St. Paul's German Reformed Church, an ethnic church composed of many new immigrants from Germany. Services were conducted in German and in English. The pastor was required, as late as 1900, to be fluent both in German and English. Around 1887, the "German" was dropped, and we were simply called St. Paul's Reformed Church of Somerset.*

*In 1934 the German Reformed Church in America merged with the German Evangelical Church in America to form the Evangelical and Reformed Church (E&R). St. Paul's followed suit, becoming St. Paul's Evangelical and Reformed Church.*

*The ecumenical spirit would once again sweep the nation in the middle of the twentieth century and on July 25, 1957, the United Church of Christ (UCC) was born at the uniting General Synod in Cleveland, OH. The new denomination combined four diverse traditions: The Congregational Christian Church, and the Evangelical & Reformed Church. The United Church of Christ would become known for its distinctly congregational church governance, meaning, each local church has full autonomy, but is held together with other UCC churches through the biblical principal of covenant. Over the following decades, members of the UCC would also distinguish themselves for their advocacy work focusing on Civil Rights, the Just Peace movement, LGBTQ rights and inclusion, and Creation Care.*

