THIS WEEK'S NEWS

St. Paul's United Church of Christ Somerset, PA Sunday, August 16, 2026

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

Our Ministry Team

Rev. J. Matthew Deal: *Pastor*
Amanda Deal: *Director of Children & Youth Ministries*
Dave Neimiller: *Organist & Director of Music*
Marcy Shellenberger-Steinly: *Children's and Youth Choir Director*
Todd Wetzel: *Church Council President*
Melanie Downing: *Church Council Vice President*
Andra Snyder: *Secretary*
Jonathan Hillegas: *Treasurer*
Adam Shaffer & Diana Laue: *Trustees*

Church Office: 814-445-4534

Here are our worship opportunities for this weekend:

Sunday Worship in the Sanctuary and on Facebook and YouTube: 9:30am

The Order of Worship for Sunday, August 16, 2026—The 12th Sunday after Pentecost

Prelude

*Call To Worship *(adapted from Psalm 133)* *Rev. Dr. Bob Gross*
Leader: How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!
All: It is like a summer rain which restores the parched earth.
L: It is like a cool breeze at the shore of a lake, at the top of a mountain or through a crowded city street.
All: God meets us here.
L: We have gathered to worship the Maker of Our Days, the Restorer of Our Souls and the Breath of Our Lives.

*Opening Hymn "Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven" **23**

*Greeting

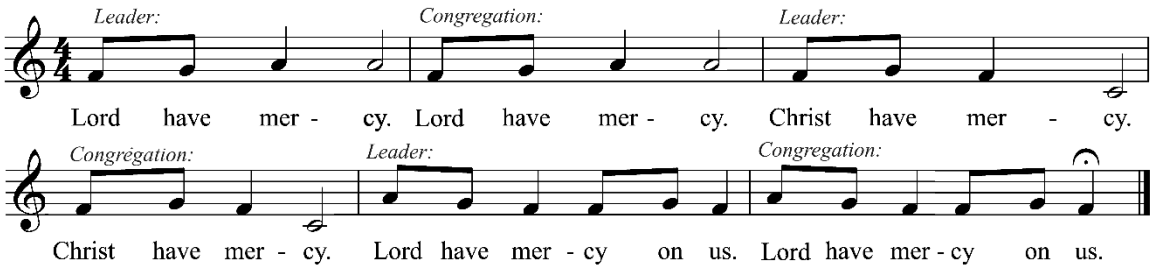
Call to Confession *Rev. Roberto Ochoa*
L: As we worship together, let us take this moment to consider our needs for transformation and forgiveness. Let us join together in praying our Prayer of Confession.

Prayer of Confession *Rev. J. Matt Deal*
Holy God, we take an odd kind of comfort in knowing that Jesus was hesitant to heal the Canaanite woman's daughter. She was not one of his people. We too are hesitant to welcome,

let alone help a stranger. We confess we like people who are like us; those who believe what we believe, look like us, who are part of our political, religious, or socio-economic tribe. And yet, you had a different plan for Jesus just as you have a different plan for us. Forgive us when we regard with suspicion those who are different. Soften our hearts to your holy presence which resides deep inside of those we judge as foreign, different, and even offensive. May your faith in us change our minds, just as it did Jesus', so that healing and wholeness may blossom for all your creation. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

a time for personal reflection and confession

Kyrie



Words of Assurance *Rev. Nancy Townley, "Ministry Matters"*

L: You have reached out for the Lord, seeking God's healing power. It is given to you through God's awesome love. Receive the love of God. Reach out to others with that same compassion.

All: Thanks be to God. Amen.

Passing of the Peace

Special Music

A Time for Children

*Hymn of Praise "Lord, I Want to be a Christian" **589**

Today's Scripture Lesson Matthew 15: (10-20), 21-28

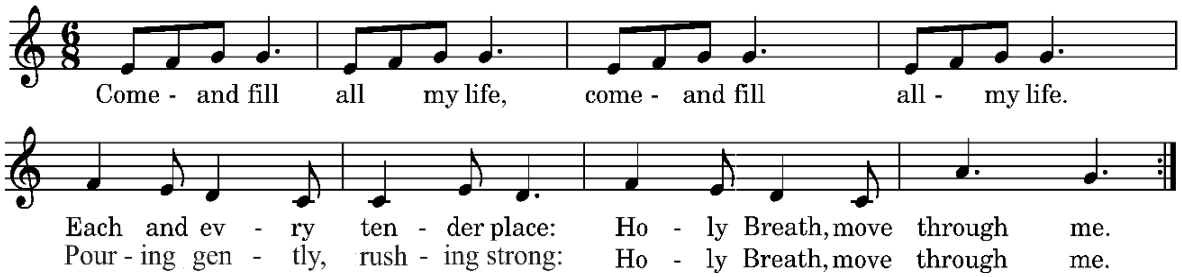
Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, "Listen and understand: it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles." Then the disciples approached and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?" He answered, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit." But Peter said to him, "Explain this parable to us." Then he said, "Are you also still without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach and goes out into the sewer? But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. For out of the heart come evil intentions,

murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile." Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed from that moment.

Sermon "Practicing What You Preach"

Pastoral Prayer

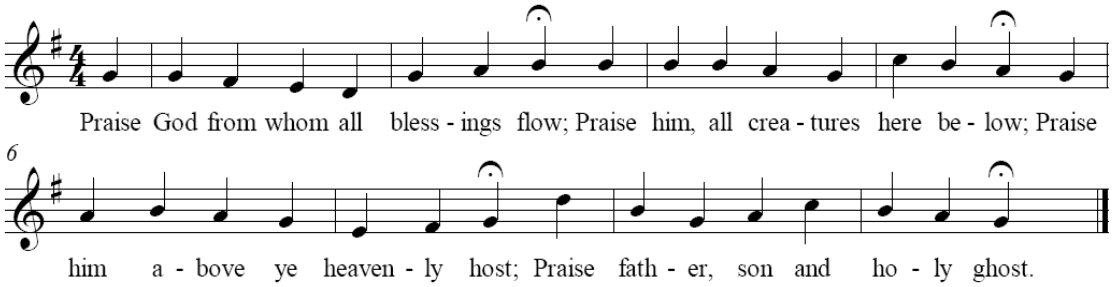
Prayer Response



Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

*The Doxology



*Prayer of Dedication *Rev. J. M. Deal*

Ever-Living God, move us by your Spirit's presence. Shake us from our complacency. Awaken us from our spiritual slumber. Empower us by your Holy Spirit to give, body, mind, and soul to your service. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

*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.

Closing Hymn "My Hope is Built" **537**

*Charge & 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

Please note, we continue to accept offerings during our in-person services, USPS mailed in offerings and online with Tithe.ly. If you have any questions, please call the church at 814-445-4534.

Greeters and Ushers:

August 16	August 23	August 30	September 6
Melanie Downing*	Christy Fetterman*	Diana Laue*	Adam Shaffer*
Wynne Sechler	Kurt Weaver	Henry Cook	Kate Shaffer
CJ Downing	Debbi Weaver	Tina Beistel	Aiden Shaffer
Lisa Yeckley	Gary Cameron	Pete Hauger	Stephen Brick

* Chair

Nursery Volunteers:

August 16	Christy & Taylor Fetterman
August 23	Gretchen Pritts & Colton Dewitt
August 30	Kate & Aiden Shaffer
September 6	Sue Willison & Andra Snyder

Church Office Hours are Monday-Friday: 8:30am—3:00pm

If someone is not physically in the office when you stop by, Pastor Matt or Dave is likely somewhere else in the building.

Office Phone: 814-445-4534

Weekly Bible Study: Please join us each Tuesday at 10am in Salem Chapel.

NEXT STEP CENTER

EMERGENCY SHELTER FOR SOMERSET COUNTY RESIDENTS
COMMUNITY HOUSING AND ADVOCACY PROGRAMS

August's Mission Offering is the Next Step Center

Our mission offering will go to help provide temporary housing to needy families in Somerset County. The Next Step Center is Somerset County's only emergency homeless shelter. Their mission is to help homeless county residents take the next step to self-sufficiency.

Quarterly giving statements are now available on the table in the back of the Sanctuary. Please pick yours up today! Thanks for your continued generosity to our shared mission as a church family!

Save the Date!

Our annual church picnic is scheduled for August 30th.

Please be sure to put your name on the sign-up sheet in the back of the Sanctuary or call the church office, 445-4534, if you plan to attend! Mark your calendar and plan to attend!

Instant Church Directory™

Your church directory on your mobile device. Instantly!

We are updating our church directory in the Instant Church Directory App and would like to include as many church members and friends as we can.

Please review your directory listing, if you have one, and make any changes so our church directory remains accurate and helpful for staying connected. If you don't have an entry, please consider being part of our directory! Here's how you can update your information or make an entry.

- **If you are comfortable using the Instant Church Directory app:**
  - Find and install "Instant Church Directory" from your App or Google Play Store.
  - Open the app and enter the email address you have on file with the church.

- Check your email for the verification code, then return to the app and select “Sign In With Code”.
- To update or enter your personal information, tap the menu icon (three lines) in the top left corner, and select “Edit My Info”.
- Tap “Submit Edits” when you are done making changes.
- To add a photo, tap “Edit Photo” on your profile page and choose a photo from your phone’s gallery or take a new one.

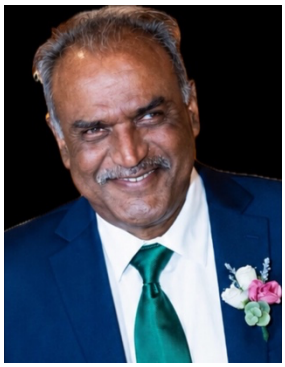
- **If you would like help using the app:**
  A help station will be available in the Narthex on Sundays after worship beginning July 12, 2026, and volunteers will be available to assist you.
- **If you are unable to come to church or prefer a paper form:**
  Paper information forms will be available for church members and friends who prefer to complete their updates by hand, and completed forms may be returned to the church office. Church staff will update the directory on behalf of those who submit paper forms.

We appreciate your help keeping information current and hope all members and friends will take part!

Military Honor Roll Update: We are in the process of updating the church’s Military Honor Rolls that are displayed each year during the Memorial Day & Veteran’s Day services and on permanent display in the library extension. The names on these honor rolls are of church members or church friends who have served in the armed forces. If you or a family member have a name to be added to the roll, please contact Andra Snyder at 814-233-0642. You can view the honor rolls by going to the library extension. **Please have your submissions to Andra by Sunday, September 6th.**

Community Back to School Drive

St. Paul’s UCC is again partnering with Tableland and the Family Center of Somerset County to provide back-to-school items for local children in need. You can take part in this year’s drive by purchasing requested items for a specific child or by making a financial donation to the church to assist in underwriting the purchase of needed items. Please write “School Drive” on your donation. Each child available for sponsorship is displayed on a “book” in the Edgewood Avenue Narthex. All items are due back to the church with the book attached AS SOON AS POSSILBE (but no later than Wednesday, August 26th). Sorry for the short notice! Any questions can be addressed to Amanda Deal. Your prayers & support are greatly appreciated!



Remembering Dr. Cyril Nathaniel. Cyril Nathaniel, a beloved and faithful member of our church family passed away on August 5th following a courageous two-and-a-half-year battle with cancer. His family will be having a celebration of life visitation at the Duca Funeral Home, 1622 Menoher Blvd, Johnstown, PA 15905, this Sunday from 4-7pm. Here is the link to the obituary https://www.ducafuneralhome.com/obituary/DrCyril-Nathaniel.