
THIS WEEK'S NEWS

St. Paul's United Church of Christ Somerset, PA Sunday, September 13, 2026

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*

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

Dear St. Paul's Friends & Family,

I had the honor of participating in the 25th Anniversary Morning Observance Program at the Flight 93 National Memorial on Friday. As we remember the terrible events of September 11, 2001, and lives that were lost and the many more lives that were forever changed, I share with you the prayer that I prayed on Friday.

May you experience God's peace and presence as we reflect and remember.

Peace,
Pastor Matt

"O, God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come.
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home." *Isaac Watts, 1719*

We gather before you today giving thanks for those whose lives were lifted up to you in the ultimate act of love and sacrifice so that the lives of countless neighbors would be spared from injury and death. We humbly ask for your blessing upon the memory of the passengers and crew members of United Airlines Flight 93, whose actions and souls are forever linked to this sacred place. We give thanks that 25 years ago, 40 strangers, each on their own journey, united behind a single purpose that not only saved lives, but whose actions will continue to inspire countless generations.

God of Many Names may your Spirit surround their families who continue to bear the burden of their loss. Hold them securely in your love so that they may be joined eternally to

you and to their departed loved ones. Provide for them sustenance for life's journey as they live out each day. Grant to them the continued blessings of new life, youth and children, who will join in sharing the courageous stories of their loved ones who sacrificed themselves defending others. Bind them together in your Spirit's tether. May sacred memory embrace them with continued healing and a future full of hope and abundant life.

Encourage us, O God, to make of our lives a living sacrifice, dedicated to works of mercy, love, and generosity toward our neighbor. Nurture among us a beloved community that cares for the grieving and courageously contends with the darkness of hate, bigotry, religious extremism, intolerance, and all forces that diminish our life together.

Grant that we, your people, of all faiths, and of no faith, be guided in the ways of peace and justice as we seek to respond to your love by loving you, our neighbor, and ourselves with all our strength and being. May the courage and selflessness of the 40 passengers and crew members of Flight 93 inspire us to live lives committed to protecting the life, dignity, and freedom of friends and strangers. Continue to shepherd us, O Holy One, from this sacred space into the worship that is our lives.

"O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be thou our guide while life shall last,
And our eternal home." *Isaac Watts, 1719*

Amen.

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, September 13, 2026—The 16th Sunday after Pentecost

Prelude

*Call To Worship

Thom Shuman

Leader: We gather here, where God would teach us:

All: so we may learn to be more compassionate, so we may be taught how to be more loving.

L: We gather here, where Jesus would teach us

All: the wisdom to choose forgiveness over holding a grudge, the language of hope so we may speak to all.

L: We gather here, where the Spirit imparts wisdom,

All: so we might know how to share grace, so we would learn to welcome all to this Table.

*Opening Hymn

"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"

*Greeting

Call to Confession

Rev. J. Matt Deal

L: Just as God delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, God also saves us from being enslaved by the harmful results of our sins and failures.

All: Let us offer our confession to God.

Prayer of Confession

Rev. J. Matt Deal

Redeeming God, we admit that forgiveness and reconciliation are hard things for us to accomplish. In the midst of conflict and misunderstandings we cling to our own positions of power and privilege, seeking to preserve our self-righteousness by seldom admitting we are wrong. We confess to you O God, that we are often wrong. We have wronged our neighbors in thought, word, and deed. We have diminished the sacredness of others by the things we have said and the things we have left unsaid. Forgive us when we retreat from doing the hard work of reconciliation. Grant us large measures of strength and courage so that we build a more just world by loving our neighbor. Teach us Christ's ways so that we may dispense grace just as generously as we receive grace from the you. We pray these things in Jesus' name, amen.

a time for personal reflection and confession

Kyrie

Words of Assurance

Rev. J. Matt Deal

One: God's mercy is boundless. God's grace is inexhaustible. We are forgiven by God not once, not twice, but countless times.

All: Thanks be to God! Let us live generous lives that reflect God's love.

Passing of the Peace

L: May the Peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

Special Music

"A Song of Peace"

arr. M. Schinske

A Time for Children

*Hymn of Praise

"Help Us Accept Each Other"

487

Today's Scripture Lesson

Matthew 18:21-35

Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were

greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

Sermon

"The Really Hard Work of Mercy"

Pastoral Prayer

Prayer Response

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

*The Doxology

*Prayer of Dedication

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 (unison):

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

"Let There Be Peace on Earth"

677

*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.

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

Greeters and Ushers:

September 13	September 20	September 27	October 4 Communion
Jonathan Hillegas* Laura Fochtman Don Zuccolotto Rich Nichols	Raymond Toy* Missy Toy Gary Cameron Charles Toy	Melanie Downing* Wynne Sechler CJ Downing Henry Cook	Christy Fetterman* Roy Fetterman Trevor Fetterman Audrey Hay

* Chair

Nursery Volunteers:

September 13	Melanie & CJ Downing
September 20	Diana Laue & Kirsten Thomas
September 27	Debi & Taylor Fetterman



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

September's Mission Offering is The Good Samaritan Fund

The Good Samaritan Fund was established to respond with compassion to urgent needs in the Somerset community. Through this ministry, St. Paul's United Church of Christ may provide short-term assistance to individuals and families facing unexpected financial hardship or other immediate challenges.



Rally Day This Sunday!

Join us to kick-off a new season of our faith-formation classes with a light lunch and a "Mini-Messy Church" session following worship. If you or your children are interested in joining a class this season, please put your name and contact info on the sign-up sheet at the back of the sanctuary so we can plan for appropriate classes. **Everyone is welcome to join us for the rally day lunch and activities, even if you're not planning to participate in a class this year**

Come on down to Connections Café!

Please join us every Sunday downstairs in the fellowship hall following worship to connect and catch up with others in our faith family and enjoy a snack & coffee. This has been a long-running, fun and meaningful ministry here, and we need your help to keep it going. Please consider hosting a Sunday, making baked goods/providing snacks, or giving a monetary donation (denote "Connections Café" on your envelope). **Hosts are still needed for the following Sundays:**

September 27, October 4, October 11, October 18, November 1, and

November 15. Supplies will be available in the church refrigerator and freezer, and assistance making the coffee is available. If you are willing to host an upcoming Sunday, please put your name on the scheduling display found in Fellowship Hall or speak with Andra Snyder (814-233-0642). Thank you!



Time to get BACK in the "SING" of Things!



The Children's and Youth Choirs will start a new choir season on Saturday, September 19th, from 9:30-10:00 (both groups TOGETHER as we begin the year) in the Salem Chapel (lower level of the church)! Young people Age 4 - High School are invited to participate!

The Chancel Choir will begin a new choral season on Sunday, September 20th, following Worship & Fellowship!

Please join us as we excitedly begin a new year of musical ministry!

"SING"-cerely, Dave & Marcy

Mark Your Calendars! ... the *Christmas Musical* will be presented on *December 19th and 20th* this year!