
THIS WEEK'S NEWS

St. Paul's United Church of Christ Somerset, PA Sunday, September 27, 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 and Family,

"Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you..." (Philippians 2: 12-13a)

I am often amazed when I stop and think about how Christianity spread throughout the ancient world. In a three-mile-per-hour word devoid of the communication technologies we often take for granted, it's stunning how quickly new churches popped up. Jesus' first disciples joined by the apostle Paul, and other leaders were responsible for taking his message out to the world, albeit usually on foot. Paul was especially effective at communicating Jesus' message through multi-year journeys to churches and prolifically writing letters to churches throughout the ancient world.

Paul had little time or space to mince words. The content of his letters was usually a combination of commending congregations for their faithfulness, exhorting them to reform, urging resolutions to conflicts, and general instructions regarding continued faithful discipleship.

Our text today is from his letter he wrote to the church in Philippi. He calls church members to the ultimate form of discipleship: oneness with Jesus Christ. Paul used the words to an ancient church hymn to remind them about the nature of Jesus' life and ministry. In summation, Jesus' life was based on his willingness to humble himself as God in becoming one of us, gladly emptying himself so that we could experience God's love and grace. He was obedient to God's desire to reconcile humanity so that we could have oneness with God, even though that meant his own suffering, death, and resurrection.

Paul exhorts us to seriously work out our own salvation, to literally consider the ways in which we help to bring wholeness and healing to others through allowing God's Spirit to work in our lives in acts of love, acceptance, justice, peace and grace. The good news is that we do not engage in this saving work on our own but are joined with others as the Body of Christ, the church. We gain support and encouragement as we work together to nurture salvation in our own lives and in the world. May the Holy Spirit continue to guard and guide us in unity as we faithfully carry out Christ's life-giving ministry.

Blessings for your journey,
Pastor Matt

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 27, 2026—The 18th Sunday after Pentecost

Prelude

*Call To Worship (*Inspired by Psalm 25*)

Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay

Leader: To you, O God, we lift up our souls. We trust you!

All: Make your ways known to us. Teach us your truths.

L: To you, O God, we lift up our souls. We follow you!

All: Lead us in your ways. Your path liberates and saves.

L: To you, O God, we lift up our souls. We worship you!

All: Guide us in humility and goodness. Praise the Holy One!

*Opening Hymn

"Praise My Soul, the God of Heaven"

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*Greeting

Call to Confession

Rev. J. Matthew 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. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay

Holy Presence, you demonstrate the way of love and community, yet so often we turn immediately to quarrels and complaints against one another and against you rather than helpful ways of communicating and confronting conflict. Teach us to be loving even as we struggle. Stir up compassion and accountability in our interactions. Remind us that you are with us even through tests, trials, and disappointments. Transform us with trust and care to be faithful and to seek you in prayer when we feel driven to quarrel and complaint. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

a time for personal reflection and confession

Kyrie

Leader: Lord have mer - cy. Lord have mer - cy. Christ have mer - cy.

Congregation: Christ have mer - cy. Lord have mer - cy on us. Lord have mer - cy on us.

Words of Assurance

Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay

L: Our Creator meets us with compassion and care even when we do not embody our best or strive for the goodness of God. Let us follow in the path of trust and faithful remembering of what God has done for us and how Christ has empowered us for transformation and new life.

All: Thanks be to God! Amen!

Passing of the Peace

L: May the Peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

Special Music

“Humble Thyself in the Sight of the Lord”

arr. M. Hayes

A Time for Children

*Hymn of Praise

“Seek Ye First”

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Today's Scripture Lesson

Matthew 21:23-32

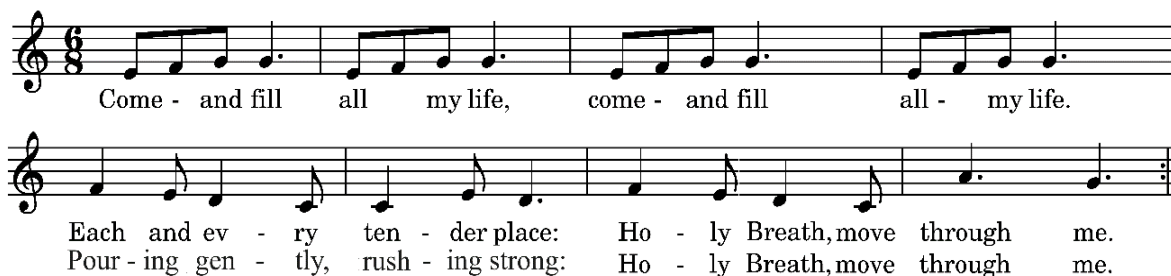
When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why, then, did you not believe him?’ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the crowd, for all regard John as a prophet.” So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. “What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ He answered, ‘I will not,’ but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same, and he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him, and even after you saw it you did not change your minds and believe him.

Sermon

“The Importance of Doing”

Pastoral Prayer

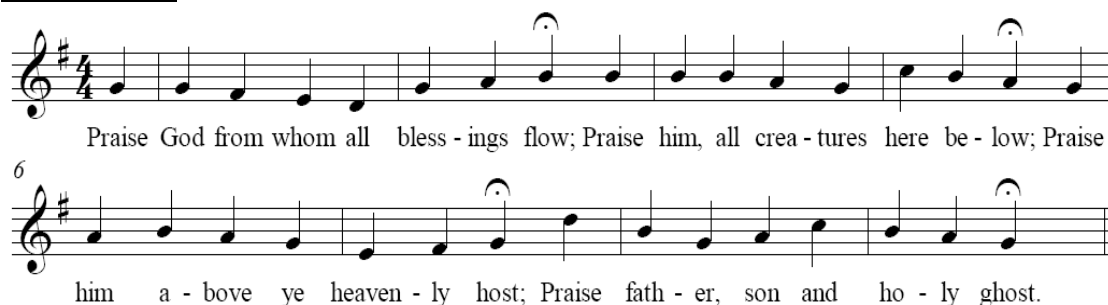
Prayer Response



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

"Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!"

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*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

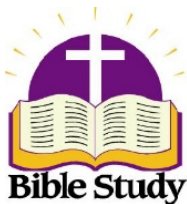
Greeters and Ushers:

September 27	October 4 Communion	October 11	October 18
Melanie Downing* Wynne Sechler CJ Downing Henry Cook	Christy Fetterman* Roy Fetterman Trevor Fetterman Audrey Hay	Diana Laue* Mike Stutzman Suzy Housley Sally McClintock	Rich Nichols* Dale Snyder Rebecca Witt Kathy Gary

* Chair

Nursery Volunteers:

September 27	Debi Weaver & Taylor Fetterman
October 4	Corey & Alice Whaley
October 11	Gretchen Pritts & Colton Dewitt
October 18	Becky & Kendall Smith



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.

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!



Sunday School is back in session! Classes will meet following Connections Café, from ~10:45 to 11:45 each Sunday. The Adult Forum meets in Salem Chapel, and will be looking at the book, *100 Bible Verses that Made America: Defining Moments That Shaped Our Enduring Foundation of Faith* by Robert J. Morgan. The mixed grades class (grade 1 – grade 7) meets in the C.E. Room. The “Play & Pray” group (age 2 – Kindergarten) meets in the nursery for Bible activities and playtime. All are welcome to check out a class and join us!

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!