
THIS WEEK'S NEWS

St. Paul's United Church of Christ Somerset, PA Sunday, October 11, 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,

Over the years we have been blessed with some very talented ministry interns. Our summer ministry internship was a way for individuals to discern a calling to ministry. Rev. Rachel McDonald was our first intern. She answered her calling through study and ordination, first serving a local congregation and currently serving the national church. Her ministry involves helping congregations use their gifts to serve the wider church. As we consider the gifts of laity this Sunday, I leave you with one of Rachel's recent meditations regarding this month's mission offering, Neighbors In Need. All clergy members were once lay members of the church. I give thanks for Rachel's ministry and the small part that our congregation played in her journey!

--Pastor Matt

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love, as Christ loved us. Ephesians 5:1-2 (NRSVUE)

I have often found it difficult to preach from Ephesians. It is challenging not to turn the text into a sermon full of scolding. Act this way, don't act this way. There are certainly plenty of instructions in Ephesians that Christians haven't been living up to for thousands of years.

And yet, I find myself drawn to the encouragement to be like Christ. This is a movement at the heart of our faith, that we can be transformed to be more Christ-like. There is hope that what we were doesn't have to dictate who we will be.

This is at the heart of why this scripture is the theme for our Neighbors in Need offering this year. When we come together as a church to do the work of justice and advocacy, we are acting out of the hope that change in the world is possible.

As you encourage your congregation to participate in this offering, I hope you will share the following. First, this offering is transformative because it calls us to collective justice—not isolated programs and pitches, but a genuine ecosystem of people who work collaboratively across issues and geographies to bring about social change. Second, our gifts represent our faith in God’s ability to multiply what we have. Jesus’ ministry was full of abundance, but not because he started with overwhelming resources. Rather, what was offered in community became enough to meet the needs of the day. When we walk, roll, and march in love together, justice will come.

The Rev. Rachel McDonald works for the National Ministries of the UCC as Generosity Officer, OCWM and Special Mission Offerings. The four Special Mission Offerings of the United Church of Christ are One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, and the Christmas Fund. Together they demonstrate a commitment to building a just world for all. To learn more, go to <https://www.ucc.org/smo>

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, October 11, 2026—The 20th Sunday after Pentecost—Lay Leader Sunday.

Prelude

*Call To Worship (adapted from Mark 10:35-45)

The Worship Sourcebook

Leader: We may come here for a glimpse of glory,

All: But Jesus asks us: “Can you drink the cup that I drink?”

L: The cup of Jesus’ own life: struggle and joy; suffering and hope. Fullness of life! We may come here to get close to Jesus,

All: And Jesus asks us: “Can you be baptized with my baptism?”

L: Baptized into the reign of God, where the Spirit breaks down barriers among all people and creates new relationships! We may come here for honor or fame,

All: But Jesus challenges us: “To become great you must serve!”

L: Why are we here?

All: To drink the cup of fullness of life; to immerse ourselves in Jesus’ struggle for justice and peace; to learn how to serve so that the world may be healed.

*Opening Hymn

“Lord of All Hopefulness”

see bulletin p. 10

*Greeting

L: This is the day that the Lord has made! Let us rejoice and be glad in it! It is good that we gather on this day to worship our triune God. God who has created us, Christ who has redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit who sustains us.

Call to Confession

The Worship Sourcebook

L: We are standing on holy ground.

All: With Jesus as our advocate we may approach God with boldness.

L: Let us make our confession to God.

All: In God we receive mercy and find grace.

Prayer of Confession

Rev. J. Matthew Deal

Gracious God, we confess that the allure of power, popularity, and greatness are strong. Examples of fame and fortune abound in the world as our culture seems to worship the cult of celebrity and fame. Please forgive us when we find ourselves distracted by trendy fads and the social gossip of the moment. Help us to focus on Christ's saving works, so that we might be a source of healing, love, and hope to those who are struggling for wholeness and acceptance. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

a time for personal reflection and confession

Kyrie

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

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

Words of Assurance

Rev. J. Matthew Deal

L: God wants us to be whole, to live an abundant life free of fear. God seeks relationship with us. In God's grace, you are forgiven.

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

A Time for Children

*Hymn of Praise

"O Jesus I Have Promised"

612

Today's Scripture Lesson

Mark 10:35-45

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him and said to him, 'Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.' And he said to them, 'What is it you want me to do for you?' And they said to him, 'Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.' But Jesus said to them, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?' They replied, 'We are able.' Then Jesus said to them, 'The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.'

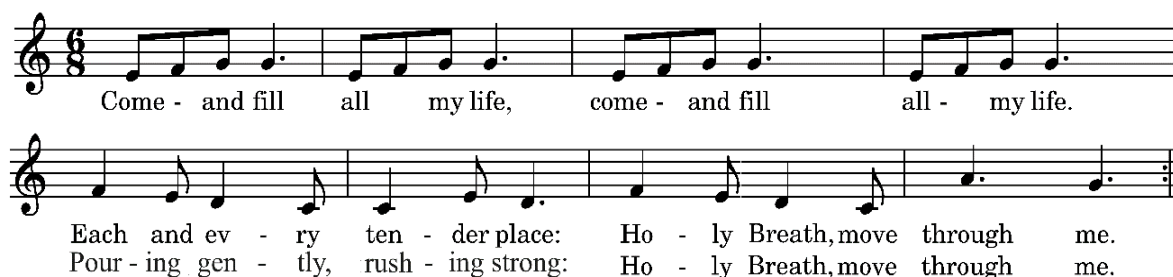
When the ten heard this, they began to be angry with James and John. So Jesus called them and said to them, 'You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.'

Sermon

"Jesus, the Sons of Zebedee, and Me"

Pastoral Prayer

Prayer Response



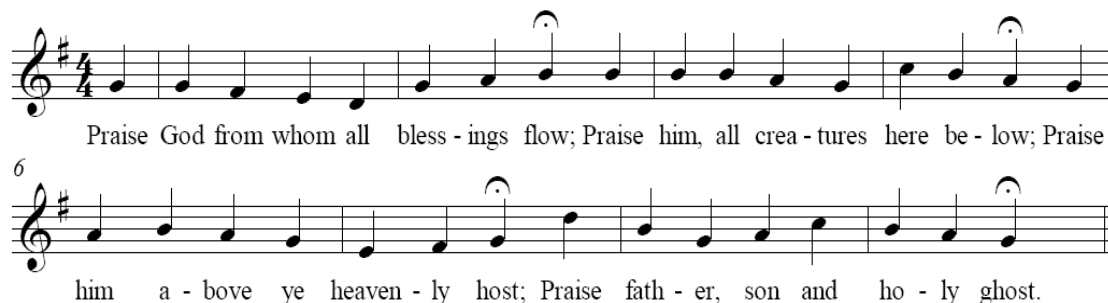
Invitation to the Offering

The Worship Sourcebook

L: Let us be faithful stewards of our time, our talents, and our money, so that our treasure is in heaven and our giving pleases God. Let us now give of our tithes and offerings.

Offertory

*The Doxology



*Prayer of Dedication

Rev. J. Matthew 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

"Now Thank We All Our God"

715

*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:

October 11	October 18	October 25	November 1 Communion
Diana Laue* Mike Stutzman Suzy Housley Sally McClintock	Rich Nichols* Dale Snyder Rebecca Witt Kathy Gary	Andra Snyder* Sally McClintock Josh Boland Kirsten Thomas	Todd Wetzel* Sara Wetzel Gary Cameron Pam Kister

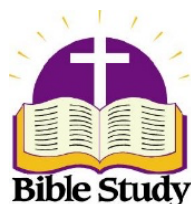
* Chair

Nursery Volunteers:

October 11	Gretchen Pritts & Colton Dewitt
October 18	Becky & Kendall Smith
October 25	Christy & Taylor Fetterman



This Sunday is Laity Sunday! Please join us for worship as we welcome lay leaders as they guide us through the service!



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

Quarterly giving statements are now available in the narthex. Please pick yours up to save the church on postage! Thanks for your continued generosity to our shared mission as a church family!

Neighbor's In Need is October's Mission Offering



Neighbors in Need Mission Moment

In the letter to the Ephesians, Paul encourages the church to put on a new self and leave their old ways of being behind. This is at the heart of what he is teaching when he invites the Ephesians and all of us to “walk in love.”

Whether we walk, roll, or march in love, this is still an invitation for us today to continue to seek new ways of justice together. One of the ways we do this is by supporting the Neighbors in Need offering. When you give to Neighbors in Need, you support justice and advocacy ministries throughout the United Church of Christ. Whether through our partnership with the Council for American Indian Ministries or the Neighbors in Need grant program, your gifts equip ministries that seek to transform the world into a more just, fair, and equitable place.

We have hope that the world does not have to stay as it is, but we believe that God inspires transformative action. Whether through projects seeking to increase home ownership, providing food for unhoused siblings, or addressing mental health challenges of children and youth—we seek to make the world a more just place. The world can change and through the power of the Holy Spirit we can be a part of that transformation.

Together let us advocate, act, and give generously.

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). **October 18, November 8, November 15, and November 22.** 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. Please note: The Children's classes will not meet today.

Calling All Acolytes!

We need youth acolytes to light and extinguish the candles and the beginning and end of worship. Please put your name on the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the hallway if you're interested in helping! Pastor Matt is available to instruct those who haven't done it before.



The Adult Chancel Choir is back! Please join us as we prepare special music for worship. If you have taken a break, want to try choir, or are a current member you are welcome to sing with us! This is a really fun group to make music with! Rehearsals are Sundays following worship.