



# **St. Paul's United Church of Christ**

*A welcoming Christ-centered community...*

7th Sunday of Easter

May 17, 2026  
9:30am Worship

## **We're Glad You're Here!**

**Welcome:** *St. Paul's creates experiences of joyful fellowship where children, youth, adults, and the elderly build open and honest relationships of mutual support. In welcoming the ongoing transformative power of the Holy Spirit, we find freedom from social stigmas and shame. This in turn empowers us to address isolation and marginalization in ourselves and in our wider community.*

## **Today's Scripture Readings**

1 Peter 4:12-14 and 5:6-11+ John 17:1-11

Ministers of the Gospel – All Who Gather for God's Worship

Worship Leader– Rev. Deborah Parker-Hill

Reader – Dave Johnson

Ushers – Derek & Marian Prince

Accompanist – Barb Moyer

Acolyte – Pat Babel

## **Flower Dedication**

To the Glory of God in honor of Denise Cisick's birthday,  
by her husband Joe

**Join us for Sunday Morning Music & Worship  
9:30 – 10:30am Sunday In-Person / Zoom Worship**

Connect online: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86359317508>

Or by phone to listen to the service:

Call 1-646-876-9923 and when prompted, enter the meeting ID: 863 5931 7508

300 West First Street, Birdsboro PA 19508  
610-582-8461 + [office@stpaulsbirdsboro.org](mailto:office@stpaulsbirdsboro.org) +  
[www.stpaulsbirdsboro.org](http://www.stpaulsbirdsboro.org)  
Church wifi: StPauls / havefaith

# Welcome and Announcements

## Prelude

*(please rise, in body or in spirit)*

## Call to Worship

Leader: Let God rise up! Let those who love God be jubilant with joy.

**People: We sing praises to our awe-inspiring God, whose abundant blessings provide for all we need.**

Leader: God is Sovereign over the earth, defender of the defenseless, and parent to orphans; God creates families for those who are alone. God leads captives to freedom and breaks the yoke of oppression.

**People: God goes forth before the people, marching through the wilderness of our lives, bringing forth restoration and justice.**

Leader: Sing praise to God, who dwells in holiness.

**People: We proclaim the power of God, who gives power and strength to the people.**

**All: Let us worship God together!**

**Opening Hymn: “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You”** **NCH #4**  
*[New Century Hymnal]*

## Prayer of Transformation and New Life

Leader: Let us pray. God Most High, as we gather this morning, we remember that we are your people and you are our God. Enfold us in your presence, fill us again with holy awe and mystery, as we worship you today, and hear now the confession of our hearts and lips:

**All: Blessed One, you created us and provide all that we need. Forgive our anxiety in these troubled days. Empower us with your vision. Help us to see the ways that you are rising up even now. Help us to find joy amidst the struggles, as we wait for the power of your Spirit to come upon us. Forgive us when we miss or ignore the prompting of your Spirit – your purpose for our lives – and place our will above yours. Grant us courage to share in Christ’s sufferings, to be his witnesses, to create loving life in community and to carry your compassion to a hurting world...**

*(a moment of quiet reflection)*

### **Words of Grace**

Leader: As the Body of Christ, we are forgiven and empowered by the Holy Spirit to be Christ's witnesses. Each of us has our own story of what Jesus' life means for us. Through our life- stories we can convey hope to the hopeless, joy to the downtrodden, and peace in the midst of conflict. This is, indeed, good news!

**All: Thanks be to God! Amen.**

### **Passing the Peace**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

### **We Listen For God's Word: Scripture**

**1 Peter 4:12-14 and 5:6-11 [page #184] + John 17:1-11 page #85]**

Reader: This is the Word of God for the people of God.

**All: Thanks be to God!**

### **Sermon: "*Spirit of Witness*"**

*(please rise, in body or in spirit)*

## **Affirmation of Faith**

United Church of Canada, 1980 (New Century Hymnal #887)

Leader: We are not alone, we live in God's world.

**ALL: We believe in God:**

**who has created and is creating,  
who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,  
to reconcile and make new,  
who works in us and others by the Spirit.**

**We trust in God.**

**We are called to be the Church:**

**to celebrate God's presence,  
to love and serve others,  
to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,  
our judge and our hope.**

**In life, in death, in life beyond death,  
God is with us.**

**We are not alone. Thanks be to God.**

## **Gathering the Prayers of the People**

*After each petition, we will say the following -*

Leader: Holy One, in your mercy,

**All: Hear our prayer.**

## **The Lord's Prayer**

**All: Our Creator, 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.**

## Offering

**Sending Hymn: “Rise Up, O Saints of God”**

*Tune: Festal Song*

**W&R #590 vs 2-5**

*[Worship & Rejoice]*

*Permission to reprint/stream obtained from ONE LICENSE, License #A-714498*

**Speak out, O saints of God!  
Despair engulfs earth’s frame;  
as heirs of God’s baptismal grace,  
His word of hope proclaim.**

**Rise up, O saints of God!  
His kingdom’s task embrace;  
redress sin’s cruel consequence;  
give justice larger place.**

**Give heed, O saints of God!  
Creation cries in pain;  
stretch forth your hand of healing now,  
with love the weak sustain.**

**Commit your hearts to seek  
the paths which Christ has trod;  
and quickened by the Spirit’s power,  
rise up, O saints of God!**

## Benediction

## Postlude

*Liturgy adapted from:*

*Worship Ways, **Witnesses to Hope: Service Prayers for the Seventh Sunday of Easter** by the Rev. Renee C. Jackson, Minister for Ministerial Formation, MESA (Ministerial Excellence, Support and Authorization). ©2020 Justice and Local Church Ministries, Faith INFO Ministry Team, United Church of Christ.*

+++++

## **Announcements**

**Church office will be closed** the week beginning May 11<sup>th</sup> and will reopen the week beginning May 25<sup>th</sup>. Voice mail messages and email messages will be monitored by Nancy Hughes. Thank you Nancy!

**50 DAYS OF EASTER FOOD CHALLENGE:** Let's focus on our giving to the DBASD Caring Closet for the 50 days of Easter, April 5-May 24, 2026! See the list of item for what is requested by the School District. Most needs are canned fruits and vegetables, whole grain cereal, pasta, and toiletries. Our impact in the community will be reported at the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Keystone Conference Meeting, to be held Jun 5-7, 2026.

**Congregational Meeting** will be held on June 14<sup>th</sup> following worship.

**Our Daily Bread** for March/April/May 2026 has arrived! Pick up your copy today!

**Save the Date for the church picnic.** It will be on July 12<sup>th</sup>! Details to follow.

### **GOOD NEWS TO SHARE!!! BIRDSBORO SHARES IS LIVE!!!!**

Birdsboro Shares is a mutual aid network that we have been working on. This is a network of neighbors helping neighbors. Whether you have a need, a resource/skill to share, or both, we all enter the network the same way., through the Birdsboro Shares form on St Paul's website. See link:

<https://stpaulsbirdsboro.org/birdsboro-shares-mutual-aid-network/>

Your help is needed to get the word out, so please share with friends and neighbors!!.

**Bible Study** is held in the upper room in the church each Sunday beginning at 8:30am. Join us for good conversation and discussion about the books of the bible.

**“Prayers of the People”** – Our current Elders will be holding meetings on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday evening of each month at 6pm via Zoom. All are welcome including phone participants. Contact Pat Babel at 484-949-5033 to be included in the email distribution. Thank you!

**Caring Closet starting for 2025-2026 school year**

Ashley Griffith, the coordinator for the Daniel Boone School District’s “Caring Closet” sent a flyer to the church asking for the following:

- \* Boys underwear for our Primary Center & Intermediate Center, S-XL & 4/5-12; & all sizes for Middle & High School
- \* Girls underwear for our Primary Center & Intermediate Center, S-XL & 4/5-12; & all sizes for Middle & High School
- \* Universal items such as applesauce squeeze pouches & individual goldfish snacks; children’s toothpaste & toothbrushes; deodorant; tampons & panty liners

**Boyer’s 1% Caring & Sharing** – When shopping at Boyer’s don’t forget to have the cashier scan your 1% Caring & Sharing card (this card has St. Paul’s name printed on the back of it). Every time you use the card Boyer’s will give St. Paul’s a rebate check totaling 1% of the total purchases made by those who used the card. This is a simple and easy way to help St. Paul’s. If you don’t have a card but would like one, please contact the church office.

**Redner’s Save-A-Tape** – We are still collecting Redner’s tapes for which St. Paul’s can receive 1% of the total bill (Excluding items controlled by the government such as tax, milk and tobacco products). Redner’s accepts receipts for redemption up to three years from their printed date and there is no dollar limit. Start saving tapes today! You can drop your receipts in the weekly offering plate or mailed to the church office.

*Electronic Giving is available with the Vanco Mobile App or through our website "Give" page.*



## **St Paul's Weekly Calendar**

Sun, May 17	Sunday Worship (C) New Millennium (CE)	9:30am 7pm-8pm
Tues, May 19	Nancy Moyer Counseling (CE-LL)	5:30pm-7pm
Thurs, May 21	Nancy Moyer Counseling (CE-LL) Currently Sober (CE)	5:30pm-7pm 6:30-7:30pm
Fri, May 22	Beginners Meeting (CE)	7pm- 8pm
Sat, May 23	Nancy Moyer Counseling (CE-LL)	8:30am – 2pm
Sun, May 24	Sunday Worship (C) New Millennium (CE)	9:30am 7pm-8pm

### This Week: Church Office Hours

The office is closed this week. Phone messages and emails will be monitored by Nancy Hughes. Thank you Nancy

### This Week: Pastor Deb's Office Hours

Tues/remote	9:00am-1:00pm
Wed/in-office	9:00am-1:00pm
Thurs/remote	9:00am-1:00pm



# Keystone

CONFERENCE  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## The Covenant Association of the Keystone Conference UCC News from around the Association Greetings!

May 3, 2026

On Sunday, April 26, 2026, the Covenant Association met at St. John's Gernants Church in Leesport. It was a wonderful gathering, and we thank the Rev. Fran Merkel and the members of St. John's Gernants for their hospitality and refreshments. It was great to see friends, colleagues, and new faces as 70 people from around Covenant Association came together as one body.

As we worshiped God together, you could feel the Holy Spirit with us. Thanks to the Rev. Linda Kozlowski, the Rev. Selina Hamilton, the Rev. Rebecca Hoover, and the Rev. Fran Merkel for a wonderful worship experience.

With the creation of the Keystone Conference there was a lot of work that we needed to be about. The first item was to adopt The Conflict-of-Interest Policy. You can find this policy on the Covenant Association Website ([covenantassociation.org](http://covenantassociation.org)). Each member of the Executive Committee will be asked to sign that they will abide by that policy. This will be done on an annual basis.

Our second item was to create the "Clergy Care Team" (CCT). Here is a short description of what this team will be about:

The Clergy Care Team serves as a vital support resource for authorized ministers, their spouses, and families within the Covenant Association. Committed to fostering well-being, the team coordinates prayer requests, stays in touch with Conference leadership, and offers both training and guidance to ensure the needs of clergy are met. With a dedication to confidentiality and a strong understanding of United Church of Christ beliefs and theology, members are respected for their administrative and visitation skills.

After much discussion about this proposal around the "term limits" that each of these folks would serve, this proposal was accepted.

The Rev. Mark Johnson, the Rev. Melissa Burkhart, the Rev. Bob Witmyer, the Rev. Mark Stryak, and the Rev. Linda Meredith were introduced as our new Clergy Care Team.

Our third item was discussion about what to do when people were not available for open positions on the Executive Committee. As you may or may not know, we have not had a Vice Moderator for one year. With concerns raised that our lay people need to know how important they are to the well-being of the Covenant Association, the following sentence was added to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Covenant Association:

“Though it is desired to alternate between authorized ministers and lay persons for the position of Moderator and Vice-Moderator, and if this is not possible, then an appropriate volunteer (authorized ministers and lay persons) may fill the role.”

One of the final items we discussed was the election of offices. The following were elected to positions in the Covenant Association:

Mrs. Alexis Ames: Standing side of the (COM)

(COM stands for the Committee on Ministry)

Rev. Domenik Ackerman to the COM

Rev. Jayme Babczak to the COM

Rev. Donald Epps to the COM

Mrs. Linda Lash to fill the unfinished term of Vice Moderator

Rev. Tammie Wisniewski as Treasurer

Mr. Rick Deerfield as Secretary

We celebrated our work and worship together by ending our gathering with communion and singing.

I would like to thank everyone who attended and everyone who helped to make this an amazing gathering! It was a beautiful day in the life of the Covenant Association.

If you missed this gathering, we will be gathering again on Sunday, October 25, 2026, at Huff's Church, 540 Conrad Road, Alburtis, PA. **MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!** Spread the word in your congregation!

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the Covenant Association, feel free to reach out to your Executive Committee and we will be happy to meet with you.

In the June insert, we would like to begin to highlight our churches in the Covenant Association. PLEASE send one or two pictures of your congregation and include the exciting things that are happening. Send to Rev. Sharon Morris at [revsmorris@gmail.com](mailto:revsmorris@gmail.com).