



St. Paul's United Church of Christ

A welcoming Christ-centered community...

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

Romans 8:26-28, 31, 35-39 + Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52
Ministers of the Gospel – All Who Gather for God's Worship

Worship Leader– Rev. Deborah Parker-Hill

Reader – Janeen Adil

Ushers – Doug Johnson and Wanda Druzba

Accompanist – Barb Moyer

Acolyte – John Herold

Flower Dedication

To the Glory of God and in celebration of the birthday of Dave Johnson
by his family

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 +
www.stpaulsbirdsboro.org
Church wifi: StPauls / havefaith

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

(please rise, in body or in spirit)

Call to Worship

Leader: Give thanks to the Holy One.

All: We sing praises and remember God's wonderful works!

Leader: Give thanks to the Holy One.

All: We make God's deeds known among the peoples.

Leader: Give thanks to the Holy One.

All: We seek the Holy, and our hearts rejoice!

All: Let us worship God together!

Opening Hymn: "Rejoice, You Pure in Heart" NCH #55
[New Century Hymnal]

Prayer of Transformation and New Life

Leader: Let us pray. Gracious God, you have made yourself known among us.

When we seek you, we find you. You surround us with love. Your presence strengthens and upholds us. While we gather together, let us be mindful that your wisdom speaks, your power fuels, and your heart fills us.

Transform us by your grace, as we pray together:

All: Glorious God, may your face shine upon us. Teach us your ways so that we may live in peace, with justice. Keep our way steady and directed toward you. Remove the hold of oppression and evil from among your people. Transform our hearts and minds so that we might reflect your goodness and love in the world...

(a moment of quiet reflection)

Words of Grace

Leader: Servants of God, the Holy One radiates grace and mercy. By the power of Love, receive the opportunity to redeem every mistake, every passive participation, every deliberate action that has caused harm. Receive God's forgiveness in order to be released from shame and set free to make things right. Remember, nothing can separate us from God's love.

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

Romans 8:26-28, 31, 35-39

26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. 27 And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. 28 We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

31 What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? 36 As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered." 37 No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

31 He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; 32 it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

33 He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; 46 on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. 47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; 48 when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. 49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous 50 and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 51 "Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." 52 And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.

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

All: Thanks be to God!

Sermon: *Love Wins*

Hymn:

"Spirit of the Living God"

NCH #283

Sing 2 times, the second substituting the word "us" for "me."

Installation and Blessing of Consistory

Gathering the Prayers of the People

After each petition, we will say the following -

Leader: Holy One..

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.

Invitation to Generosity

Offertory

Doxology

[The New Century Hymnal- tune #780, words #778]

(please rise in body or in spirit as the doxology begins)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God for all that love has done;

Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.

Offering Dedication

Sending Hymn: “To What Can the Kingdom of God be Compared”

Text: Carolyn Wilfrey Gillette, ©2011. All rights reserved.

Tune: William Howard Doane, 1875 (“To God Be the Glory”)

Permission given to use in worship.

To what can the kingdom of God be compared?
A mustard seed falls where a field's been prepared,
And there, where predictable plantings should be,
There grows up a wild bush — as big as a tree!
God of love, here on earth, hidden things still surprise:
Loving deeds ... signs of birth ... faithful, Spirit-filled lives.
Your reign is amazing, your ways still astound,
Just like that new life springing forth from the ground.

A small bit of leaven will change the whole bread:
A poor woman sees that her neighbors are fed,
A church reaches out to the youth in the town,
A man shares his faith and God's blessings abound.
God of love, here on earth, hidden things still surprise:
Loving deeds ... signs of birth ... faithful, Spirit-filled lives.
Your reign is among us, creation is blessed,
When even a few faithful lives change the rest.

While some look for treasure or one priceless pearl,
God's reign is the gift wise ones seek in this world.
A girl sells possessions to help those in need;
A boy chooses faithfulness rather than greed.
God of love, here on earth, hidden things still surprise:
Loving deeds ... signs of birth ... faithful, Spirit-filled lives.
Your reign is a treasure that wise ones pursue;
May we seek your kingdom in all that we do.

Benediction

Postlude

Liturgy adapted from:

Worship Ways, "What is This?: Service Prayers for the Ninth Sunday after Pentecost Year A," by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ, ©2026.

The sending hymn is from: www.carolynshymns.com

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Announcements

New consistory year begins. Today we take the opportunity to give thanks for their service, especially, Janneen Adil and Lenette Wells, whose terms have ended, and Doug Johnson for serving as president. We ask God's blessing on those who have taken on this mantel of leadership in the coming year:

Stuart Wells - president

Doug Johnson - vice-president

Dave Johnson - treasurer

Pat Babel - secretary

Andy Headman

John Hunter

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!!.

Mission Trip Birdsboro volunteers assist residents with home repairs, landscaping

By Bill Uhrich
BUHRICH@READINGEAGLE.COM

Dawn Fear had her T-shirt sleeves rolled up to her shoulders as she sat in the yard of an Amity Township home, painting a stairway to a deck out front.

The Thursday morning sun was softened through a haze of Canadian wildfire smoke blanketing the East, but the temperatures were still climbing into the high 80s as she worked.

A member of St. Paul's UCC church in Birdsboro, Fear is one of the original Mission Trip Birdsboro volunteers who began the service to the community now in its 13th year.

"You know, we don't really think about the weather," said Fear of Stowe. "Yeah, you get used to it, and you know it's gonna be hot."

"The only thing we don't pray for is rain,"



Stuart Wells, coordinator for Mission Trip Birdsboro, looks over assignment locations at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Birdsboro on Thursday. **BILL UHRICH — READING EAGLE**

she said with a laugh.

Fear is one of the 142 volunteers who have been fanning out to 63 sites across eastern and southern Berks County this week, working on home repairs and land-

scaping, according to Stuart Wells, another original volunteer from St. Paul's who now coordinates the many facets of the mission.

See **HELPING** on Page A2

HELPING

From Page 1

"The community mission was started as a way to live out an example of what it might look like to follow Christ's teachings, to love your neighbor, service to others," Wells said as he looked over job site assignments posted in the supply sheds behind St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Birds-

boro, where the mission trip is now based.

"But I mean, you don't have to be Christian, and there are humanitarians who are worried about the quality of community life and worried about isolation and marginalization."

Fear recalls the beginning of the mission that started at St. Paul's UCC in 2014 after the church had sponsored mission trips to places as varied as Mississippi and

Maine.

Church members then thought that it would be a good idea to do local mission work, she said, and the concept grew each year with more churches participating.

"I was like, this sounds like something I want to be involved in," Fear said. "Helping others is important if you can. You never know when you're going to need help."

Over the years Fear's daughters and now grand-

children have participated.

"It's such a joy to see my children giving back, and to see my grandchildren giving back," she said. "You know, just to have that heart, that mentality, and they look forward to it, too. So it's not like I'm dragging them here."

Volunteers are dressed in yellow T-shirts with this year's theme of "Let Your Light Shine," from Matthew 5:16.

"Well, in the Bible, it says

you'll know Christians by their love," Wells explained. "You need to be out in the community. If you're inside a church, it's not really doing much. You should be out among the people. That's what Jesus saw, too."

Mission Trip Birdsboro will wrap up today with a worship service.

"We're really blessed to be able to do this," Fear said, "I know the homeowners are grateful for what we do and

allow us to be here and help them a little bit because it's not always easy to ask for help."

It also helps that young people are becoming more involved with the mission trip, she said.

"They just take more pride in their community, and I think that's an awesome thing," she said.

To volunteer for next year's mission trip or to donate, go to missiontrip-birdsboro.org.

Summer Heat is here!! We will continue to worship on Sunday's at 9:30am at the Christian Education building of St Paul's to keep cool and comfy with air conditioning. The address is 235 W 2nd St., Birdsboro. This will continue until August 30th.

Covenant Association Laity Lunch - Thursday, July 30 at 11:30 a.m.

Red Plate Restaurant - 440 East Penn Avenue, Wernersville. Contact Rev. Mary Etta Mest to reserve a place at the table. Her email mestme@aol.com or call 610-659-2775. For more information, look on the following page.

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 4th 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

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, July 26	Sunday Worship (C) New Millennium (CE)	9:30am 7pm-8pm
Tues, Jul 28	Nancy Moyer Counseling (CE-LL) Woman's Club (CE)	5:30pm-7pm 7pm
Thurs, Jul 30	Nancy Moyer Counseling (CE-LL) Currently Sober (CE)	5:30pm-7pm 6:30-7:30pm
Fri, Jul 31	Beginners Meeting (CE)	7pm- 8pm
Sat, Aug 1	Nancy Moyer Counseling (CE-LL)	8:30am – 2pm
Sun, Aug 2	Sunday Worship (C) New Millennium (CE)	9:30am 7pm-8pm

This Week: Church Office Hours

Tues, Wed, Thurs 9:00am-1:00pm

****Office will be closed the week of Aug 3^d and will open on Aug 24th. ****

This Week: Pastor Deb's Office Hours

Monday	Pastor's Sabbath Day; available for emergencies only
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!**

Aug 2, 2026

Laity Lunches

I Know - you think you have enough friends.

I Know - you don't have time for more friends.

But . . . think that you may be missing an opportunity to do something you like to do that would help other people as well as your relationship with God.

Now what excuse can we use to justify not spreading our wings?

Besides, (is that a word?)

Besides, God may have a friend waiting for you in that other UCC church near you or on the other side or up and down of Berks County.

I know – you ask what will you do with another friend? God knows!

Come and see! Come to the table! The Laity Table.

Find us. We move around. We have already had two lunches—one in Reading at Esperanza; one in Breezy Corner at the Pour House. We are headed for The Red Plate Restaurant in Wernersville on July 30. If you saw a notice on the Covenant E-Blast, you may have joined us a few days ago.

Some of our conversations are about how we do things in our own congregation – sharing ideas and practices. Some of the conversations are about our beliefs. But would you believe the big topic at one meal was car shows and antique vehicles in general. Honestly, we had to watch for the smallest opening to get our comments into the conversation.

(cont)

So what good are these lunches if we are just chit-chatting? Well, God is with us. God is listening and even guiding the conversation. God is pleased with the new relationships. Who knows what could burst from these relationships. Just think, how can we try to have churches do things together? Fun things. Serious things like mission projects or baseball teams (did I say serious?). Who knows! Even Bible study!

We will be announcing the locations on the Covenant E-Blast. So far, we are choosing the last Thursday of the month to meet at 11:30 a.m. We each pay for our own meal. If that is a problem for you, please tell me when you register.

Reservations for a place at the table shall be sent to Rev. Mary Etta Mest at mestme@aol.com or 610-659-2775. Pastors are welcome if you are curious, especially if you bring a lay person with you.

Blessings,

Rev. Mary Etta Mest, Chair of Nominating Committee

REMINDER:

1. **The Fall Association gathering** will take place on Sunday, October 25, 2026, at Huff's Church, 540 Conrad Road, Alburtis, PA. **MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!** Spread the word in your congregation!
2. **COMBINED CHOIR AGAIN!!!** Our combine choir in 2025 was such a success that we want to have another! We are asking for musicians and members of your church choirs to come together on Sunday, October 25 at our Fall Association gathering for a combined choir. We will be singing two songs this time!
PLEASE email Sharon Morris with the number of folks you plan on sending. We will get the music to you! Choir members will be asked to register as choir when we open registration. More info to come!
3. Deadline for any church announcements for the September bulletin insert is August 17. Send to covenantassociation@yahoo.com
4. If your church has any questions about how the Covenant Association can be of service, please contact the Executive Committee! The Rev. Sharon Morris is currently the moderator at revsmorris@gmail.com.

