

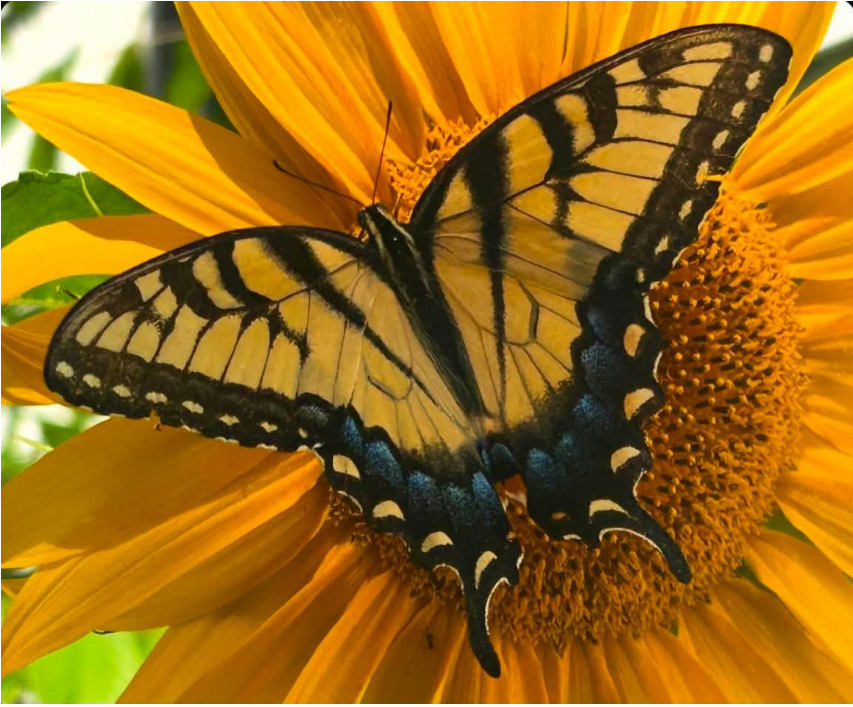


Photo courtesy of Nicole Wallace

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

Isaiah 56:1, 6-8 + Matthew 15:21-28

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

Worship Leader– Rev. Deborah Parker-Hill

Reader – Nancy Dragan

Ushers – Marian & Derek Prince

Accompanist – Barb Moyer

Acolyte – John Herold

Flower Dedication

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: Come, all who seek the mercy of God.

All: We come trusting that God's love is greater than our fears.

Leader: Come, all who have wondered whether there is a place for you.

All: We come to praise the God who welcomes us all.

Leader: Come all who hunger for justice and hope.

All: We come to worship the One whose love knows no boundaries.

All: Let us worship God together!

Opening Hymn: "We Yearn, O Christ, for Wholeness" NCH #179

[New Century Hymnal]

Prayer of Transformation and New Life

Leader: Let us pray... Transform us by your grace, as we pray together:

All: God of mercy, too often we draw lines that you never intended. We decide who is worthy of welcome, whose voices deserve to be heard, and whose pain can be ignored. We cling to comfort instead of compassion, certainty instead of curiosity, judgment instead of grace. Forgive us when we protect our own place at the table instead of making room for others. Open our hearts to those we have overlooked, our ears to those we have silenced, and our lives to the work of your inclusive love. Help us become the people you call us to be – a community where all may find healing and hope...

(a moment of quiet reflection)

Words of Grace

Leader: Hear the good news: God gathers those who have been scattered.

Christ listens to the cries of those the world ignores. The Holy Spirit continues to widen the circle of belonging. In Christ, we are forgiven, renewed, and invited to become ambassadors of God's reconciling 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

Isaiah 56:1, 6-8

56 Thus says the Lord:

Maintain justice, and do what is right,

for soon my salvation will come and my deliverance be revealed.

6 And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord,

to minister to him, to love the name of the Lord,

and to be his servants,

all who keep the Sabbath and do not profane it and hold fast my covenant—

7 these I will bring to my holy mountain

and make them joyful in my house of prayer;

their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar,

for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.

8 Thus says the Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel:

I will gather others to them besides those already gathered.

Matthew 15:21-28

21 Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. 22 Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." 23 But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." 24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." 25 But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." 26 He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." 27 She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." 28 Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed from that moment.

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

All: Thanks be to God!

Sermon: *Holy Persistence*

Sermon Hymn: “*She Came to Jesus*”

Tune: SLANE 10 10 9 10 (“Be Thou My Vision”), Irish Ballad.

Text: Copyright ©2002 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette.

She came to Jesus from outside the fold—
Canaanite woman! Persistent and bold!
Looking to Jesus, she wanted to see
One who would help her and set her child free.

Claiming a blessing, a touch of God’s grace,
She knew God’s love was not bounded by place.
Jesus, you listened, debated—then healed—
For in her asking, her faith was revealed.

God, you still bless those who seek you in prayer.
You welcome dreamers who faithfully dare.
In Christ, now risen, your mercy extends:
Those on the outside are welcomed as friend

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: “We Are Your People”

NCH #309

[New Century Hymnal]

Benediction

Postlude

Liturgy adapted from:

Prompt given to Chat GPT: “Can you write a liturgy in the UCC tradition using Matthew 15:21-28 and Isaiah 56:1, 6-8?”

Sermon Hymn from: SONGS OF GRACE: New Hymns for God and Neighbor. Copyright ©2009 Discipleship Resources. All rights reserved.

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Announcements

Congregational Meeting — September 13

Mark your calendars! A special congregational meeting will be held after the service on September 13 to discuss the placement of the American flag.

Consistory has also been working on a survey form to record congregants' preferences. The form will be distributed to the congregation and then returned to Consistory, providing a fair, clear, and measurable way to record the opinions of our congregants. Looking to hear from everyone! Stuart

Pastor Deb will be away from Aug 17th – Aug 31st. Rev. Marian Shearer will be on-call for pastoral emergencies. Please contact the church office, if needed. Or call Doug Johnson at 610-633-9879 or contact Stuart Wells. Stuart is available from Aug 24th – Aug 31st.

Office will be closed the week of Aug 3rd and will open on Aug 25th.

Join us for a Community Walk! Sunday, Sept 20th with a picnic at 12:30pm and the walk at 2:00pm. The walk is a 3 mile loop through Rustic Park and around the gorgeous Birdsboro Reservoir. Funds will go to support the programs of Hopewell Love Community Services. It is sponsored by Hopewell Love and the Southeast Berks Ministerium. For more information go to: hopewelllovecs@gmail.com or 610-582-8167, opt 3. Scan QR code to register and donate. See Wanda Druzba for participant walkers.



Register & Donate

Altar Flowers: There are openings for August for 8/23 and 8/30. If you'd like to sponsor flowers to honor or memorialize a loved one, see Wanda Druzba at church or give her a call at 610-385-3382.

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!!.

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.

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 & more

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.

Our Daily Bread for September/October/November 2026 has arrived! Pick up your copy today!

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



St Paul's Weekly Calendar

Sun, Aug 16	Sunday Worship (CE)	9:30am
	New Millennium (CE)	7pm-8pm
Tues, Aug 18	Nancy Moyer Counseling (CE-LL)	5:30pm-7pm
	Woman's Club (CE)	7pm
Wed, Aug 19	Disciple Bible Study (CE)	9:30am-10:30 am
Thu, Aug 20	Nancy Moyer Counseling (CE-LL)	5:30pm-7pm
	Currently Sober (CE)	6:30-7:30pm
Fri, Aug 21	Beginners Meeting (CE)	7pm- 8pm
Sat, Aug 22	Nancy Moyer Counseling (CE-LL)	8:30am – 2pm
Sun, Aug 23	Sunday Worship (CE)	9:30am
	New Millennium (CE)	7pm-8pm

This Week: Church Office Hours

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

****Office will be closed the week of Aug 3rd and will open on Aug 25th. ****

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.