

# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## St. Paul

**August 23, 2026**

**10:30am**

**Welcome!** Whether you are a guest, friend or member, we are delighted that you are here. Large print bulletins are available at either door. Ask a greeter for any directions you may need.

*"Please note that this service will be live-streamed on Facebook. If you do not wish to be visible on camera, please let an usher know so we can take appropriate measures to ensure your privacy."*



Rev. Jim Oleson, Pastor  
Carolyn Meier, Musician  
Joyce Noble, Liturgist

## ***Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost***

*\*Please rise in body or spirit*

### **Ringin of the Bell**

#### **Welcome & Announcements**

*We welcome you today in the name of the One who frees us from every burden, renews our spirits and inspires hope and joy in our living. May this time of worship encourage and lift you up.*

### **Prelude and Lighting of the Candles**

#### **\*Call to Worship (Responsive)**

**ONE:** Our help is in the name of God, who made heaven and earth.

**MANY:** If God had not been with us when our enemies attacked, then they would have swallowed us up alive.

**ONE:** If God had not been with us when the flood swept over us, then the raging waters would have gone over us.

**MANY:** Blessed be the Sovereign, our God, who has not given us up as a prey.

**ONE:** We have escaped like a bird from the snare; the snare is broken and we have escaped.

**MANY:** Our help is in the name of God, who made heaven and earth.

#### **\*Invocation**

**God our holy Parent, the magnitude and mystery of the universe is a simple thing to you; help us to come to you with both awe and trust.**

**Christ Jesus our holy Brother, the wonder of the Gospel of love is a free gift from you; help us to come to you with open hearts.**

**Spirit-Truth, our holy Friend, the power that sustains all things is contained in your intimacy;**

**help us to come to you with high expectations.**

**Please bless us, most loving God, for in your blessing is our health and our happiness.**

**Amen.**

**\*Hymn of Praise #17 New Century**

**To You, O God, All Creatures Sing**

**\* Prayer for Transformation and New Life (Unison)**

**Holy God, even if we had not seen your light and love in Jesus, we might be discontented with many of our thoughts, words and actions. But since you have shown your beauty in Christ, we are much more aware of how badly we have fallen short; of how far we are**

from fulfilling our potential.

We bring to you now the whole of our lives. We bring the small diamonds of success and the clay of failure, the gems we are proud to remember and the slag that makes us ashamed, the silver smattering of wisdom and the dross of our folly, the hopes that still shine like gold and the mud of pessimism. We confess all that we are and everything we have been, and put ourselves unconditionally in your hands.

Holy Friend, we thank you that the same Christ whose beauty highlights our fallen condition, also highlights your inexhaustible mercy. In your hands is forgiveness, in your hands is healing, in your hands is encouragement, in your hands is peace. Touch us now and we shall be made whole. Amen.

<pause for silent reflection >

### **Words of Grace**

**One:** Sisters and brothers, Christ did not come to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be redeemed.

**Many:** He is the one who declares to those who come to him in faith: "Your sins are forgiven you. Go in peace."

**All:** Thanks be to God!

### **\*Response of Praise**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, World without end. Amen. Amen.

### **Written Word**

Exodus 1:8-2:10

Romans 12:1-8

Matthew 16:13-20

### **Hymn #400 New Century**

Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation

### **Message**

Names and Identities

Rev. Jim Oleson

Matthew 16:13-20

### **Church in Prayer**

**Pastoral Prayer**

**Lord's Prayer** (Debts, Debtors)

### **Offertory**

**Invitation to Generosity**

**\*Doxology** (Tune: Old Hundredth)

**Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

**O Gracious God, we offer You our praise, we offer You our hearts, we offer You prayers,  
and now we offer You our gifts and ourselves. All this we do in the name of Christ Jesus,  
our Lord and Savior. Amen.**

**\*Closing Hymn #539** New Century

Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant?

**\*Commission and Benediction**

**\*Christ's Light Leads Us into the World**

**\*Congregational Response #531** New Century

God, Speak to Me, That I May Speak  
(Verse 1)

**\*Ringing of the Bell and Postlude**

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### **OFFICE HOURS**

Pastor Jim – Monday & Tuesday 8:00am to Noon

Church Office

Wednesday: 9:00am – 3:00pm

Friday: 9:00am - Noon



It Happens

Here



*St. Paul UCC*

*Weekly Calendar*

August 23<sup>rd</sup> – August 30<sup>th</sup>

**August 23<sup>rd</sup>**

***Thirteenth Sunday after  
Pentecost***

10:30am

Worship

11:30am

Fellowship Hour

**August 23<sup>rd</sup>**

***Fourteenth Sunday after  
Pentecost***

10:30am

Worship

11:30am

Fellowship Hour

**Looking Ahead**

**Sept 21<sup>st</sup>**

5:15pm

Council Meeting

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## OUR GIVING IN 2026

**Needed weekly to meet our commitments \$2190.29**

**\$ 2190.29**

General Fund Offering August 9<sup>th</sup>

\$ 688.00

July Average

\$ 1075.00

Stewardship Offering August 9<sup>th</sup>

\$ 328.00

June Average

\$ 1133.75

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## HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY

**Sunday, September 20:** St. Paul's UCC Annual Chicken Dinner & Country Store. Dine in or carry out from 11am to 5pm.

Please join us to honor and say goodbye to Joann  
and welcome Casey on  
September 13, 2026 after service.

We will have a carry in dinner to thank Joann for her 20 years of service  
and wish her a wonderful retirement  
and to welcome and get to know Casey.

## Thank you to all our volunteers!

### **Greeters/Ushers**

Darryl & Phyllis Freese

### **Acolyte**

Bobby Roskowske

### **Liturgist**

Joyce Noble

### **Fellowship Hour**

Grounds



Thank  
You

## *In our prayers ...*

This week we added Mike to our prayers.

We continue to keep in our prayers:

Lynn and Ron D., Ernie M., Eileen T., Lyle R., Jamie, Nor, Rick C., Carolyn M., Jackie, Belinda D., Linda M., Brittany and Edward, Mary and Jerry, Pat G., Randy M., David, Rick L., Bob S., Billy, Maura and Tara.

We lift up in our prayers those who need prayers for their *long-term circumstances*: Carol Jean P. and Jane M.