



Saint Paul's United Methodist Church
"A Compassionate Community Led and Transformed by the Spirit."
Sunday, February 22nd, 2026 - 10:30 AM Service



*We welcome you, trusting that this time of worship will open our hearts to experience the Spirit's movement among us.
Together, we seek peace, health, and wholeness as we gather in God's presence.*

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**Indicates a standing portion of the service. Please stand as you are able.*

GATHERING

Gathering Music

"And the Angels Sing"
by Ziggy Elman/Johnny Mercer

Molly MacMillan, piano

Greetings & Welcome

Centering Music

"This is My Father's World"
(trad. English)

*Molly MacMillan, piano
Jon Aldave, euphonium*

***Call to Worship**

The good news of the gospel is:

manna in the desert, water turned into wine, love after loss, forgiveness after pain.

The good news of the gospel is:

**release for the captive, hope for the hopeless, mourning turned to dancing, and
strangers turned to friends.**

So come on in.

There's no time to waste!

This surprising good news is here for you.

Let us worship this good-news God.

***Opening Hymn**

"Seed of God's Garden, Tenderly Planted"

Insert

***Passing the Peace**

PROCLAIMING

A Message for All God's Children

Pastor Alicia Wood

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

**Loving God, somewhere along the way we picked up the message that in order to be faithful,
we have to be serious.**

We have to pray on our knees without ceasing.

We have to be somber in worship and quiet in our studies.

We have to check our wiggles and our questions at the door.

But then you say the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed—unruly and untamed.

You turn water into wine—surprising and extravagant.

And all of a sudden, we wonder:

Can we be like that mustard seed?

Can we be faithful and unruly?

Can we be playful and curious?

Can we be messy and still be yours?

We know the answer already.

**The Spirit whispers: of course, of course, of course.
Forgive our doubt.
Pull us closer into your embrace.
With faith like a mustard seed, we pray. Amen.**

Words of Forgiveness

God's grace is wild and unruly.
God's mercy is abundant and surprising.
God's love is expansive and unending.
So if you ask, "Holy One, am I forgiven?"
the answer is and always will be:
of course, of course, of course.
This is the good news of the gospel.
Thanks be to God! Amen.

Special Music

"He's Got the Whole World in His Hands"
(trad. Spiritual)

*Molly MacMillan, piano
Jon Aldave, euphonium*

Scripture

John 2: 1-11 (CEB)

Pat Woodward

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the celebration. When the wine ran out, Jesus' mother said to him, "They don't have any wine." Jesus replied, "Woman, what does that have to do with me? My time hasn't come yet." His mother told the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Nearby were six stone water jars used for the Jewish cleansing ritual, each able to hold about twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water," and they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, "Now draw some from them and take it to the headwaiter," and they did. The headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine. He didn't know where it came from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. The headwaiter called the groom and said, "Everyone serves the good wine first. They bring out the second-rate wine only when the guests are drinking freely. You kept the good wine until now." This was the first miraculous sign that Jesus did in Cana of Galilee. He revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

Hear What the Spirit is Saying to the Church!
Thanks Be to God!

Message

"The Good News Is...All Are Invited"

Pastor Alicia Wood

RESPONDING

***Hymn of Response**

"Change My Heart, O God"

FWS #2152

Prayers of the People & the Lord's Prayer

Jami Breedlove-Crouch

Mission Moment

Offering Our Gifts to God

Offertory

"The Good Life"
by Sachs Distel/Jack Rearden

Molly MacMillan, piano

***Doxology**

"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"

UMH #94

***Prayer of Dedication**

GOING FORTH

Announcements

*Affirmation of Faith

I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.

It sounds like welcome and feels like home.

It sounds like laughter and feels like mercy.

It sounds like love and feels like a seat at the table, so I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.

I have seen it alive in the world.

And even when my heart aches, even when wars rage, even when mercy feels out of reach, I remember the one who welcomed the children and led with nonviolence.

I remember the one who cared for the vulnerable and inspired those around him.

I remember that the good news really is good news, for I have seen it alive in the world.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

*Closing Hymn

“Standing on the Promises”

UMH #374

*Dismissal with Blessing

Postlude

“Joy Spring”
by Clifford Brown

Molly MacMillan, piano

-----PRAYERS-----

For Prayer Chain Requests, confidential concerns seen only by those who participate in the Prayer Chain, please contact Jami Breedlove-Crouch at lovingcare@stpaulsithaca.org.

Prayer Requests: We thank God for the healing in the lives of people we've been praying for. If you would like to be added to the Prayer Chain or the Prayer List, contact Jami Breedlove-Crouch at: lovingcare@stpaulsithaca.org. Your requests will be listed in the bulletin for one month before being deleted. Please let us know of your improved condition or if you desire visitation.

Lent 2026 Gatherings

Have you been feeling overwhelmed with all that's going on in our world and lives? Pastor Alicia will host a time together based on our Lenten Devotional “Tell Me Something Good: Grounding Ourselves in the Good News This Lent” **Wednesdays at 9:30am in the Durham Room**. The devotional can be found in our Friday emails or printed copies outside the sanctuary. Please join us as we support one other during these times. Come as you are. No RSVP needed.

How could Jesus eat with those people? This Lenten Season, we will learn together through Will Willimon's book, “The Last Supper: Experience Lent through the Lens of Jesus's Most Powerful Mealtime Parables.” We'll meet via zoom on Mondays beginning **February 23rd at 7pm** for six weeks. Books will be available to purchase in the office for \$16. Please rsvp pastor@stpaulsithaca.org to receive the zoom link.

St Paul's Ministries ~ Week of February 22nd, 2026

Sunday, February 22nd

10:30am – Worship – Sanctuary

10:45am – Faith Explorers - Rm. 115, Main Floor

11:30am – Coffee/Fellowship Time – Memorial Room

Monday, February 23rd

7:00pm – Lenten Bible Study “The Last Supper” - ZOOM

Tuesday, February 24th

10:00am – Staff Meeting – ZOOM

Wednesday, February 25th

9:30am – Faithful Resistance – Memorial Rooms

Thursday, February 26th

11:00am – Crafters Group – Durham Room

6:00pm – Festival Chimes - Sanctuary

7:15pm – Chancel Choir Rehearsal – Dining Room

Friday, February 27th

Church Offices Closed

Saturday, February 8th

Sunday, March 1st

10:30am – Worship w/Communion – Sanctuary

11:30am – Coffee/Fellowship Time – Memorial Room

11:45am – Connections Young Adult Group- Durham Room

4:00pm – Opus Community Concert - Sanctuary

Children and Worship – Children are always welcome in worship! To help keep small hands busy, we have books and toys on the black cart near the main sanctuary door. **Children ages 4 through 11 are invited to participate in “Faith Explorers” following the “Message for Children” segment during worship (except on Communion Sundays).**

Survey Participation Requested for 2026 Leadership Gathering

United Methodists of Upper New York are invited to complete a denomination-wide survey that will help shape the [2026 Council of Bishops Leadership Gathering](https://www.resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/council-of-bishops-leadership-gathering/survey), to be held later this October. Pastors are asked to help encourage broad participation across their congregations; the survey is open through February 15, takes about ten minutes, and results will be shared with the Church ahead of the gathering. You can find the survey here: <https://www.resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/council-of-bishops-leadership-gathering/survey> to appreciate the inclusive and expansive gifts of our church community. All are welcome!

Announcing Two New Small Groups

St. Paul’s is starting two new small groups, each with a different focus and leadership. The groups plan to meet monthly, though a regular meeting date and time will not be decided until the group forms and they decide together. **If you would like to join one of these groups, please contact one of the leaders below by Friday, March 13.**

Hearts and Hands

Carolyn Beyers and Karen Kaufmann will facilitate a new group, Hearts and Hands, that both raises awareness and takes action about and toward societal struggles. The basic format will feature monthly meetings, alternating book reads/discussions with related action (volunteering, advocacy, supporting a specific community event), offering the strength of group action to the prophetic call to “do justice, love mercy, and live humbly with God” (Micah 6:8). To sign up for this group (or to learn more about the group), please email Karen Kaufmann (karen.kaufmann1@gmail.com) or Carolyn Beyers (beyerscarolyn@gmail.com).

Social Group

Pam and Tim Lillard will facilitate a social group whose members decide what the group will do. Some ideas, in no particular order, include: walks or hikes in nature; bring in guest speakers, or have group members speak on topics of interest to the group; demonstration of hobbies, e.g., gardening, baking, candy making; game nights; lunch together after church; meet at a local campground; attend theatre or movies together. The group would meet once a month, at each other’s homes or at activity-dependent locations. To sign up for this group (or to learn more about the group), please email Pam Lillard (psl1@cornell.edu) or Tim Lillard (clumsydad@yahoo.com).

Please Fill Out Important Short Survey

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee is initiating a survey to assess how our Pastor Transition is going so far. We have been in transition since Pastor Alicia came to us in July. It is a transition for all of us, as she is getting to know us, and we are getting to know her. The Annual Conference encourages congregations to assess the transition several times during a new pastor's first year. We value your feedback and would appreciate your taking a few minutes to complete a short survey found on a table just outside the sanctuary. If you prefer to email your responses to Pam Lillard (psl1@cornell.edu) or Ann Bohman (akbohman@gmail.com) from your SPRC Team. Thank you!

St. Paul’s United Methodist Church

402 North Aurora St., Ithaca, NY

Find us at www.stpaulsithaca.org, Facebook and Instagram

Church Office Hours are 9:00 AM-12:00 PM Sunday – Thursday

Office Phone: 607-273-5971 Pastoral Care Line: 607-269-5509

“Seeds of God’s Garden , Tenderly Planted”
(Tune to “Morning Has Broken”)

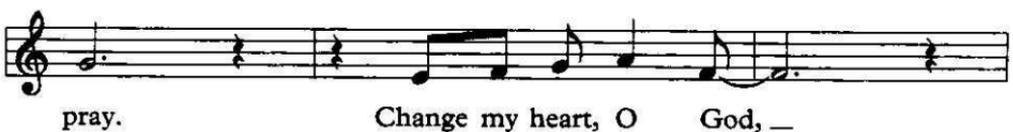
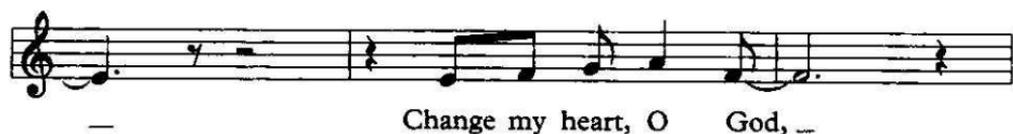
*Seeds of God’s garden, tenderly planted,
Hope of creation, buried with care,
Through our beholding slowly unfolding,
Tended in patience, nurtured in prayer.*

*Seeds of God’s garden, tiny and fragile,
Hope of creation, cool in the earth,
Easing our sadness, bringers of gladness,
Bearers of goodness showing our worth.*

*Seeds of God’s garden, one day to blossom,
Hope of creation, bearing good fruit,
Gently repairing all our despairing,
Faith reaching outward, love at the root.*

Change My Heart, O God

2152



94 Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Unison

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise

Harmony

God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!

Unison

Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise

Harmony

Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!

WORDS: Thomas Ken, 1674; adapt. by Gilbert H. Vieira, 1978

MUSIC: *Geistliche Kirchengesänge*, 1623; harm. by Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

88.44.88 with Refrain

Unison

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

The image shows a musical score for a unison setting of 'Alleluia'. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The melody is written in a simple, homophonic style. The lyrics 'Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!' are centered between the two staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The second staff begins with a bass clef and the same key signature. The music is written in a single system, with the two staves connected by a brace on the left. The lyrics are aligned with the notes of the melody. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The second staff has a bass clef and the same key signature. The music is written in a single system, with the two staves connected by a brace on the left. The lyrics are aligned with the notes of the melody.

Standing on the Promises

1. Stand - ing on the prom - is - es of Christ my King,
 2. Stand - ing on the prom - is - es that can - not fail,
 3. Stand - ing on the prom - is - es of Christ the Lord,
 4. Stand - ing on the prom - is - es I can - not fall,

through e - ter - nal a - ges let his prais - es ring;
 when the howl - ing storms of doubt and fear as - sail,
 bound to him e - ter - nal - ly by love's strong cord,
 lis - tening ev - ery mo - ment to the Spir - it's call,

glo - ry in the high - est, I will shout and sing,
 by the liv - ing Word of God I shall pre - vail,
 o - ver - com - ing dai - ly with the Spir - it's sword,
 rest - ing in my Sav - ior as my all in all,

stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.
 stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.
 stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.
 stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.

Refrain

Stand - ing, stand - ing,
Stand - ing on the prom - is - es, stand - ing on the prom - is - es,

stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God my Sav - ior;

stand - ing, stand - ing,
stand - ing on the prom - is - es, stand - ing on the prom - is - es,

I'm stand - ing on the prom - is - es of God.