**ST. JOHN’S and ST. PAUL’S UCC**

**Fourth Sunday after Pentecost**

**St Paul’s Confirmation Sunday**

**July 6, 2025**

RINGING OF THE BELL

 THE PRELUDE “Battle Hymn of the Republic” (Duet)

\*CALL TO WORSHIP (Revised Common Lectionary – Inspired by Psalm 30)

ONE: Sing praises to the Holy One, O you faithful, and give thanks to God’s holy name
**MANY: Shepherd and Source, you guide us in wisdom. You cover us in love.**
ONE: Sing praises to the Holy One, O you faithful, and give thanks to God’s holy name
**MANY: Comforter and Spirit, you encourage us in times of trouble. You strengthen us for the journey.**ONE: Sing praises to the Holy One, O you faithful, and give thanks to God’s holy name
**MANY: Redeemer and Friend, you hear our cry, redeem the years of struggle, and restore our joy. Praise the Holy One!**

\***UNISON PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE
Righteous God, forgive us for praying for the harvest without planting seeds. Forgive us for praying for the harvest without preparing the soil. Forgive us for praying for the harvest without tending the land, discerning weeds, and ensuring an adequate supply of water. Transform us for the work of the harvest. Transform us into cultivators of hope and joy. Transform us to plant seeds of justice and love. God of the harvest, equip us for the labor of stewarding the roots of new life you offer. Amen.**

**\*WORDS OF GRACE**
Beloved, there is room in the garden for you and the gifts you bring. Receive the grace of God to plant and replant, to till and to tend, to harvest and to hope. Rest in knowing that the One who sends you to work for a good harvest will sustain, guide, and renew you in this life.

\*SONG #594 - "How Beautiful, Our Spacious Skies"

 THE READING OF SCRIPTURE: Kathy Herwig

Isaiah 66:10-14 - *Jerusalem, a nursing mother (NRSV)*

Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice with her in joy, all you who mourn over her--that you may nurse and be satisfied from her consoling breast, that you may drink deeply with delight from her glorious bosom. For thus says the LORD: I will extend prosperity to her like a river and the wealth of the nations like an overflowing stream, and you shall nurse and be carried on her arm and bounced on her knees. As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem. you shall see, and your heart shall rejoice; your bodies shall flourish like the grass, and it shall be known that the power of the LORD is with his servants, and his indignation is against his enemies.

Galatians 6:(1-6), 7-16 - *Do what is right now*

My brothers and sisters, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Take care that you yourselves are not tempted.

Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. For if those who are nothing think they are something, they deceive themselves. All must test their own work; then that work, rather than their neighbor's work, will become a cause for pride. For all must carry their own loads. Those who are taught the word must share in all good things with their teacher.

Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow.

If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh, but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap eternal life from the Spirit. So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest-time, if we do not give up. So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all and especially for those of the family of faith. See what large letters I make when I am writing in my own hand! It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh who try to compel you to be circumcised--only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ. Even the circumcised do not themselves obey the law, but they want you to be circumcised so that they may boast about your flesh. May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world. For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything, but a new creation is everything! As for those who will follow this rule--peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

Luke 10:1-11, 16-20 - *Jesus sends out seventy disciples*

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. He said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore, ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Go on your way; I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals, and greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house!'

And if a person of peace is there, your peace will rest on that person, but if not, it will return to you.

Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the laborer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; cure the sick who are there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' But whenever you enter a town and they do not welcome you, go out into its streets and say, 'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off in protest against you. Yet know this: the kingdom of God has come near.' "Whoever listens to you listens to me, and whoever rejects you rejects me, and whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me."

The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, in your name even the demons submit to us!"

He said to them, "I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning. Indeed, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice at this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US

THE MESSAGE

SONG on monitors **"God Bless America" by Sandi Patty**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (*Joys and Concerns*)

THE LORD’S PRAYER

**Our Father 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.**

UNISON INVITATION TO GENEROSITY (UCC Worship Ways)

 **Galatians 6:2 challenges us to, “Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” The reign of God assures us that there is enough. The Holy One’s creation and provision remains abundant, and we participate in the kingdom by refusing to hoard and to withhold from our siblings. Let us magnify the name of Creator by repudiating the falsehood of scarcity. Let us share in all things good given to us by the Generous One for common benefit and mutual aid.**

BRINGING OUR GIFTS TO GOD #785 (*While the offering is brought forward*)

 **We give you but your own, what-e’er the gift may be; all that we have is yours alone, we give it gratefully.**

UNISON OFFERTORY PRAYER (UCC Worship Ways)

 **We give you thanks, Wise God, for cultivating generosity within us and alerting us to the needs around us. Use these gifts for the expansion of your will on earth and the blessing of your beloved. In your name and in hope, we give these gifts. Amen.**

SONG #609 - "Now Is the Time Approaching"

ANNOUNCEMENTS

\*THE BENEDICTION (UCC Worship Ways)

 ONE: Go and say, “Peace.”

 **MANY: Say peace when despair threatens to overwhelm you.**

 ONE: Say peace when the news of the day invites you to apathy or avoidance.

 **MANY: Say peace when a ceasefire is not enough.**

ONE: Say peace because a loving approach to conflict can build it.

 **MANY: Say peace because a faithful people can realize it.**

 ONE: Say peace because the God of Peace is with you. Go and say and be peace in the world.

 **MANY: AMEN!**

"Please remain standing for the entire national anthem."

\*THE POSTLUDE “Star Spangled Banner” (Duet)

**Don’t forget next Sunday, July 13, 2025, at 9:00, we will have a joint outdoor worship at Our Shepherd UCC in Howards Grove. Bring your own lawn chairs. If there is bad weather, worship will be moved indoors. Hope to see you all there.**