

2026
Congregation Officers

President-
Suzanne Umstott
Vice President-
Casey Colledge
Secretary-
Debbie Szymanski
Treasurer-
Stephanie Wade

2026 Congregation
Council Members

Education (Faith
Formation)-
Charity Friend
Evangelism-
Linda Zeller
Finance-
Brenda Aydelotte
Ministry in Daily Life-
Nancy Ayers
Personnel-
Brenda Aydelotte, Casey
Colledge, Sue Umstott
Property-
Todd Umstott
Social Ministry-
Marsha Tarte
Stewardship-
Casey Colledge

St. Paul Church Staff

Pastor
The Reverend Ryan K.
Viands
Director of Music
David Rankin
Parish Administrator
Debbie Szymanski
Sexton
Brett Densock
Treasurer
Stephanie Wade

PROCLAIMING A TIMELESS CHRIST
IN A CHANGING WORLD SINCE 1794



THE SPIRE

SAINT PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH † CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND

15 N. Smallwood Street
Cumberland, MD 21502
(301) 722-6604

www.stpaulcumberland.org

Email: debbie@stpaulcumberland.org

February 2026

Pastor's Ponderings



Celebrating Candlemas

*“Blessed Mary and Joseph brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to
present Him to the Lord.” Saint Luke 2: 22.*

BEHOLD AN ADORABLE CHILD

When a newborn baby is brought to church for the first time, the parents (or guardian) know what to expect (usually). Everyone who sees the child will exclaim how precious he or she is and will gush over all of the infant's adorable qualities. Humans seem to be hardwired to respond that way to babies, so it likely was no different in Jesus' time.

continued on page 2

continued from page 1

Imagine blessed Mary and St. Joseph's surprise, then, at the reaction their new son provoked from two people in attendance on that first day in the Jerusalem temple. They had come in with their infant to fulfill routine requirements of the Jewish ritual law. Since workers in the temple were used to seeing families in this context, it wouldn't have been surprising if the whole thing passed without particular notice. But instead, they were met in the temple by an older man named Simeon who took the baby Jesus in his arms. But rather than talk about how cute he was, Simeon spoke to God, giving praise for having been allowed to see God's gift of salvation to all humankind—not only for the Jews alone, but even for those who were not seen as children of God. He went to talk about this infant as being the means for the falling and rising of many people, and that a sword of great sorrow would pierce Mary's very soul! As they were standing there, probably dumbfounded, they were joined by the aged prophet Anna, who also began to praise God for this lowly infant child.

What were Mary and Joseph to think about all of this? What are *we* to think about all of this? For we also encounter the strangeness of Jesus, both God and human. Like that couple of long ago, we go on about our lives, yet we are always learning new ways in which our lives are increased by the one born as a baby to be the salvation of the world. For he came to redeem us and the whole of creation in order to bring it back to the fuller fulfillment of God and His plan for all creation.

“When everything had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of the Lord rested upon Him.”

Saint Luke 2: 39-40



The annual meeting of the congregation will be held following worship on Sunday, February 1st. We will have lunch together prior to the meeting.

Church COUNCIL

As we begin to enter the Lenten season, many of us spend the 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Holy Week focusing on prayer, reflecting on the past year and preparing to honor the resurrection of Jesus. In 2026, Ash Wednesday or the Day of Ashes will be February 18th.

During Lent, there are many special days and phrases. These include Shrove Tuesday, Maundy Thursday, Holy Week, Palm Sunday, Passion Sunday, dust to dust and more.

The Lenten season is inspired by the Bread of Life and how Jesus fed people, not just their bodies but also their souls with stories of redemption and the good news of God's kingdom. I hope this Lenten season fills you with faith, love, mercy and joy.

Blessings

Sue Umstott,
Vestry President



Bountiful Blessings

We are asking for donations of deodorant. If you can help us assist our community neighbors, please put items in the box inside the parking lot entrance to the church.

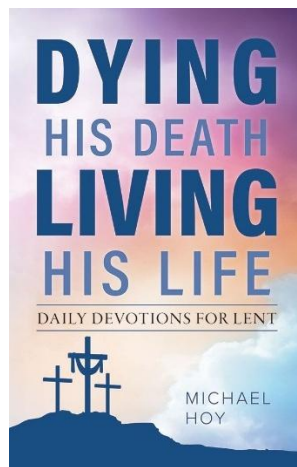


Ash Wednesday

February 18th at St. Paul Church
Imposition of Ashes
7:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
1:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

Noon Liturgy
12:00 p.m.

Ash Wednesday Mass
7:00 p.m.



Wednesday Lenten Vespers

6:00 p.m. in the chapel beginning February 25th

In this series of worship for Lent, we are reminded that we are buried with Christ in his death so that we might live with him in his resurrection. The old is gone. The new has come. Each day affords us a chance to die to self and live for him. In word and song, we contemplate those things that were put to death on the cross so that we might receive the blessings of new life in Christ.



Q1 Declutter - I hope this finds you well and excited about the start of 2026! It's been a bit of a rough start for some but I hope that brighter days are ahead. It's time for the Stewardship Declutter that I mentioned in the Stewardship Connections that came out before the end of 2025.

Let's work on our Kitchens!!!

Do you have extra small appliances (extra toaster, coffee maker, etc) or do you have tons of utensils (5 spatulas, 8 wooden spoons, etc)? Let's declutter the extras that we can give to others in need. Let's spend some time between now and February 14 decluttering our kitchens. Bring in your decluttered kitchen extras on Sunday February 15 and I will make sure they all get donated to area groups that need them. I can't wait to see what treasures you find that you can share with the community!!

**Casey Colledge
Stewardship Committee**



If you would like a statement of your 2025 offerings to St. Paul Lutheran Church please call the church office or email stephanie@stpaulcumberland.org and one will be printed for you.

**Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
Tuesday, February 17 at 6:00pm**

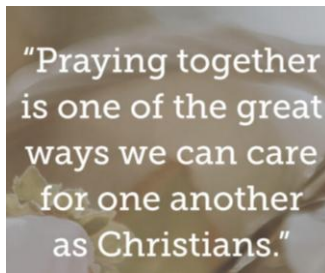


*Please sign up on the bulletin board and bring a
pancake topping or sweet treat to share!*

Family Worship and Fun

The children of St. Paul Lutheran and their parents and grandparents are invited to join us on the third Tuesday of each month. We start with a family dinner, move to family worship in the small chapel, then back upstairs for a craft activity. We start at 6:00 p.m. and are usually finished in an hour and a half.

The Shrove Tuesday pancake supper and activities on Tuesday, February 17th will be our Family Worship and Fun for the month of February. Pastor Ryan will share a Lent lesson with the children.



Please join us on **Monday, February 9 at 11:00 a.m.** in the Luther Chapel to pray for the Church at large, for our world, and for Saint Paul.

The Saint Paul Prayer Team invites all to join us each month for a time of reflection and prayer for those needs presented to us. But as important, we pray for those needs unknown to us, unspoken in need for privacy.

For personal prayer in private, we might pray: "God, I do not know what is going on in my friend's life today, in family, work, or relationships, but I ask that they will feel Your Presence, as they are prayed for and experience Your grace."

*"Prayer is not the reverberation of sound; it is the articulation of love.
It is with the heart rather than the lips that we pray..."*
Saint Augustine



Echoes of the Oratory:

Chant-Along #3

Saturday, February 21, 2026 | 2-5 p.m.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 15 N. Smallwood, Cumberland MD

For Chant-A-Long #3, Mountainside Baroque board member Bishop Matthew Riegel, along with Co-Director, Lyle Nordstrom, will present a newly revamped version of "Chant-Along" that includes varying levels of participation. Please plan to come be a part of this fun activity, that includes a refreshment break midway through. (There is no charge for the workshop though donations will be welcomed.)



Altar flowers for 2026

The chart has been posted for this year. If you have previously sponsored a specific Sunday, that has been reserved for you again this year. We have selected a new floral provider; your invoice will now come from the church. The cost to sponsor two altar vases is \$50. If you use email it will come from stephanie@stpaulcumberland.org or debbie@stpaulcumberland.org.

If you do not use email, it will be mailed to your home.

Please make checks payable to St. Paul Lutheran Church.

Please check the chart on the bulletin board for sponsoring dates available and let Debbie Szymanski know if you have any questions.

Let Us Pray With You

Sunday Morning Prayers

Prayer requests called into the church office
or received through pastoral visits.

Prayed for during Sunday morning worship.

Intercessory Prayer Team Prayers

Prayer requests placed in the prayer box shown
below, (form provided), received by email to
mutmab43@gmail.com, or by text to 240-727-1798.



**These requests are prayed for daily by the
Prayer Team and are held in complete
confidentiality.**



Discover God's Plan for You

PLACE assessment helps you learn about the gifts God has given you. The assessment takes place over a period of two days. The process includes discovering personality, spiritual gifts, abilities, passions, and how life experiences reveal where God may be calling you while connecting your passions and abilities to daily life.

Dates: **Friday, March 6** – Dinner at 5:30pm followed by Part 1 ending before 9:00pm
Saturday, March 7 – Begin Part 2 at 9:30am to 1:30pm (includes a light lunch)

Location: St. Paul Lutheran Church

Cost: \$10.00 for the workbook. Donations towards meals are appreciated.

Sign up on the bulletin board.

Questions? Contact Debbie Streicher (dstreicher52@gmail.com or 703-303-7255)



“The
Church
is most
powerful
when she
is on her
knees.”

A.W. Tozer



Saint Paul Church has had an Intercessory Prayer Team for 20+ years and during that time we have prayed for hundreds of situations, both joyous ones and mournful ones. All who pray for others are intercessors, simply meaning “**praying on behalf of someone else**,” asking God for their needs, healing, guidance, or intervention.

Intercessory prayer is powerful. When the Disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray His first words were “Our Father”. We are children of God, and we can pray to Him as our Father, just as Jesus did. Our prayers may not always be answered as we hope or expect, or answered right away, but they are always answered for the greater good of all of us.

Intercessory prayer is not a quick fix. Answers at times don’t come right away, often the case in my experience, but God is working – on me. He wants my focus to be on Him and giving him my whole heart in the process.

Intercessory prayer is “love on its knees” (Dick Eastman). When we intercede for someone, we pause, and try to see the person with love, like the Father. Jesus will guide our prayers as He promised, interceding for us before the Father, and He knows what is needed more than we do. (No worry about the “right” words.)

Kathleen Ball
Prayer Team Coordinator

February Celebrations

3 – Timmy Friend

5 – Dennis Read

5 – Kay Cochrane

10 – Christine Miller

\$10 Giving Sunday – February 22nd

As we start the new year, I would like to call on us in the sharing of our treasures. Each quarter of the year we have special areas of focus that we list on our giving envelopes. I would like to ask us to give at least \$10 each per month on the last Sunday of the month to help the special area of focus for that quarter. For January, February and March we are focusing on the St. Paul Building Fund. The church always has projects that are ongoing to keep the building in good working order. We just spent \$20,000+ for Air Conditioners for the church nave (those will be a blessing once the summer arrives). But this has reduced our funds to help cover other costs. Won't you help us build up those funds to support more upcoming projects?? Can you set aside at least \$2.50 a week each for the help to our quarterly areas of focus? It will help us work toward serving our church and the community. You can always give more if you feel called but I imagine we can all give \$2.50 a week extra to support these worthy causes.

Below are the areas for each quarter:

January-March	St. Paul Building Fund
April-June	Union Rescue Mission
July-September	Bountiful Blessings
October-December	Interfaith Food Pantry

I will include a GIVING SUNDAY envelope in the bulletin on the designated Sunday so if you don't have offering envelopes you can still give your \$10 for the designated area of focus for that month/quarter.

**Thank you for sharing your treasures!!
Casey Colledge, Stewardship Chairperson**

February Paint and Sip



Our next paint and sip event with Beth Hilliker will be held on Friday, February 20th beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the upper level coffee house at St. Paul's.

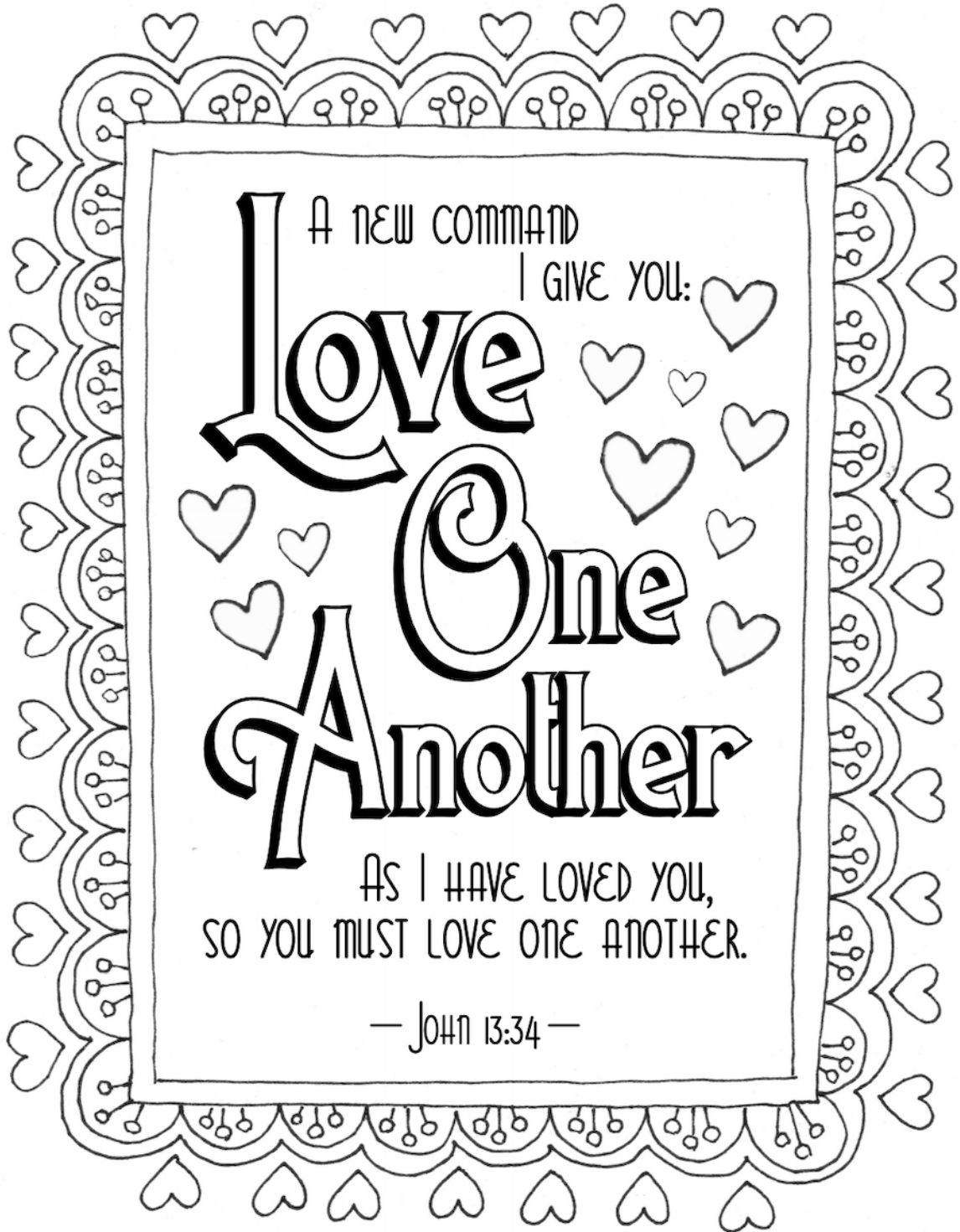
The cost is \$25.00 which includes paint supplies and instruction for creating the scene shown.

No skill is needed to participate.

Please sign up by Sunday, February 15th.

BYOB and a small snack to share.

Coloring page for kids of all ages!





Sunday 8:45 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:45 a.m.	February 1 Choir rehearsal Worship Luncheon and Annual Meeting
Monday 6:00-8:00 7:00 p.m.	February 2 Art class-coffee house Let's Beautify Cumberland! Meeting-fellowship hall
Wednesday 5:15 p.m. 6:00 p.m.	February 4 Hand Bell rehearsal Vespers-Chapel
Thursday 5:30 p.m. 6:00 p.m.	February 5 Confirmation instruction Shake Your Soul-fellowship hall
Sunday 8:45 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:45 a.m.	February 8 Choir rehearsal Worship Book Study
Monday 11:00 a.m. 6:00-8:00	February 9 Prayers in the chapel Art class-fellowship hall
Tuesday 5:30 p.m.	February 10 Council meeting
Wednesday 5:15 p.m. 6:00 p.m.	February 11 Hand bell rehearsal Vespers-lower chapel
Thursday 4:00-6:00 5:30 p.m.	February 12 Bountiful Blessings Confirmation instruction
Friday 6:00-9:00	February 13 Beginnings Parents Night Out
Saturday 10:00 a.m. 12:00 p.m.	February 14 Grief Support group Shake Your Soul
Sunday 8:45 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:45 a.m.	February 15 Choir rehearsal Worship Book Study

Monday	February 16 President's Day-school and office closed
Tuesday 6:00 p.m.	February 17 Shrove Tuesday pancake dinner and Family Worship & Fun
Wednesday 7:00-12:00 12:00 p.m. 1:00-7:00 7:00 p.m.	February 18 Imposition of Ashes Noon Liturgy Imposition of Ashes Ash Wednesday Mass
Thursday 5:30 p.m. 6:00 p.m.	February 19 Confirmation instruction Shake Your Soul
Friday 6:00 p.m.	February 20 Paint and Sip-coffee house
Saturday 2:00-5:00	February 21 Mountainside Baroque Echoes of the Oratory
Sunday 8:45 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:45 a.m.	February 22 Choir rehearsal Worship-Giving Sunday Book Study
Monday 6:00-8:00	February 23 Art class-fellowship hall
Tuesday	February 24 Beginnings Parents Education Night
Wednesday 5:15 p.m. 6:00 p.m.	February 25 Hand Bell rehearsal Vespers-Chapel
Thursday 4:00-6:00	February 26 Bountiful Blessings
Saturday 10:00 a.m. 12:00 p.m.	February 28 Grieff Support group Shake Your Soul