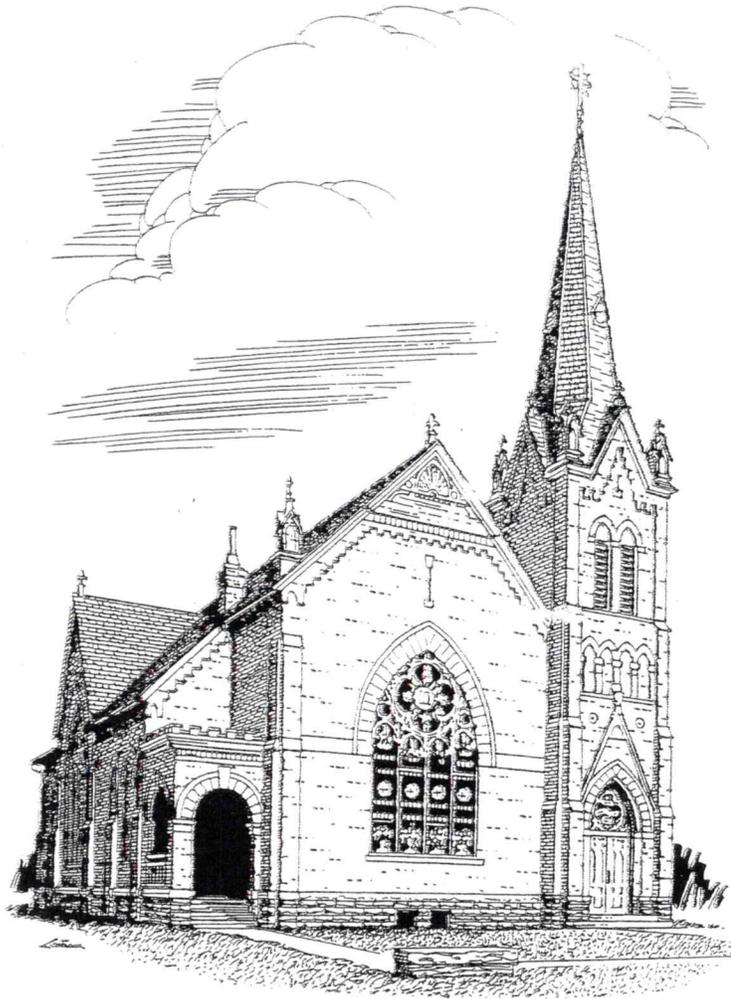


# Hilltop News

St. Paul Lutheran Church

March/April 2026



St. Paul Lutheran Church

P.O. Box 157

Sulphur Springs, Oh 44881

Church Office 419-562-5858

Pastors Brodie & Andrea Taphorn

*But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. Titus 3:4-7*

People so dearly loved by God,

The season of Lent is upon us—a season often described as a time for spiritual seriousness. Many imagine Lent as a period to take stock, clean up our lives, and try again with renewed intentions. It's tempting to see Lent as some kind of spiritual workshop of interior work, where honesty and effort might finally produce the faith, we feel is lacking. But the gospel won't let us keep with this line of thinking for very long. We find in the gospel that Christ alone is the one who rescues. Christ alone is the one who saves. And it is while we are yet sinners, that Christ dies, *for us!* This is both offense and relief! It is an offense because we find that our seriousness isn't what is needed for our death and resurrection. It is Christ's determination in the midst of our sin, to offer us grace and forgiveness. This is also a relief, because we also find- that we don't have it in us to do this work. He stands where we cannot stand. He bears what we cannot carry. His obedience through suffering and death is His alone. And the benefits are ours.

I invite you to join us in worship this Lent and Easter season, not just for Sunday mornings, but also on Wednesday nights for dinner and worship. Come as you are—whether strong or weary, hopeful or uncertain—and together, we will discover the grace that meets us in every moment. We will hear the news again that it is the life, death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that in all seriousness, saves us.

Pastor Andrea

### March Birthdays

3/02 Mark Teynor  
3/02 Cory LaRue  
3/06 Jim Crabaugh  
3/07 Shawn Auck  
3/07 Charlotte Powell  
3/07 Elizabeth Geiger  
3/08 Ruth Crabaugh  
3/08 Nancy Maxfield  
3/08 Steve Seif  
3/11 Rhonda Evak  
3/12 Andrew Johnson  
3/12 Elijah Reffey  
3/13 Ross Newcome  
3/15 Veronica Vandayburg  
3/16 Tom Widman  
3/16 Walter Schimpf  
3/19 Russell Breyley  
3/19 Doug Ebbeskotte  
3/19 Hanah Wilson  
3/21 Jacquie Stuckey  
3/21 Brock Scott  
3/21 Branson Scott  
3/21 Sarah Gilbert  
3/22 Morgan Young  
3/22 Alan Young  
3/23 Jim Shade  
3/23 Charlie Britt  
3/24 Eric Kocher  
3/24 Nancy Allamon  
3/24 Victoria Shipman  
3/25 Lucas Geiger  
3/26 Angela Rayborn  
3/29 Randi Webber  
3/30 Owen Kocher  
3/30 Bob Geiger  
3/30 Carla Seif  
3/30 Todd Billings  
3/31 Janel Brause

### March Anniversaries

3/07 Larry & Jenny Leonhardt  
3/16 Brad & Nancy Stuckman  
3/17 Jim & Ruth Crabaugh  
3/20 Rich & Chris Krahling  
3/25 Adam & Sarah Bartinkas

### April Birthdays

4/01 Julie Teynor  
4/02 Susan Sutherland  
4/04 D-Ann Geiger  
4/04 Tonya Geiger  
4/05 Wade Hopkins  
4/07 Deb Karl  
4/09 Melissa Shade  
4/10 Trevor Seif  
4/10 Pentti Maki  
4/11 Brad Stuckman  
4/13 Jennifer Geiger  
4/17 Ariel Bloomfield  
4/18 Betty Pfleiderer  
4/18 Alan Leonhardt  
4/18 Kathy Sheets  
4/19 Blake Rittenhour  
4/19 Karen Scherner  
4/20 Tom Miller  
4/21 Caeden Pfeifer  
4/22 Brady Sheets  
4/22 Rachel Webber  
4/24 Nick Rowland  
4/25 Justin Leonhardt  
4/25 Florice Leonhardt  
4/29 Steven Kocher

### April Anniversaries

4/15 Jim & Helen Luidhardt  
4/15 Matt & Kayla Klime  
4/24 Mike & D-Ann Geiger  
4/30 Mark & Julie Teynor

Committees for March:

Altar: Michee Breyley  
Greeter: John & Linda Pfleiderer

April:

Altar: George & Kathy Sheets  
Greeter: Joyce Bloomfield &  
Joyce Schanzenbach

We extend our sympathy to Florice Leonhardt, on the death of her sister, Ruth Pennington, to John & Joy Britton and family on the death of Joy's father James Staiger. He passed away January 27, 2026 and Ramon & Joyce Durigg on the death of Ramon's brother, Richard Durigg. He passed away in February.

Lenten services continue on Wednesday evening at 7 P.M. Lenten meal will be at 6 PM. Offering will be divided between The Salvation Army, American Cancer Society Road to Recovery and BORN. Maundy Thursday offering will be given to LifeWise.

On March 5 God Squad will be having their Luther Uncorked dinner, fellowship and discussion at Suburban in Bucyrus. It will begin at 6 PM. All are invited.

March 15 God Squad will be frosting cookies with the residents of Trustwell Living (Carlisle). All are invited to attend this event. Resident enjoy visiting with members of St. Paul.

God Squad will be hosting a Bible Study at the church during April. Watch the bulletin for more details

If you would like to donate candy or small items; pencils, erasers, stickers etc. for the kids Easter treat bags and egg hunt, there will be baskets on each coat rack. Thank you.

Thank you for your support to LifeWise Crawford County. Your support is helping shape future leaders of our county. Because of your generosity toward the end of year giving initiative we were able to raise \$28,700 toward our expansion vision across Crawford County.

Remember Our Shut in and Home Bound Members

**Trustwell Living (Carlisle Place)**

1721 Whetstone St  
Bucyrus, OH 44820  
John Barnhart Birthday June 5 (Apt. 116)  
Chris Shealy Birthday January 25  
Walter Schimpf Birthday March 16  
Geneva Cleland Birthday December 15

**At Home**

Mary Ann McCallister  
P O Box 27 Birthday November 4  
Sulphur Springs, OH 44881

**Westbrook Assisted Living**

Helen Lyons  
101 Westbrook Room 149  
Upper Sandusky, OH 43351 Birthday May 27

**Wyandot County Skilled Nursing and Rehab Center**

Florice Leonhardt 7830 St. Rt. 199  
Upper Sandusky, Oh 43351 Birthday April 25

Dear Friends of His Hands Extended Soup Kitchen,

We count it an honor to serve hot meals to the ones in need in this region and we are blessed that you have joined us in this ministry. Many people are ministered to through your generous donation of food, finances, paper products, and service. A scripture in Proverbs 19:17 states: Mercy to the needy is a loan to God and God pays back those loans in full. We thank you so much for your support of \$729.06

Many Blessing,  
Pastor Dan Rebon

Thank you so much for your donations during 2025 to the Salvation Army. These funds help us to serve the Bucyrus Community and beyond. There are no words to convey the gratitude that we have for your willingness to give.

Capt. Jared Starnes  
Corps Officer/Pastor

Dear St. Paul Lutheran Church Family,

Thank you for your gift of \$105.00 for 2025. Your gift has helped us continue helping children with medical needs that would otherwise go untreated. We are always looking for more fundraising ideas or assistance with mission, if God has laid this on your heart. Thank you again!

God Bless,  
Holly Christini, President and Founder of Into The Heart Into The Home

Dear St. Paul Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your support of \$729.37 to the St. John Lutheran Church Food Pantry.

Dear Church Members,

Thank you for your gift of \$570.00 and continued support of to our residents and ministry. We are grateful.

Carol Slight, Vice President  
Filling Homes Foundation

Dear Friends in Christ,

Thank you so much for supporting LifeWise Academy through our Giving Tree project. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Thank you again,

Linda Schulz—BC LifeWise site coordinator

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your recent gift of \$600.00. Your generosity makes a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve. Your faithful dedication helps others thrive. Thank you!

Melissa Gregg Director of Mission Advancement  
Megan O'Brien, Vice President

Dear Friend in Christ,

We so appreciate your generous gift to the Chatfield Community Food Pantry. We pray it will bless our clients physically and lead them to knowing Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Chatfield Community Food Pantry Team

St. Paul Lutheran Church Council Minutes  
January 11, 2026

John Britton called the meeting to order. Members present were Doug Ebbeskotte, Mark Ebbeskotte, Dan Feichtner, Jim Crabaugh, Mike Geiger, Jim Luidhardt, John Britton, Mike Grube, Tom Bush, and Jeff Karl. Pastor Andrea and Susie Sutherland were also present. Devotions were given by Pastor Andrea.

Secretary's Report: Doug Ebbeskotte motioned to approve, and Mike Geiger seconded. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Reviewed treasurers report. Susie shared that the checking account balance was \$26,008.45 on December 31, 2025, with all bills current. Discussed license to copy music for \$300 and how to handle bills before the budget is approved. Mike Grube motioned to approve report, and Mark Ebbeskotte seconded. Motion passed.

Elder's Report: Mark gave an update on potential nominees for open council positions.

Deacon's Report: In October, \$14,418.00 was given to current funds, with a year-to-date total of \$257,047.52 across all accounts. Average Sunday attendance was 106 with 104 communed. Christmas Eve attendance was 159 with 144 communed.

Trustee's Report: Dan presented an update regarding recent repairs, including the toilet at the parsonage and addressing air leaks in the sacristy. He also reviewed the current list of ongoing repair and maintenance tasks for both the church and parsonage.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Andrea gave a monthly update. St. Paul will host North Central Ohio NALC Pastors for worship on Jan 15 and the NALC Lay Preaching Class on Jan 17, 24, and Feb 7. Andrea and Brodie will attend a Theology of the Cross conference in MN on Feb 2-3.

Motion to approve all reports was made by Mike Geiger and seconded by Tom Bush. Motion passed.

Old Business: Still only have one bid for plaster and paint repairs to church. Planning to have church vote on it at the annual Church congregation meeting. Discussed getting the west windows fixed for air leaks that make noise when the wind blows.

New Business:

1) Supply Pastor Katie Borden fills in on January 25; compensation set at \$200 plus 72.5¢/mile. 2) July 2025 minutes updated to include approval for membership transfer of Pastor Pentti and Jane Maki. 3) Agenda for the 2026 Annual Meeting approved (motion by Doug Ebbeskotte, seconded by Dan Feichtner) 4) 2026 Budget approved (motion by Mark Ebbeskotte, seconded by Jim Luidhardt). 5) Council members with expiring terms were thanked. 6) Feb 8<sup>th</sup> will be the installation date for new members. 7) Discussed idea about honoring Walter for being a choir member for 80 years and Dart ball for 70 years.

The next council meeting will be **Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup>** after worship. With no further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's prayer.

Jeff Karl  
Secretary

St. Paul Lutheran Church  
2026 Annual Report  
February 1, 2026

The 2026 annual meeting was called to order by President John Britton. Pastor Andrea shared a prayer and message of hope and good news of Christ, His living hope feeding us. Mike Geiger moved second Dave Robertson to accept the 2025 annual meeting minutes. Motion passed.

Nominating Committee Report: Mark Ebbeskotte thanked the people for putting their names on the ballot and those that considered to put their names on. Results of the Ballot: Elder Jim Shade, Trustee Grant Geiger, Deacon Doug Ebbeskotte, Memorial Committee Cathy Miller.

Pastor Andrea summarized the NALC Amendments for the constitution.

- 1) Clean typo errors,
  - 2) Recognize the NALS Seminary as the NALC Seminary
  - 3) Language alignment of the founding documents.
- The amendments to the constitution passed.

Elders Report: Tom Bush thanked the nominating committee and people on the ballot. He also thanked Pastor's Andrea and Brodie for their hard work and leading us in our church life.

Auditing Committee: George Sheets reported all books were in good order. Members of this committee Brian Evak, Randi Webber & George Sheets.

Treasurer Report: Susie Sutherland reported checking account balance of \$26,162.63, assets of \$228,240.68. She mentioned it was a good year of giving.

Deacons Report: Mike Geiger referred to the reports printed with a total giving of \$257,047.52 for the year. Mike commended the congregation for this support of the church. Also, the attendance has increased.

Memorial Committee: Marilyn Long reported checking balance as of December 31 of \$5,300.63 and saving account balance of \$19,449.55.

Women of the Church: Helen Luidhardt reported checking account balance of \$2,421.95. She thanked council for giving \$2,000 to put towards CD to increase the amount to \$5,000 for better interest. Helen mentioned it was a fantastic year of giving and they were happy to give money to NALC seminary along with other disbursements.

Cemetery Report: Mike Geiger mentioned we had some folks pass away from the church, but this was the first year since his time of being on committee starting in 1978 there wasn't anyone buried in the cemetery.

Youth Group: Amber Robertson mentioned youth is age is grade 5-12. Anyone interested in leading the group should see Amber. Checking account balance of \$8876.41

God Squad: Mark Schanzenbach reported checking balance of \$3,355.77. Mark thanked the congregation for their support, prayers and attending events such as Luther Uncorked. There will be Lenten meals this year.

Helping Hands: Bev Robertson mentioned anyone having a suggestion for a project see her or Mark Ebbeskotte. Their money comes from Thrivent Insurance policy holders. They have an ending balance on checking of \$2,7562.58.

Pastors Report: Pastor Andrea thanks all for a great year, establishing relationships, felt so welcomed. Good Council relationships, not like all churches. Proclamation of the gospel drives Pastor's Andrea and Brodie. Grateful how we care for each other! Pastor Brodies tells other pastors how lucky they are to be here. He mentioned on March 29 he leaves for Navy Officer training until May 1. Chaplain school in the future.

Chris Krahlung moved Ken Geiger seconded motion to approve proceeding reports. Motion passed.

Old Business: John reviewed some of the items of the past year. Calling the Taphorn's to be our pastors, update and repairs of parsonage, installation of air condition, thanking church council, lay ministers Eric Kocher, Charlie Britt, Dave Halsey, Jeff Karl and George Sheets. Pastors that fill in for leading worship, Eric Kocher, Custodian work, Sam Hopkins recording services for viewing, Roxanne Shipman, Kathy Sheets, choir, Cindy Hopkins and bell choir, Tom Bush for special music, Helen Luidhardt and Karen Schimpf for accompanist. Joyce Schanzenbach for secretary work, Susie Sutherland for thorough job of bookkeeping. God Squad for ministering to members in need of food and gift cards, Memorial committee, Women of the Church duties, Sunday worship, Joyce Bloomfield for her work on bulletin board and library. Ron Zucker for plowing snow from parking lot. Thanking loving wife Joy for her support. Pastors Andea & Brodie. Thanks to the congregation and council members: Tom Bush for visiting and giving communion to shut ins and serving on council. Jim Luidhardt for his council time as trustee and helping get tasks completed.

New Business: John reviewed the budget, Jim Shade moved, Doug Heydinger seconded motion to approve the budget, motion passed. Estimate for plaster repair the church, west vestibule, places on windowsills, also painting by Johsua Keith total estimate of \$24,290.00. Chris Krahlung moved Cindy Markley seconded motion to do the plaster repairs, Motion passed. Next years annual meeting will be held Jauary24, 2027 with snow

date of January 31,2027. Sam Hopkins moved Mark Ebbkotte second to adjourn. Motion passed. We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Jim Luidhardt,  
Substitute Secretary.

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## Monthly Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																											
<b>1</b> Sunday School 9 AM Worship 10:00 AM	<b>2</b> Dartball at Windfall UCC 7:30 PM	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Lenten Meal Lent Worship 7 PM	<b>5</b> Luther Uncorked at Suburban in Bucyrus 6 PM	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>																																																																																											
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<b>15</b> Cookies at Carlisle Sunday School 9 AM Worship 10:00 AM	<b>16</b> Dartball Open Date	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> Lenten Meal Lent Worship 7 PM	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>																																																																																											
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<b>29</b> Sunday School 9 AM Worship 10:00 AM	<b>30</b> Dartball Banquet at Holy Trinity	<b>31</b>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">Feb 2026</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th> <th>M</th> <th>T</th> <th>W</th> <th>T</th> <th>F</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> <td>11</td> <td>12</td> <td>13</td> <td>14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15</td> <td>16</td> <td>17</td> <td>18</td> <td>19</td> <td>20</td> <td>21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>22</td> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> <td>25</td> <td>26</td> <td>27</td> <td>28</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Feb 2026							S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">Apr 2026</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th> <th>M</th> <th>T</th> <th>W</th> <th>T</th> <th>F</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> <td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12</td> <td>13</td> <td>14</td> <td>15</td> <td>16</td> <td>17</td> <td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>19</td> <td>20</td> <td>21</td> <td>22</td> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> <td>25</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26</td> <td>27</td> <td>28</td> <td>29</td> <td>30</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Apr 2026							S	M	T	W	T	F	S				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
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**March/April 2026**

<b>Church Staff</b>	<b>Congregational Council</b>
Andrea & Brodie Taphorn..... Pastors David Halsey.....Lay Assistant Joyce Schanzenbach.....Secretary Kathy Sheets..... Organist Karen Schimpf.....Assistant Organist Susie Sutherland.....Bookkeeper Roxanne Shipman..... Choir Cindy Hopkins.....Bell Choir Jill Rittenour.....Sunday School Superintendent .....President, Women of Church Amber Robertson..... Youth Advisor God Squad.....Mark Schanzenbach Eric Kocher..... Custodian Church Telephone: (419) 562-5858 Parsonage Phone: (419) 562-5262 E-MAIL:stpaulslutheran@embarqmail.com Web Page: www.stpaulsulphur.com	John Britton                      Jim Crabaugh Mark Ebbeskotte                Jim Shade Gant Geiger                      Doug Ebbeskotte Mike Grube                        Mike Geiger Jeff Karl                            Dan Feichtner  <p align="center"><b>Congregational Officers</b></p> President .....John Britton Secretary .....Jeff Karl Treasurer ..... Assistant Treasurer..... Mike Grube

"Hilltop News" is published by the community of faith  
 at St. Paul Lutheran Church,  
 4707 Ridgeton Rd., Sulphur Springs, OH 44881  
**Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.                      Worship, 10:00 a.m.**  
**Communion First Sunday Of The Month**