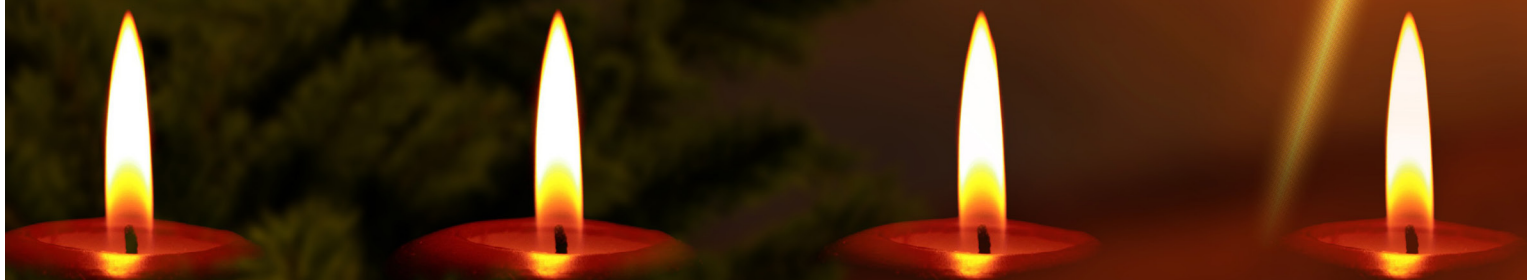


the EVANGEL

St. Paul's Newsletter

December 2025



St. Paul's
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Rochester, Michigan

December 2025

Pastor's Message

In early November, a friend shared that her husband was grumbling as he noticed people decorating for Christmas so early. While all the stores have had their Christmas aisles stocked for months, many reserve Christmas decorations in their homes until after Thanksgiving. My friend turned to her husband and said, "Could it be that decorating the house for Christmas brings joy? And right now, some of us need more joy!"



While the first snow has just fallen and our harvest decorations still have a place of prominence in our home, I must admit that Christmas brings me joy as well. Perhaps what I need is a little more of the Advent and Christmas mood in my home a few days earlier this year. It may start with nativity, but I have a feeling that the tree is going up a week or two earlier this year. For some it may be early. Yet it seems that this year it may be a little overdue.

On the other hand, it may be that it is right on time. Advent is a season that comes upon us and invites us to look out into the world around us and rediscover our need for something different...our need for a Savior. With tentative peace in some places, wars still raging on in others, hungry people here in the United States, lives devastated by natural disasters in Jamaica and elsewhere, Advent is a season of yearning for God's presence and recreation in the world that we celebrate in the birth of the Christ at Christmas.

This Advent, I hope that you will join us not only in yearning for God's presence in the preparation of our hearts and homes, but also in giving witness to the presence of God who not only comes at Christmas but is with us even now. In sharing food with our local food pantry, in Christmas toys for Grace Centers of Hope in Pontiac, in gathering together for a Merry Little Christmas Party, at all the Christmas concerts and All Music Sunday, and even as we light our candles on Christmas Eve, may we not only seek out the Christ, but give witness to the presence of Light and Life that is born among us yet again in this holy season.

Advent Blessings for a Merry Christmas,
Elbert Dulworth
Senior Pastor



Christmas Food Mission Project

St. Paul's and our partners at Neighborhood House will help about 100 families in need giving them Kroger gift certificates to make their Christmas a little brighter.



We Need Donations!

This mission project is only possible because of the generous support of the St. Paul's congregation.



To make a financial donation, please write "Christmas Baskets" on the envelope and on the memo line of your check made out to St. Paul's UMC or donate online by scanning the QR code and selecting 'Give to Christmas Baskets' on the drop-down menu.



Christmas and Candlelight

**Tuesday, December 2
7 p.m. in the Sanctuary**

St. Paul's United Women in Faith invite you, your friends, spouses and neighbors to an evening of music and holiday cheer.

Begin the season with a program featuring Brittany DeYoung, Principal Harpist for the

Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra.

Dessert and coffee will be served in the Narthex following the program.

Free-will offering collected for Rochester Area Neighborhood House.



Orders due December 8

Poinsettia Sunday December 21

Help decorate the church and memorialize or honor loved ones by purchasing a poinsettia.

After services on December 21, plants may

be picked up or donated to be delivered to homebound members. Place your order online at stpaulsrochester.org or call 248-651-9361 to order. **Poinsettias are \$16 each.**

Altar Flowers

Through your generous support, the sponsorship of altar flowers at St. Paul's has remained a loving tradition and a beautiful part of our worship experience. If you would like to sponsor altar flowers, please contact Linda Jeffries at 248-651-9361 or sign up in the main office or on Sunday at the Welcome Center in the Narthex.



HARMONY IN THE HILLS



Advent Concert Series

Fridays, December 5 & 12; Noon in the Sanctuary

Add something special to your Advent Fridays by attending these 45-minute concerts. **Free Admission.**

December 5 Tian Tian, piano

December 12 Sarah Simko, organ

All Music Sunday

Sunday, December 21

9:30 & 11 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Celebrate Christmas with a Festival of Carols featuring St. Paul's Music department including choir, handbell choir, children's choir, praise teams, and orchestra.

Open Door service in Sanctuary at 9:30 a.m.



Children & Youth Music Holiday Rehearsal Schedule

Sunday, Dec 7 & 14 in Rickard Chapel

- Youth Band: 4:15 - 5 p.m.
- Children's Choir: 5:15 - 6 p.m.

Both groups will perform at All Music Sunday on December 21 at 9:30 & 11 a.m. and at the Family Christmas Eve service at 4 p.m. on December 24.

New members are always welcome!

Questions? Contact Betsy Marsh at marshmusic101@comcast.net.

Rehearsals will resume on January 11.

A Merry Little Christmas Party with LIVE Nativity

Saturday, December 13; 6 - 7:30 p.m.

Parlor, Rickard Chapel & North Lawn

Young and old are invited to join us as we celebrate the most wonderful time of the year. **PET and FEED the animals at the LIVE nativity** on the north lawn. Walk by and listen to the narrated Christmas story with shows every 15 minutes. In the Parlor, join us for crafts, and in Rickard Chapel visit with Santa and have cocoa and cookies. **Invite your friends and share some Christmas cheer.**

If you wish to donate, new and gently used toys will be collected for Grace Centers of Hope.



Blue Christmas

Thursday, December 18

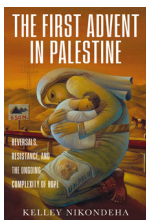
7 p.m. in Rickard Chapel

You're invited to a service designed for those for whom the holidays may be difficult. If you have experienced the loss of a loved one, a transition or life change due to illness, depression, separation or divorce, please know that your church cares about you and offers a time for reflection, prayer and scripture.

It is our prayer that you will find comfort and hope in knowing that you are not alone, your feelings are honored and that God knows your pain and loves you unconditionally. Rev. Judy May preaches.



Classes & Groups



Advent Study

Mondays, November 24 – December 15
6:30 p.m. in Rickard Chapel

The First Advent in Palestine by Kelley Nikondeha re-contextualizes the Advent story, moving it from a “once upon a time” narrative to a specific, grounded, and ongoing reality in a place of struggle and hope. This study connects deeply with our social holiness tradition and our commitment to seeking peace and justice as United Methodist Christians. Led by Rev. Dulworth, Ron & Betsy Fisch. Buy the book from your favorite retailer, call the office to sign up and read the introduction “Beginnings” and Chapters 1-2.



Seeker's Study

Mondays, December 1 - 22

1 - 2:30 p.m. in the Parlor and on Zoom

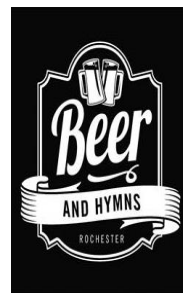
Become a Seeker and explore the lectionary texts for the four Sundays in Advent. Each week we will read an Old Testament lesson, a Psalm, an Epistle lesson, and a lesson from Matthew's Gospel. Come discover the blessings in the manger as we prepare our hearts and minds to receive the precious gift found there. **ALL are welcome!**

SPARK Christmas Luncheon

Thursday, December 4
12 p.m. at Recipes

134 University Dr. Rochester

Join us for our annual Christmas luncheon at Recipes and help select books for 2026. Call or text Linda at 248-765-5511 or email at lkb_jab@hotmail.com to RSVP by November 24.



Beer & Carols

Tuesday, December 16

7 p.m. Gus O'Connor's
324 S. Main St. Rochester

Join us in the joy of the season. Sing Christmas carols along with us! Participants buy their own drinks.



Mission Corner



Blood Drive

Monday, December 8; 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Hickey Hall

The need for blood is great all year long. Schedule an appointment by calling Bill Molloy at 248-892-1705 or go to redcrossblood.org (sponsor code 'stpaulunited').



Warm Coats Delivered

Last winter St. Paul's **donated 183 coats** for Baldwin Center's store where clients “shop” for their family members before Christmas. On October 17, Roxanne Cleveland delivered the coats donated last March to a very grateful Baldwin Center. We will be collecting coats again this winter. Look for the collection box in the Narthex and shop the post-holiday coat sales! **Thank you for helping us make a difference in our local community.**



Mission Challenge 2026

Kids Empowered On the Move

Kids Empowered On the Move is an Oakland County organization that helps families navigate through the system with whatever is needed to move a family to the next level on their homeless to home journey. To donate, please write 'MC 2026' on the envelope and on the memo line of your check made out to St. Paul's UMC or donate online by scanning the QR code and selecting 'MC 2026' on the drop-down menu.



United Methodist Men's Breakfast

Saturday, December 6

8 a.m. in the Parlor

All men are invited to join us for breakfast and brotherhood. Invite a guest. **Join us!** Contact Dave deSteiger at 248-376-0416.



United Women in Faith

We Believe Love in Action Can Change the World

December Circle Meetings

- **New Hope Circle** - Tuesday, December 2 at 7 p.m. for Christmas and Candlelight.
- **Faith Circle** - Wednesday, December 10 at 1 p.m. Luncheon at the Olive Garden.
- **Patience Circle** - Thursday, December 11 at 9 a.m. in the Parlor. Christmas Brunch and Ornament Exchange.



Exec. Board Meeting: Tuesday, December 9; 9:30 a.m. in Room 132
Spend Down Meeting

J.O.Y.

Just Older Youth

Tuesday, December 16

12 p.m. in Hickey Hall

Just Older Youth will meet for a brown bag lunch; coffee and dessert provided. Everyone sixty plus is invited to share food, fellowship and service projects involving our "Keeping in Touch" friends who can no longer attend worship or be involved in other church programs. Bring your friends and neighbors. Everyone is welcome to be part of this Joyful Youth Group!



Christmas Cookie Sale

Sunday, December 14; 9:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. in the Narthex

Purchase an excellent variety of homemade cookies and holiday treats pre-boxed to take home or give as gifts. All proceeds go entirely to local missions supported by our United Women in Faith.

Bakers needed!

Deliver cookies to **Hickey Hall**

on **Saturday, December 13**

from **10 a.m. to 12 p.m.** in

**DISPOSABLE
CONTAINERS.**



Share your favorite cookies!



HUGS. Humor, Understanding, Growth and Support

For mothers and grandmothers of all ages

Wednesdays at 9 - 11:30 a.m. in Room 132

Dec 3 Christmas Brunch - 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. in the Parlor Enjoy brunch in the Parlor (easily accessed from the main entrance outside the church office) and have a relaxing start to December. Stay tuned for a sign up for our celebration.

Dec 10 Fa La La Field Trip - Off Campus 10 a.m. Dessert Oasis (336 S. Main St. Rochester) RCS families have no school today, so let's meet up for cocoa and conversation! Meet at

Dessert Oasis then take a stroll in downtown Rochester to do some holiday shopping. Join us when you can for however long you can. Kids are welcome.

Dec 17 That's a Wrap Some people dread the midnight wrapping on Christmas Eve so, bring wrapping paper and ribbons for a wrapping party. Come if you love wrapping or if you need a spot to wrap those gifts outside of little eyes, or come for coffee and conversation as we try to keep the holy in the holidays and maintain our sanity.

Dec 24 No HUGS Enjoy your Christmas break with your families! **HUGS resumes January 14.**

See stpaulsrochester.org/calendar/ for more detailed information. Scan QR code to reserve childcare.

HUGS observes the Rochester Community Schools calendar. When schools are closed, HUGS will not meet.



Stay in Touch

Remember to Stay in Touch with our older members this Christmas by sending a card to those listed below. Include a little note letting them know that you are remembering them and praying for them. They get so much enjoyment from reading all of the notes and cards.



Nancy Allinger - Cedarbrook
790 Letica Dr. Apt. 405
Rochester, MI 48307

Rich Alverson
2677 Lambeth Park
Rochester Hills, MI 48306

Donna Beerer
3020 Columbus Ave.
Royal Oak, MI 48073

Al & Nancy Boughner
151 Albertson St.
Rochester, MI 48307

Ruth Burns
2549 Stoodleigh Dr.
Rochester Hills, MI 48309

Earl & Jean Bryant
1254 Churchill Cir.
Rochester, MI 48307

Margaret Bylen
1126 Cove Ln.
Rochester Hills, MI 48306

Thelma Childress - Green Acres
235 Pearl St. Room 212
Cadillac, MI 49601

Kathleen Davis
2310 Geyer Ct.
Lake Orion, MI 48360

Carolyn Googasian c/o Lynn Gafford
747 Eastbridge Ct.
Rochester, MI 48307

Betty Lou Hickey
15 Avenue De La Mer Apt 2505
Palm Coast, FL 32137-2290

Maruerite Jacob
146 Brester Rd.
Rochester Hills, MI 48309

Rev Dwayne & Ruth Kelsey - Waltonwood
3250 Walton Blvd. Apt. 254
Rochester Hills, MI 48309

Fredric & Barbara Kurelich
1447 Morley Ave.
Rochester Hills, MI 48307

Rev. Johnny Liles (Lynda)
434 Taylor Ave.
Rochester, MI 48307

Wendy McNaughton
2354 Galaxy Way
Lake Orion, MI 48360-1917

Jean Meyers - Volante Assist. Living
985 N Lapeer Rd. Apt 46
Lake Orion, MI 48362

Joyce Olson - Waltonwood
1401 N. Rochester Rd Apt 139
Rochester, MI 48307

Robert Peters
882 Cobblestone
Rochester Hills, MI 48309

Bill Ray
160 Stark Rd.
Rochester Hills, MI 48307

Gwen Shelly
1726 Bedford Square Dr. Apt. 102
Rochester Hills, MI 48306

Donald Shephard
102 Bobolink
Rochester Hills, MI 49309

Jane Shephard
1143 Woodnoll Dr.
Flint, MI 48507

Gayle Schuman - American House
2251 Auburn Rd. Apt. 54
Rochester Hills, MI 48309

Wally Semrau
3145 Lily Trail Apt. 2255
Oakland Twp., MI 48306

Isabelle Smith
3631 Lexington Dr.
Auburn Hills, MI 48326

George Staten
6766 Vernmoor Dr.
Troy, MI 48098

Lorraine Towers - Cedarbrook
790 Letica Dr. Apt. 310
Rochester, MI 48307

Ethyl Waltenbaugh
1206 Churchill Circle
Rochester, MI 48307

John & Susan Wiers
69490 Brookhill Dr.
Bruce Twp, MI 48065

Baby's First Christmas

Sunday, December 7
9:30 & 11 a.m. services

If your child or grandchild will be celebrating their first Christmas this season, we invite you to join us on Sunday,

December 7, to be recognized. All new babies will be celebrated with a hand-crafted ornament. Please register by scanning the QR code.



All Together in Church

Sunday school and childcare children will remain in worship on **Sunday, Nov. 30, Dec. 28 and Jan. 4** so that our volunteers and staff can enjoy the holiday weekends. Busy bags will be available for children. Check out the Sunday school scripture and themes for the month in the Family Newsletter so you can continue to support your child's faith formation at home. **Sunday school and childcare resume on January 11.**





St. Paul's
PRESCHOOL
stpaulsrochester.org/preschool

Preschool Corner

Our preschoolers continue to learn and grow in so many wonderful ways! This month, our Thanksgiving celebrations are a true highlight, reminding us all of the many blessings we have to be thankful for. The joy and gratitude shared among the children are truly heartwarming.

As we look ahead to the Christmas season, we're excited to experience the wonder and magic of this time through our preschoolers' eyes as we celebrate the birth of Jesus. A variety of festive activities are planned to bring both joy and learning to our classroom during this special season. One of the highlights will be our Preschool Christmas Concert, where the children will sing favorite Christmas songs for their families. Everyone is welcome to join us for these special performances—more details will be shared soon!

Looking ahead, registration for the 2026–2027 school year will begin in January for returning families and in February for new families. Please visit our website stpaulsrochester.org/preschool for more information.

Warm regards,

Ms. Michelle Staarmann
St. Paul's Preschool Director

MS & HS Youth Group

All 6th - 12th graders & their friends
Sundays; 5 - 7 p.m. Meet in Hickey Hall
Dec 7 Holiday Acts of Kindness
Dec 14 Christmas Movie, PJ's
 & Cookie Swap



No Youth Group December 21, 28 & January 4
Have a wonderful Christmas filled with love and laughter.

Youth Group Resumes January 11 for our annual Blanket Palooza event.

Meet & Eat

Thursday, December 11
6:30 p.m. at Grand Tavern
3512 Marketplace Circle, Rochester Hills
All High School youth and friends are welcome for a FREE dinner out. Bring your smile and a big appetite.



Youth Group Alumni Dinner

Thursday, December 18; 6:30 p.m.
Rochester Mills, 400 Water St. Rochester
All youth group alumni are invited to join us for a FREE dinner and catch up with old friends.
Please RSVP by December 12 to Jodi at Jodi@stpaulsrochester.org.



Christmas Eve Family Service

Wednesday, December 24
4 p.m. at the Family Service
Please email Amy@stpaulsrochester.org if your child (Kindergarten - 5th grade) would like to be a part of the Christmas Pageant at our Family Christmas Eve Service.

Holy Family Participants Needed

Wednesday, December 24; 7 & 10 p.m. Candlelight Service
We would like to have a family with a young baby represent the Holy Family at our Christmas Eve services. No lines to memorize. Costumes provided. Email Amy@stpaulsrochester.org with interest.

NEW Family Newsletter

Are you the parent of a child at St. Paul's and want to receive the Family Newsletter? Email Jodi@stpaulsrochester.org to be added to the list. This weekly newsletter is curated so families can easily find information about what is happening with children and youth at St. Paul's so they can get connected.



Christmas Eve Services

Wednesday, December 24

Family Service

4 p.m. in Sanctuary - Children's Pageant
Music, joy, glow candles, and children's story.

Candlelight Services

7 & 10 p.m. in Sanctuary - Rev. Elbert Dulworth
Traditional service of carols, lessons and candlelight.

Services also live-streamed.

Find us on YouTube @StPaulsUMCRochester and Facebook @St Paul's United Methodist Church - Rochester
See more at stpaulsrochester.org.



Holy Communion

December 7 at 9:30 & 11 a.m. services

The sacrament of Holy Communion celebrates the presence of Christ and helps us find strength for Christian living. In the United Methodist Church, communion is open to all who intend to lead a Christian life.



Blood Pressure Clinic

Sunday, December 14

10:30 - 11 a.m. & 12 - 12:30 p.m. in the Narthex

Stop by to have your blood pressure checked.



Year End Giving

All Gifts for 2025
must be postmarked
by December 31

All gifts for credit in the year 2025 must be dated 2025 and RECEIVED by the church by December 31 or POSTMARKED in the year 2025. Also, if you are prepaying a 2026 pledge, please make that notation on the check and envelope. **Thanks for your continued and faithful support.**

SUNDAY WORSHIP Worship with us!

The Open Door Service

9:30 a.m. in Hickey Hall

Traditional Service

11 a.m. in Sanctuary

7	Second Sunday in Advent • Communion	
	Luke 1:5-25 The Silent Word	Rev. Kress
14	Third Sunday in Advent	
	Luke 1:26-38 Son of Mary	Rev. Dulworth
21	Fourth Sunday in Advent • All Music Sunday • Poinsettia Sunday	
	Matthew 1:18-25 Enthroned by Love	All
28	One Service at 9:30 a.m. in Hickey Hall	
	Jeremiah 18:1-6 The Shape of Things to Come	Rev. Kress

SERMON SERIES December

Looking Ahead...

January

- 1st Happy New Year
- Church Office Closed
- 3rd UMM Breakfast
- Support for Caregivers Group
- 11th UWF Sunday
- Baptisms
- Blanket Palooza
- 12th Blood Drive
- 15th SPARK Book Group
- UWF Book Club
- 20th J.O.Y.
- Theology on Tap

