

the EVANGEL

St. Paul's Newsletter

January 2026



St. Paul's
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Rochester, Michigan

January 2026

Pastor's Message

Do not remember the former things... I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth - do you not perceive it?
Isaiah 43:18-19

God's 'New Thing'

As we step into a new year together at St. Paul's, these words from Isaiah remind us that God is always ahead of us, planting seeds of renewal long before we notice them breaking through the soil. The turn of the calendar invites us not simply to make resolutions, but to open ourselves to the holy possibilities God is already preparing.

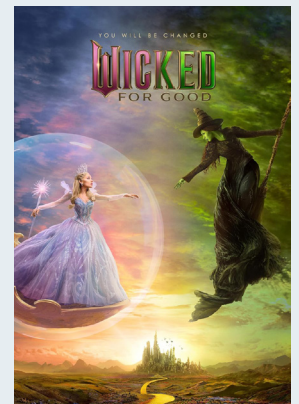
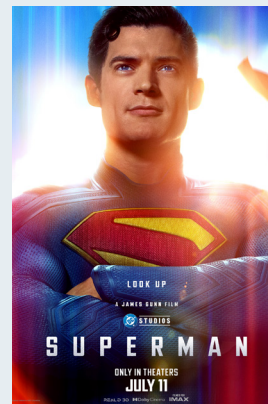
This year, I invite you to look for God's "new thing" in your own life of faith. Maybe you'll invite someone to watch one of our movies for the upcoming sermon series and then invite them to "come sit with us" at St. Paul's on a Sunday morning. Or perhaps you'll consider joining a small group where you can listen, learn, and grow alongside others. Maybe it's stepping into a mission opportunity - serving in a way that stretches your compassion and connects you more deeply with our neighbors. You might feel a nudge to join a Bible study and engage Scripture with fresh curiosity, to greet people on Sunday mornings, to usher, or to assist with Sunday School. Or maybe God is stirring a desire for a new spiritual discipline: daily prayer, breath prayers, Sabbath rest, journaling, or intentional acts of kindness.

Whatever shape it takes, I encourage you to choose one next step this January - one practice or commitment that creates space for God's renewing grace to take root in you. We don't grow by accident; we grow by intention, by showing up, and by trusting that God is already at work doing something new. As we walk into 2026, may we experience God's new mercies at work with hopeful hearts and open hands. I'm blessed to be on this journey together with you.

Grace and peace,

Elbert Dulworth

Senior Pastor



St. Paul's at the Movies January Sermon Series

Sundays, January 4 - 25

Grab your popcorn and join us for our annual series on faith and film. Invite a friend to join you at home or in a local theater during the week to catch a movie and then to sit with you at St. Paul's on Sunday as we explore how faith intersects with lessons in movies and our daily lives.

January 4	<i>David</i>	1 Samuel 17:41-51; Matthew 2:1-12	Facing Giants
January 11	<i>Charlotte's Web</i>	John 15:1-15	A Pig, a Spider and A Rat Walk into a Barn
January 18	<i>Superman 2025</i>	Jude 1:20-21	Superman and Friends
January 25	<i>Wicked: For Good</i>	2 Corinthians 5:16-21	Changed for Good



United Women in Faith Sunday

Sunday, January 11; 11 a.m. in the Sanctuary

The United Women in Faith will have their installation of officers for 2026 during the 11 a.m. worship service and will recognize individuals for their dedication and service to St. Paul's in past years.



Everyone is Welcome! This is a great event for all ages.

Blanket Palooza

Sunday, January 11; 5 - 7 p.m. in Hickey Hall

Join the Middle School and High School youth as we make fleece tie blankets for those in need. In the past 9 years, we have donated over 500 blankets to community shelters. Please bring a **fleece blanket kit** or **2 pieces of fleece** measuring 2 yards x 2 yards and **scissors**. We will have additional kits on site to use for those unable to provide fleece.

Game Night & Potluck

Wednesday, January 14

5:45 - 7 p.m. in the Parlor

Please plan to bring a game, a dish to pass and your own table service. Enjoy getting to know each other as we share a casual meal and some games. **ALL ages are welcome!**



32nd Celebration Honoring Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Challenge of Change

Sunday, January 11, 2026
2:30 PM: Reception
3:30 PM: Program

Trenton Faith UMC
2530 Charlton Road, Trenton, MI

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 Sunday at the Welcome Center in the Narthex.



breeze

Breeze Update

Is Your Data Up to Date?

With the start of the new year, it is a great time to update your Breeze database profile. If you have changed phone numbers or have an address update, please sign on to your Breeze account and make sure all is correct. If you need help, please contact Linda Jeffries in the office at Linda@stpaulsrochester.org or 248-651-9361.

Classes & Groups



Seeker's Study

Mondays, beginning January 5

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

Building Beloved Community: The Courage to Love, in the Face of Tyranny. The United Methodist Council of Bishops offers a prophetic roadmap to help Christians navigate through turbulent times using Scripture,

Wesleyan theology and voices from the global church. Books can be ordered from Cokesbury or your favorite bookseller. **ALL are welcome!**

United Methodist

Men's Breakfast

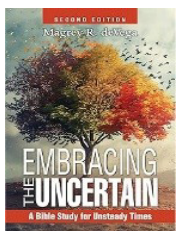
Saturday, January 10

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.



Come together with other women to make a friend... be a friend... laugh... dig into God's Word together and discover new ways to **Live In Faith Everyday.**



Women's LIFE Friday

Fridays, January 9 - February 13

9:30 - 11:30 a.m. in the Parlor or on Zoom

Come beginning at 9:15 a.m. for coffee

Leaders: Nancy Fidler & Sharon Hiller

Embracing the Uncertain (2nd Edition): A Bible Study

for Unsteady Times Author Magrey deVega helps us dig

deep into our faith as we face life's challenges such as worry, suffering, forgiveness, and our mortality with a renewed sense of purpose.

Amplify Media videos will provide the basis of our discussions. Books are not required but can be ordered online. (Please order the 2nd edition.). For further information or to sign up, contact Nancy Fidler at 248-933-1981 or nnfidler@gmail.com.



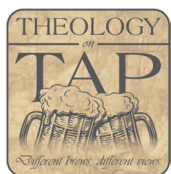
Open Table

Sundays, January 11 - February 1

10:30 - 11:30 a.m. in Hickey Hall

The Open Table small group will be offered again in January. Open Table is a welcoming community where friendships are formed and hearts are nourished.

Each week, we will gather around an open space of conversation, learning, and spiritual reflection. Whether you're carrying joy, questions, or quiet hope, you're invited to bring your whole self. Together, we explore faith, support one another, and discover something new - about God, about each other, and about ourselves. **Come as you are. There's a seat for you.**



Theology on Tap

**Tuesday, January 20; 7 p.m. at Rochester Mills
400 Water St. Rochester**

Join in a lively discussion of contemporary topics from different faith perspectives. St. Paul's provides the appetizers; participants buy their own drinks.



SPARK Book Group

Thursday, January 15

1:30 p.m. in the Parlor

Start the new year with us as we discuss *The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride. Call Linda Burnard at 248-765-5511 with questions.



UWF Book Club

Thursday, January 15

5:30 p.m. in Room 132

Join us for a discussion of *Everyday Ubuntu: Living Better Together the African Way* by Mungi Ngomane. Contact Nancy Shannon at nancgs@aol.com with questions.

J.O.Y.

Just Older Youth

**Tuesday, January 20
12 p.m. in Hickey Hall**

Begin 2026 in JOY, with JOY, at JOY! Please join us for a brown bag lunch with dessert, tea and coffee provided. Everyone age 60 and above is invited to share in this special fellowship group! Why not start the new year with a challenge? Each one invite one... we will all be glad we did!





HUGS

For mothers & grandmothers of all ages
Wednesdays, 9:30 - 11 a.m. Room 132

Jan 14 Mugs & HUGS Off Campus
10 - 11 a.m. The Brew Coffee Shop
296 W. Tienken, Rochester Hills Meet for casual conversation and well-deserved rest and relaxation. You are welcome whether this is the first time or you are a seasoned veteran!

Jan 21 Beat the Winter Blues Game Day

You survived the chaos of the holiday season, but the winter is still young. Bring your favorite card game or board game to have some old-school fun! While we play, we can chat about ways to keep spirits bright and avoid cabin fever.

Jan 28 Joy & Peace through Prayer

We'll review how to use Sybil MacBeth's *Praying in Color* for ordinary prayers as we investigate our theme verse and Sue Evans will introduce another new prayer practice so that the "the God of hope fill[s] you all with joy and peace as you trust in him." Romans 15:13

Wednesday Lunch Bunch 1/28 after HUGS

If you can linger, bring an ingredient to include in a salad and extend our fellowship through lunch. For the toddler/preschool set, feel free to bring your little guys in with us.

See the calendar at stpaulsrochester.org 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.



United Women in Faith

We Believe Love in Action Can Change the World

January Circle Meetings

- **New Hope Circle** - Thursday, January 8 at 7 p.m. in Parlor making fringed fleece blankets & pillows
- **Faith Circle** - Wednesday, January 14 at 1 p.m. in the Library.
- **Patience Circle** - No January meeting.

Exec. Board Meeting: Thursday, February 19; 9:30 a.m. on Zoom.



United Women in Faith Donates \$63,300

The United Women in Faith Executive Board met on December 9 for their annual Spend-Down meeting. They had **\$36,500** to donate to charities benefiting women and children on top of **\$26,800** already donated during the year. In 2025, the UWF donated a total of **\$63,300** to missions! **Thank you for your generous support of the UWF!**

UWF Reading Program

The United Women in Faith has a reading program that recommends books in 5 areas of faith development. Those who read in all 5 areas receive a Certificate of Recognition. For a complete list of qualifying books please search uwfaith.org/resources/reading_program.



Below is a list of books on the 2026 Book List that we have available in the St. Paul's library. We also have *Response* Magazines available.

- *Everyday Ubuntu: Living Better Together the African Way* by M. Ngomane
- *Still Dreaming* by Claudia Guadalupe Martinez
- *Highway of Tears* by Jessica McDiarmid
- *From a Whisper to a Rallying Cry* by Paula Yoo
- *The Women* by Kristen Hannah
- *The Personal Librarian* by Marie Benedict
- *Finding Me* by Viola Davis
- *Trash: A Poor White Journey* by Cedar Monroe
- *Sanctuary* by Paola Mendoza
- *Happiest Man on Earth* by Eddie Jaku
- *The Matter of Little Losses* by Rachel Marie Kang
- *Penny Preaches* by Amy & Rob Dixon
- *God's Ghostwriters* by Candida Moss
- *Michi Challenges History* by Ken Mochizuki
- *A Book of Hope* by Jane Goodall
- *Heart of Fire* by Mazie K. Hirono

Check them out!

Contact Pat Klos in the church library for more information. Turn in your book log to Diane Donoghue by September 1.

Mission Highlights 2025

Mission Accomplishments

As chair of Missions Council, it is my pleasure to share this list of accomplishments at St. Paul's in 2025:

- We accomplished our MC 2025 goal of raising **\$18,000 for scholarships** at the Henri Dennis School in Liberia.
- We donated **\$14,525 to UMCOR**.
- We made cash donations to our Missions Designated Giving accounts (RANH, Baldwin, Cass Community Services & MCHS) totaling **\$6,600**.
- We donated **\$3,600** for the purchase of a **new freezer** for the RANH Food Pantry.
- We delivered over **2,200 pounds** of food and personal care products to RANH Food Pantry.
- At our Night of 1,000 Blessings in March we packed **1024 lunch bags** for the Baldwin Center
- At our Night of 1,000 Blessings in November we packed enough **rice kits to feed 14,400 people**, with many of the bags going to Jamaica to help those impacted by the hurricane that devastated the area.
- We donated **42 blankets, 2 scarves, 3 bags, and 7 Kleenex** pouches to Grace Centers of Hope.
- We delivered **183 winter coats** to Baldwin Center.
- We collected life-saving units of blood products for the Red Cross.
- We grew, harvested, and donated **110 pounds of fresh vegetables** from our community garden.
- We donated **\$12,100 in Kroger Gift Certificates** to RANH client families in December.

This partial list does not include the many contributions made by:

- United Women in Faith, HUGS Mothers Group, Quilt Ministry, St. Paul's Youth Group, Children's Ministry, Outreach & Hospitality (OH!) & Sunday School Classes

St. Paul's stands out as a beacon for its mission activities. It is my honor to serve as Mission Chair and I thank you all for your support and prayers.

In 2026, Amy Heitman and Patty McGowan will take over as Mission Council Co-Chairs. They have new ideas and a new focus to lead St. Paul's Missions into a new year. I look forward to working with them.

John Kelly
Mission Chair

Christmas Food Mission

St. Paul's distributed Kroger gift certificates to 100 families in the Rochester area. Each gift included a Christmas card created by our Sunday School kids and a letter of introduction about St. Paul's, and the gift certificate. **Your generosity made all this possible.**



Warm Coats for Baldwin

In the past 14 years, the generous congregation of St. Paul's has donated approximately 2800 new winter coats for the Baldwin Center store where clients "shop" for their family members before Christmas. These warm coats are some of the first things chosen.

Please help continue this St. Paul's tradition by shopping the post-holiday sales and purchasing coats for next year's store. **It is important that coats be warm enough to protect from winter cold and low wind chill temperatures.** All sizes are needed. Cash donations are also accepted. Please write "Coats for Baldwin" on the memo line of your check or donate online by scanning the QR code and selecting 'Coats for Baldwin' on the drop-down menu.



Drop off donations in the Narthex February 1 - 22. Contact Roxanne Cleveland at 248-762-0196 with questions. **Thank you for helping us make a difference in our local community.**

All Together in Church

Sunday school children and childcare families will remain in worship on **Sunday, January 4** so that our volunteers and staff can enjoy the holiday weekends. **Sunday school and childcare resume on January 11.**



Meet & Eat

Wednesday, January 8
6:30 p.m. at Shake Shack
66 N. Adams Rd. RH

All HS youth are welcome for a FREE dinner out. Bring friends and a big appetite.

MS & HS Youth Group

All 6th - 12th graders & their friends

Sundays; 5 - 7 p.m. Hickey Hall; Dinner \$5

Jan 4

No Youth Group

Jan 11

Blanket Palooza - bring a fleece blanket kit or two 6'x6' pieces of

fleece, we will also have kits available onsite

Jan 18

YouLead, Youth Potluck - Bring a dish to pass

Jan 25

Ash Wednesday Prep/Winter Fun

No matter what the activity, laughter is guaranteed!

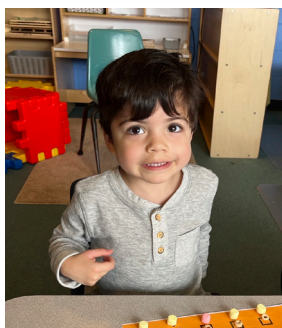


Young Adult Gathering

Wednesday, January 21

7 - 8 p.m. at St. Paul's Patio

Gather with other young adults, get to know each other and enjoy a hot cocoa around a winter campfire. Stay tuned for more information.



St. Paul's Preschool Corner

A Word from our Director

We are off to a wonderful start in 2026! The Christmas season was amazing. Experiencing the magic of Christmas through a preschooler's eyes is truly special. Our students loved the December snow and enjoyed many opportunities to play outside. We had so much fun making ornaments, creating gifts for our parents, and learning about Jesus.

The preschoolers also presented a Christmas concert that filled everyone with the Christmas spirit. We are excited for winter and all the fun activities it brings. We continue to enjoy this school year with our wonderful families.

We are already planning for the 2026-2027 school year. Returning families may register on January 5, and new families may begin registering on February 1. If you are interested or if you know someone who is looking for a preschool, please reach out to me. I would be happy to provide more information and schedule a tour. For more information, please visit our website stpaulsrochester.org/preschool.

Thank you for being part of our preschool community!

Warm regards,
Michelle Staarmann





St. Paul's Preschool Registration for Fall 2026

Parent & Me for 2's: W 9:30 - 11 a.m.
 Young Preschool: T, Th 9 a.m. - noon
 Preschool: M, W, F 9 a.m. - noon
 Pre-K: M - F 9 a.m. - noon

St. Paul's provides high-quality learning with emphasis on the individuality of each child. Our certified teaching staff will engage your child in hands-on experiences and exploration activities that nurture their basic developmental needs: physical, language, cognitive, social, and emotional.

Registration for St. Paul's members and returning families opens January 5.

Registration for NEW Families begins February 1.

Applications available online at stpaulsrochester.org/preschool.



Holy Communion

January 4 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, January 11

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

Stop by to have your blood pressure checked.



Upcoming Baptism Dates

January 18 & May 10

The sacrament of Holy Baptism is an important event in the life of a child and the Church. The sacrament of baptism is open to children and adults. Please contact the office at 248-651-9361 to schedule.



Save the Date

Where in the World Have YOU Been?

Sunday, February 1

10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Hickey Hall

Share about the places you have traveled in the United States and around the world.

- Enjoy brunch food at 10:30 a.m.
- Enjoy lunch food at noon
- Plot your travels on a world map
- Craft table for kids
- Trivia game for all
- Slideshow with your vacation pics

Sponsored by the Membership Committee.



Blood Drive

Monday, January 12

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').

SUNDAY WORSHIP Worship with us!

The Open Door Service
9:30 a.m. in Hickey Hall

Traditional Service
11 a.m. in Sanctuary

4 Epiphany • Communion • St. Paul's at the Movies

I Sam. 17:41-51; Matt. 2:1-12 Facing Giants - David Rev. Dulworth

11 Baptism • United Women in Faith Sunday

John 15:1-15 A Pig, a Spider & a Rat Walk into a Barn Rev. May

18 Jude 1:20-21 Superman and Friends Rev. Kress

25 2 Corin. 5:16-21 Changed for Good - Wicked: For Good Rev. Dulworth

SERMON SERIES January

Looking Ahead...

February

- 1st Membership Event
- 7th UMM Breakfast
- Support for Caregivers Group
- 9th Blood Drive
- 17th J.O.Y. - Just Older Youth
- Beer & Hymns
- 18th UWF Lenten Prayer Service
- Lenten Dinner
- Ash Wednesday Worship
- 19th SPARK Book Group
- UWF Book Club
- 20th HITH Noon Concert
- 25th Lenten Dinner
- 27th HITH Noon Concert