

# the EVANGEL

St. Paul's Newsletter

February 2026



St. Paul's  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
Rochester, Michigan

February 2026

# Pastor's Message

## Connect and Celebrate

February is the month of love with Valentine's Day approaching. In Michigan, it can also be the height of the winter blues. At St. Paul's, however, there are so many ways for us to connect with others and celebrate. In the middle of the week, you can stop by Hickey Hall for a game of pickleball or shooting hoops with friends around the basketball nets. On the first three Sundays in February, we'll be looking at who God is calling us to be in this new season of United Methodism as we hear about a new vision that our Council of Bishops and Connectional Table have adopted.



We start the month, with an exciting globe trotting multicultural event with food, fellowship, and plenty of fun as we celebrate together **Where in the World Have YOU Been?** Whether it's your own backyard, up north, down south, out west, along the coast, or overseas, we'll celebrate the diverse and beautiful world that God has created together following both services on Sunday, February 1. You can find out more on page 3 on the right.

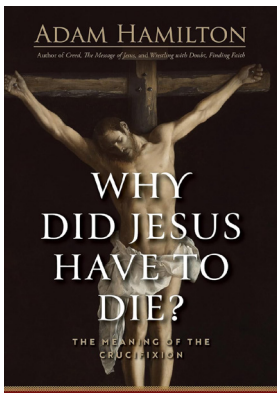
On February 18, Ash Wednesday begins our Lenten season. The United Women in Faith host their Lenten Prayer Service at 10 a.m. in Rickard Chapel. See more information on page 5. Join us for a beautiful service of ashes and communion led by our youth and confirmands in the Sanctuary at 7 p.m. Lent this year also includes something new. Each Wednesday, beginning February 18, we'll meet for a simple supper and faithful conversations for individuals and families of all ages from 5:45 - 7 p.m. in Hickey Hall. It's a great way to join us in our Lenten disciplines each week as we share and grow together.

Look in the February Evangel to find out more about each of these opportunities, other Lenten studies, and so much more as we dive into life together at St. Paul's this month.

Blessings,

*Elbert Dulworth*

Senior Pastor



## Lenten Study

### Why Did Jesus Have to Die? The Meaning of the Crucifixion

Join us on our Lenten journey for one of our small groups where we'll be diving into Adam Hamilton's new book by the same name. "Despite the crucifixion's central place in Christian faith, the New Testament offers few clear answers about how Jesus' death saves, or why, exactly, he had to die. The New Testament writers use a host of metaphors; ransom, sacrifice, reconciliation, victory but never explain exactly how it works or why it had to happen this way."

"What if that's because we've been asking the wrong question? What if the cross isn't a transaction to be explained, but a living Word from God meant to transform who we are and how we live?"

Join one of the three groups listed below participating in the Lenten Study. Purchase the book from Cokesbury or your favorite bookseller. Please read the beginning for the first class. See more information about the Women's LIFE class on Page 4. Contact Rachel at [Rachel@stpaulsrochester.org](mailto:Rachel@stpaulsrochester.org) or 248-651-9361 to sign up for Rev. Dulworth's class. Please email Phil Swisher at [swisher1770@gmail.com](mailto:swisher1770@gmail.com) to get the Zoom link to join that group.

**Women's LIFE**  
Friday, Feb 20 - Mar 27  
9:30-11:30 a.m. Parlor

**Rev. Dulworth Small Group**  
Monday, Feb 23 - Mar 30  
6:30 - 7:45 p.m. in Room 132

**Swisher Small Group**  
Tuesday, Feb 24 - Mar 31  
7:30 p.m. on Zoom



## Where in the World Have YOU Been?

**Sunday, February 1**

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

Join us for a great time of fellowship and fun!

- **Enjoy International Food Favorites**
- **Wear Apparel** from your favorite vacation spot in the USA or around the world.
- **Live Music by Kristin Snyder & Friends**
- **Travel Trivia Game**
- **Craft Table for All Ages**
- **Vacation Photo Slide Show** of vacation photos submitted to [RKress@stpaulsrochester.org](mailto:RKress@stpaulsrochester.org) by January 25.

**Sponsored by the Membership and Outreach & Hospitality Committees.**

**NEW this Lent!**

## Lenten Dinners

**Wednesdays, February 18 - March 25**

**5:45 - 7 p.m. in Hickey Hall**

Observe Lent this year by enjoying a meal and meaningful conversation with your church family. Each week, a different group will provide dinner, so all you need to do is show up and enjoy a lovely dinner and great conversation with friends!

## Ash Wednesday Worship Service

**Wednesday, February 18**

**7 p.m. in the Sanctuary**

Ash Wednesday is the official beginning of our Lenten journey. Marking ourselves with ashes in the sign of the cross reminds us that we have been made from the sacred dust of the earth and the life we have is by God's grace. Join our youth this year at this beautiful service as they lead us with music, prayers, inspirational words, Holy communion, and the imposition of ashes.



## HARMONY IN THE HILLS



### Lenten Concert Series

**Fridays at Noon in the Sanctuary**

Add something special to your Lenten Fridays by attending these 45-minute concerts.

Free admission.

**February 20**

Amanda Ross  
Trumpet



**February 27**

Warren & Flick  
Violin & Bass

**March 6**

Ann Arbor Symphony  
Woodwind Quartet

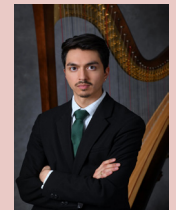


**March 13**

Chris Harding  
Piano

**March 20**

Juan Riveros  
Harp



### Free Books!

On Sunday mornings look for the cart in the Narthex. You are welcome to take any books from the cart that you would like for your home library.

# Classes & Groups

## Cancer Support Group

Tuesdays, January 27 - March 10  
7 p.m. in Room 128-129

This non-denominational support group is open to the community for cancer survivors, both those going through treatment now or in the past, as well as for family members, friends and caregivers. We would love to have you join us for as many of these meetings as you can make during the session. The support and growth experienced in these groups is invaluable and amazing. For more information, call the church office at 248-651-9361.



**United Methodist Men's Breakfast**  
Saturday, February 7  
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.



## Beer & Hymns

Tuesday, February 17 at 7 p.m.  
Gus O'Connors 324 S. Main St. Rochester

Sing along with us! St Paul's provides the appetizers, and you provide your voice. Participants buy their own drinks.



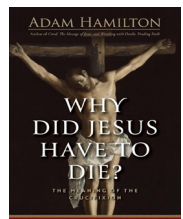
## J.O.Y.

**Just Older Youth**  
Tuesday, February 17  
12 p.m. in Hickey Hall

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! Each one invite one... we will all be glad we did!



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, February 20 - March 27  
9:30 - 11:30 a.m. in the Parlor or on Zoom  
Come beginning at 9:15 a.m. for coffee  
Leaders: Nancy Fidler & Susan Sonye  
**Why Did Jesus Have to Die? The Meaning of the Crucifixion** We join St. Paul's Lenten study as Adam

Hamilton explores numerous metaphors used by writers in the Bible to explain the meaning of the crucifixion to help us better understand why Jesus had to die. Videos will provide the basis of our discussions. Books are recommended but not required and can be ordered online. For further information or to sign up, contact Nancy Fidler at 248-933-1981 or [nnfidler@gmail.com](mailto:nnfidler@gmail.com).



## SPARK Book Group

Thursday, February 19  
1:30 p.m. in the Parlor

Start the new year with us as we discuss *The Raffle Baby* by Ruth Talbot. Call Linda Burnard at 248-765-5511 with questions.



## Open Table

Sundays, February 22 - March 22  
10:30 - 11:30 a.m. in Hickey Hall

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.**

## UWF Book Club

Thursday, February 19  
5:30 p.m. in Room 132

Join us for a discussion of *The Women* by Kristen Hannah. Contact Nancy Shannon at [nancgs@aol.com](mailto:nancgs@aol.com) with questions.





## HUGS

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

### Feb 4 Crucial Conversations - How Much is Too Much/Not Enough?

We'll discuss the HUGS' Mommas' approach to engaging kids without overtaxing our already overloaded schedules.

### Feb 11 Galentine's Day

Celebrate our friendships with coffee, conversation and treats. Whether you're a regular attender or just want to check out what HUGS is all about, today is a perfect day to uplift each other.

### Wednesday Lunch Bunch 2/11 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.

### Feb 18 UWF Lenten Prayer Service

Celebrate the start of Lent with the United Women of Faith this morning. See details at right.

### Feb 25 Crafting & Conversation

Make an easy "craft" that requires no expertise to complete and share how we practice Lent in our homes and discuss ideas for a spring service project that HUGS moms and kids can do together.

See the calendar at [stpaulsrochester.org](http://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  
February Circle Meetings

- **Faith Circle** - Wednesday, February 11 at 1 p.m. in the Library.
- **New Hope Circle** - Thursday, February 12; 5 - 7 p.m. in Parlor for a pizza party/circle meeting.
- **Patience Circle** - Thursday, February 12 at 9:30 a.m. in the Parlor.

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



Hosted by the United Women in Faith

## Lenten Prayer Service

Wednesday, February 18

10 a.m. in Rickard Chapel

Please join us for a time of peaceful prayer and reflection. Rev. Judy May will lead a Taizé service of scripture and prayer. Sharon Hiller and Paula D'Ambrosio will provide beautiful music. We will write down our individual prayer requests to Jesus and lift up our concerns during a quiet prayer time.

**Come and be refreshed.**



## United Women in Faith Mission Pin Recipients

Each year, St. Paul's United Women in Faith recognize dedicated individuals for outstanding service. On Sunday, January 11, **Grant Fry, Larry Hice, Marilyn Kress, Rick Kress and Frank Sonye** were recognized for their dedicated service in 2025 to St. Paul's and to the UWF mission work.

## Missions in 2026

### New Season for Our Mission Team

Building on the foundation of the past, our Mission Team is entering a new season with fresh leadership, renewed vision, and a strong commitment to make God's love real by creating opportunities for people to serve joyfully.

We will have big and small projects where all ages can get involved and make a difference. As followers of Jesus, we will seek to grow spiritually, work together faithfully, and respond to the needs of our community and beyond as God leads us.

The Team will be led by your enthusiastic new coaches, Amy Heitman and Patti McGowan. **If interested in joining the Team**, email Amy at [Amy@stpaulsrochester.org](mailto:Amy@stpaulsrochester.org) or Patti at [pattimcgowan.llc@gmail.com](mailto:pattimcgowan.llc@gmail.com).

We are excited to work with you!

*Amy Heitman*

*Patti McGowan*



### Warm Coats for Baldwin Center

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. Our volunteers report that 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.**



### St. Paul's Preschool Corner

#### A Word from our Director

Our preschoolers have been having a wonderful time enjoying a variety of fun winter activities in the classroom. This month, our lessons have focused on snow, polar animals, and snowmen, sparking both curiosity and creativity among the children. The students especially loved pajama day, painting snowflakes with salt, and spending time playing outside in the snow.

We also enjoyed a fantastic January field trip to Rochester Play. The children had a great time spending the morning with their preschool friends, exploring and laughing together. It was truly a delightful experience for everyone!

Looking ahead, we are excited to celebrate Valentine's Day with our friends. It's sure to be a joyful occasion filled with friendship, fun, and special memories.

As a reminder, we are currently enrolling for the 2026 - 2027 school year. If you or someone you know is interested in our preschool program, please don't hesitate to reach out. We would love the opportunity to show you around and share all the wonderful activities our program has to offer! Please visit [stpaulsrochester.org/preschool](http://stpaulsrochester.org/preschool) for more information.

Thank you for your continued support!  
*Michelle Staarmann*

## Fun with Faith

Sunday, February 1  
9:30 & 11 a.m.

### Sunday School

Mrs. Davis will lead us during Sunday school in exploring God's love for us and others with a special project. Plan to be there and see your friends in Sunday school. And remember, God loves you and there's nothing you can do about it. If are not receiving the weekly **Family Newsletter** that provides you with all there is to know about Children's Ministry, please sign up below.



## MS & HS Youth Group

All 6<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> graders & their friends

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

Feb 1 Ash Wednesday Prep  
Feb 8 No Youth Group - Super Bowl  
Feb 15 No Youth Group - Winter Break  
Feb 22 YouLead



**No matter what the activity, laughter is guaranteed!**

Feb 18 Youth-Led Ash Wednesday Service 7 p.m.

### Youth Worktrip Fundraiser

## Gourmet Pretzel Sale

Sunday, February 8

9 - 10:45 a.m. Hickey Hallway

10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Narthex

Stop by, say "Hi," and purchase a pretzel or two from the worktrippers to help support the summer trip to Gatlinburg, TN. Any donation is appreciated. These are great treats for Super Bowl parties or a delicious snack for anytime. **Thank you for your support!**



## Family Newsletter

The NEW weekly Family 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. Are you the parent of a child at St. Paul's and want to receive the Family Newsletter? Please email [Jodi@stpaulsrochester.org](mailto:Jodi@stpaulsrochester.org) to be added to the list.

## HS Meet & Eat

Tuesday, February 10 at 6:30 p.m.

Buddy's Pizza 2612 N. Squirrel Rd. Auburn Hills

All High School youth and friends are welcome for a FREE dinner out. Bring your smile and a big appetite. Please RSVP to Jodi Stuermer at [Jodi@stpaulsrochester.org](mailto:Jodi@stpaulsrochester.org) by February 6.



## Scholarships Available Application Deadline is April 15

Applications and information available at [stpaulsrochester.org](http://stpaulsrochester.org).  
(Follow 'Scholarship' quick link at bottom of homepage).

### St. Paul's Scholarship

Scholarships are available to eligible members of St. Paul's United Methodist Church who have demonstrated service to the church or community. Scholarships may be used for tuition or room and board at an accredited college or university, vocational program, apprenticeship or training program.



### St. Paul's United Women in Faith Scholarship

St. Paul's UWF offer scholarships for women and youth members of St. Paul's United Methodist Church. Scholarships in the amount of \$500 will be available for higher education and \$250 for summer camp.

**Don't wait until the last minute! Start your application now!**





## Livestream Sunday Services

View Livestream Services on YouTube for Better Sound Quality



St. Paul's livestreams Sunday worship services and posts them on both **YouTube** and **Facebook**. Links to both platforms are posted on our website on the **Online Services - Livestream and Vespers** page. The YouTube platform offers much better sound quality and we recommend that you view services there for a better experience.

On our website homepage, [stpaulsrochester.org](http://stpaulsrochester.org), click on the purple **Worship Online** button and then select the purple **Livestream on YouTube** buttons to view services.

Find us on **YouTube@StPaulsUMCRochester** and **Facebook@St Paul's United Methodist Church - Rochester**.



## 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 NEW Families begins February 1.**

Applications available online at [stpaulsrochester.org/preschool](http://stpaulsrochester.org/preschool).



## Upcoming Baptism Date 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.

## Holy Communion



February 1

9:30 a.m. Hickey Hall  
& 11 a.m. Sanctuary

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, February 8

10:30 - 11 a.m. &  
12 - 12:30 p.m.

Narthex

Stop by to have your blood pressure checked.



## Blood Drive

Monday, February 9

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](http://redcrossblood.org) (sponsor code 'stpaulunited').

## Looking Ahead...

### March

- 4<sup>th</sup> Lenten Dinner
- 6<sup>th</sup> HITH Lenten Concert
- 7<sup>th</sup> UMM Breakfast  
Support for Caregivers Group
- 11<sup>th</sup> Lenten Dinner
- 13<sup>th</sup> HITH Lenten Concert
- 16<sup>th</sup> Blood Drive
- 17<sup>th</sup> J.O.Y. - Just Older Youth
- 18<sup>th</sup> Lenten Dinner
- 19<sup>th</sup> SPARK Book Group  
UWF Book Club
- 20<sup>th</sup> HITH Lenten Concert
- 22<sup>nd</sup> That Takes the Cake Sale
- 24<sup>th</sup> Theology on Tap
- 25<sup>th</sup> Lenten Dinner
- 29<sup>th</sup> Palm Sunday

## SUNDAY WORSHIP Worship with us!

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

**Traditional Service**  
11 a.m. in Sanctuary

### 1 Communion • Prayer & Anointing

Matt. 22:37-39; John 13:34-35

Love *Boldly*

Rev. Dulworth

8 Nehem. 8:10; John 13:14-15; 1 Peter 4:10

Serve *Joyfully*

Rev. Kress

### 15 Baptism • Transfiguration Sunday

Joshua 1:1-19; Ephesians 6:10

Lead *Courageously*

Rev. Dulworth

### 22 First Sunday in Lent

1 Cor. 15: 22, 45; John 1:1, 14

The Do-Over We Needed

Rev. May

## SERMON SERIES February