

the EVANGEL

St. Paul's Newsletter

March 2026



St. Paul's
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Rochester, Michigan

March 2026

Pastor's Message

Less Giving Up - More Making Room

Lent invites us into the quiet, honest space of the wilderness - a place Jesus knew well. After his baptism, the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness, where he fasted, prayed, and faced temptation. This wasn't a detour from God's work, but a necessary part of it. In the wilderness, distractions fell away, and Jesus became rooted again in who he was and whose he was.



Our own Lenten journey echoes that story. While most of us won't head into an actual desert, Lent asks us to step back from the noise, busyness, and habits that keep us disconnected - from God, from one another, and even from ourselves. The wilderness is not meant to punish us; it is meant to clarify us. It is a place where we learn to listen more closely and trust more deeply.

Lenten disciplines - prayer, fasting, study, generosity, acts of mercy - are not about earning God's love. They are practices that help us notice the love that has been there all along. When we set aside time to pray, we create space to hear God's voice again. When we fast or simplify, we remember what truly sustains us. When we give and serve, we reconnect with the heart of Christ, who meets us in our neighbors, especially the most vulnerable.

It's not too late to join us in all that this Lenten season has to offer: dinners, conversations, studies, concerts, Palm Sunday parades, and Holy Week services. May our Lent be less about what we give up and more about what we make room for. May this wilderness journey draw us closer to God, deepen our compassion, and prepare our hearts for the new life that Easter promises.

Blessings,

Elbert Dulworth

Senior Pastor

NEW this Lent!

Lenten Dinners

**Wednesdays, until 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!



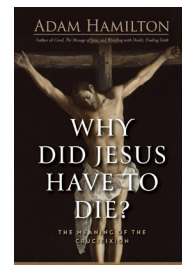
Still Time To Join!

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.

Women's LIFE

**Friday, February 20 - March 27
9:30-11:30 a.m. Parlor**

See more information about the Women's LIFE class on Page 4.

Rev. Dulworth Small Group

**Monday, February 23 - March 30
6:30 - 7:45 p.m. in Room 132**

Contact Rachel Henry at 248-651-9361 or Rachel@stpaulsrochester.org to sign up for Rev. Dulworth's class

Swisher Small Group

**Tuesday, February 24 - March 31
7:30 p.m. on Zoom**

Please email Phil Swisher at swisher1770@gmail.com to get the Zoom link to join the Zoom group.

Lenten Concert Series

Fridays at Noon in the Sanctuary

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

HARMONY IN THE HILLS



February 27
Warren & Flick
Violin & Bass



March 6
Ann Arbor Symphony
Woodwind Quartet



March 13
Chris Harding
Piano



March 20
Juan Riveros
Harp

Service of Prayer & Reflection

Thursday, February 26
7 p.m. in Rickard Chapel

These are challenging times in the community, the nation, and the world. It's important for followers of Jesus to come together and strengthen one another's faith in God at these times. This Prayer Service is a time to pause, pray, reflect, and petition God in the midst of turmoil. Join us during this service to renew faith and hope in God's activity in difficult times. Service will also be on Zoom. See website for sign-in information.



Operation Clean Sweep

Saturday, March 28

9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Brunch served at 11:30 a.m.

It's time for spring cleaning! Volunteers are needed for some 'tidying up' and cleaning at St. Paul's that goes above and beyond any custodial responsibilities.

Can you help? For more information, contact Marilyn Kress at marilyn.kress@gmail.com.



Neighborhood House
Benefit Concert

Guardians of Harmony

Friday, March 13

7 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Come and enjoy an evening of

music featuring the Rochester Guardians of Harmony barbershop chorus. Concert will include traditional barbershop and popular music. This is a benefit concert with proceeds going to support programs at Rochester Area Neighborhood House. Scan QR code to donate. Recommended donation \$15.



Contact Grant Fry at grant.fry@aol.com with questions.

The Upper Room

We have been having problems the past few months receiving our bulk orders from the Upper Room. We would like to encourage everyone to place their own subscription by calling Upper Room 1-800-972-0433 or Store.UpperRoom.org. One year subscription for digital or mail for either regular or large print is \$17.99.

Classes & Groups



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.**



New Member Class

Discover St. Paul's

Sunday, March 8

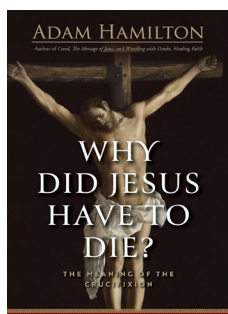
10:30 - 11:30 a.m. OR

12:15 - 1:15 p.m. in the Parlor

If you are new to St. Paul's, we would like to help you and your family connect with people in the church. Learn more about small groups and ministry teams that are offered, visit with the pastors, learn more about the United Methodist Church, and tour the building. We think you will discover St. Paul's is for you! Childcare will be available only at the 10:30 a.m. class. Please email Amy Heitman at Amy@stpaulsrochester.org if you need childcare. Contact Marilyn Kress at marilyn.kress@gmail.com or 586-212-9065 for more information.



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, through March 27

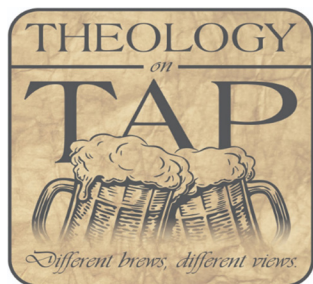
9:30 - 11:30 a.m. in the Parlor or on Zoom

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.



Theology on Tap

Tuesday, March 24

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.

Pickleball

Tuesdays,

6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Hickey Hall

Sign up to play Pickleball - beginner and experienced players welcome. Instruction and support available. Limited spots are available so scan QR code to sign up today.



Basketball

Thursdays,

6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Hickey Hall

Drop-in basketball is back! Invite others to join in a friendly pick-up game.



United Methodist Men's Breakfast

Saturday, March 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.



J.O.Y.

Just Older Youth
Tuesday, March 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!



SPARK Book Group

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

Start the new year with us as we discuss *Absolution* by Alice McDermott. Call Linda Burnard at 248-765-5511 with questions.

UWF Book Club

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

Join us for a discussion of *Trash: A Poor White Journey* by Cedar Monroe. Please contact Nancy Shannon at nancgs@aol.com with questions.



United Women in Faith

We Believe Love in Action Can Change the World
March Circle Meetings

- **Faith Circle** - Wednesday, March 11 at 1 p.m. in the Library.
- **Patience Circle** - Thursday, March 12 at 9:30 a.m. in the Parlor.
- **New Hope Circle** - Wednesday, March 18; 5 - 7 p.m. Serve Lenten Dinner in Hickey Hall. .



Exec. Board Meeting: Thursday, April 16; 9:30 a.m. in the Parlor.



That Takes the Cake Sale

Sunday, March 22
9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. in Narthex

Homemade coffee cakes will be for sale. Proceeds support UWF Missions locally and around the world. **Drop off coffee cakes Saturday, March 21; 12 - 2 p.m. in the Narthex.** Call Jane Chamberlain at 586-323-2537 to sign up as a baker.



HUGS

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

Mar 4 March Madness

Basketball is the sport of the moment. What happens when you combine your love of basketball and our goal of changing our world view to a Word view? A bracket of Biblical passages vying for the top spot

in the HUGS bracket and the promise of guiding our studies for next year! Find out what is on the horizon for us. **LUNCH BUNCH 11:30 - 12:30** Bring one ingredient to include in a potluck salad. We always have extra, so come even if you forget your ingredient!

Mar 11 - 25 March Madness continues as we narrow the field of verses. There will be games, surprises and general hijinks that you won't want to miss!

Looking Ahead: April 1 Spring Break - NO HUGS

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.



Missions

Opportunities to Serve Joyfully!



Supporting Shelter in Pontiac

Demonstrating that we are all on the Missions Team, our friends in Seeker's Study and United Women in Faith have been supporting a shelter for our unhoused neighbors in Pontiac, bringing and serving hot meals, donating snacks and staples, and spending time playing with shelter kids. For more information, scan QR code at right for the Signup Genius from Kids Empowered on the Move. Note: there are 4 tabs within the signup.



Karen Reynolds is coordinating volunteers to sort food donations for families at Suburban Studios in Auburn Hills. Suburban Studios is another arm of Kids Empowered on the Move, working to keep families from becoming homeless. For more information, contact Karen at kjr975@gmail.com.



Neighborhood House Easter Basket Program

Donations Needed by March 17

Join us in bringing Easter joy to local children in need! Your donation helps fill Easter baskets with toys, treats, and essential items - making this holiday special for families who could use a little extra support.

Scan QR code for more information including wish list and drop-off locations.



St. Paul's Preschool Corner

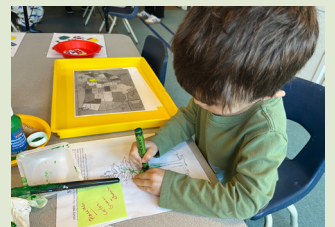
A Word from our Director

Our preschoolers continue to enjoy a variety of activities and lots of time playing with friends. February was filled with learning about Michigan, groundhogs, penguins, snow, and Valentine's Day. We had so much fun sharing valentines with friends, singing songs, making crafts, and decorating cookies.

We are looking forward to more fun this month as we eagerly welcome the arrival of spring. We are hopeful for some nice weather so we can spend more time outside enjoying the fresh air. The school year is going by so quickly, and we are amazed at how much everyone has grown. It truly is a blessing to be part of each child's educational journey.

We are now registering for the 2026—2027 school year and have a few preschool spots available. If you or someone you know is interested, we would love to share more information and schedule a tour. Please visit our website stpaulsrochester.org/preschool for more information.

Thank you for your continued support!
Michelle Staarmann





Worktrip Parent and Student Meeting

Sunday, March 1

5 p.m. in Hickey Hall

For students and parents. \$150 payment due. We will have a brief "tool school" during this meeting.

MS Youth Group 6th - 8th graders & friends

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

Mar 1	Lenten Practice
Mar 8	Fun with Faith
Mar 15	YouLead
Mar 22	Easter Activities
Mar 29	No Youth Group- Spring Break



HS Youth Group 9th - 12th graders & friends

Sundays; 5 - 7 p.m. Lounge (meet in Hickey Hall) Dinner \$5

Mar 1	Lenten Practice
Mar 8	Fun with Faith
Mar 15	YouLead - Family Devotion with the Renny's
Mar 22	Easter Activities
Mar 29	No Youth Group- Spring Break

No matter what the activity, laughter is guaranteed!



HS Meet & Eat

Thursday, March 5 at 6:30 p.m.

Grand Tavern, 3512 Marketplace Circle, Rochester Hills

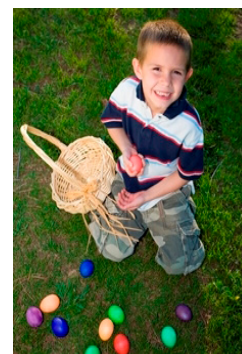
All High School youth and friends are welcome for a FREE dinner out. Bring your smile and a big appetite. Please RSVP by March 2 to Jodi Stuermer at Jodi@stpaulsrochester.org.

Egg Hunt

Saturday, March 28 at 10 a.m.

McGregor Elementary School
1101 First St. Rochester

JOIN US! St. Paul's will be hosting a **community Egg Hunt** this year at McGregor Elementary School. We want to get out and spread the love, so this will be a **NEW location** for our annual Egg Hunt. **This event is free and for everyone.** Hope to see you there!



Palm Sunday

March 29 at 9:30 & 11 a.m.

Palm Sunday worship will feature palm parades and a chance to visit the donkey during Sunday school.



Scholarships Available Application Deadline is April 15

Applications and information available at 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!



Looking Ahead

NIGHT of 1,000 BLESSINGS

Sunday, April 19; 5 - 7 p.m. in Hickey Hall

Mark your calendars so you don't miss a chance to serve joyfully together. Plan to meet in Hickey Hall for a wonderful evening of mission.

This is a great mission opportunity for families!



Orders due March 23 • Easter is April 5

Easter Lily Orders

Help decorate the church and memorialize or honor loved ones by purchasing an Easter lily. After services on Easter, plants may be picked up or donated to be delivered to homebound members. Place your order online at stpaulsrochester.org or find forms in the kiosk in the Narthex or in the church office. You may also call 248-651-9361 to order. **Lilies are \$15 each.**



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

March 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, March 8

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

Narthex

Stop by to have your blood pressure checked.



Blood Drive

Monday, March 16

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 • Traditional Service
9:30 a.m. in Hickey Hall 11 a.m. in Sanctuary

- | | | |
|-----------|---|---------------|
| 1 | Second Sunday in Lent • Communion • Prayer & Anointing | |
| | Romans 6:20-23 The Great Swap or A Holy Offering? | Rev. Dulworth |
| 8 | Third Sunday in Lent | |
| | Exodus 12:21-27 A Lamb, A Covenant, A Cancelled Debt | Rev. Dulworth |
| 15 | Fourth Sunday in Lent | |
| | John 13:12-17 The Test of the Towel | Rev. May |
| 22 | Fifth Sunday in Lent | |
| | 1 John 4:7-11 Love Is More Than a Spectator Sport | Rev. Kress |
| 29 | Palm Sunday | |
| | Matthew 21:1-11 Victory comes Riding In | Rev. Dulworth |

SERMON SERIES March

Looking Ahead... April

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|------------------------|--|
| 2nd | Holy Thursday Service |
| 3rd | Good Friday Tenebrae Service |
| 4th | UMM Breakfast |
| | Support for Caregivers Group |
| 5th | Easter 7:30, 9:30 & 11 a.m. |
| 6th | Church office closed |
| 13th | Blood Drive |
| 16th | SPARK Book Group |
| | UWF Book Club |
| 17st | HITH Concert |
| | Paradise Harmony |
| 19th | Night of 1000 Blessings |
| 21st | JOY - Just Older Youth |