

the EVANGEL

St. Paul's Newsletter

July/August 2026



St. Paul's
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Rochester, Michigan

July/August 2026

Pastor's Message

I know the best thing we can do is to always enjoy life, because God's gift to us is the happiness we get from our food and drink and from the work we do.
Ecclesiastes 3:12-13, CEV

Enjoying Life as God Intends

Summer is my favorite time of the year! While it can be the hottest and most humid time of the year, it's also the time when we take summer vacations, go on picnics, enjoy the sunny outdoors, join some friends on the beach, and just have fun! The writer of Ecclesiastes is clear; God intends for us to enjoy the blessings of life on this side of heaven too.

At St. Paul's this summer, there's so much to enjoy. Whether it's outdoor worship at 9:30 on Sunday mornings, a Tuesday evening Foodie, Fun, Fellowship event, the inspiring notes of a garden concert, hearing the excitement of youth and young adults who've witnessed Jesus' presence on their work trip, the joyful voices of kids at Vacation Bible School, or even a Blessing of the Animals service, we've planned plenty of fun moments to enjoy life together in worship, outdoors, and around a new patio. God is continuing to transform us as well as our building in this summer season.

While you might have planned some time away at summer cottages or vacation destinations, join us when you're in town or every week online as we celebrate the beauty of God's blessings this summer. And don't forget to invite someone to come and sit with you as well. Take in the sun, get some needed recreation and rest, and stop by St. Paul's where we're enjoying life as God intends.

Blessings,

Elbert Dulworth

Senior Pastor



HARMONY IN THE HILLS



Concerts in the Garden

Wednesdays at 7 p.m.
in the Garden of Hope

Bring a lawn chair and enjoy great music in the garden. Free admission.
In case of inclement weather, the concert will be held indoors.

July 1 Winthrop Winds will delight audiences with patriotic selections including the 'American Suite', 'Colonial Days', 'America', Gershwin's 'Walking the Dog', & 'Stars and Stripes Forever'. This quintet features a clarinet, flute, bassoon, oboe, and French horn.

August 5 Island Melody Makers will bring a fun-filled tropical twist with favorites such as Jimmy Buffett's 'Cheeseburger in Paradise', and Bob Marley's classic, 'One Love'. Other tunes include 'Take Five', 'Pretty Lady', 'Green Dolphin', 'All of Me' and so much more.

Celebrate the animals that make our lives special.



Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, August 16; 9:30 a.m. South Lawn at Outdoor Service

All pets are welcome to attend the outdoor worship service on the south lawn under the shade trees and receive a blessing. Please bring your own lawn chair or blanket to sit on. All pets must be crated or leashed. Retractable leashes should be avoided. Bring supplies so you are able to clean up after your own pet, if needed.

Don't have a pet? Children are encouraged to bring a stuffed animal and receive a blessing as well. Bring a picture if your pet cannot attend in person. Invite your friends and family!

There will be a designated 'No Pet Zone' on the grass during the service, so those who prefer to enjoy pets from a distance may do so. **Please note:** This event takes place during the **9:30 a.m. outdoor worship service only**. For more information, contact Marilyn Kress at 586-212-9065 or marilyn.kress@gmail.com.



Operation Clean Sweep

Saturday, August 22

9:30- 11:30 a.m.

Brunch at 11:30 a.m. in the Parlor

It's time for deep cleaning! Volunteers are needed for some 'tidying up' and cleaning at St. Paul's that goes above and beyond any custodial responsibilities. This time we'll focus on the Education wing. Can you help? For more information, contact Marilyn Kress at 586-212-9065.



Blessing of the Backpacks & Educators

Sunday, August 23

9:30 & 11 a.m. worship services

Start off the school year right! Students and educators will be blessed for the school year.

Looking Ahead to Fall



Fall Kick-off

SeptemberFEST

Sunday, September 13

**One All-Church
Worship Service
9:30 a.m. in
Hickey Hall**

**SeptemberFEST
Celebration
10:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
South Parking Lot**

Kick off the fall with a SeptemberFEST celebration after an ALL Church worship service at 9:30 a.m. in Hickey Hall.

- Live Music with Kristin Snyder & Jack's Revenge Indi Rock Band from Royal Oak
- Pony Rides for children
- GREAT Food!
- Booths with crafts and 'make& takes'
- Outdoor games



EARLY BIRD HOLIDAY

ART & CRAFT FAIR

Local Vendors · Original Handmade Artwork & Crafts

Artists & Crafters NEEDED!

Saturday, October 24

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Seeking artists and crafters interested in renting booth space. Scan QR code to apply now for a booth at our Holiday Fair.

Save the date for holiday shopping!



Classes & Groups

Five Nights of FUN!

Foodie Fun

Fellowship

Summer Style

Tuesdays, June 23,

July 14 & 28,

August 11 & 25

7 p.m. on the Patio

The Outreach & Hospitality Committee is hosting a series of summer gatherings to keep us all connected. We'll meet outdoors on the new church patio to gather, share a simple snack, and enjoy each other's company during the summer months. If it rains, we'll meet in the Parlor.

Let's stay connected this summer!



Garden Club

Wednesdays,

June 24, July 8, & 22,

August 5 & 19

9 a.m. - noon in Garden of Hope

Gardeners of all ages and abilities are invited to spring into action to plant, prune, mulch, share our friendship and knowledge as we nurture the church grounds. We hope to meet to maintain the gardens every other Wednesday through the summer and early autumn. Please bring your own garden tools, gloves, hat, and a water bottle. For more information, contact Sigrid Grace at sigridorchard@gmail.com.



The Connections Between the Old and New Testaments

Monday, June 29

7 - 8:30 p.m. in the Parlor

Many Christians are familiar with the New Testament but are less certain about how the Old Testament relates to Jesus and

the Christian faith. Yet, the New Testament is saturated with quotations, allusions, images, and themes drawn from the Old Testament. Join **Associate Pastor Rick Kress** for an engaging one-evening exploration of the many connections between the two Testaments. We'll discover how Jesus and the early Christians read the Scriptures, how the Old Testament shaped the New Testament, and how Christians today can better understand the Bible as one unfolding story of God's relationship with humanity. Whether you're a beginner to Bible study or have been reading Scripture for years, you'll gain fresh insights and practical tools for reading the Bible with greater understanding. Oh—bring a Bible!

Summer Refreshers Some Basics of Following Jesus Mondays, July 27, August 3 & 10; 7 - 8:30 p.m. in the Parlor

Summer is so enjoyable! But sometimes, the heat gets to us. That's when a tall glass of ice cold lemonade refreshes us and quenches our thirst. Like that, there are ways of following Jesus that need refreshing from time to time. Join **Associate Pastor Rick Kress** in getting refreshed in how to pray, how to hear God, and how to begin with the Bible. These classes are intended for beginners in the faith and for those who want to refresh their familiarity with these spiritual practices. Can't make all three classes? Come when you can. No registration needed. Class guide written and provided by Pastor Rick Kress. Bring a Bible and a friend!

July 27 - A Refresher on How to Pray

It's easy for your prayer life to grow stale, even difficult. In this basic study of prayer, we'll look at the reasons for prayer, the effects of prayer, and simple ways to pray, step by step. This interactive class will give you down-to-earth, practical ways to refresh your prayer life.

August 3 - A Refresher on How to Hear God

Do you realize that God is constantly trying to get through to you? This interactive class will give you down-to-earth, practical ways to refresh your ability to hear God confidently.

August 10 - A Refresher on How to Begin Again with the Bible

Let's face it: Bible reading is not at the top of everyone's To-Do-List. In this class, we'll knock down some of the roadblocks people encounter with the Bible. You'll learn the easiest ways to understand the Bible and how to apply it to your daily life as a follower of Jesus. This interactive class will give you down-to-earth, practical ways to refresh your ability to actually use the Bible with confidence.



SPARK Book Group

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

July 16 August 20

America's First

The Lost

Daughter

Apothecary

by Stephanie Dray by Sarah Pennerl

Join us! We welcome new members!

Call Linda Burnard at 248-765-5511.

Learning to Walk with God

Thursdays, through August 27

9 - 10 a.m. Rochester

Municipal Park

and other locations
for variety

Connect with your physical and spiritual fitness and well-being. Walk with us for physical exercise, socializing, and a spiritual component that gives everyone thoughts to ponder about how to better follow in Jesus' footsteps. Discuss and reflect upon the meaning of inspiring artwork, Christian visual works, prose and poetry and how scripture compliments the message. All ability levels are welcome. When walking in Rochester Municipal Park, park near the Police Station. Email Judy Smouter at smouterj@comcast.net for more information.



Handbell Ringer Needed!

The Wesley Ringers

Handbell Choir is looking for two experienced ringers to join our family in the Fall. We rehearse Thursdays and perform the third Sunday of the month. Contact Al Fisk at alfisk@comcast.net.



United Women in Faith

We Believe Love in Action Can Change the World

July/August Circle Meetings

- **New Hope Circle** - Tuesday, July 21 at 6 p.m. at Patti Finnegan's on OU's campus. Please call/text Karen Reynold at 248-762-8842 to RSVP.



Mission Challenge 2026 UPDATE



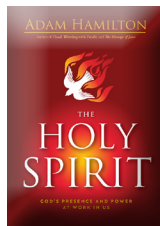
Micah 6 Summer Slam

Remember how important it was when you were a kid to put on that new pair of shoes to go back to school? Listening to their neighbors, the Micah 6 Community learned that families struggled to purchase new shoes for their kids and the **Summer Slam** was born.

This is where YOU come in as part of the Mission Team. As the Lead Sponsor, St. Paul's set a goal to raise **\$10,000 to purchase 1,500 pair of shoes**. We have raised \$3,500 to date.

Additionally, there will be volunteer opportunities on **August 5 - 8** to support the Summer Slam. Watch the Connector for details and a sign-up genius.

To donate, please write **MC 2026** on the envelope and memo line of your check to St Paul's UMC, or scan the QR code to donate online, select **Mission Challenge 2026 - Micah 6**. We ask for your support and thank you for helping to share God's love with our neighbors!



Coming this Fall...

The Holy Spirit: God's Presence & Power at Work in Us

All are welcome to join either of these groups that will be discussing Adam Hamilton's latest book. In **The Holy Spirit**, Adam Hamilton explores what Scripture teaches about God's Spirit—from the Hebrew Bible through Jesus' promises in the Gospels, the powerful Pentecost experience in Acts, and the rich teachings found in the New Testament letters. This accessible study helps believers understand and experience the Holy Spirit's presence and power in their daily walk with Christ. More details in the September Evangel and Connector.

**Phil & Kathy Swisher's
Zoom Group
5 weeks beginning
Tuesday, September 15
7 p.m. on Zoom**

**Women's LIFE
Living in Faith Everyday
5 weeks beginning
Friday, September 18
9:30 a.m in the Parlor**

Vacation Bible School

July 20 - 24
9 a.m. - noon



Registration Open until July 6
stpaulsrochester.org
All campers & volunteers register online



VBS Crafting

Select dates & times

June 30 - July 17

Join our team of crafters at a time that works for you and help create beautiful decorations to transform St. Paul's with waterfalls, towering trees and colorful creatures. Bring your crafting tools and supplies. Scan QR code for more info.



VBS Mission Project

Please help us with our mission project!

Bring in school supplies to the Narthex from July 20 - July 26 to be distributed to our local community through RANH/Assistance League's Blast Off 2 School.

For a list of requested items please see the link in the Connector or our website.

VBS Sunday

Sunday, July 26

11 a.m. in Hickey Hall

Join us as we celebrate with the church family all that we learned in Rainforest Falls VBS about trusting Jesus in a wild world. Wear your VBS t-shirt.



St. Paul's Preschool

Register for Fall 2026

Parent & Me for 2's:	F 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 Christian-based, high-quality learning with emphasis on the individuality of each child. Our qualified 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. **Apply at** stpaulsrochester.org/preschool.

A Word from the Preschool Director

Happy Summer!

I hope everyone is enjoying the beautiful summer weather. We had an amazing preschool year and are already looking forward to the new school year ahead. Our teachers are busy planning fun activities and preparing their classrooms for a new group of students.

If you are interested in learning more about our preschool or enrolling your child, please let us know. Please visit our website stpaulsrochester.org/preschool/ for more information. We would love to welcome you to our preschool family!

Warm regards,
Michelle Staarmann

Worktrip Report

Sunday, July 12; 11 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Please join us as we share our worktrip report and video. Thank you for your prayers and support of this important mission. A pool party for worktrippers follows the service.



Meet and Eat

Thursday, July 23, 6:30 p.m.

Lipuma's Coney Island

621 N. Main St. Rochester

Monday, August 17; 6:30 p.m.

Rochester Mills

400 Water St. Rochester

Let's catch up this summer! All HS students are welcome for a FREE dinner. Grab your friends and join us! RSVP Jodi at 248-977-9436.

Youth Ministry Alumni Dinner

Tuesday, August 18 at 6:30 p.m.

Rochester Mills; 400 Water St. Rochester

All young adults are invited. We would love to grab a bite and catch up on your lives! Friends are welcome. RSVP Jodi at 248-977-9436.



Save the Date

You are Not Alone: Understanding & Easing Loneliness

Tuesday, September 29; 7 - 9 p.m. in Hickey Hall

Loneliness is something we all experience at times in our lives. In this workshop, we will explore loneliness and examine the health risks and behavioral challenges that come with the feeling of loneliness. We will discuss some of the causes that contribute to the feeling that we are alone. We also will explore ways to deal with boredom and loneliness in productive healthy ways and offer suggestions for easing loneliness in our lives. Sponsored by Health Ministry and Stephen Ministry.



Holy

Communion

July 5 & August 2
9:30 a.m. Outdoors
& 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.



Upcoming Baptisms

September 20 & November 29

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



Blood Drive

Monday, July 13
& August 10
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').



Looking Ahead September

- 6th Last Outdoor worship 9:30 a.m.
- 7th Labor Day - Office Closed
- 12th Men's Breakfast
- Support for Caregivers
- 13th SeptemberFEST & Resume
- Sunday School/Youth Group
- 14th Blood Drive
- 17th SPARK Book Group
- UWF Book Club
- 20st Baptism
- Adult Sunday School Resumes
- Confirmation Parent Meeting
- 22nd UWF Annual Meeting
- 25th Harmony in the Hills Concert
- 27th Elementary Bibles
- 29th You Are Not Alone

SUNDAY WORSHIP Worship with us!

The Open Door Service
9:30 a.m. under South Canopy

Traditional Service
11 a.m. in Sanctuary

July

- | | | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| 5 | Holy Communion | Jeremiah 9:4-7 | Still Experimenting | Rev. Dulworth |
| 12 | Worktrip Report (11 a.m.) | Romans 12:2-3, Phil. 1:6 | Open Handed | Worktrip Team |
| 19 | | Genesis 28:10-17 | Seeing God in All Things | Rev. Kress |
| 26 | VBS Sunday - in Hickey Hall | Psalms 142:5 | Exploring the Nature of God | Amy Heitman |

August

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|----|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| 2 | Holy Communion | Colossians 2:6-7 | Start Where You Stand | Rev. Dulworth |
| 9 | | Psalms 1:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:16-17 | Planted by the Stream | Rev. Kress |
| 16 | | Heb. 10:24-25; Acts 2:42-47 | You Can't Grow Alone | Rev. Dulworth |
| 23 | | Eph. 2:10; 1 Peter 4:10 | Rooted to Bear Fruit | Rev. May |
| 30 | | John 15:8; Gal. 5:22-23 | A Life That Lasts | Rev. Dulworth |



SERMON SERIES July/August