

# The Epistle of St. Paul

June 2026

## St. Paul

United Methodist  
Church

244 Kurtz Road  
Marietta, Georgia  
30066  
770-422-1089

[www.stpaulumc.com](http://www.stpaulumc.com)  
[churchoffice@stpaulumc.com](mailto:churchoffice@stpaulumc.com)  
<https://onrealm.org/stpaulumc>

Rev. Shelia Preacher  
[sheliapreacher@comcast.net](mailto:sheliapreacher@comcast.net)  
678-925-0103

Children's Ministry  
Victoria Godfrey

Music Director  
Hope Field

Accompanist  
Dorothy McCracken

Administrative  
Assistant  
Louise Byrd

Financial Secretary  
Ed Jackson

Lead Nursery  
Morgan Field

Nursery Assistant  
Zahra Taylor

### Sunday Schedule

9:45 Sunday School  
11:00 Worship

## What If God's Plans Are Bigger Than We Imagined?

*Rev. Shelia Preacher*

Pentecost is not for the faint-hearted. That is the truth we explored together on Pentecost Sunday as we remembered those first frightened disciples huddled behind locked doors...only to be overwhelmed by a rushing wind, dancing flames, and the untamable presence of the Holy Spirit.

And perhaps the most unsettling part of Pentecost was not the wind...not the fire...and not even the miracle of many languages. It was the sudden realization that God's plans were FAR BIGGER than anyone imagined.

Those disciples had expected a small movement. *God envisioned a world transformed.* They imagined themselves as followers. *God called them to become witnesses.* They imagined faith as something private and contained. *God poured the Spirit into the streets.*

Pentecost shattered their small expectations. So, I wonder: *"Does this season of Pentecost long to shatter our small vision as well? Are God's plans for us...bigger than we imagined?"*

You see, Trinity Sunday sends the Church out into the world with Christ's final instructions ringing in our ears: "Go therefore..."

- ✚ Go love.
- ✚ Go serve.
- ✚ Go welcome.
- ✚ Go forgive.
- ✚ Go teach.
- ✚ Go live the Gospel with your very lives.

Oh my. What a mighty task.



*(Continued on page 2)*

**Bigger than We Imagined** *(Continued from page 1)*

Dear ones, the Great Commission is not merely about spreading information about Jesus. It is about sharing what we ourselves have experienced: the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion and presence of the Holy Spirit. In other words, you and I are sent to live resurrection-shaped lives in a weary world that is desperate for hope.

And perhaps that raises the great Pentecost question we will explore together throughout this season: What if God's plans are bigger than we imagined?

What if caring for church grounds is more than maintenance—but holy hospitality where weary souls encounter peace and welcome? What if music is more than preference or performance—but the Spirit teaching us new songs for a new day? What if mission begins not across oceans, but next door? What if children are not merely the future of the Church—but already vital voices through whom God speaks? What if generosity changes more than budgets? What if older disciples are still being called into new dreams? What if the Spirit did not fall only on preachers—but on all of us?

Pentecost reminds us that God's Spirit is always pressing outward: expanding hearts, stretching vision, breaking barriers, and calling ordinary people into extraordinary grace-filled lives. And that means the Church cannot simply sit still admiring the flames of Pentecost long ago. We are called to become the fire.

And so, throughout this Pentecost season, may you and I DARE to imagine bigger:



- ↳ Bigger grace.
- ↳ Bigger compassion.
- ↳ Bigger welcome.
- ↳ Bigger generosity.
- ↳ Bigger faith.
- ↳ Bigger courage.

And while we're at it...let's imagine a church bigger than these walls and a God bigger than we have sometimes allowed ourselves to believe! Because Pentecost was never meant to end in the upper room. It was always meant to spill into the world.

---

## Mission Project for June 2026: MUST Summer Lunch

Susan Short

*“And on some have compassion, making a difference,” (Jude 1:22)*



This summer, MUST Ministries will continue their time-honored tradition of partnering with churches, schools, corporations, and volunteers to feed thousands of kids in Metro Atlanta all summer. **MUST’s goal is to provide breakfast and lunch to at least 7,500 children for nine weeks.**

An estimated half-million meals will be distributed across eight counties (Bartow, Cobb, Cherokee, Douglas, Fulton, Paulding, Pickens & Gwinnett).

In addition to food, MUST will also hand out mind, body, and soul activity kits.

St. Paul has supported this mission for many years. This year, the request is for financial contributions so lunch items may be purchased in larger quantities, packed at MUST, and distributed. In this way, your contribution goes further! However, if you’d like to be more hands-on, you can visit the website below for more details about packing or distributing lunches this summer.

If you would like to participate in this Mission Project, please pray for those children in need of sustaining food. For a financial contribution, please use **“MUST Lunches”** in the **memo or dropdown**. On behalf of the recipients, thank you in advance!

Again, thank YOU for your prayer, support, and kindness for each of our Mission Projects. Pray also that the projects selected fulfill the purpose of sharing the love of Christ in our community and beyond.

Always in His name.

<https://mustministries.org/services/summer-lunch/>



## The Spirit Didn't Fall Only on Preachers

Mike McMillin

When we read the story of Pentecost in Acts 2, it is easy to picture the Holy Spirit falling only upon the apostles. But Scripture tells us there were many others gathered in that upper room—ordinary believers, faithful followers, women and men alike. The gift of the Holy Spirit was not reserved for clergy alone. It was poured out upon the whole Church.

That truth sits at the very heart of Methodism.

John Wesley never imagined the Church as a place where pastors did all the ministry while everyone else simply watched from the pews. In fact, early Methodism depended heavily upon laypeople. Circuit-riding preachers traveled from town to town, often leaving local congregations without an ordained pastor for weeks or months at a time. The day-to-day work of ministry rested in the hands of ordinary believers filled with extraordinary grace.

*The Spirit*  
**DIDN'T FALL  
ONLY ON PREACHERS**

Every believer. Every gift.  
Everywhere for God's mission.

— ☩ —

The laity are not part of the Church.  
*The laity are the Church.*  
— John Wesley

PRAYERS | PRESENCE | GIFTS | SERVICE | WITNESS

*(Continued from page 4)*

Laypersons—both men and women—led small groups, prayed with neighbors, cared for the sick, encouraged struggling believers, taught Scripture, and sometimes even preached. Wesley believed the laity were not merely part of the Church—the laity *were* the Church. That vision still speaks powerfully to us today.

Every time we welcome new members into the Church, we renew a sacred promise together: “We renew our vows to uphold it by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness.” That is not a promise pastors make alone. It is the calling of every Christian disciple.

The mission of the Church, as our United Methodist Book of Discipline reminds us, is “to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” Pastors cannot accomplish that mission on their own. They were never meant to. Wesley understood that the Holy Spirit equips all believers with gifts for ministry and service.

Some are called to teach. Some to encourage. Some to organize. Some to visit the lonely, sing in the choir, prepare meals, mentor children, lead studies, or quietly care for others behind the scenes. The same Spirit that empowered the early Church still empowers everyday Christians today.

Perhaps that is Wesley’s great reminder to us: Church is not simply somewhere we go on Sunday morning. Church is who we are called to be—and the Spirit still falls on ordinary people willing to say “yes” to God.

**YES!**



## More than Maintenance

*Bob Trengove*

Being a member of a team has many blessings. The Building and Grounds team is special in my eyes. This team loves God and shows it through the beautification of our church grounds and the maintenance of the buildings used for worship, teaching, sharing, and just plain hospitality.

It is our belief that by helping to shape the view of our church, passersby will be invited in to experience the love of God through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is within the walls of our church as well as in the beauty of the grounds surrounding our church.

The many activities scheduled every month at St Paul have brought in people from afar, due to their nature. It is our hope that the surrounding community will also come to join in the various events as they are offered. We offer opportunities that will lift your spirit through friendship, grace, support, and uplifting music. Some of the activities include Grief Share, Coffee and a Blessing, blood drives, yoga, soccer, school supplies for the children, and Messy Church for those who want a different kind of church experience.

It warms our hearts when we see families playing on the playground, hunting Easter eggs, kicking a soccer ball, or dressing in a Halloween costume. Everyone who experiences God through our church will be blessed in so many ways that they will need to bring others to share in what they have found at St Paul, Holy Hospitality.

*Dear Heavenly Father, we are always thankful for everything you do for us as we do our best to make our church welcoming to all who are looking for a church home. Help us always to show holy hospitality to all those who come through our doors. Thank you for being our friend.  
In Jesus' name, Amen.*

New activities are still being carried out at St Paul by the Building and Grounds Team. The following are a few of the tasks completed or in progress.



Building &  
GROUNDS

*(Continued on page 7)*

*(Continued from page 6)*

- 🔧 Atlanta Gas Light installed the new line and meter for the Sanctuary Building. Our plumber came out and hooked it up to our system.
- 🔧 The Parsonage Workday was completed and the grounds look much better.
- 🔧 The Parsonage lease has been renewed.
- 🔧 The Bells Ferry fifth-graders held their annual picnic at our facility, which they greatly appreciated.
- 🔧 E-Smith Heating & Air has sent us a new renewal rate for yearly service for the church campus, which we have accepted. The increase was \$22 over last year.
- 🔧 An unsuccessful security breach on our church bank account was discovered and stopped.
- 🔧 The next workday is scheduled for June 6th, with a rain date of June 13th.



*Bells Ferry E.S.  
Fifth Grade Picnic*

# forever young

## cyber security workshop

Forever Young hosted a *Cybersecurity- Modern AI Scams* workshop on Wednesday, May 20. In this session, attendees learned how to spot AI-generated emails, deepfake



Our Instructor: Aaditya Kulkarni, 15-year-old student at Walton High School



videos, social media scams, and QR code scams. Practical tips and real-world examples made it easy to understand and apply immediately, so participants can now browse, bank, and stay connected safely in the digital world.

Our presenter was Aaditya Kulkarni, a student with a tremendous amount of expertise in cybersecurity and technology. Aaditya is certified by Cisco in cybersecurity and has won or received multiple awards from various organizations in the area of cybersecurity. He has a keen interest in helping people protect themselves in their digital life and is very good at teaching.

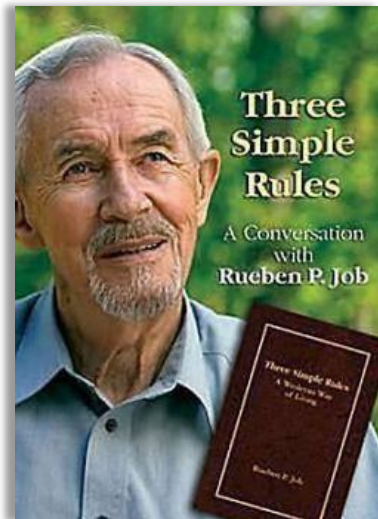
# Discipleship Opportunities

## ChristWalk

### *Strangers, Neighbors, Friends*

Are you troubled by the growing division and hate on display? Do you look at the world and wonder, “How did we ever grow to be so divided?” and “Surely, humanity was made for something better.”

Join us for our exciting new ChristWalk book study called “Strangers, Neighbors, Friends.” Written from three different faith perspectives (Muslim, Christian, Jewish), this book explores a different topic each week from different vantage points...seeking new understanding, common ground, and ways to engage with one another that are pleasing to God.



## Open Door Class

### *New Study in June*

Our new study, beginning on June 14, will be a short one called *Three Simple Rules: A Conversation with Rueben Job*. In *Three Simple Rules*, Bishop Job offers an interpretation of John Wesley’s General Rules, “do no harm, do good, stay in love with God,” for today’s readers. For individual reading or group study, this insightful work calls us to mutual respect, unity, and a deeper daily relationship with God.

Join us each Sunday at 9:45 a.m. in Room 206 for lively discussion and fellowship.

## Pentecost Offers Unity through Worship

*Hope Field*

Just as Pentecost united people through new languages and songs of praise, church music today brings together generations, cultures, and styles of worship. Traditional hymns carry the faith and wisdom of those who came before us, while newer songs speak to people in fresh and meaningful ways. Together, both old and new music help the church share the message of God's love in ways people can understand and feel.



During my time at St. Paul, our worship music has gone through many changes. When I began in 2000, the music was entirely traditional. Within a few years, we introduced praise and worship music, formed a praise band, and added worship leaders at the front. Even with these changes, we continued to include some traditional hymns. For several years, we settled into a blended service that included selections from the hymnal, the praise band, the congregation, and the choir. Although we no longer have a praise band, we still try to include praise and worship songs whenever possible.

Through all the changes and different directions we have taken, music at St. Paul has remained a constant. No matter our size, we continue to offer cantatas, joint presentations with St. Andrew, and, hopefully, a meaningful worship experience every Sunday. Music lifts the weary soul, fills the empty soul, and brings our different souls together.



### ChristWalk: Dinner and a Movie???

Our last ChristWalk Dinner and a Movie was such a success! Do we want to do it again? Let us know what movie you would like to watch together and we will make it happen!

## What If Generosity Changes More Than Budgets?

*Chris Heldreth*

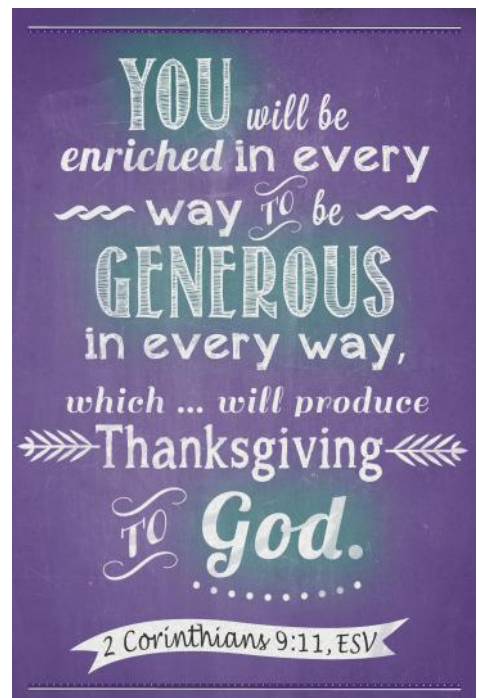
When churches talk about generosity, it is often connected to budgets, buildings, or ministry expenses. Those things certainly matter. Churches rely on faithful giving to support worship, outreach, missions, staff, and care for the community. But what if generosity changes far more than numbers on a financial report? What if it changes hearts, relationships, and the spiritual life of a congregation?

Generosity has always been about more than money. Throughout Scripture, giving is connected to trust, gratitude, and faithfulness. When we give, we acknowledge that everything we have ultimately comes from God. We become participants in God's work rather than simply observers. Generosity reminds us that the church is not built by one person alone, but by a community joining together with willing hearts and open hands.

A generous church becomes a welcoming church. It creates ministry opportunities, supports those in need, and helps share the love of Christ beyond the sanctuary walls. A meal provided, a mission supported, a child taught, a family encouraged, or a neighbor helped in difficult times often begins with someone choosing to give faithfully and consistently.

But generosity also changes the giver. It teaches us to trust God more deeply rather than hold tightly to what we have. It shifts our focus from scarcity to gratitude. It encourages us to see giving not as an obligation, but as an act of worship and partnership in ministry. Even small acts of generosity can have a lasting spiritual impact.

As we continue the work and ministry of our church, may we remember that generosity is not simply about meeting a budget goal. It is about strengthening the mission of the church and reflecting the grace God has already shown to us. When we give with thankful hearts, lives are touched, ministries continue, and faith grows stronger – both in those who receive and in those who give.



## Getting to Know Doug Conley

*Kathy Lim Sang*

This month, we are delighted to feature Doug Conley, a deeply valued member of our St. Paul church family. His calming presence and unique talents enrich our community every week.

Born and raised in the Methodist tradition, Doug began searching for a church home when he first moved into our area. His search beautifully culminated in January 1998, marking the beginning of an incredible 28-year journey with the St. Paul congregation. Over nearly three decades, Doug has woven himself into the fabric of our spiritual community, offering a steady and reassuring anchor for those around him.

Professionally, Doug navigates complex technical systems in his current role as a Compliance Architect—a specialized position that he playfully admits is not the easiest to explain in casual conversation! Outside his professional life, Doug possesses remarkable God-given talents that directly benefit our church. He has an exceptional artistic eye for photography and a rare ability to remain completely calm under pressure. Described by those who know him well as a deeply centered person, Doug brings a refreshing, reassuring perspective to stressful situations, quietly reminding us all that everything will be alright.



*St. Paul*  
Member Spotlight



**Doug Conley**

Doug generously channels his steady demeanor and creative gifts directly into our outreach ministry by managing and maintaining the church's weekly live streaming services. His dedicated efforts ensure that our worship remains fully accessible to homebound friends and individuals who are temporarily unable to gather with us in person. When he is not behind a camera at church, you can often find Doug exploring his primary creative outlet: capturing beautiful photography over at Disney.

Guided by his personal mantra, *"Knowledge is power and knowing is half the battle,"* Doug is also passionate about history. He is particularly fascinated by the historical era surrounding Jesus' time on Earth, exploring not just what is recorded directly in scripture, but how the overarching cultural and geopolitical events of that period profoundly influenced the biblical narrative.

The next time you see him passing by, please take a moment to warmly greet Doug, thank him for keeping our congregation digitally connected, or strike up a fascinating conversation about history or photography!

## Noticing A Bigger God

*Victoria Godfrey*

Over the past few months, we have been talking together about “noticing more.” Noticing God at work in ordinary moments. Noticing the people around us. Noticing the ways Jesus invites us to grow, serve, and love. As we move into June and celebrate Pentecost, that invitation continues with a new question:

*What if God is even bigger than we ever imagined?*



Isn't that exactly the question the disciples must have faced when the winds rushed through the room, and flames rested over their heads? In that moment, everything changed. The Holy Spirit arrived in power, and suddenly the disciples realized that God's love and purpose were far bigger than they had understood before. The message of Jesus was not meant only for a few people in a few places. God's love was reaching outward into the whole world.

Pentecost reminds us that God still moves in surprising ways. I think sometimes children understand this better than adults do. They ask bold questions. They wonder freely. They notice details we miss. Sometimes they help us remember that faith is not about having everything figured out, but about being open to discovering more of who God is.

This summer in Children's Ministry, we want to encourage our kids and families to keep looking for those moments of wonder. Maybe it's through a conversation with a friend, a quiet prayer before bed, serving someone in need, or simply noticing the beauty of God's creation during a summer day. Every moment can become an opportunity to discover that God's love is wider, deeper, and greater than we imagined.

As we continue into this season together, my prayer is that we would all remain open to the movement of the Holy Spirit. May we notice more, love more boldly, and trust that God is always doing something bigger than we can see.

---



We can't wait to see photos of you  
and your dad or your children!  
Email to the Church Office by  
Monday, June 1.



**Monday, June 1**

**8:00 am-5:00 pm**

**Call 1-800-324-9458 & use  
promo code HABC001**

**text the word "circle"  
to 216-279-1607**

**or visit <https://lisa.social/HC>**

[www.stpaulumc.com](http://www.stpaulumc.com)



**Grief Share**

Surviving the Holidays

Thursday, June 18

6:00-8:00 PM (Online)

Contact Kathy LimSang for info



**Tuesday,  
June 23  
@ 4:00 p.m.**

**Call the Church Office  
or Sign up in Narthex**



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> 8a LifeLine Screening 10:30a Monday Servants NO Chair Yoga	<b>2</b> 10a <i>ChristWalk</i> (FH) 7p <i>ChristWalk</i> (Zoom)	<b>3</b> 6p <i>GriefShare</i>	<b>4</b> 6:30p Stephen Ministry	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 8a Church Work Day
<b>7</b> 9:45a SS 11a Worship 3p Staff 5p UPfield	<b>8</b> 10:30a Monday Servants 11:30a Chair Yoga	<b>9</b> 10a <i>ChristWalk</i> (FH) 7p <i>ChristWalk</i> (Zoom)	<b>10</b> 6p <i>GriefShare</i>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 9:45a SS 11a Worship Noon Messy Church Team 5p UPfield	<b>15</b> 10:30a Monday Servants 11:30a Chair Yoga	<b>16</b> 10a <i>ChristWalk</i> (FH) 7p <i>ChristWalk</i> (Zoom)	<b>17</b> 6p <i>GriefShare</i>	<b>18</b> 6p <i>GriefShare</i> Surviving the Holidays (Zoom)	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>North Georgia UMC Annual Conference</b>						
<b>21</b> <b>Father's Day</b> 9:45a SS 11a Worship	<b>22</b> 10:30a Monday Servants 11:30a Chair Yoga	<b>23</b> 10a <i>ChristWalk</i> (FH) 4p Hope House 7p <i>ChristWalk</i> (Zoom)	<b>24</b> 6p <i>GriefShare</i>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 9:45a SS 11a Worship 3p Leadership 5p UPfield	<b>29</b> 10:30a Monday Servants 11:30a Chair Yoga	<b>30</b> 10a <i>ChristWalk</i> (FH) 7p <i>ChristWalk</i> (Zoom)				

# Serving This Month

## June Servants

**Worship Leader**—Mike McMillin  
**Open/Close Facilities**—Tom Preacher

### Monday Servants:

- 06/01 Darrell Morgan & Marj Rhodes
- 06/08 Darrell Morgan & Ruth Castellaw
- 06/15 Darrell Morgan & Marj Rhodes
- 06/22 Darrell Morgan & Ruth Castellaw
- 06/29 Darrell Morgan & Ruth Castellaw

**Media Team**—Mike McMillin  
**Easy Worship**—Terry Palmer, Tom Preacher  
**Audio/Video**—Chris Morgan, Jyo Vanapalli  
**Could it be YOU? Join Us!**

### Our Faithfulness

*"I will be loyal to St. Paul United Methodist Church and support her with my prayers, my presence, my gifts, my service and my witness."*

APRIL 2025

#### Our Presence

- Average weekly Sunday School attendance ..... 21
- Average weekly 11:00 worship attendance ..... 45
- Average weekly online attendance..... 70

#### Our Gifts—General Fund

APRIL 2026 INCOME

Contributions .....	\$ 17,421.00
Processing Gifts.....	\$ 67.40
Total Contributions.....	\$ 17,488.40
Rental Property.....	\$ 1,695.00
Soccer Rental.....	\$ 420.00
<b>Total Revenue .....</b>	<b>\$ 19,603.40</b>
<b>YTD 2025 Income.....</b>	<b>\$ 63,278.50</b>
<b>Total Expenses for APRIL .....</b>	<b>\$ 19,815.31</b>
<b>TOTAL 2026 Expenses.....</b>	<b>\$ 76,368.00</b>
<b>Net Total.....</b>	<b>\$ (13,089.50)</b>



- 09 Terrell Hartman
- 14 Stevie Brantley
- 14 Tricia Glidewell
- 24 Betty Gwynn
- 25 Chris Morgan
- 26 Preston Hayes

- 03 Jeannine Hartman
- 12 Alvin Arcayan
- 16 Morgan Field
- 18 Zahra Taylor
- 26 Derek Jackson
- 30 Dorothy McCracken
- 31 Hope Field



### Altar Flowers

**Cost: \$55.00**

- 06/07 Available
- 06/14 Available
- 06/21 Available
- 06/28 Available

**Sign up on Bulletin Board**



June 22

Suggested word count: 350-400