

The Epistle of St. Paul

May 2026

St. Paul

United Methodist
Church
244 Kurtz Road
Marietta, Georgia
30066
770-422-1089

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Rev. Shelia Preacher
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

Pentecost Is Not Over

Rev. Shelia Preacher

St. Paul LOVES the arrival of Pentecost Sunday almost as much as Palm Sunday! Our waving palms are eagerly replaced by bright red clothing, symbolizing those dancing flames that fell upon believers on that first Pentecost. It is tempting to look backward—to remember the rushing wind, the tongues of fire, the astonished voices speaking across every barrier of language and understanding. The story we read in Acts is powerful!

But Pentecost is not something we simply commemorate. Pentecost is something we are called to enter—today. It is not confined to a moment long ago, it is a movement still unfolding. And so, as we step into this new season together, we are invited to ask a deeper question: **What does a Spirit-filled life look like right here, right now, in this space?**

That question is not just for one person or one group. It belongs to all of us—individually, in our ministry areas, and as the whole body of Christ. Because Pentecost is not just about what the Spirit did, it is about what the Spirit is doing.

Last month, our leadership team spent time wrestling with that very question, guided by the words of Frederick Buechner: “The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”

(Continued on page 2)



Pentecost Is Not Over *(Continued from page 1)*

In no time at all, we began to see that this “deep gladness”—that sense of aliveness, of rightness, of “*this is what I was made for*”—is not random at all. It is the Spirit stirring within us. So as individuals and as a church, Pentecost invites us to seek and discern what brings us that deep sense of joy and purpose.

And “the world’s deep hunger” ...that is what we see all around us. It is seen in the needs of our neighbors, the brokenness in our communities, the quiet struggles people carry, and the longing for hope, healing, and belonging.

Pentecost happens—at the intersection of those two places. Where what the Spirit is stirring within us meets what the world is crying out for...that is where the fire falls again.



This month’s newsletter is a glimpse into that reality. You will hear from different voices across our church—leaders, teachers, servants, caregivers, and more—each reflecting on how they see the Spirit moving in their particular space. Each one is, in their own way, answering the same question: What does a Spirit-filled life look like here?

I hope that as you read, you will not simply observe—but recognize. Recognize where the Spirit is already at work in your life. Recognize the deep gladness stirring within you. Recognize where the world’s hunger is calling out.

And then, step into that intersection. Because Pentecost is not over. The Spirit is still moving. Still calling. Still sending. If Pentecost is something we enter...where is it calling you?



May Mission Focus: Wesley Woods Mother's Day Offering

Susan Short

Each Spring, we at St. Paul UMC have a meaningful opportunity to make a difference through the North Georgia Conference's **Wesley Woods Mother's Day Offering**.

Annually, this special offering supports older adults and families served by Wesley Woods. These ministries provide safe, affordable housing, wellness programs, and compassionate care for seniors across North Georgia. It's a simple way to honor the mothers and caregivers who have shaped our lives while extending that same love to others in need. Pentecost reminds us that we are not meant to serve alone. The Spirit equips each of us with gifts meant to uplift others, especially the most vulnerable among us. This calling is lived out daily at Wesley Woods through attentive care of seniors, creating community where dignity, healing and hope are priority. This work depends on a broader community willing to be moved by the Spirit into action. That's us!



As we move toward Pentecost, we're reminded of the power of the Holy Spirit to stir generosity, compassion, and connection within us. The Spirit doesn't just show up in big, dramatic moments; he also moves through quiet acts of kindness, shared meals, and gifts given with love. Participating in the Mother's Day Offering is one of those Spirit-led moments, where small acts come together to create lasting impact.

We invite you to prayerfully consider giving on Mother's Day. Whether you give in honor of your mother, in memory of someone special, or simply out of a desire to help, your contribution matters. Please click **Wesley Woods Mother's Day Offering** in the drop-down or write it in the memo section.

Let's celebrate this season by opening our hearts, trusting the Spirit's leading, and supporting a mission that reflects God's care for every generation.

cherish
every
moment

In His most holy and precious name.

Pentecst: A Journey We Never Walk Alone

Mike McMillin

Saying “Yes” — With the Help of the Holy Spirit

As I watched *The Chosen*, Season 5, Episode 8, I found myself quietly moved by the calling of Thaddeus. It wasn’t loud or dramatic—it was honest, almost disarmingly so.

Jesus speaks of a Kingdom not built by human hands...a life of deep purpose, but no earthly pay. A community shaped by love and sacrifice. And at the center is a simple invitation: Will you say yes...even when the world says no?

Sitting with that scene in prayer, I found myself asking: What does that call mean for me? For us? And just as quickly came the answer: I don’t have the strength to live that kind of “yes” on my own. And neither did the first disciples.

Why We Need the Holy Spirit

Even those who walked with Jesus were told to wait—to receive the Holy Spirit before stepping fully into their calling. If they needed the Spirit...how much more do we?

In the Methodist tradition, shaped by John Wesley, the Holy Spirit isn’t optional—it’s essential. The Spirit awakens us to grace, assures us we belong to God, transforms us over time, and strengthens us when faith is hard. Simply put, the Holy Spirit is the One who makes our “yes” possible.

The Cost—and the Gift—of Saying “Yes”

Jesus’ call doesn’t promise comfort. There is sacrifice, risk, and even loss. And yet, alongside the cost is something deeply beautiful: a Kingdom that lasts, a family bound by love, and a life that becomes part of something eternal.

This is where the Holy Spirit meets us. The Spirit gives us courage when faith costs something, endurance when the road is long, joy beyond circumstances, and love beyond our natural limits. Without the Spirit, the call feels overwhelming. With the Spirit, it becomes life-giving.

If we live by
the Spirit,
let us also be
guided by



Galatians 5:25, NRSV

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A Journey We Never Walk Alone (Continued from page 4)

A Very Wesleyan “Yes”

Those words echo in the Covenant Prayer: “I am no longer my own, but Thine... Put me to what Thou wilt.” It’s the same surrender. The same trust. The same quiet courage.

Our Invitation Today

That call wasn’t just for Thaddeus—it reaches us. We are called, right where we are, to live differently, love deeply, serve faithfully, and trust God beyond what we can see.

And here is the good news: we are not alone. The same Holy Spirit is with us—guiding, strengthening, and gently calling us forward. Day by day. Moment by moment. Helping us become people who keep saying “yes.”

To reflect more deeply:

Watch the scene from *The*

Chosen:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CUkih7rg9RI&t=564s>

Listen to the Covenant Prayer in song:

<https://strathdeemusic.com/WesleyPrayer.html>



GriefShare at St Paul

St Paul UMC once again offers our 13-week *GriefShare* on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. I'm glad to say that we are providing a safe harbor for 19 participants, including five who have returned to continue their healing journey. While some are facing recent losses, others are carrying grief from longer ago, yet the wounds still feel fresh. Several have experienced multiple losses. Sometimes we are able to share both the sad and joyful moments. We hold each other close in our hearts in this awesome family of love and support, while God steers the ship.

Loss of a Spouse

When your spouse dies, everything changes. The loneliness, the questions, the painful reminders—they can feel overwhelming. But you’re not alone in this journey. *Loss of a Spouse: Navigating the Pain of Grief* is designed to meet you right where you are.

Join us for a two-hour workshop designed to offer hope, help, and encouragement.

Thursday, May 28

7:00-8:30 PM (Online)

Saturday, May 30

10:00-11:30 AM (In person)

**Contact Kathy LimSang for info
(404) 578-1241**

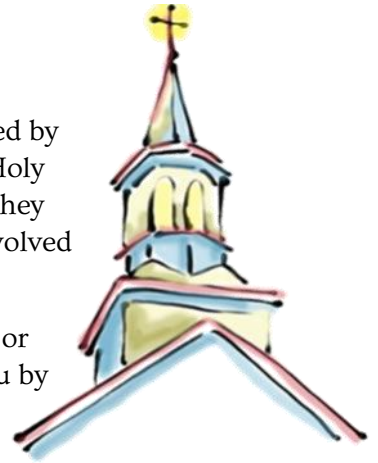
Kathylim10@gmail.com

Sharing Love at Pentecost

Bob Trengove

Pentecost is considered the birthday of the Church, characterized by unity, fellowship, and mutual care. It marks the coming of the Holy Spirit on the disciples and their transformation based on what they believed. This is a great time to think about how you can get involved in a ministry at church.

St Paul has many areas of ministry. Just look around on Sunday or any day of the week. There is always an event that will move you by the Holy Spirit. Jesus is always with us in everything we do. Building and Grounds shows off so many talents found in our congregation. If you have a talent that could be used here at St Paul come join the area of ministry that best suits that talent. Of course, Building and Grounds could always use more people but so could the many teams here at St Paul. You will be blessed at what you can do, and you will make a difference.



Building &
GROUNDS

Whether you lead a group or become part of a team you will be blessed by the Holy Spirit. If you like to sing, or are not sure, come join our choir. Our choir will always help show you the way. Even the Monday morning counting team, or Coffee and a Blessing, or *GriefShare*, or Messy Church are all areas of ministry that will get your juices flowing as you help others. Come and be invigorated by the love you share.

Dear Heavenly Father, here we are once again trying to do more for you. We pray everyone will take the opportunity to get involved in your ministries here at St Paul. Thank you for all the blessings you give us every day. Thank you for being our friend. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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

- ✂ **March 14 Workday:** The team spread mulch and pine straw, fertilized trees and shrubs, checked gutters, and trimmed bushes. The workday was a big success, and the grounds look great.

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- ✂ **Playground Deck:** The deck near the playground needs additional cleaning and staining, which the team will address after a future workday.
- ✂ **April 18 Parsonage Workday:** The team completed extensive cleanup to manage undergrowth and new shrub growth.
- ✂ **Parking Lot Improvements:** Tom and Shelia painted the speed bumps in the lower parking lot yellow during the March workday.
- ✂ **Parsonage Renewal:** With Shelia's renewal at St. Paul UMC, the parsonage renewal was completed.
- ✂ **Upcoming Workday:** The next workday is scheduled for June 6; rain date is June 13.

Forever Young Presents: Cybersecurity Made Simple

Wednesday, May 20

Keeping up with technology doesn't have to be stressful! Join us for a friendly, easy-to-understand session designed especially for older adults who want to stay safe and confident online.

We'll talk about everyday technology you already use—like email, phones, and online accounts—and show you:

- ✂ How to create **strong but memorable passwords**
- ✂ Why **multi-factor authentication (MFA)** adds extra protection
- ✂ Simple tips to **avoid scams and fraud**
- ✂ Basic ways to keep your computer, tablet, and phone secure

No technical experience needed—just curiosity! You'll leave with practical tips you can use right away to protect yourself and your personal information.

Doors open at 11:00 am

Program begins at 11:30 am

Feel free to bring a friend.

Light refreshments will be served.

Come learn, ask questions, and enjoy a relaxed, supportive atmosphere!

Contact Susan McMillin for questions or to RSVP: susan428@aol.com; (770) 310-4506.





Messy Church

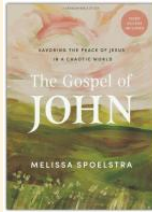


Discipleship Opportunities

Open Door Class

The Gospel of John: Savoring the Peace of Jesus in a Chaotic World

by Melissa Spoelstra



Slow down and savor the peace of Jesus in a chaotic world. This seven-session study in the Gospel of John invites you to linger with the Living Word and cultivate a still, grounded soul. Grow in intimacy with Christ and embrace His peace amid a hectic life.

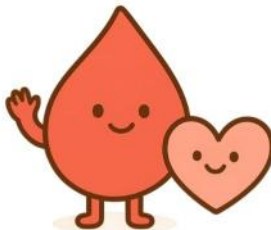
Join us each Sunday at 9:45 a.m. in Room 206 for lively discussion and fellowship.

ChristWalk

Strangers, Neighbors, Friends

Do you look at the world and wonder, “How did we grow to be so divided?” Surely, we were made for something better.

Join us for our exciting new *ChristWalk* study called *Strangers, Neighbors, Friends.* Written from Muslim, Christian, and Jewish perspectives, we explore a new topic each week to build understanding, find common ground, and engage one another in ways that honor God. We meet Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. in person and at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom.



BLOOD DRIVE

Thursday, May 7

1:00-6:00 pm

call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767)

OR redcrossblood.org code SPUMC



**LIFE LINE
SCREENING®**
The Power of Prevention

Monday, June 1

8:00 am-5:00 pm

Call 1-844-591-7160

text the word "circle" to

216-279-1607

or visit

<https://lisa.social/HC>

www.stpaulumc.com

Following the Spirit in Generosity

Chris Heldreth

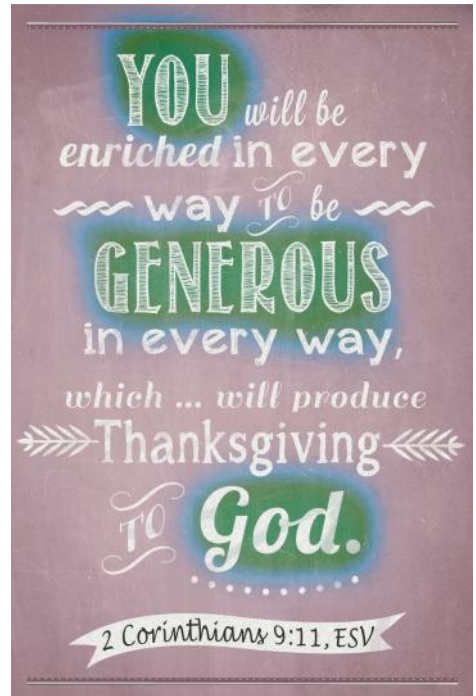
Spirit-led generosity is a way of living that flows from a heart attentive to God's voice. It goes beyond routine giving or obligation and instead reflects a willingness to respond to the quiet promptings of the Holy Spirit. This kind of generosity is not measured by how much is given, but by the posture of the heart—one that is open, responsive, and willing to act.

At its core, Spirit-led generosity begins with listening. In a busy world filled with distractions, it requires intentional stillness to recognize where God may be leading. Sometimes that leading is clear, such as helping someone in immediate need. Other times, it may come as a gentle nudge to offer encouragement, extend kindness, or share time and attention. These moments may seem small, yet they often carry deep significance for both the giver and the receiver.

What makes Spirit-led generosity distinct is its reliance on trust. It asks individuals to step forward even when the outcome is uncertain or when giving feels inconvenient. Rather than calculating cost alone, it considers obedience and faithfulness. In doing so, it shifts the focus from personal limitation to God's ability to work through what is offered.

This kind of generosity also creates a ripple effect. Acts of kindness and giving, inspired by the Spirit, often inspire others to do the same. Communities are strengthened, relationships are deepened, and a culture of care begins to grow. Over time, generosity becomes not just an action, but a defining characteristic of a life shaped by faith.

Ultimately, Spirit-led generosity is about alignment—bringing one's heart, resources, and actions into harmony with God's purposes. It reflects a life that is not held back by hesitation, but moved forward by love, guided by faith, and grounded in the belief that every act of giving matters.



Member Spotlight: Rooted in Faith and Service—Meet Mike McMillin

Kathy Lim Sang

If you've spent any time at St. Paul over the last three decades, you've likely seen Mike McMillin lending his voice to the choir, serving as a liturgist, or perhaps quietly fixing something that needed a steady hand. Since joining the church in 1998, Mike has become an integral part of our community, though his journey here began with a simple act of fatherly devotion.

A Foundation of Family and Faith

Mike and his wife, Susan, have been married for 43 years, a partnership that began on July 24, 1982. Together, they raised two sons, Bobby and David, and are now the proud grandparents of four: Charlie, Jack, and 18-month-old twins Luke and Hep. It was actually through his son Bobby that Mike found his way to St. Paul. After Bobby joined the youth group, Mike felt a calling to be part of the same church family. They officially joined on the very day Bobby was confirmed, and 28 years later, Mike says it truly feels like home.

A Heart for Service

With a professional background spanning 36 years in maintenance—including nearly three decades with Herlis Realty—Mike brings a “can-fix” attitude to



St. Paul
Member Spotlight



Mike McMillin

everything he touches. His God-given talents for listening, problem-solving, and “fixing things” are on full display through his extensive involvement. Whether he is serving as a Lay Leader, working with the Buildings and Grounds team, or acting as a Stephen Minister, Mike approaches every task with a collaborative spirit.

Currently, Mike is taking a significant step in his spiritual journey by working toward becoming a Certified Lay Servant. He has just one requirement left: the preaching class. “It’s a big one for me,” Mike admits, noting that the call to preach requires both prayer and courage.

Sharing God’s Goodness (and Tomatoes)

Outside of church, Mike finds joy in the simple things: yard work, fixing computers, and taking Susan out to dinner. However, his most famous hobby is his tomato garden. For Mike, gardening is a spiritual metaphor. While he handles the planting and watering, he credits God with providing the sun, soil, and growth.

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O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing

Hope Field

During Pentecost, church music celebrates the moment Christians believe God’s Spirit became active among ordinary people. Music is one of the main ways people express joy and energy.

People often call Pentecost the “birthday of the Church.” The music usually feels more upbeat, lively, and joyful than usual. Many songs carry a different energy during the Pentecost season. Songs often mention wind, fire, breath, or spirit—symbols from the Pentecost story in the Bible.

Even if you haven’t read the scriptures about Pentecost, the music can still help you find meaning. In general, music has the power to bring people together. Pentecost focuses on people from different backgrounds understanding each other, so churches often include different languages, styles, or musical traditions to reflect unity in diversity. These messages focus on the Spirit acting now, not just in the biblical story. The message isn’t just “this happened long ago.” Instead, the music often emphasizes that the Spirit is still present and working today—encouraging, guiding, and energizing people. What songs make you feel the spirit?

- ✂ Every Time I Feel the Spirit
- ✂ Holy Spirit Rain Down
- ✂ Holy Spirit Thou Art Welcome
- ✂ Spirit of the Living God



Member Spotlight (Continued from page 12)

He is known for giving his harvest away, often telling neighbors, “God has blessed me with too many tomatoes—would you help me by taking some?” For Mike, it is about more than just food; it is a way to share a piece of God’s goodness and remind others of how He provides.

Whether he is facing a tough task with his personal mantra of “Joy! Joy!” or tending to his vines, Mike McMillin lives out his passion for rooted, God-centered service every day. Next time you see him, be sure to say hello—and you might just walk away with a tomato and a blessing.

Watching For the Wind

Victoria Godfrey

As we step into May, I find myself returning to a theme we've been gently building over the past few months: noticing more. During Lent and Easter, we encouraged our children to slow down, pay attention, and look for where God is moving in the big and small moments of life. And the beautiful thing is that practice doesn't end with Easter morning—it grows.



May leads us toward Pentecost, a moment when the Holy Spirit came in a way that we could not ignore. There was wind, there was fire, there was boldness and joy. It was loud and exciting, but it also required awareness. The people gathered had to notice what was happening. They had to recognize that God was doing something new right in front of them.

In our Children's Ministry this month, we'll be leaning into that idea together. What does it look like to notice the Holy Spirit in our everyday lives? It may not feel like rushing wind or look like tongues of flame, but the Spirit is still actively guiding, comforting, and encouraging us. We want to help our kids see that God is not distant or quiet, but present and at work in ways they can learn to recognize.

We'll continue to connect what happens in our main worship service with our time in children's church, creating space for kids to reflect on what they've heard and experienced. Through conversation, activities, and prayer, we'll practice noticing more—more kindness, more courage, more moments where God's love shows up.

As a church family, you are invited into this practice too. Whether at home, in the car, or around the dinner table, take a moment to ask: Where did you notice God today?

Pentecost reminds us that God's Spirit is alive and moving. This May, may we all grow in our ability to notice—and respond with joy.





Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 1p Fred Elam Celebration of Life
3 9:45a SS 11a Worship	4 10:30a Monday Servants 11:30a Chair Yoga	5 NO <i>ChristWalk</i>	6 6p GriefShare	7 1p Blood Drive 6:30p Stephen Ministry 7p Set up for BFES picnic	8 8:30 BFES 5th Grade Picnic	9
10 Mother's Day 9:45a SS 11a Worship	11 10:30a Monday Servants 11:30a Chair Yoga 6:30p Building & Grounds	12 5p <i>ChristWalk</i> Dinner & a Movie <i>The Passion of the Christ</i> (Fellowship Hall)	13 6p GriefShare	14	15	16
17 9:45a SS 11a Worship 3p Leadership	18 10:30a Monday Servants 11:30a Chair Yoga	19 10a <i>ChristWalk</i> (FH) 7p <i>ChristWalk</i> (Zoom)	20 11:30 Forever Young: Cyber Security 6p GriefShare	21 6:30p Stephen Ministry	22	23
24 Pentecost 9:45a SS 11a Worship	25 Memorial Day Office Closed	26 10a <i>ChristWalk</i> (FH) 10:30a Monday Servants 4p Hope House 7p <i>ChristWalk</i>	27 6p GriefShare	28 6p GriefShare Loss of Spouse (online)	29	30 10a GriefShare Loss of Spouse (in person)
31 Trinity Sunday 9:45a SS 11a Worship						

Serving This Month

May Servants

Worship Leader—Maureen Fleming

Open/Close Facilities—Darrell Morgan

Monday Servants:

- 05/04 Darrell Morgan & Ruth Castellaw
- 05/11 Tom Short & Marj Rhodes
- 05/18 Darrell Morgan & Marj Rhodes
- 05/26 TU Tom Short & Ruth Castellaw

Media Team—Mike McMillin

Easy Worship—Terry Palmer, Tom Preacher

Audio/Video—Chris Morgan, Jyo Vanapalli

Could it be YOU? Join Us!



1 Darrell Morgan	9 Terrell Hartman
5 Peggy Pool	14 Stevie Brantley
8 Louise Byrd	14 Tricia Glidewell
9 Janice Salter	24 Betty Gwynn
18 Kimberly Cochran	25 Chris Morgan
	26 Preston Hayes



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."

MARCH 2026

Our Presence

- Average weekly Sunday School attendance19
- Average weekly 11:00 worship attendance 42
- Average weekly online attendance 45

Our Gifts—General Fund

MARCH 2026 INCOME

Contributions	\$14,550.00
Processing Gifts.....	\$ 68.00
Total Contributions.....	\$ 14,618.00
Rental Property.....	\$ 1,695.00
Soccer Rental	N/A
Total Revenue	\$16,313.00
YTD Income	\$ 43,675.10
Total Expenses for March	\$20,029.02
Net Total	\$ (3,716.02)
YTD Expenses	\$ 56,552.69

Altar Flowers

Cost: \$55.00



- 05/03 Sue Elam
- 05/10 Available
- 05/17 Marj Rhodes
- 05/24 Available
- 05/31 Available

Sign up on Bulletin Board



May 18

Suggested word count: 350-400