

Announcements

St. Paul Lutheran Church

February 22, 2026



Thank You for Joining Us!

Welcome to St. Paul Lutheran Church. We are grateful to God that you are here. We pray that you will feel the Spirit and warm welcome of this faith community.

Welcome Visitors!

We are so glad to have you here. Are you interested in learning more about St. Paul Lutheran? Curious about our activities and outreach opportunities? Are you considering becoming a member? Please contact the church office at 651-439-5970, or email SPLC@stpaulcc.org, if you would like more information and to connect with people who would be happy to assist you. We'd love to get to know you better!

Sharing Peace During Cold & Flu Season

For the time being, please be respectful of each other's health by not offering handshakes during the sharing of the Peace. We encourage you instead to wave, bump elbows, use the peace sign, or bow toward each other. We encourage you also to use the hand sanitizer available in every pew.

Calling All Thrivent Members

If you're a Thrivent member, you are eligible to apply for a Thrivent Action Grant. These grants can be put toward many different kinds of church projects and fundraisers. Let us know if you're a Thrivent member and we can help you use your grant toward a church-related project. Or let us know if you have an idea of your own for a project.

Immigrant Support Update from the Synod

Members of our immigrant congregations in the Saint Paul Area Synod are currently being targeted in unjust ways simply because of their appearance. Our synod is committed to walking with them through this terrible time of crisis. To that end, they have established the Immigrant Support Fund, which goes directly to families connected with the synod's ethnic-specific congregations. Donations to this fund support food relief, rent assistance, and legal fees when appropriate. Use the QR code here or send a check payable to "Saint Paul Area Synod" (write "immigrant support" in the memo line) and mail to: Saint Paul Area Synod, 105 University Ave. W., St. Paul MN 55103.

You're Invited to a Magic Show at St. Paul Lutheran!



Get ready for a morning filled with laughter, amazement, and moments that will make you say, "Wait... how did that happen?!" Join us on Saturday, February 28, 2026, at 10:00 AM at St. Paul Lutheran for an exciting Magic Show that promises fun, surprises, and plenty of smiles. This interactive performance is designed for all ages, making it the perfect event for children, parents, grandparents, and anyone who still believes a little magic makes life more fun. Expect jaw-dropping tricks, lots of audience participation, and giggles echoing through the room. Bring your family, invite a friend, and come enjoy a magical morning together. Whether you're five or ninety-five, there's something delightful waiting for everyone!

New Adult Forum!

By Heart: Conversations with Martin Luther's Small Catechism Begins March 8th - Luther had a way with words and an eye toward instruction as he wrote the Small Catechism. Many of us had to learn (and memorize!) some of his sayings, but do we actually remember what they mean? Beginning on Sunday, March 8th, all are welcome to join Pastor Nathan in the Lounge at 10:30 AM as we learn and talk about Luther's powerful, succinct sayings that are the foundation of our Lutheran faith. This time together is for both long-time members and those newly exploring membership. A richly illustrated book is included! We will meet for three Sundays in March, two in April and two in May. Let us know by February 15th if you'd like to participate. (You can use your Welcome to Worship card or contact the church office directly.)

Conference Assembly Update

More than 400 people attended the Conference Assemblies of the Saint Paul Area Synod on Saturday, February 14 at Christ the King Lutheran Church in New Brighton. This included nearly 80 members of our own East Central Conference. We gathered for worship and preaching by Bishop Patricia Lull before splitting off into six conferences for synod business, including nominations of pre-identified candidates for a new bishop to be elected in May at the annual Synod Assembly. Thank you to members Mugs DeFore, Shelley Jokinen and Jenny Brelje for attending with Pastor Nathan. The Greek word "synod" means "to walk together" and refers to the 106 congregations and mission starts on the eastern side of the Twin Cities. Our synod unites the work of congregations in our area, provides support to pastors and congregations, creates mutually transformative partnerships, and emboldens witness for justice.

2026 Summer Internships

Applications are beginning to come in for the Saint Paul Area Synod's summer internship program, which offers young adults the opportunity to learn, serve and reflect. Up to 10 interns ages 17-21 will work 20-24 hours per week from June 1 through Aug. 7 (with flexible scheduling). They will be paid a generous \$4,000 stipend for their work, thanks to funding from the synod's Planting Hope Campaign! Most of their hours will be at individual internship sites, working closely with a site supervisor. Some sites will have multiple interns. The 10 interns will also gather weekly as a cohort for connection, support, worship, field trips and more. Each intern is matched with a specific site, which may be a congregation or a non-profit such as Lutheran Social Service, Shobi's Table Food Truck, Daily Work, Lyngblomsten or Community Partners with Youth. If interested, speak to Pastor Nathan or go directly to the synod website: spas-elca.org

March 55+ Worship



The March service will be on Sunday, March 1st at 11:00 AM. The menu includes: Mandy's Chicken and Dumplings and dessert. Please sign-up in the Gathering Area by Sunday, February 22nd, if you will be staying for the meal. **Remember - Limited Bus service is available for Stillwater and Oak Park Heights. Please contact Bob Michaelis if you are interested in riding the bus.**

55+ SPLC Senior Members - Foot Care In Your Home

55+ SPLC Senior Members Foot Care: A Foot Care RN will tend to your toenails or other foot-related care in the comfort and privacy of your home. You can also visit an office location in Bayport if you prefer. The cost is \$15 per appointment. Pick up an information packet in the Gathering Area or contact Jenny Powell

Bells Across America - Community Bell Ringing

Bells began ringing out across Minnesota on Saturday, February 7, and now bells across the United States are invited to join in bell ringing for 10 minutes every Saturday at noon until April 4. Organized by the Minnesota non-profit City of Bells, church bells and other bell installations will call citizens to safety amid deep uncertainty as well as offering hope and courage for the future of our communities. Bells historically have been used to spread messages of hope to people in times of need and distress. We are honored to include our own church bells here at St. Paul, so stop by on a Saturday to listen if you're around!

Membership: Different Journeys, One Faith

We all have different journeys when it comes to our relationship and participation in a community of faith. But as Paul says in Ephesians, the Holy Spirit calls us to the hope of "one Lord, one faith, one baptism" through which we seek to deepen our love for God, one another, and the world. Are you seeking baptism for the first time? Or are you looking to affirm your baptism through a process of study, prayer and conversation? Or are you already baptized and familiar with church life but want to make more connections through conversation with others? These are all different paths toward becoming a member of St. Paul's. Want to learn more? Join Pastor Nathan today at 10:30 in the Lounge to explore ways you can become a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church.

Sarah Bible Study

The Winter Gather Magazine has arrived. Please do not discard your copy, as it contains December, January, and February's studies. The Sarah Bible Study will meet in the lounge on Tuesday, February 24th, at 1:30 PM. We will be studying Session Two - Praying with the body of the Earth: "Now Let Us Pray", starting on page 38. If you are in need of a copy, please contact the church office.

Prayer Requests

Congregants: Jennifer B., Ardyce S., Barb D., Nancy T., Dan B., Al M., Ron K., Judith K., Alida P., Pastor Laurel, Steve P., Mark C., and Abri B.

Family and Friends: Joe F., Mary R., Soto B., Mein B., Gavin, Kurt S., Amy, William J., Karmen P., Jerry, Dick, Mary A., Troy A., Sophia M., Marv D., The Family of family of David and Carol S., Connor D., Dan J., Mary A., Renae S., Mike S., Ann B., Katie P., Gary R., Jerry S., Sophia F., Sonja H., Kellye, Dave, Lucy, Keith, & Josh, Becky O., Mike, Jenny, Lisa, Kristen B., Mary Jo D., Rick & Jean, Patti & Family, Randy & Laura, Muggs, Carolyn, Paul, Kevin, Kara, Allison J., Evy, Dave, Georgia, Russel B., Bonnie M., Connie, Mary A., Bonnie S., Leo H., Jane S., Laura C., Lisa, Steph D., Brian D., Tyson D., Teegan D., Lexen, Danny, Harry E., Diane L., Jenny O., Lyle J, Jim G., Rick W., Karen W., Carol L., Jeff E., Mike M., and Jeffrey T.

In Loving Memory: Steven Michaelis, Darrel Henton, Patty Thomsen, James Flynn, Marshall Ray Reams, Jacquilyn Pierre, Dorie Nelson, Lois Haase, Marlene Ritzer, Holly Halvorson, Mark Walker, Richard Markgraf, Sister Eileen Trinity, and Judy Becker.

St. Croix Valley Grief Coalition - Growing Through Loss

Beginning Thursday, March 12th, Growing through Loss is an opportunity to receive grief support and learn more about grief in a group setting, free of charge. Held each Thursday at Shepherd of the Valley Church in Afton, it includes a brief large group presentation by a grief educator, followed by smaller support group time focused on particular kinds of losses. Attend a single night or the whole series. Each session is complete in itself. Age 18+. No need to register, they have a place for you already! If a need or barrier exists that prevents you from attending their series, please reach out. Call (651) 413-6698 or email scvgriefcoalition@gmail.com.

An Invitation to attend Lenten Programs

Have you realized that Easter is early this year? Determining when Easter will be celebrated each year is based on a calculation between the lunar months and the solar year. Too complicated for the average person to figure. In 2026, Easter will be observed on April 5th. Just to keep you following the timeline, the Mission Outreach committee is inviting you to participate in the observance of Lent by attending the Wednesday worship services at 11:30 AM, followed by our traditional soup lunch. The first will be on Ash Wednesday, February 18th, and every Wednesday following, including Maundy Thursday.

We offer food, fellowship, and socializing along with a variety of soups and chili made especially for us by the chef from the Lowell Inn. All soups and chili are salt-free, and of course, there are plenty of tasty desserts. We request a free will donation to cover the costs of food. In previous years, we have always sponsored a project. These projects have been those associated with our partnership in Tanzania or local non-profits that strive to improve the lives of others. This year, we are supporting the new Washington Co. Services building, which recently opened in 2025. Living space, as well as many services to improve lives, is provided for individuals with no permanent living arrangement. An organization called Stepping Stone oversees and provides services with temporary housing and assistance for individuals to become employed and live in regular housing.

A Stepping Stone staff member, Shvonne Johnson, recently delivered a presentation to the Mission Outreach Committee. The committee decided to have a material collection for residents of this program as a part of our Lenten outreach. We are asking for donations of cleaning supplies, personal care products, towels, pillows, etc. **We have copies of the list of needed items in the Gathering Area for you to take.** Men's and

(Continued on the next page.)

women's boots are in high demand. We welcome the congregation members who don't attend the noon programs to also participate by adding items to the collection box located in the Gathering Area. This project will run during the weeks of Lent. If you would rather give money to have the Mission Outreach Committee purchase items, please provide that information with your donation.

The Mission Outreach Committee sincerely appreciates the support of St. Paul Lutheran members as we reach out to better the lives of others in our community.

Welcome, Michael Benson!

It is with great pleasure that we welcome our new accountant, Michael Benson! Michael was introduced to the council at their last meeting this past Tuesday. He is quickly settling into his role as our staff accountant and overseer of many of our financial tasks. He will need a few more weeks to establish a regular office as he prioritizes getting oriented and attending many of our committee meetings. We look forward to formally introducing Michael on a future Sunday.

Making More Space

With increased activity in our sanctuary over the past couple of years, many of our leaders have noticed some challenges in negotiating the open space below the chancel—particularly during funerals and weddings, special programs, and holiday worship services which often bring extra decorations. Following discussion at the most recent Church Council meeting on February 17, members passed a motion to temporarily remove a single row of pews up front in order to feel how a bit of extra space could work. In addition to creating more space, bread line communion distribution will work a little different beginning March 8 with the goal of better accommodating those with mobility challenges. (First Sunday of the month communion distribution at the altar rail will continue as usual.) The council wishes to stress that these changes are tentative and that they welcome everyone's feedback, including how we might better utilize other spaces in the sanctuary.

SPLC In-person & Online Attendance

Date	In-Person Worship	Online Worship
1/25/2026	63	210
2/1/2026	79	177
2/8/2026	87	125
2/15/2026	71	131

Upcoming Events

Sunday, February 22nd	9:00 AM Worship 10:00 AM Coffee & Tea Time 10:30 AM Membership Information Meeting
Tuesday, February 24th	10:00 AM Toddler Tuesdays! 1:30 PM Sarah Bible Study
Wednesday, February 25th	11:30 AM Lenten Worship 12:00 PM Lenten Soup Luncheon 12:00 PM Staff Meeting 7:00 PM Holden Evening Prayer 7:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, February 26th	9:00 AM Quilters 10:00 AM St. Croix Valley Youth Ministry Mtg. 7:00 PM AA Fourth Dimension Meeting
Saturday, February 28th	10:00 AM Winter Family Magic Show!
Sunday, March 1st	9:00 AM Worship 11:00 AM 55+ Worship

Weekly Worship Assistants

Sunday, February 22nd

Ushers Jay Swanson, Ashton Bell, Sabrina Bell, Kamel Benyahia, and Atticus Mikla

Assisting Minister Riley MacDonald

Reader Shelley Jokinen

Communion Set-up Adele Urhammer

Communion Server Shelley Jokinen

Altar Flowers

Sunday, March 1st

Ushers Adele Urhammer, Keith Wille, Carol Wille, and Judy Clausen

Assisting Minister Atticus Mikla

Reader Riley MacDonald

Communion Set-up Adele Urhammer

Communion Server Cheryl Renne

Altar Flowers

Church Staff

Sr. Pastor	Rev. Nathan Baker-Trinity
Visitation Pastor	Rev. Laurel Halvorson Bernard
Director of Music	Andy Peterson
Casual Worship Leader	Karen Hillmann
Office Coordinator	Kristin Nelson
CYF & Outreach Director	Jenny Brelje
Accountant	Michael Benson
Maintenance	Jeff Thomsen
Audio-Video Engineer	Tim Schingen

2026 Church Council Officers

President	Shelley Jokinen
Vice President	Pam Seekel
Secretary	Chris Shivers

2026 Committee Chairpersons

Financial Operations	(Open Seat)
CYF	Sabrina Bell Kristie Mack
Evangelism & Membership	(Open Seat)
Fellowship	Janine Siverson
Memorial & Grants	Diane Podratz Barb LaCosse
Mission Outreach	Ann Kriesel
Property & Grounds	(Open Seat)
Seniors	Jenny Powell
Worship	Jennifer Braun

St. Paul Lutheran Church

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Office Hours

Monday - Friday, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

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