



SAINT PAUL'S VOICE

February 2026

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“From the Pastor”

Share God’s Love in the New Year

Poet: Catherine Pulsifer

A brand-new year, a chance to show,
God’s love and grace where’er you go.
Each word, each deed, a light can be,
To share God’s love for all to see.

Don’t fear to speak, don’t hold back,
God gives the strength for what we lack.
Plant seeds of faith, let kindness shine,
Trust in God’s Spirit, God’s plan divine.

So step in faith, with heart sincere,
And share God’s Gospel through the year.
Through acts of love and words of praise,
Let your life reflect God’s ways.

2026: A New Year to Share God’s Love

As we step into a brand-new year, we are reminded that each new beginning is a gift from God, a chance to reflect that love through our words, our actions, and our lives. As the poem reminds us, every kind deed and every faithful step can be a light that points others to God’s grace.

The past year was another season of transition, shaped by unexpected surprises and moments that called us to trust more deeply in God’s leading. Even when the path was unclear, we were reminded that God remains faithful walking with us, guiding us forward in faith, and onward in love.

As we begin this new year, may we step out in faith with sincere hearts, sharing the Gospel through acts of love and service, words of encouragement, and lives that reflect Christ’s light. Let us plant seeds of grace, trust the work of the Holy Spirit, and continue to be a community rooted in faith, hope, and love.

On behalf of the ministerial staff of **Resurrection Lutheran Parish**, we wish each of you and your families a blessed and Happy New Year. May 2026 be filled with God’s peace, guidance, and renewed strength. Amen

In Gospel Joy,
Vicar Don Helfer

Church News

Shrove Tuesday & Ash Wednesday

Resurrection Lutheran Parish Shrove Tuesday & Ash Wednesday Services

February 17 – Shrove Tuesday:

Immanuel: 5:30pm – 7:30pm

St. Paul's: 6pm

February 18: Ash Wednesday

Immanuel: 1pm and 7 pm Pastor Susan

St. Paul's: 4 pm Vicar Don

St. Peter's and St. Abrahams: 4pm Pastor Susan
Location TBA

Jerusalem: 7pm Vicar Don

Lenten Soup Suppers

Lenten Soup Suppers

Join Vicar Don and Pastor Roy for Soup and Conversation!

Focusing on the mission of our Parish and our future together.

Soup and Learning combined in an hour to an hour and a half, starting promptly at 6 PM.



Holy Week Schedule

Resurrection Lutheran Parish
Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday
March 29 -Normal Service Times

Maundy Thursday -
April 2
St. Abrahams/St. Peter's
6pm/ Location TBA
Immanuel 7pm
St. Paul's 7pm

Good Friday
April 3
St. Abrahams/St. Peter's
6pm /Location TBA
Immanuel 7pm
Jerusalem 7pm (Early service TBD)

Easter Sunday
April 5th - Normal Service Times

Services and prayers

Worshiping Together

Please Join Us....

In-Person Worship
9:00am in the Sanctuary

Live & Recorded Worship Videos

[St Paul's YouTube](#)
[St. Paul's webpage](#)
[St. Paul's Facebook page](#)

Sunday School
Held during the service - after the children's message

Vicar Don's day off: Monday

Vicar Don's onsite office hours: Tuesday's from 11am to 2pm



Those in Need of Prayer



Members:

Maidie Brown, Vivian Chenoweth, Carolyn Eichler, Carliana Folfas, Andy Geldmacher, Hannah Hilgartner, Denise Holtz, Glenys Hunt, Nadine McGee, Bob & Gerri Martin, Jennifer Monroe, Michael Armacost, Pat Graff and Sherry Graff Zour, Gracie Grabowski, Carol Lewis, Kim Knight, Marie Enderton, Jackie Johnson, Carol Hilgartner, and all homebound members.

Family & Friends:

Alicia Minor, Ms. Heather, Jerry & Jan Herfurth, Linda Nunan & family, Debb Webb, Bernie and Chris Harmon, Holly Hudson, Brandi Bubczyk, Rosemary Johnson, Nancy Rose, Geraldine Lewis, Todd Smith, Thad Martin, Carol Miller, Lisa Elway, Alex Strawbridge, Torie & Robert Osborne, Pat Gauthier, Jim and Dana Hoyt, Linda Bassler, Mallory Martin, Gina Garcia, Eileen Harris, Dennis Lambert, the Guthall and Gruebel families, Connie Copenhaver, Mardell

Alexander, Barry Bowdoin, Dennis Wroten, Sandra Michaels, Linda Chenoweth, those facing job loss, and those in broken relationships.

PRAYER: Gracious God, the strength of the weak and comfort of all who suffer, hear pleas for help for all who reach out in need. Especially I pray on behalf of those I lift up for your life-giving strength and comforting grace. In the name of Jesus, my Lord.

Celebrations!

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 5 Christian Neuheisel
- 7 Ashley Mountcastle
- 8 Laura Grabowski
- 26 Heidi Ebler

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

No anniversaries



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Suzi Lyons
- 2 Rob Holtz
- 4 Maidie Brown

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

14 Bob & Gerri Martin

Adding the Finishing Touchs

On November 8th, volunteers added the finishing touches to the Overflow room by hanging up the cleaned curtains and memory quilt. Thank you for making our room look beautiful!



Outreach

* Christmas Wishes were all filled by the congregation and Outreach. The gifts were delivered to the Salvation Army for distribution to our 15 adopted children. Thank you to all who participated.

* We donated 20+ cases of food to local pantries---Immanuel and NESAP.

* Cross Keys sent a thank you letter and told us they earned \$2,498 from our donations to their stamp program.



Resurrection Parish Book Club

2026 Schedule

Date	Book	Host	Location	Genre
January 19th	The Lioness - Chris Bohjalian	Iva		Historical Fiction
February 16th	A Dog in Georgia – Lauren Grodstein			Contemporary Fiction
March 16th	The Lost Apothecary – Sarah Penner			Mystery
April 20th	The Book Woman’s Daughter – Kim Michele Richardson	Jamie		Historical Fiction
May 18th	The Radium Girls – Kate Moore			Non-Fiction
June 15th	The Nightingale – Kristen Hannah			Historical Fiction
July 20th	Remain – Nicholas Sparks, M. Night Shyamalan			Fantasy/Sci-Fi
August 17th	Confessions of a Grammar Queen – Eliza Knight			Historical Fiction
September 21st	The Dressmakers of Auschwitz - Lucy Adlington			Non-Fiction
October 19th	Well-Offed in Vermont – Amy Patricia Meade			October Read
November 16th	Great Big Beautiful Life – Emily Henry			Contemporary Fiction
December 21st	Comfort and Joy – Kristen Hannah			December Read

3rd Mondays - 6:30pm with light refreshments



Flea Market Registration

The 2026 Flea Market registration is open!

2026 Dates

April 18 * May 16 * June 20 * July 18 * August 15 * September 19 * October 17



Cost: \$ 30.00 Lawn space, Pavilion space \$30.00
No Rain Date – Non-Refundable – Non Transferable
Time: 8 AM – 2 PM

To reserve your space, please complete our application and return it with your payment to:

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
15773 Dover Rd
Upperco, MD 21155
Attn: **Flea Market**

Click link to download application for space: [Flea Market Application](#)

Epiphany Star Project

Nathan, Ms Patti, Joey
and their Epiphany star project
from Sunday, January 11th.

Nice work all! They are beautiful!



St Paul's Caroling in the Thrivent Magazine



Last year's St Paul's caroling made it into the Winter Thrivent magazine!

Nadine McGee and Beth Hannon are featured on the lead-in page and our group picture and write-up are on the article page.



1. Fa la la la la, la la la la! Upperco, Maryland

Every year for the past 10 years, carolers from St. Paul's Lutheran Church have rented a school bus to go sing to the church's shut-ins and to residents at local nursing facilities. Last year, Benjamin Baber led a Thrivent Action Team that purchased and packed items to make more than 100 care packages for elderly residents. A potluck dinner followed.

2. Volunteers warm hearts, homes Roanoke, Virginia

For three days each December, the Community Christmas Store of Roanoke Valley helps hundreds of families shop for clothing, food, coats, toys and household supplies. Shirley Lautenschlager of Salem, Virginia, led a Thrivent Action Team to stock shelves, assist shoppers and raise funds. The store has served the community for 32 years.

Spreading cheer

Through tangible gifts and caroling, Thrivent clients bring Christmas joy to their communities.



3. Providing joy with necessities Avon, Indiana

Crossroads Church opens its doors every Christmas to provide families in need with gifts, food, haircuts and other necessities. Craig White leads a Thrivent Action Team to help raise dollars and items. More than 160 volunteers give their time and talents to share God's love in a tangible way in the community.



4. Filling food baskets Lebanon, Ohio

Each year, Resurrection Lutheran Church collects nonperishable food items and monetary donations to provide food baskets to their neighbors in need on Christmas Eve. Joanne Coker's Thrivent Action Team helped provide the perishable items for each basket and last year, helped sort, pack and distribute 50 baskets.

Parish Youth Events

Children of God (CoG)

On the 2nd Friday of each month, our youth gather for a meal & fun activity together at 6:30pm at Immanuel.

Questions? Please contact Jeanne Swain at jeannes@jsconnor.com or 410-852-0882

Schedule - 2026 CoG's Group Events

January 9th	Service project: Sorting and stocking Immanuel's Food Pantry from the Reverse Advent boxes.
February 13th	Valentine Cards for shut ins & Game/Blanket Making
March 13th	Baskets for Shepherd Staff/LWR Kit Making
April 10th	Bowling or Movie Night or Game Night
May 8th	Mother's Day Flowers and Cards
June 12th	Hashawha (start a little earlier)
July 10th	No COG's – VBS
August 14th	Back Packs with Social Ministry or Swim Party – Dates TBD
September 11th	Mini golf (Whatever isn't done in April)
October 9th	Pumpkin Carving or Cornmaze
November 13th	Thanksgiving dinner, Service project: Operation Christmas Child
December 11th	Christmas Party. Cards for Military & Collected Non-Perishables for Military

Youth + Family Ministry - Save the Dates!

Seekers Retreat for 3rd-5th Graders March 14-15, 2026 Mar-Lu-Ridge

Save the Date for a 2-day retreat for 3rd-5th grade youth- full of games, learning, worship and community.

Registration will open on Jan. 12th.



**RETREAT
FOR GRADES 3-5**



WHERE: MAR-LU RIDGE

WHEN: MARCH 14-15

THEME: GROWING IN GOD'S GARDEN

Games, songs, activities & Bible study, and fun!

For more info go to
www.YoungFaithMatters.com



Council Minutes

Highlights from the October Council Meeting

MOTION: to approve amended Council Meeting Minutes of 9/16/2025 as amended. Motion by Mr. Hilgartner, seconded by Ms. Lewis. All in favor. Motion carried.

Reports:

Vicar Don's Report

- Zoom training session 9/15
- St. Pauls council meeting 9/16
- Attended funeral service for father of Jeanne Swain (Immanuel)
- Church training online 9/17
- Synod Candidacy Committee entrance meeting 9/18
- Away for personal vacation 9/19-9/22
- The Shepherd Staff groundbreaking ceremony 9/23
- Lutheran Confession class
- Old Testament class
- Meeting with Carroll County Bureau of Housing to discuss housing situation for a member of Immanuel 9/24
- Cohort class meeting
- Drop off supplies at St. Pauls and St. Peter's 9/25
- Lunch with Trinity Lutheran Church
- ALS walk in Frederick 9/27
- St Paul's worship 9/28,10/5, 10/12
- Jerusalem worship 9/28, 10/5, 10/11
- Staff meetings 9/29, 10/7
- CLS Chapel time 10/1
- Lunch with church member 10/2
- Mt. Zion Bingo 10/3
- Men's breakfast 10/4
- Hampstead Fire Department Open House
- St. Abrahams Ice Cream Social
- Youth for Christ luncheon 10/5
- Conference meeting at CLV 10/9
- St. Paul's prayer ministry meeting
- Bishop Leadership event 10/13, 10/14
- CLS Annual Meeting 10/15
- NESAP to visit church member (retirement day) 10/16
- Celebration of life preparation for upcoming service 10/17
- St. Paul's Flea Market 10/18
- St. Abrahams Council meeting 10/19
- St. Abrahams worship 10/19
- St. Peter's worship 10/19

- Celebration of Life for Brian Kremen 10/19
- Sermon/worship preparation, office work, emails, calls, text and follow ups, misc.

Visitations and check in's.

9/18/2025	Hagert family	in person visit	Home
9/30/2025	Carol Lewis	in person visit	Home
10/7/2025	Sherry Zour	in person visit	Home
10/10/2025	Vivian Chenoweth	in person visit	Carroll Lutheran Village
10/10/2025	Rachael Wentz	in person visit	Carroll Lutheran Village
10/12/2025	Nadine McGee	in person visit	Golden Crest St.Paul Road
10/15/2025	Vivian Chenoweth	in person visit	Carroll Lutheran Village
10/15/2025	Rachel Murphy	in person visit	Home
10/16/2025	Lynette Jenkins	in person visit	Home
10/18/2025	Pat Graff	in person visit	Longview in Manchester Room #118
10/19/2025	Terry Davidson	in person visit	Carroll Hospital

Comments:

- Meeting with the Synod Candidacy Committee on Thursday September 18 th at 10am. I was approved for entrance into the candidacy process for Word and Sacrament.
- My sincerest appreciation and gratitude to you all for the continued help, support, and encouragement though this faith formation process.

Respectfully Submitted,
Don Helfer

President’s Report, Mr. Fleming Reported

- Painting update- painting is moving onto the next phase
- Basement AC
- Curtains back and up
- Window washing
- Alarm system
- State Highway Administration sent a check from the sale of the land needed for the intersection improvements
- Annual Congregational Meeting November 9, 2025

Treasurer’s Report, Ms. Mountcastle Reported:

- Presented balance sheet to the council
- Updated the CD mature dates
- It was decided to cash in the Edward Jones ELCA Youth Gathering CD to pay our balance

MOTION: to cash in the Edward Jones ELCA Youth Gathering CD to pay our negative balance and the extra fund will go into the Youth Gathering account to start a fund for the next Gathering by Ms. Mountcastle. Seconded Ms. Geldmacher. All in favor. Motion carried.

MOTION: that Mr. Fleming will go to the bank to find the best interest rate for the Farmers and Merchants CDs by Ms. Mountcastle. Seconded by Ms. Caine. All in favor. Motion carried.

Committee Reports

Church Budget, Charles Baber Reported:

- A balanced budget was presented to the council

MOTION: to approve the presented proposed budget by Ms. Caine. Seconded by Ms. Lewis. All in favor. Motion passed.

Parish Council, Ms. Caine Reported:

- Provided an update on current events in the parish
- Will bring the council's questions to the parish council meeting, the next meeting has not been scheduled

MOTION: As directed by Pastor Amanda, last year's budget number will be used as a place holder in St. Paul's 2026 budget by Ms. Caine. Seconded by Ms. Lyons. Motion was tabled.

Outreach, Ms. Lyons Reported:

- Teamed up with St. Abraham's and made over a \$400.00 shipment to the USS IWO JIMA. Amazon estimates delivery to be Nov. 6th.
- Adopted 15 children for Christmas Wishes through the Salvation Army. Each child is to receive at least "3" gifts + "1" item of clothing. Wishes are due back at church no later than Dec. 7th.
- Save your cancelled stamps from Christmas cards!
- Food costs for the gill increased significantly. We will no longer offer "free" chips as our combo incentive. Better than raising our sandwich prices.
- Final NET Grill Sales for 2025 - \$3,354.33

Flea Market, Ms. Lyons Reported:

- Vendor spaces were sold out every single month!
- 2026 spaces will increase to \$30.00 either lawn or pavilion. "Day of" will be \$40.00/space
 - 2025: \$15,610.00 (82 spaces @ \$25 and 6 spaces @ \$30)
 - 2026: \$18,480.00 (88 spaces @ \$30)
- Income increase of \$2,870.00 (only the 2nd increase in 20 years)
- Final numbers:
 - \$16,820.00 (many spaces were sold more than once)
 - - \$ 1,890.00 (Port-A-Pots)
 - \$14,930.00 NET Profit
- There were a couple accidents reported by vendors this year due to our removal of the cones prior to the end of the event (2:00 pm)

Property, Mr. Knight and Mr. Hilgartner Reported:

- Suggests replacing the windows in the overflow room- Mr. Knight is offering, with help, to install the windows for the church
- Two estimates for the materials are \$2,800 and \$4,000

MOTION: for Mr. Knight to move forward with the installation of the new windows in the overflow room and spend up to \$3,100 total on materials by Ms. Baber. Seconded by Ms. Caine. All in favor. Motion carried.

- Security camera update- different camera packages range from \$150-\$400 and they are solar powered. A phone app is used to view the cameras

MOTION: to purchase and install four security cameras for \$399 by Mr. Hilgartner. Seconded by Ms. Lewis. All in favor. Motion carried.

- Renewing contract with Modern Comfort

MOTION: to renew the contract with Modern Comfort by Ms. Lewis. Seconded by Mr. Hilgartner. All in favor. Motion carried.

Old Business

- Hoffman scholarship information discussion. Renaming the scholarship to Pastor Mel Stricklin Scholarship Fund.

New Business

- Candy BINGO, Carol Hilgartner presented the idea to the council:
 - An event to bring together the church and parish community
 - To raise support for Immanuel's food pantry
 - Late March would be the time frame
- Request to use church basement December 27, 2025
- Annual Reports from committee chairs due Nov 2, 2025

Good of the Church:

- Nominations for President, treasurer, secretary, 2 council members
- All current positions can serve again
- Committee Bob Knight, Colleen Geldmacher, Jed Geldmacher, and Laura Grabowski

MOTION: Ms. Baber moved to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Ms. Caine. All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned @8:46

Next meeting November 18, 2025

Highlights from the November Council Meeting

Highlights from November Council Meeting

Reports:

Vicar Don's Report:

10/20/25 to 11/17/25

- Hospital visits 10/20
- St. Paul's council meeting 10/21
- Carroll Lutheran Village 45th Anniversary 10/22
- Lutheran Confessions class 10/23, 10/30
- Attended viewing for Donald Cole 10/24
- Celebration of Life for Jane Gavruluk 10/25
- St Paul's worship 10/26, 11/2, 11/16
- Jerusalem worship 10/26, 11/2, 11/16
- MCTC jail visit 10/26, 11/16
- Old Testament class 10/27

- Men's group 11/1
- Service work at St. Peter's 11/3
- Westminster Conference Men's Dinner 11/3
- Hospital visits 11/5
- Carroll Lutheran School chapel 11/5
- Carroll Lutheran Village Annual Meeting 11/6

Committee Reports

Outreach: Ms. Lyons Reported:

- Our "3" Amazon shipments were delivered to the USS IWO JIMA without any problems! Our ship contact, Kyle, will distribute the gifts for Christmas.
- Christmas Wishes are being filled for our 15 adopted children. Any remaining wishes will be filled by Outreach funds. UNwrapped gifts are due back at church no later than Dec. 7th.
- Save your cancelled stamps from Christmas cards, etc! We'll be making a delivery to Cross Keys Village in January.

Flea Market: Ms. Lyons Reported:

- 2026 spaces will increase to \$30.00 either lawn or pavilion. "Day of" will be \$40.00/space.
- Updated application will be available in February.

Property: Mr. Knight reported:

- Overflow room windows were ordered this week
- Getting a price from the painter to paint the exterior around the windows once replaced.
- Deacon Don has applied for a grant from the Synod to help cover the cost of the windows. (It has been approved. Thank you Don!)

Parish: Ms. Caine Reported:

- Recap of the Parish Council Meeting with Pastor Robin (see unapproved meeting minutes sent separately)
- St. Paul's pays \$38,750.00 towards the parish per year
- Things to think about: Is the parish working for us? If not, can we afford Vicar Don on our own? If not, what would we be willing to do?
- It would be helpful to have a feeling as to how the church feels towards the parish before the next parish council meeting in January.
- The Synod has finally given the parish salary numbers, so a proper budget can be created.

Old Business

- Hoffman Scholarship to be renamed the Pastor Mel Stricklin Memorial Scholarship
- The scholarship committee members will be the currently serving council president, the pastor, and a member of the congregation (to be chosen)
- The applicant will need to have a relationship with St. Paul's
- The application will be similar to the Hoffman Scholarship application, but there will be some revisions.
- Roughly \$2000 is currently available
- Possible 2nd offering during 2026
- Would be nice to have it awarded during a Sunday service

New Business:

- Lawncare contract cost is increasing, but that is included in the budget
- Laura Grabowski to continue sending birthday cards to members of the congregation on behalf of the church
- Mary Caine accepts nomination as council vice president
- More clarification is needed regarding the council members needed involvement in the committees, as well as which member will serve which committee.
- Annual Planning Meeting scheduled for Saturday January 3, 2026 at 9:00 AM

Motion: Ms. Lewis moved to adjourn the meeting, 2nd by Mr. Knight. All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:21 PM

Next Meeting: December 16, 2025 (If no member of the pastoral team is available, there may be a need to change this date)



February

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9am – Worship & Sunday School Healing Service Food Collection Invite a Friend						Pr Bill Lundgren's Memorial Service - at St Ben's, Westminster – 2pm
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
9am – Worship 2nd Offering Fellowship					Prayer Ministry Meeting - 1pm Children of God (CoG) Youth Group - 6:30pm	Jerusalem Folk Service – 5:00pm
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
9am – Worship & Sunday School 10:30am - Confirmation class	 Parish Book Club - A Dog in Georgia – Lauren Grodstein – 6:30pm	 Shrove Tuesday – 6:00pm Council Meeting - 7:00pm	 Ash Wednesday Service – 4:00pm			Community Breakfast @ Immanuel
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
9am – Worship & Sunday School			 Lent "soup and conversation" – Jerusalem - 6:0pm			Immanuel - Short Traditional Service at 5pm

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

15773 Dover Road
Hanover Pike & Dover Road
Upperco, Maryland 21155

www.StPaulsUpperco.org

410-239-3456

Pastors:
Vicar Don Helfer
The Rev. Susan Roy



Office: office@stpaulsupperco.org

Council Directory

PRESIDENT	Charles Baber
VICE PRESIDENT	Mary Caine
SECRETARY	Colleen Geldmacher
TREASURER	Kelly Mountcastle
MEMBER	Heidi Ebler
MEMBER	Wade Hilgartner
MEMBER	Bob Knight
MEMBER	Suzi Lyons



Council Committee Representatives

CEMETERY	Maddie Brown
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	Madison Baber
EVANGELISM/ FELLOWSHIP	Colleen Geldmacher
FINANCE	Kelly Mountcastle
FINANCIAL SECRETARY	Charles Baber
FLEA MARKET	Suzi Lyons
HISTORIANS	Carol Lewis
HOSPITALITY	Leon Fleming
MUSIC & WORSHIP	Mary Caine
OUTREACH	Suzi Lyons
PARK	Bob Knight Wade Hilgartner
PARISH COUNCIL	Mary Caine Sandy Baber
PROPERTY	Bob Knight Wade Hilgartner
SHEPHERDS	Laura Grabowski Mary Caine
STEWARDSHIP	Carol Lewis Pastor Dot
YOUTH/CHRISTIAN ED	Madison Baber