



SAINT PAUL'S VOICE

March & April 2026

Volume 9, Number 2

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“From the Pastor”

My mom had shared this pretzel story with me .

I wanted to pass it along to each of you.

May this Lenten season gently fold your hands in prayer,

soften your heart in love,

and strengthen your spirit in grace.

And whenever you see or taste a pretzel,

may it remind you that God is shaping your life

through every twist and turn,

drawing you closer to the cross

and onward to the promise of Easter.

Amen.

Lenten blessings,

Vicar Don

THE LEGEND OF THE LENTEN PRETZEL

A very long time ago, (in the early 600's) there was a man who worked for God. His job was being a MONK.

A MONK does everything in his life for God. He lives in a special place with other MONKS, who pray and read the Bible many times during the day. They usually live in a building or group of buildings for this purpose. It is called a monastery.

MONKS usually make and/or grow their own food.

This particular MONK had been in the kitchen where other monks were baking a special bread for LENT, and he saw some leftover pieces of dough. He decided to use the leftover pieces of dough for something special. The Monk formed the dough into thin strips crossed into a looped twist to be **like the folded arms of children in prayer.**



Look at the picture. You will be one of the few people who know which way is really UP when you have a pretzel! That was how children held their hands to pray in those days.



This treat was given to the children as they learned their prayers. They began calling the treat "Pretiola", which means "little reward" in Latin. (a common language of the monks) *(Also, a different version of the story calls them braccellae, a German word that eventually became pretzel.)*

Soon it was known the world over as a pretzel. The simple shape of the pretzel, arms folded in prayer, reminds us to pray every day.

Every time you see a pretzel, remember prayer!

The pretzel really has its origins as an official food of Lent. Lent is known as the 40 days* before Easter. Lent is a time when we should be thinking of **what Jesus gave up** for us – his body and blood – his life – so we could go to heaven.

Lent is a time when we could think of **what we could give up** in honor of God, the Father, or Jesus. Long ago, in some churches, you had to decide on something to give up for the 40 days of Lent. (A personal sacrifice) Some ideas would have been chocolate, or candy or cookies or pizza!

The monk in our story lived in a time when you could not eat meat or milk or eggs during Lent! So, he and his brother monks had to figure out a special bread that did not use eggs or milk. The monks were preparing a special Lenten bread of water, flour and salt – which is what pretzels are still made out of today.

Pretzels then began to be enjoyed by all people. They became a symbol of good luck and long life. They were also a common food given to the poor and hungry. They were cheap and easy to make and satisfied hunger.

Here's a recipe you could try making with your family!

Soft Pretzel Recipe

- 1 package yeast
- 1 1/2 cups warm water
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4 cups flour
- 1 egg
- extra salt for the tops (large salt works best!)

Mix your yeast, water, sugar, and salt in a large bowl. Stir in the flour and knead until the dough is smooth. Shape into the form of arms crossed in prayer and place it on a baking sheet. Brush the dough with a beaten egg to give it a shiny finish. Sprinkle the top with salt, and bake in an oven preheated to 425 degrees for 15 minutes.

THE PRETZEL PRAYER

I fold my arms like a pretzel tight,
When I go to bed at night.
I talk with my Father up above,
To thank him for his tender love. Amen

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.



• - Feb 25 - Jerusalem
• - Mar 4, St. Paul's
• - Mar 11, Immanuel
• - Mar 18, St. Abrahams
• - Mar 25, St. Peter's

Holy Week Schedule

Resurrection Lutheran Parish
Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday
March 29 - Normal Service Times

Maundy Thursday -
April 2
Immanuel 7pm
St. Paul's 7pm

Good Friday
April 3
St. Abrahams/St. Peter's
6pm /Location: St. Abrahams
Immanuel 7pm
Jerusalem 7pm

Easter Sunday
April 5th - Normal Service Times

Easter Breakfast



Join us on April 12th following the service for our Annual Easter Breakfast and Easter Egg Hunt!
Hope to see you there!

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, Nadine McGee, Bob & Gerri Martin, Jennifer Monroe, Michael Armacost, Pat Graff and Sherry Graff Zour, Gracie Grabowski, Carol Lewis, Kim Knight, Jackie Johnson, Carol Hilgartner, Rob Holtz, 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, Diana Guthall, Betty Gruebel, Connie Copenhaver, Mardell Alexander, Dennis Rhoten, Sandra Michaels, Linda Chenoweth, Marie Enderton, Karen Turek, Greg Parry, Pr Matt Schenning, Bonnie Bevard, 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!

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Ray Lyons
- 5 Janis Hagest
- 6 Christopher Geldmacher
- 9 Rodgers Hargest
- 10 Carol Hunt
- 13 Sophie Moore
- 17 Robin Lowe
- 19 Beth Armacost
- 22 Jed Geldmacher
- 23 Sherry Moore
- 26 Hope Hilgartner
- 26 Hannah Hilgartner
- 27 Carol Hilgartner
- 30 Landyn Howard

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

- 5 Mary & Bill Caine
- 5 Bob & Kim Knight



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 6 Wendy Folfas
- 7 Ava Grabowski
- 13 Patrick Moore
- 17 Jake Lowe
- 17 Josh Lowe
- 18 John Folfas
- 24 Ella Lee Grabowski
- 25 Gracie Grabowski
- 26 Nathan Geldmacher

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

- 8 John & Jayme Folfas

Welcome!!

Jack Benard Gerkin was baptized and took his first communion on Sunday February 23, 2026.

We welcome Jack in the Body of Christ and the mission that we share. We are very excited to be a part of his faith journey!!!

Jack's father Don Gerkin was also affirmed as a new member here at St. Paul's the same day.

We welcome Jack and “Don 2.0” to the St. Paul's family!!!!



Pictured with Jack is his mother Heather, sister Violet , and his father Don Gerkin.

Not pictured were other members of Jack's family.

Thank you to all his family for supporting Jack in his faith journey with God.

Resurrection Parish Book Club

2026 Schedule

Date	Book	Host	Location	Genre
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

Mario's

Saturday, March 14, 2026

at St. Paul's Church
15773 Dover Rd
Upperco, MD 21155

Mario's Italian Restaurant is open for one night.
Please accept this as your special invite!!

Come and see something strange
The kids doing the work for a change!

Join us between 5 and 7pm and take a seat.
Then the youth will serve something to eat.

Carryout is available, so you can take home and share.
We sure do hope to see you there!



Ticket Cost: freewill donation

Proceeds Benefit: St Paul's youth programs

Outreach

We will be assembling Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief. In each kit will be the following: 1-bath towel, 3-bars of soap, 1-toothbrush, 1-comb and nail clippers.



We will also be assembling School Kits. In each kit will be the following: 4-notebooks, 1-ruler, 1-pencil sharpener, 1-pair of scissors, 5-pencils, 5-pens, 1-box of crayons, 1-eraser and 1-drawstring bag.

These kits will be delivered to New Windsor for distribution to other countries.

Flea Market Registration

Our 2026 season is off the running! New applications were emailed and mailed to all our existing vendors. So far, over 200 spaces have been sold; 23 vendors paid for the entire season. The Website has been updated and Facebook announcement has gone out.

If you're interested in being a vendor, we operate on a first come/first served basis. We fill up VERY quickly each month so best hurry and get the paperwork submitted. Any questions, please email fleamarket@stpaulsupperco.org.



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](#)

Men's Spring Dinner Meeting

Save the date for the upcoming Lutheran Church Men of the Westminster Conference Spring Dinner Meeting.

Monday, April 27, 2026 at 6:30 pm
Carroll Lutheran Village, Westminster, MD 21158
Cost: \$15.00

Please let Charles Baber know if you are interested in going or sign-up in to Narthex.



Scout Sunday

On Sunday, February 15, 2026, we celebrated our Scouts, Jed Geldmacher, Joey Geldmacher, Nathan Geldmacher and Nathaniel Hai.

We open worship with Scout Recognition , Pledge of Allegiance, Scout oath, and the Scout law.
Thanks to all our Scouts and all you do for our community!!



CLS Bingo Fundraiser

Annual **BASKET & BAG**

*Door Prizes & Raffles
including 50/50*

B I N G O

*Generously Filled
Bags & Baskets*

SATURDAY, March 21, 2026

11:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Games Begin at 1:00 p.m.

CARROLL LUTHERAN SCHOOL

1738 Old Taneytown Road
Westminster, MD 21158

Buy Tickets Online



Bring a non-perishable food item to be entered to win a special prize

 Food and Refreshments Available  Family Friendly

Tickets

Advance ticket price: \$25
(available until March 14, 2026)

Tickets at the door: \$30

For more information or to purchase tickets, email bingo@clsedu.org

All Proceeds benefit Carroll Lutheran School

**Admission
by Ticket
Only**



1738 Old Taneytown Road
Westminster, MD 21158

410-848-1050 www.clsedu.org

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

2026 – CoG’s Event Schedule

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.



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



VBS & Christian Ed Committee

Be a part of this important community outreach!
Mark your calendars now!

We hope the kids have an unforgettable week while they discover *how God finds us and helps us in every challenge we face.*



In addition to monetary donations, we also need your time and talents to truly make VBS a success. Please talk with someone on the Christian Ed committee or the pastors to find out more. There is plenty you can help with *before, during and after.* You are welcome to join our planning meetings too!

Please pass along the date/time information and registration form (coming soon) to family, friends and neighbors! Thank you.

VBS @Immanuel: The evenings of Sun, July 5 through Thurs, July 9

VBS @ St.Paul's: The mornings of Mon, July 20 through Fri, July 24

Council Minutes

Highlights from the December Council Meeting

Call to order: 7:02PM

Members Present: Pastor Susan Roy, Charles Baber (1st term/1st year), Mary Caine (2nd term/3rd year), Bob Knight (2nd term/1st year), Suzi Lyons (2nd term/2nd year), Carol Lewis (2nd term/2nd year), Colleen Geldmacher (2nd term/1st year), Heidi Ebler (1st term/1st year), Kelly Mountcastle (2nd term/1st year), Wade Hilgartner (1st term/3rd year)

Members Absent: Vicar Don

Brief introduction of council members to Pastor Roy

Devotion/Prayer

Motion: To approve the amended council meeting minutes of 11/18/25 as amended. Motion by Ms. Caine, 2nd by Ms. Lyons. All in favor. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Kelly submitted reports to council members prior to meeting. The following discussion occurred:

Committee Reports

Outreach: Ms. Lyons Reported:

- 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.
- Attached is a thank you from Cross Keys for our donations to their stamp program.

Flea Market: Ms. Lyons Reported:

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

Property: Mr. Knight Reported:

- The new windows have been ordered.
- New project: Update all fixtures (only the part that makes the lights work) and lights to LED throughout the church (Sanctuary was done in the past, this is for the rest of the church, including basement).
 - The actual chandeliers will not change to keep the aesthetic of the church. Only the lighting mechanism and light bulbs will change.
 - There is no cost to the church for this. BGE has a grant for the materials and the installation company is not charging for their labor.
 - Other local churches have participated in this project so we know it is not a scam.
 - **MOTION:** To approve the upgrade to the lighting throughout the church at no cost. Motion by Mr. Knight, 2nd by Mr. Hilgartner. All in favor. Motion carried.

Parish Council

Parish: Ms. Caine Reported:

- The next parish council meeting is scheduled for 1/14/25 at 7:00pm at St. Abraham's
- It will be a big, important meeting. New parish council board members will need to be voted in. The most important thing of note is Pr. Norma will not be continuing as president.

Old Business:

- Hoffman Scholarship is now Pastor Mel Stricklin Memorial Scholarship

New Business

- Church Chime/Carillon
- Church Constitution Updates.
- ELCA Congregational Report
- Synod Mission Support: A request to support Amazing Grace Church and their outreach programs in the City
 - **Motion:** To support Amazing Grace Church with a donation of \$250.00 from the Good Sam fund. Motion by Ms. Mountcastle. 2nd by Ms. Caine. Discussion followed: Is this an appropriate amount? Pastor Roy said yes, for what they are asking for, \$250.00 is an appropriate amount. All in favor. Motion carried.

MOTION: Ms. Lyons motioned to adjourn the meeting. 2nd by Ms. Lewis. All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned: 8:04 pm, followed by the Lord's Prayer

Next Meeting: Saturday 1/3/26, 9:00 am: Council Annual Planning Meeting Workshop

Tuesday 1/20/25: 7:00 pm: Monthly Council Meeting

Highlights from the January Council Meeting

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Council Meeting
15773 Dover Rd. Upperco MD 21155

Tuesday January 20, 2026

Council Meeting

Call to order: 7:00PM

Members Present: Vicar Don, Mary Caine (2nd term/3rd year), Bob Knight (2nd term/1st year), Suzi Lyons (2nd term/2nd year), Carol Lewis (2nd term/2nd year), Colleen Geldmacher (2nd term/1st year), Heidi Ebler (1st term/1st year), Kelly Mountcastle (2nd term/1st year), Wade Hilgartner (1st term/3rd year)

Members Absent: Charles Baber (excused, 1st term, first year), Pastor Susan Roy

Devotion-taken from "The Upper Room," followed by a prayer

Motion: To approve the council meeting minutes of 12/16/25. Motion by Ms. Lewis, 2nd by Ms. Lyons. No discussion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Pastor Reports

Committee Reports

Outreach

- We will be assembling Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief. In each kit will be the following: 1-bath towel, 3-bars of soap, 1-toothbrush, 1-comb and nail clippers.
- We will also be assembling School Kits. In each kit will be the following: 4-notebooks, 1-ruler, 1-pencil sharpener, 1-pair of scissors, 5-pencils, 5-pens, 1-box of crayons, 1-eraser and 1-drawstring bag.
- These kits will be delivered to New Windsor. Shipping costs TBD.
- The school kits will be delivered in Honduras. The personal care kits will be delivered in Angola.

Flea Market

- 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. EDIT: Applications are now available. Lori will upload to the website ASAP

Property

- The new LED lighting has been installed
- Carillon costs are prohibiting. It was suggested to forgo that idea

Old Business

New Business

- Letter was received regarding the Annual Congregational Report
 - When the website opens for reporting we will handle it
- A thank you note was received from Carroll Lutheran Village for our donation from a second offering taken on their behalf
- Pastor Susan would like to have a process in place for online services for the parish as a whole should there be weather-related closings in the future.

Good Of the Church

- A big thank you to Mary and Sandy for their hard work and dedication to serving St. Paul's on the parish council
- Likewise, a big thank you to the St. Paul's congregation and council for their continued support of Mary and Sandy in their parish roles.

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting by Ms. Ebler, 2nd by Ms. Lyons. All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:18 PM.



March

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			6:00pm - Lenten Soup Super at St. Paul's	12:30pm - Parish Grief Support Group at Immanuel		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
9am – Worship 2nd Offering Fellowship		 Council Meeting - 7:00pm	6:00pm - Lenten Soup Super at Immanuel		1:00pm - Prayer Ministry Meeting 6:30pm - (CoG) Youth Group	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
9am – Worship & Sunday School 10:30am - Confirmation Class at Immanuel	6:30pm - Parish Book Club	Happy St. Patrick's Day!	6:00pm - Lenten Soup Super at St. Abrahams	12:30pm - Parish Grief Support Group at Immanuel		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
9am – Worship & Sunday School			6:00pm - Lenten Soup Super at St. Peter's			
29	30	31				
Palm Sunday 9am – Worship & Sunday School						

April



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
				7:00 pm - Maundy Thursday Service 12:30pm - Parish Grief Support Group at Immanuel	6pm - Good Friday at St Abrahams & St Peer's 7pm at Jerusalem & Immanuel	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Easter Sunday 9am – Worship & Sunday School Healing Service Food Collection Invite a Friend					1:00pm -Prayer Ministry Meeting 6:30pm - (CoG) Youth Group	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9am – Worship & Sunday School 2nd Offering Fellowship				12:30pm - Parish Grief Support Group at Immanuel		 Flea Market – 8:00am
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9am – Worship & Sunday School 10:30am - Confirmation class at St Paul's	6:30pm - Resurrection Parish Book Club 7pm - Parish Worship and Music at St. Abrahams	 Council Meeting – 7:00pm				
26	27	28	29	30	31	
9am – Worship & Sunday School	6:30pm - Men's Spring Dinner Men					

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	Carol Lewis
MEMBER	Suzi Lyons

Parish Representatives

PARISH COUNCIL	Mary Caine
REPS	Sandy Baber
PARISH WORSHIP & MUSIC REP	Mary Caine
MUTUAL MINISTRY	Kelly Mountcastle



Committee Representatives

AUDIT	Charles Baber Kelly Mountcastle Susan Fleming
CEMETERY	Maddie Brown
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	Colleen Geldmacher
EVANGELISM/ FELLOWSHIP	Heidi Ebler
FINANCE	Kelly Mountcastle
FINANCIAL SECRETARY	Charles Baber
FLEA MARKET	Suzi Lyons
HISTORIANS	Carol Lewis
HOSPITALITY	Colleen Geldmacher Susan Fleming Mary Caine
MUSIC & WORSHIP	
NEWSLETTER	Lori Teitelbaum
OUTREACH	Suzi Lyons
PARK	Bob Knight Wade Hilgartner
PROPERTY	Bob Knight Wade Hilgartner
SHEPHERDS	Colleen Geldmacher Laura Grabowski
STEWARDSHIP	Mary Caine Carol Lewis