



SAINT PAUL'S VOICE

July & August 2026

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“From the Vicar”



You know what they're singing. | Emiko Aumann/GettyImages

"Kumbaya, My Lord"

*Kumbaya, my Lord, kumbaya
Kumbaya, my Lord, kumbaya
Kumbaya, my Lord, kumbaya
Oh Lord, kumbaya.*

St. Paul's, we made it to summer!

Winter finally gave way to spring, and spring has now passed “the baton” onto summer. Summer is a season filled with vacations, camps, cookouts, travel, family gatherings, games, and adventures. It is also a season that invites us to slow down and reconnect with God's creation. Whether it is sitting on a porch, walking a trail, watching a sunset, listening to the sounds of nature, or gazing into a star-filled sky, summer reminds us of the beauty and wonder of God's handiwork.

Some of my fondest summer memories involve sitting around a campfire with family and friends. There is something sacred about those moments. The warmth of the fire, the crackling of the wood, the laughter shared, the stories told, and the quiet moments spent gazing upward at the stars have always left me feeling closer to God. In those moments, I am reminded just how vast God's creation is and how blessed we are to be a part of it.

A campfire itself offers lessons about faith. It reminds us that warmth brings people together. Much like the fire draws people into a circle, God's love draws us into community through connection. We were never meant to journey through life alone. God created us for relationship—with God and with one another.

A campfire also teaches us the importance of tending what matters. A fire left unattended slowly fades. In the same way, our faith, relationships, and spiritual lives need care and attention. Through prayer, worship, Scripture, and fellowship, God continues to kindle the flame of faith within us.

Campfires remind us to find joy in simplicity. In a world filled with noise and distraction, sometimes God's voice is heard most clearly in the quiet moments. A starry sky, a gentle breeze, the laughter of loved ones, or the simple gift of being present can become holy moments where we encounter God's grace.

And every campfire becomes a place for stories of adventures, memories, challenges, and hopes. As people of faith, we are storytellers too. Our lives tell the story of God's faithfulness. We share how God has walked beside us through seasons of joy and sorrow. We pass on the story of Jesus, whose love continues to transform lives and bring hope to the world.

Finally, a campfire reminds us to be a light. Jesus tells us, "Let your light shine before others." Just as a fire offers warmth and guidance in the darkness, God calls us to share Christ's love with those around us. Through acts of kindness, compassion, generosity, and service, we become reflections of God's light in the world.

One song that I often recall singing around the campfire was the old African American spiritual, *Kumbaya*. While many know the tune, fewer know its meaning. The word "Kumbaya" comes from the phrase "Come by here." It is a prayer, an invitation asking God to come near, to be present among us in our singing, our praying, our hopes, our struggles, and our everyday lives.

As you enjoy the summer months ahead, whether around a campfire, beside a pool, on vacation, or simply relaxing at home, my prayer for you is:

Kumbaya, my Lord. Come by here, Lord.

Come by here in our laughter and our conversations.

Come by here in our travels and adventures.

Come by here in our rest and renewal.

Come by here in our worries and uncertainties.

Come by here in our homes, our church, and our community.

Come by here and remind us that You are always near. Amen

May your summer be filled with God's presence, God's peace, and God's blessings.

Vicar Don ②

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

On summer break

Vicar Don's day off: Monday

Vicar Don's onsite office hours: Friday's from 10am to 1pm

Those in Need of Prayer

Members:

Maidie Brown, Vivian Chenoweth, Carolyn Eichler, Andy Geldmacher, Hannah Hilgartner, Denise Holtz, Nadine McGee, Bob & Gerri Martin, Pat Graff and Sherry Graff Zour, Gracie Grabowski, Carol Lewis, Kim Knight, Jackie Johnson, Carol Hilgartner, Laura Grabowski, Leon Fleming, 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, Todd Smith, Thad Martin, Carol Miller, Lisa Elway, Alex Strawbridge, Torie & Robert Osborne, Jim and Dana Hoyt, Linda Bassler, Mallory Martin, Eileen Harris, Dennis Lambert, Diana Guthall, Betty Gruebel, Connie Copenhaver, Mardell Alexander, Dennis Rhoten, Sandra Michaels, Linda Chenoweth, Marie Enderton, Karen Turek, Pr Matt Schenning, Bonnie Bevard, Carol Cahoon, 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!

JULY BIRTHDAYS

4 Jackson Armacost
5 Chloe Carmichael
10 Madison Baber
12 Selena Howard
13 Jack Gerkin
16 Louisa Neuheisel

JULY ANNIVERSARIES

6 Patrick & Sherry Moore
22 Rob & Denise Holtz
24 Tom & Carol Lewis
26 Tim & Denise McGee



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

1 Carrie Moore
4 Carol Lewis
6 Evelyn Barrett
8 Cheyenne Kelly
12 Garret Watson
15 Payton Kelly
17 Susan Fleming
22 Rachel Mountcastle
23 Sara Moore
24 Kelly Mountcastle
24 Clara Neuheisel

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

12 Brittney & Jay Carmichael

Birthday Celebration!



Fellowship on June 14th, we celebrated
Vicar Don's 50th birthday!!!

Happy Birthday Vicar Don!!



St. Abrahams Lutheran Community Picnic!



Saturday, July 11, 2026 from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Free Food, Music, Old Fashioned Cake Walk, Raffles and more!

Bring your family and friends and enjoy a relaxing afternoon in the woods topped off with ice cream!

All food and extras are provided by the church. This is a free community, fun-filled event and there will be no religious services at this event. All welcomed!

For more information, contact 443-797-4657.

Potluck Picnic Celebrating the End of Sunday School for Summer



Confirmands - May 31, 2026



Warmest congratulations on your Confirmation!

This milestone represents a beautiful commitment to faith, growth, and spiritual journey. May this special day live with you always, and may the Holy Spirit guide and inspire you as you step into this next chapter!



Joseph & Nathan Geldmacher



Ella Grabowski



Sophia Monroe



Congratulations!!!!

Outreach

Outreach Ministries Updates

- * 24 Personal Care Kits (bath towel, soap, tissues, lotion, comb, nail clippers, toothbrush and hand sanitizer) were delivered to Shepherd's Staff for distribution to the homeless in our own community.
- * 24 Back to School Kits (4 college ruled notebooks, 5 pencils, pencil sharpener, crayons, 5 pens, eraser, ruler and scissors) were delivered to Shepherd's Staff.
- * Alpha Pregnancy "Sanctity of Human Life" program kicked off. Baby bottles were distributed on Mother's Day, picked up on Father's day and delivered to Alpha Pregnancy. Thank you to everyone who supported this project. The donations fund counseling, medical supplies, baby food, clothing, toys, etc. Greatly appreciated!



Flea Market



Our flea market continues to be a huge community attraction! So far, each month has been sold out of vendor spaces. These events are financially beneficial to our church, but also very popular with our surrounding community.

When attending our Flea Market, be sure to stop by our food grill. **We serve hot dogs, hamburgers and Italian sausage along with snacks and a variety of drinks.** The proceeds from our grill support our Outreach programs for the year. It's a great way to spend a Saturday roaming through our vendor tables and enjoying a tasty lunch! Hope to see you soon!

2026 Dates

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](#)

Rent Our Pavilion

Great for
Graduation &
Birthday Parties!

Reserve Now!
for only \$100

Conveniently located off Rt 30
~
15773 Dover Rd
Upperco, MD 21155

Park is about two acres and consists mostly of lawn and mature trees. The pavilion is 36' x 60' with concrete floor and wood arch roof. There are ten 8' picnic tables made of galvanized metal and PT wood. The pavilion will hold 100 people.

www.StPaulsUpperco.org
410-239-3456 - Pavilion@stpaulsupperco.org



Everything you need
for a great event !

- * Covered Pavilion
- * Picnic Tables
- * Grill
- * Lawn Space
- * Playground
- * Portable Bathrooms
- * On-site Parking

Resurrection Parish Book Club

2026 Schedule

Date	Book	Host	Location	Genre
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 refreshment



Vacation Bible School

Make plans to join us for Vacation Bible School this summer!

Missing Sunday school? Please join us for VBS beginning on July 20th through July 24th, 9 a.m. until noon. Looking for students and volunteers please contact Susan Fleming.



Get ready for an exciting summer adventure at Tropical Trek Vacation Bible School! Children will enjoy five fun-filled days of games, music, crafts, Bible stories, activities, and new friendships while learning how God finds us and helps us through every challenge. Both programs are completely free and open to everyone in the community, and friends are always welcome!

Do it now! Don't miss out on a fun week at the end of summer.

[Click here to download the St Paul's Registration form for July 20 – 24](#)

[Click here to download Immanuel's Registration form for July 5 – 9](#)

Walk-ins are always welcome, though pre-registration is appreciated to help with planning. Programs are available for children ages 3 through completed 5th grade. Invite your friends and neighbors! All are welcome! This is a FREE event! Contact Susan Fleming (susanf795@gmail.com) or Brittany Pomaes (brittompomaes1114@gmail.com) for more information.

Looking for Volunteers!

We are looking for volunteers before, during or after VBS!

If you would like to help this wonderful ministry, please contact:

- Susan Fleming (susanf795@gmail.com) or
- Brittany Pomaes (brittompomaes1114@gmail.com)



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

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 Ministry Events 2026-2027



MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH SCHOOL EVENT

(Grades 6-12)

Skycroft Retreat Center, Middletown, MD



SEEKERS

(Grades 3-5)

Mar-Lu-Ridge, Jefferson, MD



MIDDLE SCHOOL IMMERSION EXPERIENCE

(Grades 6-8)

A weekend opportunity to experience what faithful living may look like by interacting with community leaders



ELCA YOUTH GATHERING

(Grades 8-12)

Minneapolis, MN

www.YoungFaithMatters.com

Council Minutes

Highlights from the April Council Meeting

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Council Meeting
15773 Dover Rd. Upperco MD 21155
Tuesday April 21, 2026
Council Meeting

Call to order: 7:05PM

Members Present: Vicar Don, 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: None

Guest Attendee: Tom Custance of Edward Jones

Devotion- "Peanut Butter Pie" followed by prayer

Motion: To approve the council meeting minutes of 3/10/26. Motion by Ms. Lews. 2nd by Ms. Lyons. No discussion. All in favor. Motion carried.

New Business

- Donation in memory of Pr. Melissa's brother (Vicar Don's brother-in-law)
 - **Motion** to make a \$100 donation to the Moniteau High School Basketball Boosters in memory of Richard Fleege. Motion by Ms. Caine. 2nd by Ms. Lyons. No discussion. All in favor. Motion carried.
- A new mat is needed inside the door to the overflow room as it is becoming a trip hazard for our handicap members that frequently use that door.
 - **Motion:** To purchase a new mat, spending up to \$250.00 to replace the current one. Motion by Ms. Caine. 2nd by Mr. Hilgartner. No discussion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Highlights from the May Council Meeting

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Council Meeting
15773 Dover Rd. Upperco, MD 21155
Tuesday May 19, 2026
Council Meeting

Call to order: 7:03PM

Members Present: Vicar Don, Charles Baber (excused, 1st term, first year) Mary Caine (2nd term/3rd year), Bob Knight (2nd term/1st year), Suzi Lyons (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: Carol Lewis (2nd term/2nd year)

Prayer

Motion: To approve the council meeting minutes from 4/21/26. Motion by Ms. Caine. 2nd by Ms. Lyons. No discussion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Property

- Cleaning person wants us to raise her pay based on amount of time it takes to clean the church. Motion: To increase the rate to \$150.00 per cleaning visit. **Motion** by Mr. Knight. 2nd by Mr. Hilgartner. Discussion as follows: When does it become effective?—Next cleaning date. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Air Conditioning issue. A problem with the unit is causing the alarm to trigger. Cost is \$2,116.00 to repair. Bylaws were referenced to confirm amount of money council is approved to spend without congregational approval. We are within those guidelines and the money can be used from the Bare donation. **Motion:** To go forward with the proposal presented by the property committee to repair the AC to working order using the Bare money in the amount of \$2,116.00. Motion by Ms. Caine. 2nd by Mr. Knight. Motion carried.
- AC discussion raised the following: Do we have an emergency clause for if there is an issue that costs more than council can approve without involving the congregation when there is not enough time to call a congregational meeting? (i.e. an emergency repair that cannot wait).

Parish

- 5th Sunday Service/Potluck: 5/31 at St. Paul's will be a joint celebration of the Schennings
 - o Parish is contributing \$150.00 for a gift card to Friendly Farms as a thank you for all they have done for the parish. **Motion:** For St. Paul's to match the donation from the parish of \$150.00 for an additional gift for the Schennings. Motion by Ms. Geldmacher. 2nd wholeheartedly by Ms. Lyons. All in favor. Motion carried.
 - o St. Paul's will contribute the chicken and water for the potluck. Heidi will pickup.
 - o Colleen will get a cake for the confirmands.
 - o Service is at 10:00 am.

New Business

- MLR Scholarship—we have 3 youth that could benefit from this. We will reach out to MLR for the amount due.

Old Business

- Pr. Mel Scholarship Application—when should application be due? 6/30 to allow adequate time for checks to clear to colleges before tuition is due



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
				12:30pm - Parish Grief Support Group at Immanuel	10am – 1pm - Vicar Don in the office	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9am – Worship Healing Service Food Collection & Bring a Friend  VBS – Immanuel @ 5:30pm	VBS – Immanuel @ 5:30pm 	VBS – Immanuel @ 5:30pm 	VBS – Immanuel @ 5:30pm 	VBS – Immanuel @ 5:30pm 	10am – 1pm - Vicar Don in the office 1:00pm -Prayer Ministry Meeting 6:30pm - (CoG) Youth Group	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9am – Worship 2nd Offering - Immanuel Food pantry & Fellowship				12:30pm - Parish Grief Support Group at Immanuel	10am – 1pm - Vicar Don in the office	 Flea Market – 8:00am
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9am – Worship	VBS - St.Paul's 9-12pm  6:30pm - Resurrection Parish Book Club	VBS - St.Paul's 9-12pm  Council Meeting – 7:00pm	VBS - St.Paul's 9-12pm 	VBS - St.Paul's 9-12pm 	VBS - St.Paul's 9-12pm  10am – 1pm - Vicar Don in the office	
26	27	28	29	30	31	
9am – Worship						

August



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9am – Worship Healing Service Food Collection & Bring a Friend				12:30pm - Resurrection Parish Grief Support Group		
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
9am – Worship 2nd Offering - CLV Resident Assistance & Fellowship					10am – 1pm - Vicar Don in the office Prayer Ministry Meeting – 1pm Children of God (CoG) Youth Group	 Flea Market – 8:00am
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
9am – Worship	 6:30pm - Parish Book Club	 Church Council – 7:00pm		12:30pm - Resurrection Parish Grief Support Group	10am – 1pm - Vicar Don in the office	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
9am – Worship					10am – 1pm - Vicar Don in the office	
30	31					
5 th Sunday Joint Worship Parish Service - 10:00 am at Jerusalem						

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	Lori Teitelbaum
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