

SAINT PAUL'S VOICE
November & December 2026

Volume 9, Number 6

In This Issue:

Worshipping Together Page 2

Prayer List Page 2

Celebrations! Page 3

Church Happenings Page 3

Family & Youth Page 13

Council Minutes Pages 16

Church Calendar Pages 20

Worship Leader Calendar Page 22

"From the Vicar's Desk"

Preparing Our Hearts for What Is to Come

Throughout these past few months in the season of Pentecost, our Scripture readings have reminded us of the importance of growing in faith, letting go of what may be holding us back, and trusting God as we prepare for what is to come.

One of the many gifts that the new church year and the season of Advent provide us is an invitation to slow down, reflect, and make room for God's presence in our hearts and lives as we prepare for the coming of Christ.

But preparing our hearts and minds is not always easy, especially during the hustle and bustle of November and December. Between family gatherings, shopping, decorating, church activities, and all the traditions that accompany this time of year, it can be easy to become so busy preparing for the holidays that we forget to prepare ourselves spiritually.

As I was reflecting on all of this, I came across an article titled "Preparing Your Soul for the Holidays" on the Walk in Faith Clothing website that I invite you to check out online: www.walkinfaithclothing.com.

This article offered a wonderful reminder that the holidays are not just filled with activities, but also with emotions. Gratitude, joy, grief, nostalgia, expectations, and loneliness can all be part of this season. And that is why taking time to prepare ourselves spiritually is so important.

I pray these coming months bring each of you a sense of renewal in your faith lives through the wonder and excitement of the season. I also want to acknowledge that the holidays are not always a joyful time for everyone. For some, this season can be mentally, physically, and spiritually difficult. I pray that this holiday season is gentle with you and provides a reassuring sense of peace, comfort, and hope throughout these days.

As we prepare to enter a new calendar year, may we do so with a renewed sense of hope and trust in the One who has faithfully provided for us and continues to do so in our lives and in the life of our church family. May God continue to bless the mission and ministry of our congregation and all who come and go through these church doors in the name of the Lord. May we continue to Love, Serve, and Teach God's Word!!!

St. Paul's, from my family to yours, I wish each of you a blessed Thanksgiving, a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year!

In faith, hope, and love, and GOD'S GRACE!!!!!!!!!!!
Vicar Don Helfer ☺

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

Those in Need of Prayer



Members:
Maidie Brown, Vivian Chenoweth, Carolyn Eichler, Hannah Hilgartner, Denise Holtz, Nadine McGee, Bob & Gerri Martin, Pat Graff and Sherry Graff Zour, 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, Sandra Michaels, Linda Chenoweth, Marie Enderton, Karen Turek, Bonnie Bevard, Carol Cahoon, Chastity, Chris Winner, Annie Sensabaugh, Clara Braun, Pr. Carl Myers, Matthew and Hanna Jones, Kathy Widmaier, family and friends of Bradley Dunst, those facing job loss, and those in broken relationships.

PRAYER:

Gracious and loving God, we lift before you all those on our prayer list and all who are in need of your care. Bring healing to those who are ill, strength to those who are weary, comfort to those who are grieving, and peace to those who are anxious or afraid. Surround them with your loving presence, and give wisdom and compassion to all who care for them. Remind each one that they are never alone, but are held always in your grace and love, and held in the hearts and prayers of this congregation. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Celebrations!

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS
2 Bobby Watson
7 Mike Armacost
8 Jennifer Moore
12 Jack Schunk
23 Benjamin Baber

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES
1 Bobby & Gina Watzon
15 Ray & Laura Grabowski



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS
1 Gina Watson
5 Don Gerkin
6 Isla Watson
9 Bri Murphy
11 Charles Baber
23 John Kelly, Jr.
24 Nadine McGee
29 Brittney Carmichael

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES
12 Shannon & Rachel Murphy
29 Steve & Selena Howard

Church News

Parish Thanksgiving Eve Worship



Join us on Wednesday, November 25th service at 4:00pm at Immanuel

for a Parish Thanksgiving Eve Worship.

Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes

It's that time again to spread Christmas cheer!
Shoeboxes can be picked up from the overflow room.

What Goes in My Shoebox?

- Decide whether you will pack a box for a **GIRL** or a **BOY**, and the age category: **2–4**, **5–9**, or **10–14**. Secure the provided label to the shoebox and mark accordingly.
- Start with a quality "wow" item such as an awesome toy that will capture the child's attention when he or she opens the box. ***Try to pick at least one item from each category listed on the label info.*** Everything must fit in the shoebox. You can secure with a rubber band.

- **Return your filled shoeboxes to church by Sunday, November 23rd** – they will be delivered to the drop off location that afternoon. If inclined to do so, please include a check payable to Samaritan's Purse for $10 to cover the costs of distribution. Or pay online and follow your box with the enclosed tracking label.

***** VERY IMPORTANT ** DO NOT INCLUDE *****

Candy; toothpaste; gum; used or damaged items; war-related items such as toy guns, knives, or military figures; chocolate or food; seeds; fruit rolls or other fruit snacks; drink mixes (powdered or liquid); liquids or lotions; medications or vitamins; breakable items such as snow globes or glass containers; aerosol cans.

I will add some pointers that were shared by someone that has gone on mission trips to distribute the shoeboxes.
Please read through these before filling your boxes.

- **What did the children like best? The toys** - they don't have any. The toys that are perfect and known by all kids -**jacks, balls, cars, playing cards, marbles**. They didn't know what to do with legos, or puzzles. **Simple toys are best**, even for the older kids.
- **No washcloths!** They didn't know what a washcloth was. They don't use them, or towels either. She had to explain how to use them.
- **Feminine hygiene products** for some of the older girls, especially things like **washable pads**!
- Stuffed animals don't last long - they get filthy. **Don't send white stuffed animals**.
- **Water bottles** are gold!
- **Band-Aids** - awesome
- **Tape measure** - YES
- Any kind of **hair accessories**, but especially little ponytail holders for braids.
- **Sewing kits**
- **Chalk**
- **Bright colored thread** (thread is hard to find in many areas)
- **Tools**
- **Flashlights *WITH* batteries**
- **Eating utensils**, bowls, cups, anything they can put food in
- **Simple books or picture books** so they can practice English as they really want to learn
- Drawings by your own children, of play & family activities
- And of course, **pencils with sharpeners, pens, markers, crayons, notebooks**, etc, for school

Any questions? Contact Sandy Baber.

Christmas in the Barn - December 13th



Christmas in the Barn will be held on Sunday, December 13th at 5 pm.

The barn is located at 16530 Trenton Rd. Please park at Christ Lutheran and walk across the road to the barn. There will be handicap parking available at the barn for those that aren't able to walk from the church.

Dress warm and bring a flashlight and a chair to sit on. All donations will go to NESAP.

Christmas Pageant - December 20th

Time for all young people (and young at heart) to participate in this year's Christmas skit. If you are, or have someone interested please be at service on November 8. The youth will be receiving parts and doing a read through while doing the outreach craft time. This will be from the start of service until communion. Please come and celebrate with us!



Christmas Caroling - December 20th

Join us on Sunday, December 20th - 1 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.
Once again we are visiting our older members for Christmas Caroling! This has become quite the tradition with singing, visiting and a potluck dinner at St. Paul's afterwards. ALL are welcome! And be sure to wear your favorite festive hat!!



Christmas Eve Services - December 24th



Christmas Eve Services will be held at 4:00pm at St. Paul's.

Bring your family & friends to celebrate this special night with our church family!

All are welcome!

Outreach



We have adopted 15 children under the age of 12 for Christmas Wishes. They are requesting 3 gift items per child plus 1 item of clothing. Wishes will be on the tree beginning of November and gifts due back to the church no later than December 6th. If you would like to be part of this project and can't be at St. Paul's to choose a wish, please contact Suzi @ 443-375-2424. Whatever isn't provided by the congregation will be purchased by Outreach.

Flea Market



WOW!!! What a year we had! Vendors clamoring for specific spaces, multiple spaces and just any space!! St. Paul's Flea Market continues to be a huge community event. This year we had nearly 600 spaces sold over the 7 month period.

Our PARKING CREW did an awesome job keeping everyone happy and comfortable in their space!

Our new 2027 application will be available mid-February. We'd love to have you as a Vendor and/or Customer. You're guaranteed a GREAT 3rd Saturday of every month April to October. Promise!

THANK YOU----THANK YOU----THANK YOU!!! TO OUR GRILL GANG AT THE FLEA MARKET! We had rain, low and high temps, wind...but still we sold food that provides income to our Outreach projects!









Baptism of Ainsley Marie Carmichael

On September 13, 2026 we welcomed a new member to God's family!





Madison & Charlie's Shower

Dear St. Paul's Family,
Thank you for the generous gifts and wedding shower to celebrate our marriage! The gifts will continue to help us make our new house a home. We are truly blessed to be part of the St. Paul's Family!

-Madison & Charlie







Madison & Charlie's Wedding

May God bless their new journey together, filling their home with grace and guiding their hearts daily. We wish them a beautiful, blessed lifetime of love, happiness, and shared faith!

Congratulations to Madison Baber and Charlie Frekot who were married at Mar-Lu-Ridge on September 26, 2026. Wishing you a lifetime of love and happiness.








Folfas/Carusillo Wedding

Congratulations to newlyweds Wendy Folfas and Louie Carusillo, who were married on August 28, 2026 at Chesapeake Beach, MD. Cheers to a life filled with love and happiness!







Men’s Fall Dinner

The Lutheran Church Men of the Westminster Conference held their Fall Dinner Meeting on Monday, October 26, 2026, in the Krug Chapel at Carroll Lutheran Village. CLV served a dinner consisting of: garden salad, warm rolls and butter, chicken marsala, buttered green beams, cheddar scalloped potatoes, cherry pie, assorted beverages, and coffee service. Thanks to all the men that joined us!







ALS Walk

Thank you to everyone who came out to support our very own Bob Martin by making a donation or coming out to walk for the Frederick walk on Saturday, September 12th to help find a cure, and in the meanwhile make ALS livable







Troop 706 Court of Honor





Trunk-or-Treat

Friday, October 23rd, we held our Annual Trunk-or-Treat. We had a great turnout and the firehouse sent a firetruck! The kids all looked great and had a lot of fun! Thanks for to all our volunteers for decorating your trunk, doing setup and clean-up and planning all our crafts and games!

















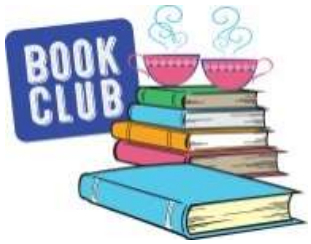




Resurrection Parish Book Club

2026 Schedule

Date	Book	Host	Location	Genre
November 16th	**Great Big Beautiful Life** – Emily Henry			Contemporary Fiction
December 21st	**Comfort and Joy** – Kristen Hannah			December Read



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

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

Registration Open for the Middle School/High School Youth Event

Nov. 20-22, 2026



Theme: Lost and Found

We have a God who is tenacious is seeking out those who are lost or feel lost and joyfully welcomes us home. At this year's event, we'll be spending time with 3 parables from Luke 15- the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin and the Prodigal Son.



www.YoungFaithMatters.com

DELAWARE-MARYLAND + METRO D.C. YOUTH + FAMILY MINISTRY

2027 ELCA YOUTH GATHERING
IMAGINE more
MYLE, THE TABLE, & YOUNG ADULTS

2027 ELCA Youth Gathering "Imagine More"

June 28-July 2, 2027
Minneapolis, MN

Multicultural Youth Leadership Event (MYLE)- June 27-28, 2027

The Table: for youth living with disabilities and their caregivers- June 27-28

Carroll Lutheran School Letter

St Paul's family - Unfortunately, Carroll Lutheran School did not reopen for the 2026-27 school year. Board president, Pr Charlie Marshall, included the following letter in our Annual Mtg packet that was held on Oct 15, I wanted to share it with you. Thank you for your 26 years of support to CLS!

Sandy Baber
Parent Alumni and Board of Trustees Member

CLS
Carroll Lutheran School

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT
Annual Meeting October 15, 2026

The last seven years have been a roller-coaster ride for Carroll Lutheran School. In 2019, enrollment was in the 60's and we thought we might have to close. Then in 2020, Covid came along and our enrollment doubled when we were one of the only schools continuing to operate in person while doing an excellent job of keeping our school Covid-safe. We continued to do well for the next few years although enrollmen slowly declined and the Covid grants that we had relied upon dried up, leaving us struggling financially. With generous giving by some of our donors and budget cuts to reduce expenses, we were able to continue for one more year while searching for ways to turn things around.

The 2025-2026 school year was the last for Carroll Lutheran School. We began with an enrollment of 80 students, enough to keep going for another year. The Board of Trustees knew that unless we could build enrollment for the following school year, our long-term future was in doubt. To do this, we began a campaign, *Forward in Faith*, to raise funds to hire a professional marketing and communications manage who would help us get the word out about CLS and secure additional enrollments for the coming year. W contracted with a local marketing and communications service, and work began in earnest in early 2026. Despite the excellent work done, enrollments for 2026-2027 came in slowly and current year enrollment dropped. The Board remained committed to finding a way forward, considering multiple ways to turn things around. We adopted a CLS Recovery Plan outlining steps we would take to restore the school's financial stability, eliminate operating deficits, increase enrollment, strengthen fundraising efforts, and create a sustainable long-term financial model while continuing to fulfill our Christian educational mission, and asked our mortgage lender for an additional loan of $700,000 to enable us to carry this out. Both this request and a similar request made of our bank were turned down, and the Board made the painful decision to close the school and notify families, faculty and other staff at a special meeting on Jul 13, 2026.

Our first concern was to assist families in finding schools and staff in finding employment. With the help and guidance of Bishop Bill Gohl and forbearance on our mortgage payments, we have been working with Principal Penny Segessenman, Business Manager Margaret Arnoult and other dedicated staff to prepare the school building and property for sale and have found good homes for our books, supplies and equipment in many local schools and other nonprofit organizations. (see the Principal's Report)

It has been a joy and an honor to serve on the Board of Trustees for the past five years, and as a Wednesday Chapel leader for the past ten. The first day I walked into the school, I immediately knew this was a very special place. The students and staff will always have a special place in my heart, as will my fellow Board members, donors and volunteers. Through the students, faculty and staff that go forth from here to their places of work and learning, CLS will continue to bear fruit in the lives of others for years to come. In fact, we've only just begun!

Respectfully submitted,

"Pastor Charlie" Marshall, President, CLS Board of Trustees

Council Minutes

Highlights from the August Council Meeting

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Council Meeting

15773 Dover Rd. Upperco MD 21155

Tuesday August 18, 2026

Council Meeting

Call to order: 7:01PM

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), Wade Hilgartner(1st term/3rd year), Heidi Ebler(1st term/1st year)

Members Absent: Kelly Mountcastle(2nd term/1st year)

Prayer from Pr. Susan Roy

Motion: To approve the minutes as amended from July's meeting. Motion by Ms. Lyons. 2nd by Ms. Lewis. All in favor. Motion carried.

Committee Reports

Outreach

- Alpha Pregnancy "Sanctity of Human Life" Baby bottles were collected and delivered to Alpha Pregnancy - $ 66.20 Total from St. Paul's**
- Bob indicated his donation was $50.00, so this amount wasn't correct. I called Alpha and was told they report the "cash" first then calculate in the checks. Our **ACTUAL** donation totaled $204.51.
- "Back to School" food pantry donation was made to Immanuel totaling $ 181.76
- Delivered our collected glasses/cases to NC Senior Center/Lions Club

Flea Market: August 15th

- Sold 68 spaces @ $30/space = $2,040.00 total

Total so far this year - $15,730.00

Property

- Looking into the possibility of striping more lines to add some spaces in the parking lot. This would be particularly helpful during Flea Markets.
- Still working on a solution to the AC alarm.

Parish

- Nothing new to report. The next meeting is tomorrow (August 19)

New Business

- Fellowship
    - Will start back up in September on Rally Day (September 13)
    - Will continue to be the 2nd Sunday of the month
- Sunday School
    - Ms. Geldmacher read a letter submitted by Susan Flemming on behalf of the Sunday School teachers, which discussed the difficulties faced but also included solutions.
    - Council will support the Sunday School teachers in any way we can and we are grateful they continue to teach the youth.
- Advent
    - Vicar Don suggested ordering an Advent Wreath Banner which would have a banner labeling each candle.
        - Mary will ask her mother for help to make them to save on cost.

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

Meeting adjourned: 8:12 PM

Next Meeting: September 15, 2026

Highlights from the September Council Meeting

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Council Meeting

15773 Dover Rd. Upperco MD 21155

Tuesday September 15, 2026

Council Meeting

Call to order: 6:58 PM

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),Kelly Mountcastle(2nd term/1st year), Colleen Geldmacher(2nd term/1st year), Wade Hilgartner(1st term/3rd year), Heidi Ebler(1st term/1st year)

Members Absent: Carol Lewis(2nd term/2nd year)

Prayer from Vicar Don

MOTION: To approve the minutes from August 18, 2026. Motion by Ms. Caine. 2nd by Ms. Ebler. All in favor. Motion carried.

Committee Reports

Outreach

- Contacted Salvation Army for Christmas Angels. Planning to adopt 15 children under the age of 12.
- "Back to School" food pantry donation was made to NESAP totaling $ 261.50

Flea Market

September 19th

- So far, 76 spaces have been sold for 9/19 = $ 2280.00
    - Total so far this year - $ 16,210.00
- Lost/Found - House key, 2 watches
- Cell phone owner found!

Property

- Alarm evaluation on Thursday

Church Steering Committee update-Tom Batillo

- What are people looking for in a church?
  - Research shows they like TV screens in the sanctuary to follow along instead of a paper bulletin.
  - Updated websites are crucial because everyone looks to the internet
  - More contemporary songs during worship, to be mixed in with the traditional hymns.
- The younger generations are returning to church, specifically the Catholic and non-denominational churches. What can we do to grow our congregation?

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:48 pm.
Next Meeting: October 20, 2026



NOVEMBER 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
All Saints' Day 9am – Worship & Sunday School Healing Service Food Collection Invite a Friend				 12:30pm - Parish Grief Support Group at Immanuel		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
9am – Worship 2nd Offering - Shephard's Staff Congregational Meeting Fellowship					 1:00pm -Prayer Ministry Meeting 6:30pm - (CoG) Youth Group	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
9am – Worship & Sunday School Council Members Installation	 6:30pm - Parish Book Club	 Council Meeting - 7:00pm		 12:30pm - Parish Grief Support Group at Immanuel		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
9am – Worship & Sunday School			4:00pm - Thanksgiving Eve Service at Immanuel			
29	30					
First Sunday of Advent 9am – Worship & Sunday School						

DECEMBER 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
				 12:30pm - Parish Grief Support Group at Immanuel		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Second Sunday of Advent 9am – Worship & Sunday School Healing Service Food Collection & Bring a Friend					 1:00pm -Prayer Ministry Meeting 6:30pm - (CoG) Youth Group	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Third Sunday of Advent 9am – Worship & Sunday School 2nd Offering - Bridging Life Fellowship		 Council Meeting - 7:00pm		 12:30pm - Parish Grief Support Group at Immanuel		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Fourth Sunday of Advent 9am – Worship & Sunday School Christmas Pageant 	 Parish Book Club - 6:30pm			 4:00pm - Christmas Eve Service		
27	28	29	30	31		
 9am – Lessons & Carols Service						

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 REPS	Mary Caine 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
HISTORIAN	Carol Lewis
HOSPITALITY	Colleen Geldmacher Susan Fleming
MUSIC & WORSHIP	Mary Caine
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