

St. Paul Lutheran Church
To Know Jesus and Make Him Known

201 S. Main Street, Spring Grove, PA 17362
717-225-3466

Pastor: Rev. Alison Bowlan-Kurland

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EPISTLE

MAY 2024

THOUGHTS FROM PASTOR ALISON

“When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.” Acts 2

On Sunday May 19th we will celebrate the day of Pentecost. Pentecost is the day we mark as the birthday of the church. It's the day that God gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to his people. In the book of Acts the Holy Spirit is described as a “violent wind”. In Hebrew the word, Ruach (violent wind), means breath of life. Have you ever thought of the Holy Spirit as the breath of life? On the day of Pentecost, the breath of life entered into God's people, in the same way God breathed the breath of life into Adam and Eve in the very beginning of the world. God's gift of Ruach is yet another promise of God's unconditional love and reminds us of our connection with people of all generations.

What does it mean to you to be filled with the breath of life given by God? What does it mean that God speaks to each one of us in the way we are able to hear and understand? What does it mean that God does not give up until we hear him? To me it means that even now, generations later, God is still working in, through, and around me. Even though I can't see God or touch God, I know God is with me. That's what God promises me with the gift of his Ruach given to me in my baptism, that he is constantly breathing the breath of life into me. Every time I feel the wind blowing, I think of the Holy Spirit, and I am reminded of God's presence in my life, and I am so grateful.

We have been so blessed to be witnesses to four baptisms in the last few Sundays. We will receive new members on May 12th. We will celebrate our five graduating seniors. What a fabulous reminder that God is alive and working among us. I can feel the breath of life being breathed into our church family, can you?

I pray in the days to come we continue to feel the movement of the Spirit and listen to God's call in our life together.

God's Most Abundant Blessings,

Pastor Alison



Worship Highlights

Sunday YouTube Worship

9:00 a.m. "LIVE Stream Worship Online"
through YouTube Live (St. Paul Lutheran Church Spring Grove)

Below is the YouTube link:

*Please subscribe and turn on notifications so
that you know whenever we go live.*

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJJtXyxY1mhzb2hEdEB_Cw

Parish Life Update

Baptisms: Jean-Luc Skywalker Colas – April 7
Eleanor Grace Hartsough – April 14
Hudson Gray Leese – April 21
Weston Miller – May 12

New Members: Amber and Jean Colas – April 7
Robie, Kristin, Harper, and Wyatt Leese – April 21
Keith and Jennifer Senft – May 12
Evelyn Hartsough – May 12
Keith, Crystal, Carter, Wyatt and Benjamin Gayman – May 12

Graduating High School Seniors: Michael Hershey, Ava Plummer,
Cameron Smith, Zach Smith, Austin T. Ural

Death: Betty Poff – April 5

Prayer Requests

Steve Ealy, Jr.
Irelyn Sprenkle
Harper Leese
Diane Lepson
Bill Thoman
Elliott Leonard
Victoria Martin
Kathy Godrey
Jesse Betlyon
Pat Berkheimer (cancer)
Barb Gault
Sheila Geuvin
Lou Long
Steve Tiehel
Sara Smith
Larry Hamby
Robyn Jirsa
Christine Smith
Doug Ewing
Sandy Mummert
Jan Hersh (heart problems)
Mary Kessler
Tom Uffelman
Scott Wisner (brain cancer)
Sue Smith
Sally Hoover (illness)

Finance News

This financial information shows the total receipts and expenses for the general fund for the current calendar year, as well as the current deficit or surplus. Please forward any questions to Amy Thompson at Amy.Thompson@stpaulmlutheranchurchsg.com.

General Fund Summary	
March 2024	
Total Revenues	*124,363.04
Total Expenditures	132,661.68
Net	-8,298.64
*This amount includes \$15,000 transferred from the Reserve Fund to ensure the church had cash available to pay for the second and third floor fire alarm project, which totaled \$28,500. This project was paid for in March of 2024.	

Quarterly Donation Statements- Please Read

The Finance Committee has decided to eliminate quarterly donation statements. Annual statements will be mailed in January. If you would like to continue to receive quarterly donation statements, please call or email Amy Thompson at 484-336-4077 or Amy.Thompson@stpaulmlutheranchurchsg.com. As a reminder, you may request a donation statement at any time during the year by contacting Amy.

Memorial Fund Purchases - April 2024

Memorial funds have been designated by the council to buy new books for the church library.

We thank God for the witness of former members and for the memorial gifts which will help us to continue our mission to know Jesus and make Him known.

Offering Envelopes

If you do not have offering envelopes and would like them, please contact Amy Thompson at 484-336-4077.



Graduating Seniors

This year, St. Paul will recognize five graduating seniors on two different Sundays in May.

Ava Plummer, Cameron Smith, and Austin Ural will be recognized on Sunday, May 5

Michael Hershey and Zach Smith will be recognized on Sunday, May 12

We would love to shower these seniors with gift cards to celebrate their success. We will be collecting gift cards in any amount to be divided up among our seniors. Gift cards can be for gas, bookstores, supercenters, coffee shops, restaurants, etc.

Please return gift cards to Amy Thompson or put them in the box outside the church office, no later than Sunday, May 5.

Pentecost Flowers

Pentecost Sunday is May 19 and again this year we are offering red geranium flower dedications. If you wish to remember loved ones or honor someone special in your life, St. Paul is taking orders for RED geraniums in 4 ½ inch foiled pots (each \$5.50) which will be placed in the church for worship service on Pentecost Sunday. Order forms are available in the Fellowship Hall and the church office.

A complete list of the dedications will be included in the worship bulletins on Pentecost Sunday.

If you purchased geraniums, you may take them home after worship on Pentecost Sunday, May 19, or leave them to be planted on the church lawn.

PLEASE RETURN YOUR ORDER FORM TO THE CHURCH OFFICE, NO LATER THAN MONDAY, MAY 6, make checks payable to St. Paul Lutheran Church and specify “Pentecost flowers” in the memo line.





Plant Sale

Calling all gardeners! Mission, Service, and Outreach will be having a **plant sale on Sunday, May 5**, at church in the Fellowship Hall and we need your help. We are asking for donations of plants. **As you prep your gardens for spring and summer, we would love to have plants you would like to share.** Houseplants and succulents would be good also. We will provide some colorful annuals.

You can **drop off your plant donations at church on Saturday, May 4, from 10:00 to 2:00**. Please mark your donations with the plant's name. There will be a display in the Fellowship Hall with sticks to be used for labeling. If you are unable to drop off your donation on May 4, you may put them on the side porch by the side yard May 1-3.

The Plant Sale will be a good opportunity to purchase a variety of inexpensive plants just in time for spring planting. Proceeds from the plant sale will help fund Mission, Service, and Outreach projects. If you have questions, contact Brenda Bowersox.



Back to School Clothing Program

GOAL: To provide new and gently used clothing and shoes, and new socks for children in Grades K – 6 in Spring Grove School District in August 2024

HOW CAN YOU HELP:

- 1. Save, collect, or purchase clothing – boys and girls -** Sizes 3/4, 5/6, 7/8, 9/10, 11/12, 13/14, 15/16 and Adult Small.
- 2. Yard Sales** – if you know of yard sales in the area with children’s clothing, contact Sue Williams with the dates so we can request donations.
- 3. Donate clothing - COLLECTION BEGINS JULY 7** for St. Paul members. Donation boxes will be in the basement.
- 4. Volunteer** – your time to sort and organize clothing.

Thank you for your support!!

Watch Weekly Email and Monthly Epistle for more details.

Questions? Contact Sue Williams at 717-225-6480.

Second Story Silcox Library

New Books, Part One

I'm pleased to announce that several new books have been added to the church library. Take a look at the shelves appropriately labeled "New Books" and you'll find the following titles by Kate Bowler.

- * *Good Enough: 40ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection*
Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie

From the preface:

You can read these entries in order or skip around or use them during the forty days of Lent. Each includes a prayer or blessing . . . Inside is also a simple prompt called a Good Enough Step to nudge you toward action. No, not every transformation is possible. But yes, there are some things we can do to inch toward a deeper, richer, truer kind of faith. (xii-xiii)

- * *Have a Beautiful, Terrible Day!: Daily Meditations for the Ups, Downs & In-Betweens*
Kate Bowler

From the preface:

These daily entries are meant to be thumbed through, picked up and set down when you need them. Please do not ever, ever feel bad that you did not read them beginning to end. . . Take what you need. The chapters have been descriptively labeled in the table of contents so that you can find the themes that might match what you are going through. (xxvi)

- * *The Lives We Actually Have: 100 Blessings for Imperfect Days*
Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie

From the introduction:

May the words that follow be a little shelter for you, dear reader. May these blessings meet you today, giving enough hope or courage or rest for this moment. And may they offer you words if you can't find your own, and some encouragement as you do what you always do: bless others. (xxi)

* *No Cure for Being Human (and Other Truths I Need to Hear)*
Kate Bowler

From a review by Lori Gottlieb, author of *Maybe You Should Talk to Someone*:
With hilarity and courage, Bowler tells the story of being diagnosed with stage-four cancer at age thirty-five, which forced her to re-examine the way she (and we) live our lives. This is a brilliant examination of what happens when everything you assumed is suddenly in question, and you have to substitute love for self-actualization and hope for certainty.”

Books may be borrowed on the honor system. (If you would like to record your name and book title(s), notecards are available on the shelf by the chair.) Recommendations for future purchases are always welcome!

May your reading be enlightening,
Betsy Scheivert

(I would like to thank my fellow Council members for authorizing the use of memorial funds to purchase books for the library.)

Harvest of Hope Food Pantry

May's specific food pantry items are spaghetti and spaghetti sauce

****MAY PANTRY VOLUNTEERS****

**TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2024
4:00-7:00 P.M.**

- **Bobbi Heisler**
 - **Kim Leber**
 - **Hannah Kessler**
 - **Dennis Kessler**
 - **Kathy Gladfelter**
-
-

Harvest of Hope Food Pantry Summer Lunch Program Begins May 2024

Provides 5 healthy lunches per week for each child of Harvest of Hope clients

Financial assistance is needed

(\$3 per child, per week, for 11 weeks) to provide lunch for over 300 children this summer. Contributions should be made in **blue** pew envelopes – **noting:** "*Harvest of Hope Summer Lunch Program*"

Thank you for your continued support!

**Our church will be helping with Harvest of Hope Summer Lunch Distribution
on Monday, July 1, 2024.**

Watch the bulletin board to sign up.

Our Little Free Pantry



Using space within the St. Paul's Lutheran Church sign, extra storage space was created for more food and supplies to help those in need within our community.

Little Free Pantry is asking for donations of canned spam, tuna, chicken, beef/stew, salmon and chili.

You can leave them in the vestibule inside the Handicap Entrance.

THANK YOU!

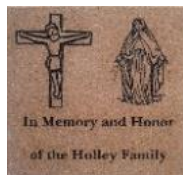
Legacy Garden

A perpetual project that helps raise money for the building revitalization fund. It is a special place created for worship, prayer and reflection. Memorialize or honor your loved ones by purchasing custom-engraved bricks for the Garden.

Order online at: www.polarengraving.com/stpaulevangelicallutheranchurch

Order forms are also available in the church office or on our website.

Thank you for your support.



Spring Programming

BIBLE STUDY – Last Bible Study Gathering will be May 14

Join Pastor Alison every Tuesday morning at 10:00 a.m. in the Parlor for Bible Study and prayer. Focus of study will be on the Gospel for the upcoming Sunday

ALL COMMITTEE NIGHT – Last All Committee Night will be May 13

All committees with the exception of Worship and Music will gather together on **Monday, May 13, at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall for a meal provided by John and Teresa Sprenkle.** At 6:30 p.m. there will be a time of sharing between the committees and by 6:45 p.m. we will break out into committees to do our work. Childcare will be provided. **All Committee will resume in September.**

LUNCH BUNCH – Last gathering will be May 14

Join Pastor Alison to share in lunch together. All are welcome! **The next gathering will be Tuesday, May 14, at 11:00 a.m. at Genova's in Spring Grove.** If you plan on attending, please RSVP to Pastor Alison. We hope to see you there!

SUNDAY SCHOOL – Last Day of Sunday School will be May 19

Join us for our Faith Formation Programs. Sunday School Programs meet every Sunday after worship at **10:30 a.m.** Sunday School is for all ages: Pre-K through 12th grade, Young Adult Forum (faith and family), Adult Sunday School (Augsburg Curriculum) and Forum Class (current events and faith).

St. Paul Playgroup News

St. Paul Playgroup continues every Wednesday from 10:00-11:30 a.m.

This ministry is open to the community. We meet on the third floor in the Kiwi Room. Please email Amy at Amy.Thompson@stpaulchurchsg.com if you would like more information or to join the email list.

We have continued to meet new friends and had 20-35 kids per week throughout April! Some church members started to help with playgroup this month, which is appreciated as the program continues to grow. If you are interested in being a playgroup helper when playgroup moves back inside in the fall contact Amy Thompson.



Sunday School / Children's Choir News

In April, we have been focusing on the Easter season and the stories of Jesus appearing to the disciples. Kids have learned about Doubting Thomas and The Great Commission. The Youth have been continuing the talks sheet curriculum.

The classes are all working toward attendance goals to earn an end of the Sunday School year ice cream party.



The Children's Choir continues to grow and fill the front of the church with beautiful music one Sunday a month. They sang The Sheep Song on April 21st to celebrate Good Shepherd Sunday. They will sing again on May 12th.

CYF Event Recap

Our youth had an Escape Room and Ice Cream event on April 12th. We had 13 youth and 4 adults in attendance. Both the boys and the girls group escaped, but the girls were quite a bit faster. Everyone had a great time!



CYF Event Recap

Our younger kids spent the beginning of April building and decorating rockets to launch at Brian and Libby Artz's house. The event was a huge success with 44 people in attendance. Thanks so much to Brian and Libby for being the rocket experts and allowing us to use your yard.



VBS News

We are in need of VBS sponsors. Instead of asking for item donations this year, we would like to ask members of the congregation to sponsor a child attending VBS for \$25. This money will be used to offset the costs of snacks and materials. There are scuba-themed donation cards with envelopes hanging in Fellowship Hall that can be placed in the offering basket throughout the months of May and June. Thank you for your financial support of VBS! As of April 16th, we have 42 kids signed up for VBS.



ST. PAUL VBS
JUNE 10-14
9-11:30

REGISTRATION IS OPEN
FOR KIDS ENTERING
KINDERGARTEN-6TH
GRADE!
SCAN THE QR CODE TO
REGISTER

CYF Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars!

EVENTS:

- **All Church Sunday School Year End Celebration – Sunday, May 19, 11:30 a.m.**
– **Church Side Yard** - Dress comfortably to church, bring side dish or dessert, blankets or chairs
(Rain backup – Bible Trivia in Fellowship Hall)
 - **Last day of Sunday School** – May 19
 - **Vacation Bible School** – Monday, June 10, thru Friday, June 14, from 9:00-11:30 a.m.
-



Council News

- Council welcomed new member Steve Ealy and new president Karen Myers.
- A program of Ministry Minutes has been recommended by the Finance Committee and approved by the Council. There will be brief monthly presentations with the focus rotating among our various programs and outreach efforts. Stay tuned!
- Everyone is invited to a side-yard wiffle ball game and hot dog lunch after church on May 19. (If the weather doesn't cooperate, be ready for Bible trivia in the Fellowship Hall.)
- VBS will be held June 10-14 with a SCUBA theme. Forty children have signed up; the congregation can continue to provide support with \$25 sponsorships.
- The next Council Chat will be held in June; the date will be announced soon.
- St. Paul continues to grow and thrive—baptisms, new members, a full schedule of children and youth activities, and more!

**The next Council meeting will be held
on Monday, May 20, at 6:30 p.m.**

Hospitality Committee

The Hospitality Committee works to make our church a welcoming environment for new members and the existing congregation by reviewing and creating church signage, pamphlets/flyers/handouts for special events and keeping our Connect Cards up to date. We help with greeters, coffee hour, funeral luncheons, The Live Nativity and the Maker's Market.

We're seeking additional members who would like to serve on this committee. If interested or would like more information, please contact Ann Hayes at annhayes545@gmail.com

Fellowship Committee

We are looking for volunteers to help get the coffee brewing for Fellowship Hour Volunteers will need to arrive at 8:30 a.m. to get the coffee set up prior to worship.

Volunteers are needed for the following dates:

May 12

July 28

August 25

September 1, 8, 22

November 3, 24

December 8, 15, 29

If interested, please sign-up on the Fellowship Coffee Hour volunteer sheet located on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.

If you have any questions, please contact Pat Lobodinsky at 717-870-4598.

Mission, Service, Outreach & Stewardship News

Plant Sale

The Plant Sale will be a good opportunity to purchase a variety of inexpensive plants just in time for spring planting. Proceeds from the plant sale will help fund Mission, Service, and Outreach projects. For additional information, refer to page 8 in this Epistle. If you have questions, contact Brenda Bowersox.

Ronald McDonald House Aluminum Tab Collection

We are collecting aluminum tabs from cans and donating them to the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central PA. The funds generated from recycling these tabs help support the Ronald McDonald House programs and services. The mission of Ronald McDonald House is to keep families together, inspire strength, and give comfort and support to families whose children are receiving essential medical care. Donation containers will be in the Fellowship Hall. When everyone “pulls” together, you can make a difference!

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE MONDAY, MAY 13, AT 6:30 P.M.

Please join us and share your ideas for service and outreach.

Property Committee

- The Spring Work Day was Saturday, April 20. Many projects were completed with the help available.
- Work is being done to repair several non-working heating units. As work is being done, spots where wire enters the building will be sealed in an effort to stop bugs from entering the building. Hopefully this will help solve our current wasp and elder bug problem.
- Decision was made to switch pest control companies from Ehrlich to Fox. The new policy provides better coverage for less money.
- Work is being done to repair the ceiling in the second-floor conference room. When the old lights were removed, the damage was more extensive than expected. This task has prohibited us from moving forward on the project.
- The wall repairs have been done in the third-floor bathrooms where the wall heaters were moved. Painting has begun.
- Multiple resources are being followed up on for solutions for the water which continues to collect in the elevator pit. Since it is believed that the water is coming up through the floor it was determined that any solution is cost prohibitive. We will have to instead take steps to protect the metal structure.
- Thanks to Tom Ural for taking notes at the last committee meeting.

**The next Property Committee meeting
will be Monday, May 13, at 6:30 p.m.**

Worship & Music

- Dinner Church well attended, and it was noted how good the food was. The children did well with Kid's Club.
- Everyone loved the children's procession on Palm Sunday. There was so much joy in worship.
- There was discussion around the stripping of the altar on Maundy Thursday and how it was too dark in the sanctuary. It was noted that the sanctuary to be dim next year in order for participants to better witness what was happening.
- The Tenebrae service had better attendance than normal. Members mentioned how moving the service was.
- Easter services were well attended and filled with joy. It was noted how much people loved the trumpet. There was a discussion about having a brass band next year as well as for Sundays throughout the year.
- A special thank you to Mark Sullivan for the beautiful Easter decorations and the altar guild for the many hours they dedicated to making worship run smoothly.
- Three new acolytes have been trained. There are several more children and youth who would like to be trained. Acolyte calendar is full.
- Lectors and Communion Assistants' schedule is full through July.
- Ushers are looking for an usher captain. If anyone is available, please contact Jim Gingerich.
- The speakers have been installed in the sanctuary; still waiting on a handheld mic. All members have been raving about the new equipment.

**The next Worship and Music Committee meeting
will be Tuesday, June 3.**

Guidelines for Giving - 2024
Offering Envelopes - Simply Giving – VANCO online

ENVELOPES:

Contributions will be tracked for the following funds:

- **General Fund** - One weekly envelope for this account
(covers salaries, operating expenses, programs, benevolence and maintenance)
- **Special Appeal** - Special Red Envelopes – at entrances and in pews
- **Harvest of Hope Food Pantry** - Blue Envelope – at entrances and in pews
- **White Envelope** - Bulletins/Communion, Flowers, Special Offerings,
Little Free Pantry, any other use at entrances and in pews

IMPORTANT - Mark purpose of contribution on outside of white envelope.

All envelopes should be clearly marked with the total amount found in that envelope. Contributions for several weeks may be combined in one envelope.

SIMPLY GIVING:

Simply Giving is an automated giving program by which you can use electronic funds transfer to give your weekly, semi-monthly, or monthly offering from your checking or savings account to our congregation.

Contact Amy Thompson for an authorization form or print one from our website:
<https://www.stpaulchurchsg.com>

VANCO ONLINE:

VANCO Online is an electronic on-line and mobile option for making church offerings or donations, in addition to our current Simply Giving program. Contributions will be debited automatically from your checking or savings account or processed using your credit or debit card. When giving electronically, please be aware that VANCO Online fees are much lower for the church for ACH Transactions (withdrawals from a checking or savings account) versus credit cards charges.

This online and mobile donation option is a product of VANCO, the same company that we currently use for Simply Giving. VANCO is endorsed by the ELCA, is secure, and is used by over 20,000 churches. You may access it via:

Our website: <https://www.stpaulchurchsg.com>)

VANCO link: <https://secure.myvanco.com/YJKW>

VANCO Mobile app (load to your phone). Use code **LAR84A**

If there are any questions concerning pledges, contributions, or methods of giving please contact Amy Thompson, Financial Secretary at 717-225-6480 or finance@stpaulchurchsg.com

GIVE ELECTRONICALLY TO SUPPORT THE MINISTRY OF ST. PAUL:

Did you want to contribute during the offering today, but you have no cash or check? can the QR Code below to go straight to the St. Paul Electronic Giving Page. Thank you so much for contributing to the ministry happening at St. Paul Lutheran!

If you would like help setting up recurring giving, please contact Amy Thompson at Amy.Thompson@stpaulchurchsg.com or by phone at 484-336-4077.





KENNIE'S COMMUNITY REWARDS PROGRAM **APRIL UNTIL AUGUST 2024**

Shopping at Kennie's Market raises money for our congregation.

1. Complete a community rewards enrollment form which will be **available in March** at the church. Sign up as soon as possible – your total accumulates from the time you sign up beginning in April.
2. **Kennie's will rebate up to 1% of the purchases** made in the St. Paul's name.
3. Last year people from the **congregation earned \$527.60** just by enrolling and shopping at Kennie's.

Any questions? Contact: Sue Williams 717-225-6480



Grocery Gift Card Fundraiser

All money raised will go to support the Youth Ministry at St. Paul Lutheran Church.

- Purchase **Kennie's Market Gift Cards** in increments of \$50.
- Use gift cards when you do your normal shopping.
- Youth receives 5% of gift card sales directly from the supermarket.

Details:

1. Cards must be purchased with checks made payable to St. Paul Lutheran Church.
2. To Purchase cards, please contact Sue Williams at 717-225-6480.



Church Council Members:

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Financial Administrator	Amy Thompson	484-336-4077
Church Musician	Ian Hoke	667-207-0550
Council President	Karen Myers	717-495-5117