

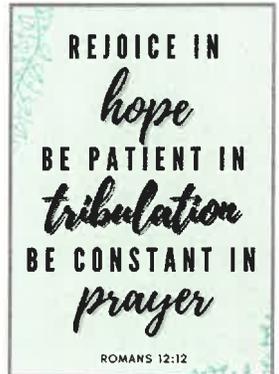
March
2026

St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church

CREATES AND SHARES GOD'S LOVE AND COMPASSION

727 South Second Avenue
Alpena, Michigan 49707

A Stephen Ministry Congregation



2026 Theme:
Be Our Vision Lord

Monthly Ministry Highlight:
Property Committee



Phone: 989-356-1658

www.stpaul.org

Facebook Page: St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church - Alpena

YouTube: St. Paul Lutheran Church, Alpena, Michigan

March 2026

Special points of interest:

- *“There is no limit to what can be accomplished when no one cares who gets the credit.”*
- *“The Season of Lent is a time to reflect on our team at St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church and how we can reach others with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”*

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St. Paul Epistle

Lent Season

People of God at St. Paul, John Wooden, Coach of the UCLA Bruins, echoes a statement made by various people in various iterations, *“There is no limit to what can be accomplished when no one cares who gets the credit.”*

Wooden’s 10 NCAA National Championships in a 12 year period (while at UCLA) are unmatched by any other college basketball coach. I raise up this leader because he is the epitome of servant leadership and, as you know, March Madness is upon us.

I played and watched a great deal of basketball in my life and I have refereed this athletic event all over the world, both men and women’s basketball. I have witnessed great athletes and great leaders and I have seen the opposite as well. I found throughout my time of play and officiating that the strongest teams are those who play

together, diminishing individual egos while celebrating teamwork; incorporating the strengths of individuals, minimizing weaknesses and diminishing jealousy; watching for opportunities for all team members, rather than for one superstar. The strength of these teams was found in cooperation rather than conflict and they were successful, whether they won or lost the competition.

This March, as you choose to watch or refrain from viewing the NCAA college basketball tournament, I hope you will take up your cross and remember the entire month of March is found in the Lenten Season. Sports metaphors are interesting and worthwhile, but our congregational team has a much more significant task than putting a ball through a hoop. The Season of

Lent is a time to reflect on our team at St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church and how we can reach others with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. First consider what Coach Wooden said, *“There is no limit to what can be accomplished when no one cares who gets the credit,”* then contemplate how we (as a community and as individuals) walk in Jesus’ name, how we speak his gospel and share our lives giving all the glory to God.

Jesus changes the perspective of his followers and each faithful journey will never be the same if we reflect on his sacrifice. I am fond of saying, “Be great and help others be greater.” This statement is from Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew, “If you want to be great, you must be the servant of all.” Jesus, on the night he was betrayed took a basin and washed the disciple’s feet... all the disciples: The disciple who betrayed him,



Lent Season Continued

the disciple who denied him and the disciples who ran away in fear. Our Savior won the victory over sin and death with a servant heart, proclaiming hope in his resurrection. During March, I don't want you to go mad

(March Madness). It is my hope and desire that you become more passionate about your faith journey. That you see your life as more than a game or race, but rather a sacred journey filled with the love of God. If you choose to take on a

new ministry or give up a bad habit during the season of Lent, I pray that in all things you accomplish that God would receive the glory. Be great and help others be greater.

- Pastor John



CHURCH COUNCIL



I am part of the AARP/IRS Ministry here at St. Paul church, I have collaborated with them for six years and they have been at St. Paul using this facility for three years. This ministry is amazing. When I started this ministry, it was because I was bored in the months of January and February and thought what a good use of my "Down time." Little did I know what an adventure it would become for me. The original intent of Tax-Aide, the program's name, is to assist with low income and those who are 50 and older in filing their income taxes. We do not turn anyone away no matter whether your income or your age.



To become a volunteer every year, each person must pass four tests ranging from ethics, computer skills, confidentiality, and

of course learning the changes in the tax laws from the previous year. We are placed in scenarios which include examples of all the new tax laws both from the IRS and the state of Michigan. We basically spend the month of January performing these assignments. I have to admit about mid-January I wonder why I am doing this as I keep on telling myself I am too old to learn.

When I sit down with my first client and start handling their information and realize what many people in our area live on and how they are still able to pay for food and taxes, I am totally amazed. The people I encounter are amazing, many live on next to nothing, under the financial guidelines of poverty.

AARP—a Taxing Outreach Ministry that Inspires Hope

Their hearts are huge; they want to be honest and pay their "fair share." The smile on their faces when you get them any type of a refund is huge, and the fact that it is "free" to get their taxes done is another smile. In 2025 we accomplished 685 visits, with 654 claims submitted. We did refund \$414,227 in total, with the average refund being \$735.00.

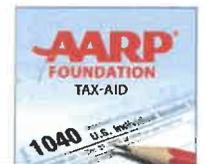
AARP wants to thank St. Paul Church for continuing to let taxes be prepared in your building. The clients love it as it is easy in and that we have an elevator. In the past the donations from these people have totaled over \$1000.00 which helps with the annual budget at St. Paul. Again, thank you for allowing us to continue to use the church building to accomplish this important outreach ministry. Submitted by Donna Kensa Council Secretary

CHURCH COUNCIL

- Jessica O'Neil - President (Education)
- Andrea Dutcher - Vice-President (Personnel)
- Donna Kensa - Secretary (Property)
- Bernadine Wagner - Treasurer
- Scott Brooks (Outreach)
- Dawn Grzeskowiak
- Cathy Kieliszewski (Worship)
- Danielle McDonald (Small Group Ministry - Women)
- Scott Parkham (Property)
- Phil Wickstrom (Small Group Ministry - Men)
- Cayden Smith—Youth Member

Their area of responsibility is in parentheses.

Church Council monthly reports are available in the office.





Adam's Advice Hub (AHH)

Before I was hired as the Media Coordinator at St. Paul Lutheran, our livestream had some challenges. At times, people watching from home could not hear the service, and I was told that at one point there was not even video. One of my first responsibilities was to make sure both the sanctuary and people online could clearly hear and see what was happening in worship. The solution itself turned out to be fairly simple. Once I discovered where the problem was, I



was able to go into the computer software and adjust a few settings. The difficult part was not the fix but figuring out what needed to be fixed. Our sound system has many connections, and solving a problem means carefully checking each possible point where something might go wrong. I reached out to two knowledgeable people for advice. They offered helpful ideas, but in the end, I needed to take the time to learn how our system was set up and work through the issue myself. That time spent learning has

been very valuable. Now, when something goes wrong, problems can usually be solved quickly and calmly. Having someone who understands the layout of the system helps prevent small issues from becoming big distractions during worship or events. My goal is always to keep technology from interrupting worship and instead let it quietly support it. If you ever have questions or need help with technology, I am always happy to assist. You can reach me by emailing media@stpaul.org or by calling the church office.



"Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize."
1 Corinthians 9:24

Jackie's Jump Start

"We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. May your unfailing love be with us, Lord, even as we put our hope in you" Psalm 33:20-22. Lent/Easter is such a very busy season in the church office. The Lent/Holy Week/Easter schedule is posted

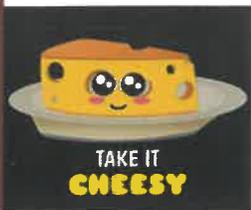


in this newsletter and there are also tri-folds in the Narthex, and we invite you to join us for as many services as you can. I want to draw your attention to a few additional items. The first is the deadline to order your Easter flowers, which is Monday, March 30th. You will find the order

forms in the Narthex or in the church office. The second, is that the church office will be closing at 11:00 a.m. on Good Friday, April 3rd, and will remain closed through Easter Monday, April 6th. If you have any questions, you may contact me via email, jackie@stpaul.org, or call me at the office (989) 356-1658.



Miss Cheesy's Corner



Hi, my name is Linda Ricotta. I was born and raised in Alpena. I am a mom of 2 girls. I have been

married to my husband Charles for 15 years this year. I was a stay-at-home mom for 14 years and I helped my husband manage and operate our heating and cooling business (Ricotta Mechanical LLC).

My favorite bible verse is John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have

eternal life." My favorite worship song is, "Abide with Me." I am a Jill of all trades with many random hobbies, including photography, photo restoration, walking with my family and I am enthusiastic about sweep staking.



I believe in treating people with compassion and professionalism with a willingness to listen.

I thank God every day for this position at St. Paul as I was praying for a job like this for some time. I always have a

smile on my face wherever I go and yes, my last name bears the

same name as a cheese. My nickname is Mrs. Cheesy and I look forward to serving with all of you at St. Paul. Please stop by and say, "Hi" because it is not easy being cheesy.

Linda Ricotta



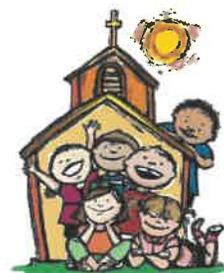
Children's Church

During the Contemporary, 10:30 service we have Children's Church (another name for Sunday School). Parents and children are invited to the 10:30 service and after a prayer and a song, the children will go with the Children's Church ministry team. This opportunity is a time



of learning, celebration, and fun while allowing parents to worship. The children will meet for about 40 minutes and then return to the 10:30 Service for the final song. Please pray for this ministry and support this outreach effort with

your time and effort and by sharing it with your friends and family.



Kid's Korner - Kids speak the gospel for all to hear.

The children made cards expressing love for Valentines day. Pastor John took them into the community of Alpena to share the message of love.





Lent Wednesday Worship Services at St. Paul and Book Studies

We are having Wednesday Worship Services weekly through March 25th, at 12:25 p.m., preceded by a luncheon at noon. We are looking for people/groups to do one of the lunches. Call the church office and schedule a Wednesday that works for you/group.

The theme is “Dust & Hope.” Join us as we discover again the hope, peace, love, joy and faith in Christ’s sacrifice and resurrection.

Join us for a Lent Book Study: “Psalms, Prayers of the Heart” will begin at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesdays

after service and at 5:30 p.m. in Pastor John’s office. “Life Source, Prayers for Lent” led by Nena will be held on Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. in classroom 1.

Ecumenical Lent Services

The Ecumenical Community will have evening services at different venues in Alpena. These services will follow this format.

1) 5:30 start to soup supper.

2) After everyone has had the chance to get food a video (10 - 15 minutes long) Embracing the Prophets in Contemporary Culture and the video

presenter is Walter Brueggemann.

3) Discussion of the video and continue it around the tables.

4) Wrapping up discussion at 6:30

5) A prayer service at 6:45

6) Expecting to be wrapped up by 7:15 - 7:30 latest

March 4—Trinity Episcopal Church

March 11—First United Methodist Church

March 18—Grace Lutheran Church

March 25—First United Methodist Church

All are welcome to join us.

The schedule for March is as follows:

Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday, March 28/29th - We will have our three regular weekend worship services.

Maundy Thursday—April 2nd - Service at 6:00 p.m. “Dust & Love”

Good Friday—April 3rd - Service at 6:00 p.m. “Jesus Conquers the Dust” The

service will be followed by the movie “The Passion” at 7:00 p.m.

St. Paul Lutheran will also participate in the Good Friday Tre Ore service on April 3rd that will be hosted by First Presbyterian Church, from 12:00 noon—3:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday Services - April 5th:
 Sunrise Service 6:30
 Liturgical Service 9:00
 Contemporary Service 10:30



Baked Potato Night



We will again be having our delicious Potato Bake on Saturday, March 14th, after the Saturday service, around 6:30 p.m.

Come and enjoy baked potatoes with numerous choices of toppings, and ice cream with toppings. There will be a free will offering taken and you do need tickets, which you can get in the church

office. If you would like to donate an item to the Chinese raffle please contact Dennis or Lori Dziesinski at 989-464-7112. Write this date on your calendar and plan now to attend.



Celebration of Ministry



Everyone is invited to join us

as we honor Pastor John and Nena in a Celebration of Ministry at JJ's on Sunday,

March 22nd, from 1:00—4:00 p.m.



Easter Egg Hunt

On Saturday, April 4th, the Adventure Club is planning an Easter Egg hunt for our community within our building.

We would love donations of grass for baskets, candy,

and items to be included in our family friendly baskets for the raffle.

These items can be dropped off at the office.

This will be another event

to celebrate Christ in our community. Come and join the adventure.



Easter Breakfast

There will be an Easter Breakfast right after the Sunrise Service on Easter Sunday. Come join us!



Easter Flowers



If you would like to order an Easter flower in honor or in memory of someone, there

are order forms in the Narthex or church office to fill out. The deadline to get your order in is March 30th.

Mark Your Calendar

Bishop Julie E. Schneider-Thomas is coming to visit on June 18th—21st. Be sure to mark your calendar!





C.I.A. Youth Group—Movie and Game Night

The Christians In Action (C.I.A.) Youth Group will be having a Movie and Game night on Saturday, March 7th from 3:00—5:00 p.m. It is open to

teens in 6th—12th grade. Come and enjoy snacks, drinks, a movie, football and ping pong. Be sure to invite a friend to come along with you!



Soul Sisters - Easter Card Signing

Soul Sisters will meet March 17th at 5:30 in room 207 to sign Easter cards for shut ins at Besser Living and Turning Brook. A light snack will be served as we celebrate

this opportunity to share the message of the resurrection with others in our community. Please contact Shirley Jones, 989-464-6472, or Val Urban at 989-916-5560,

if you plan on attending this event. This is a Soul sisters event but all ladies of St. Paul are welcome to participate.

March Service Activity

The March Service Activity is Pied Piper School.

Items needed: Coloring and activity books, markers, large crayons, Kleenex, hand sanitizer, and Clorox wipes. Fidget toys

would also be great for the students.

Please leave items on the altar.

Thank you for your generosity.



Hope Shores Alliance

Hope Shores Alliance is an agency in Alpena that helps in our community, supporting of people who have experienced violence

in their homes or lives. St. Paul Lutheran has opened our doors to be a drop off point for this organization (on the third floor).

Thanks to everyone who is part of this important ministry.

Bazaar

Please don't forget to re-cycle the canning jars and rings from this year's bazaar. They

can be brought to the "Jar Room" across from the lounge anytime. Thank you.



"Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy."
Psalm 47:1



March Birthdays



- March 1
John Putkamer
- March 2
Stacy Lukitsch
Mike Yakes
- March 3
Laura Warren
- March 5
Karen Wekwert
Franny Plamondon
Felonie Keller-Somers
William Shupert
- March 6
Donna Scull
- March 7
Shelly Hoffmeyer
Mary Hughes
Philip Wickstrom

- March 8
Caden LaRoche-McHarg
Landen LaRoche-McHarg
Paul Ludwig
Rae Stephens
- March 9
Jane Guyott
- March 13
Isabelle Smith
Paul Nensewitz
- March 15
Evie Main
- March 16
Alexis Gries
Ronald Wirgau
John Snyder II
- March 17
Phyllis Genschaw
- March 18
Brenda Sandhu
Matthew Przykucki
Molly Przykucki
- March 20
MaryAnne Kucharek
- March 23
Sydney Romel
- March 25
Jonathon Blaski

- Jennifer McKenney
Jaxson Moll
- March 26
Scott Smith
- March 27
Trevor Olsen
- March 29
Caleb Borchard
Julie Hasse
DJ Wilcox
- March 30
Geraldine Hanson
Zuri Somers



March Anniversaries

- March 1
Jim & Doreen Kriniak
- March 12
Jeff & Zully Dameworth
- March 15
Robert & Kathy Burton
Steve & Mary Zann
- March 16
Tim & Sue Moggie
- March 28
Tom & Pat Kelbaugh



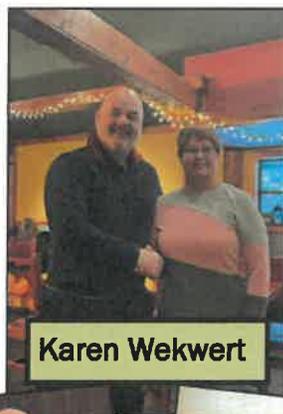
"Let all that you do be done in love."
1 Corinthians 16:14

February Servant Leaders

Celebrating the efforts of our Servant Leaders of the Month for February. We thank God for past/present Council presidents of our Congregation. Each received a special coin to commemorate their service. Please keep them in your prayers. Jessica, Scott and Karen were present...Judy, and Iris were unable to attend. We also remember Mary Jo Beck who passed last week.



Scott Brooks



Karen Wekwert



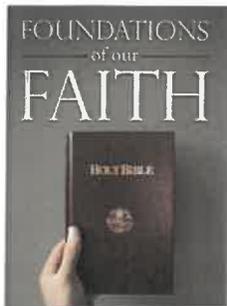
Jessica O'Neil



Iris Arthur



Judy Beyer

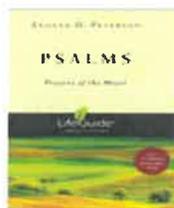


Adult Education Opportunities

Pastor John and Miss Nena planned for adult education opportunities in 2025-2026; Bible studies and book studies to inspire your faith walk throughout the coming school year. Each class will last for six weeks (or less) and the class length will be 1 hour. Pastor John's class will meet on Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. and Miss Nena's class will meet on the same day (Wednesday) at 5:30 p.m. The class size will determine where the class will meet. Please call the office so we know how to plan/books to order. Sign up for one or all these opportunities to grow in faith.

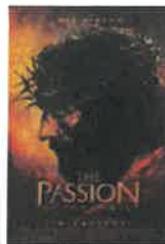
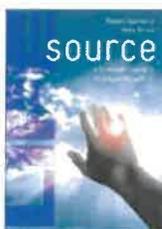
"Let the wise also hear and gain in learning, and the discerning acquire skill."
Proverbs 1:5

Lenten Educational Opportunities (6 Weeks) February 19th – March 25th



Pastor John – "Psalms, Prayers of the Heart," by Eugene Peterson

Miss Nena Bible Study - "Life Source, Prayers for Lent"



APRIL VIDEO EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE *"The Passion"*

April 3rd at 7:00 p.m. A meal is provided and discussion – All are invited.

MAY VIDEO EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE *"Sound of Hope, The Story of Possum Trot"*

May 6th at 6:00 p.m. A meal is provided and discussion – All are invited.



Scholarship News

The Scholarship committee would like to remind all senior high school students and college students, that we are accepting scholarship applications starting April 1st. Applications can be picked up in the office April 1st. Please complete all portions of the application and returned it April 30th.



Growing



Growing the church in the 21st century is unique, and I want to challenge everyone in our congregation to reach out to family, friends and acquaintances to follow us on Facebook or on our Website. Increasing our digital footprint through word of mouth (through technology) may expand the connection with God this those you know and love.

Pop-Up Hygiene Closet



Saturday, March 28th
2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

St. Paul Lutheran Church
727 S. 2nd Ave.,
Alpena, MI

FREE personal care, household cleaning, and laundry products!

NO Sign up or qualifications required!



Small Group - Women



The Breakfast Belles meet each week at JJ's. All women are invited to be at JJ's, on Wednesdays at 7:30 a.m. Remember the first breakfast is free!

"The Forget Me Nots" (Women 70 and older) will not meet on the first Tuesday in March.

Instead, we will be attending the matinee performance at Alpena Civic Theatre on Sunday, March 15. The comedy, "Finding Gladys," will be presented.

Please call Ann Hardesty at (989-590-2055), if you have any questions.

Facebook for details.

"SALT" Sisters Adoring Light and Truth (Women 18-45) will meet soon. Please watch your bulletin and Facebook for details.

Come and be inspired, share your ideas and be open to God's possibilities.



"The Soul Sisters" (Women 50-70) will meet soon. Please watch your bulletin and



Small Group—Men



The Men of St. Paul and friends are still meeting at JJ's at 7:00 a.m. This has been a great time of discussion and celebration of God at work in the church. Come and be part of this gospel expression

Band of Brothers is currently meeting quarterly. This is for men who are 18-45. We are looking to connect and strengthen the faith of young men through activities and studies that will be a beacon of hope.



BoB (Band of Brothers) will meet soon.

Please watch your bulletin and Facebook for details.

Come and be inspired, share your ideas and be open to God's possibilities.

Singles

(Singles At St. Paul) are meeting the first Thursday of every month (**March 5th**) at 5:30 p.m. at Thunder



Bowl Lanes, Alpena. Please come and be part of this ministry and invite your friends. It is open to singles from 18-101.

Reminder

Just a reminder for those who have Thrivent Choice Dollars. The deadline to designate the 2025 Choice Dollars is March 31st.



Feeding Kids Ministry

We will be packing food for the Feeding Kids Ministry on Monday, March 16th at the old Sunset School, 1421 Hobbs Drive, at 5:30

p.m. Please call Sherry McDonald if you are willing to help or have any questions, 260-414-3613.



Life Line Screening

Life Line Screening will be offering preventive health screenings on Tuesday, March 24, 2026.

The preventive screenings provided check for stroke risk, abdominal aortic aneurysms, and osteoporosis. St. Paul Lutheran Church is pleased to make these important screenings available by hosting Life Line Screening, the nation's leading provider of preventive health screenings.



Screenings are fast, painless and affordable. Three key tests check for blocked carotid arteries, an irregular heart

rhythm called atrial fibrillation, and high blood pressure, which are the three leading risk

factors for stroke. Strokes are the third leading cause of death in the U.S., yet, with preventive strategies, 80% of strokes can be prevented.

Other tests check for abdominal aortic aneu-

rysms and hardening of the arteries in the legs. A bone density screening to assess osteoporosis risk is also offered and is appropriate for both men and women. Many events also offer blood tests, including cholesterol, glucose and c-reactive protein screenings. Special pricing for \$129.

For more information regarding the screenings or to schedule an appointment, call 1-800-324-9458 or go to <https://www.lisa.social/hsba> or text the word circle to 216-279-1607. Pre-registration is required.

"Screening are fast, painless and affordable"

Engage Your Enthusiasm

E.Y.E. (Engage Your Enthusiasm) ministry - Everyone has a vision for the ministry at St. Paul. I hope you will share the events of the church through your eyes.

Please appoint an E.Y.E. representative for each event so nothing will be missed and your event will be promoted on our various digital sites

(Facebook, Twitter, etc.) If you submit 5 photos you will be given a t-shirt.



Fellowship



The Fellowship for the 5:30 p.m. Saturday night service meets at 4:30 for drinks and baked goods until 5:20. Fellowship for the Sunday 9:00 a.m. service and the 10:30 a.m. service occurs in-

between the service times. Come and share your life with the people with whom you worship. This ministry is a celebration and I ask that you help by leading a fellowship time. We would also like to express our appreciation to those people who have donated cookies for fellowship. We are grateful for your delicious donations!

Vision Gala

Options Pregnancy Center is hosting our Vision Gala on Saturday, April 18th, at the APlex! We invite you to come and see what the Lord is doing through Options and our region and how you can partner with us. If you are interested in hosting a table or attending, please contact Lori at 989-354-6089 for more information.



Baptism



The Baptism of Kallyn Timm was a wonderful expression of God's love. Her sponsors were Heather Senske and Jason Timm. Please keep her and her family in prayer as Kallyn grows in faith.



AARP Tax Preparation

The AARP Tax Team is back at St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church - Alpena and they are ready and



willing to help our seniors and low-income members of our community with their tax

preparation. Please contact them at 989-278-8104 for any information related to your tax preparation process.

Ray of Sonshine

Do you have a few minutes to brighten someone else's day? Do you have a desire to share God's love? Please consider being part of the

"Ray of Sonshine Ministry" team. We send out encouraging notes, make phone calls or a personal visit to those in need of

fellowship/connection. Please contact the office to become part of this important ministry.



Pastoral Acts

Condolences to the family and friends of Mary Jo Beck who joined our Lord in eternity February 11, 2026. A celebration of Mary Jo's life will be held in the spring.



Thank you to the following people for their donation in memory of:



Robert Arthur
Patti Byce

Memorials

Karen Wallace

June Sylvester
Gerald and Ann Hardesty
Iris Arthur
Juliana Specht
Patti Byce
Julie Troy
Rickie and Esther Kindt

Dana Panknin

Iris Arthur
Juliana Specht
Patti Byce
Julie Troy
Myra Gapske
Rickie and Esther Kindt
Janet Stafford

Arnie Kindt

Patti Byce

Joanne Kindt

Carol Kindt

Norman Dutcher

Norma Schultz
Jim and Doreen Kriniak
June Sylvester
Iris Arthur
Juliana Specht
Patti Byce
Mary Kuhl
Myra Gapske
Rickie and Esther Kindt
Janet Stafford

MARCH SERVICE SCHEDULE

| Date & Service | Assisting Ministers | Lectors | Ushers | Fellowship Volunteer | Children's Church and Little's Worship Workers |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---|------------------------------|--|
| FEBRUARY 28 & MARCH 1 | | | | | |
| 5:30 p.m. | Iris Arthur | Gail Atkins | Patti Byce & Jimmy Nensewitz | Anita Laub | 10:30 <i>Children's Church:</i> Jessica O'Neil Karen Wekwert, Sue Robb <i>Little's Worship:</i> Joanne Huggler & Rita Chase |
| 9:00 a.m. | Dawn Grzeskowiak | Barb Szczesniak | Roy Wekwert Kathy Burton Jesse & Jessica O'Neal | Mary Courtney | |
| 10:30 a.m. | | | Connie Sims | | |
| MARCH 7 & 8 | | | | | |
| 5:30 p.m. | Carol Kindt | Sue Keyes | Dennis & Sherry McDonald | Sue Robb | <i>Children's Church:</i> Joanne Huggler, Rita Chase, Nena Shipman, Jean Johnson <i>Little's Worship:</i> Andrea Dutcher & Evie Bicker |
| 9:00 a.m. | Phil Wickstrom | Phil Wickstrom | Jeff Ciupka Ryan Panknin Dennis Dziesinski Cathy Kieliszewski | Joanne Huggler Rita Chase | |
| 10:30 a.m. | | | Janet Freeman | | |
| MARCH 14 & 15 | | | | | |
| 5:30 p.m. | Iris Arthur | Iris Arthur | Patti Byce Jimmy Nensewitz | Joan Smolinski | <i>Children's Church:</i> Ashley Reed, Bonnie DUBY, Jean Johnson, Karen Wekwert <i>Little's Worship:</i> Ophelia Steinke & Ashley Reed |
| 9:00 a.m. | Shirley Jones | Shirley Jones | Barb Szczesniak Paul Kieliszewski Jesse & Jessica O'Neil | Carla Steinke | |
| 10:30 a.m. | | | Carla Steinke | | |
| MARCH 21 & 22 | | | | | |
| 5:30 p.m. | Carol Kindt | Carol Kindt | John & Linda Snyder | Patti Byce Myra Gapske | <i>Children's Church:</i> Kathy Burton, Cathy Kieliszewski, Nena Shipman, Bonnie DUBY <i>Little's Worship:</i> Jesse & Jessica O'Neil |
| 9:00 a.m. | Barb Szczesniak | Cathy Kieliszewski | Owen Werth Roy Wekwert Cathy Kieliszewski Ryan Panknin | Janice Boboltz | |
| 10:30 a.m. | | | Karen Wekwert | | |
| MARCH 28 & 29 | | | | | |
| 5:30 p.m. | Iris Arthur | Myra Gapske | Bruce Anschuetz | Anita Laub | <i>Children's Church:</i> Jessica O'Neil Jesse O'Neil, Kathy Burton, Amy DeRosia <i>Little's Worship:</i> Cathy Kieliszewski & Mary Courtney |
| 9:00 a.m. | Scott Parkham | Scott Parkham | Dennis Dziesinski Jeff Ciupka Richard Miller Paul Kieliszewski | Janice Boboltz | |
| 10:30 a.m. | | | Connie Sims | | |

We are looking for Assisting Ministers and Lectors, Acolytes and Ushers for our worship services.

If you are interested in serving at either service, please contact the church office at (989) 356-1658.

Altar Care for the month of March – Sandy Samp and Laurie Stafford.





Community Outreach
...Building Bridges of Hope



We thank God for our Scouting America troop and the light of hope they are shining in the world. February 8th was Scout Sunday and we celebrated together in worship.



Baby Eleanor celebrating love...



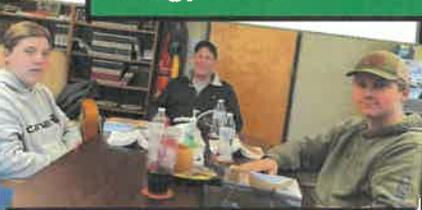
Children's Church kids made valentines for people in the nursing homes. Thanks for sharing your love.



Thank you to our Trust Committee who donated \$500 to the Together For Youth program (formally the D.A.R.E. program) and to Merl Faucett for his leadership in this program. They still sup-



The Trust and Endowment Fund gathered to consider support for our community, our nation, our world and the ELCA. Their leadership is vital, I ask that you keep these servant leaders in your prayers.



Confirmation classes continue. Aiden, Conner and Rob made the educational process a celebration as we discussed sin.



The RACK M (Random Acts of Caring/ Kindness Ministry) rejoices with Norma Schultz (top left) as she celebrates 95 years, Eleanor Cottington (top right) as she celebrates 95 years, and Andrea Dutcher (bottom left) as she celebrates 70 years, and Larry Samp (bottom right) 85 years. Wish them all a happy birthday!



Owen Werth was hard at it changing a fan and fixing a light fixture. Please thank this servant leader.



The Adventure Club met in January to go sledding. hot cocoa, hot dogs and hot apple cider helped everyone stay motivated.



Celebrated with Janice and Ryan who represent the Peace Community of Alpena. We presented them with a gift of \$500 to help their efforts throughout the year.



Ryan helped us celebrate in worship as he played the drum during the final hymn.



Great looking young people from St Paul attended the Winterfest dance on Saturday day/night.

I had a wonderful time visiting with members recently and sharing sacred moments. Please continue to pray for them as they grow in strength and courage.



Gere Romel

Ruth Grossman

Ryan Chase

Ryan Panknin

Dorothy Carr

Bunny Kelm

Evelyn Green

Doris

Valentine's Day is a special time to celebrate love and relationships. Gave out a card to Chris in celebration of all she has done for our congregation.

Phyllis Robb



Thanks to all who came out and supported the Scouting America Spaghetti Supper. Awesome food and fellowship were shared.



Myra stopped by to celebrate the ministry at St. Paul and the love of Jesus we share.



Had a sacred visit with Sandy Samp at her shop, "Sandy Dees Sewing." Please keep her in prayer.



Amy Truth blessed my life with music of her own composition.



What a wonderful evening for our couples retreat. Please keep these dynamic couples in your prayers.



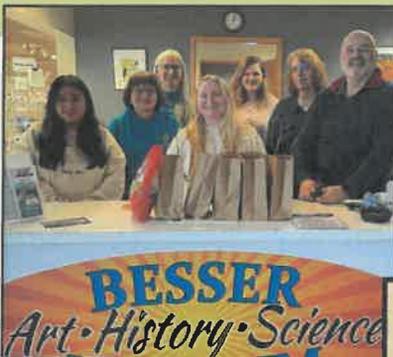
The 3M men (*Men in Motion for Ministry*) gathered for a fish dinner. Everyone enjoyed the meal and a time of fellowship. Special thanks to Fred, Tim & Jimmy. (*Preparation*)



The Forget-Me-Nots went to the Sunday matinee at the Alpena Civic Theatre. The play, "The God Committee," was well acted and thought provoking.



Met (for the last time) with the Sunrise Side Conference of the NWL Michigan Synod at St. Paul. Great time of sharing was had by all.



What a glorious day. Gratitude Lunches Ministry blessed the amazing staffs at Pied Piper (bottom) and the Besser Museum (left).



Installation of our Church Council servant leaders occurred January 17/18 weekend. Please keep these leaders in your prayers.



The Forget-Me-Nots met for lunch and it was a celebration! Continuing to keep these faithful ladies in your prayers.



The Women's Retreat began this evening with a celebration of faith and a special meal. Please pray that all will grow in love and hope.



Celebrated with the people of God at St. Paul as we helped pack up food for the "Feed The Kids Ministry." Thanks to all the servant leaders who came to help.

Installation of our new Church Council servant leader occurred in February. Welcome Dawn Grzeskowiak. Please keep all of our leaders in your prayers.



Jimmy and Dennis were here to make some final touches on the third floor. Please thank them for their service. They also donated this candle lighter holder for our church to be used in the multipurpose room. We offered a blessing on this wonderful gift at the 10:30 service.



The church council met to discuss the issues facing the church. Please keep these elected leaders in your prayers.



Thanks to Val Urban for her efforts on Church Council. Val resigned due to personal reasons. Please keep her in prayer.



I was part of a celebration of ministry and sacrifice with the servant leaders who give of themselves in the office each week throughout the year. Barb, Kathy, Sue, Joan, Linda and Joanne are so very special.



Servant Leaders Marie and Mary Ann are working hard stocking the pews with needed supplies. Thank you both for all you do.



The Education Committee met to discuss this important ministry within our community. Thank this whole ministry team for their leadership and vision.



Enjoyed a sacred meeting with Geraldine Rhodes today. Great time to share stories. She made some peanut butter cookies for Miss Nena to distribute.



The faithful Servant Leaders of our Newsletter Team arrived (on this icy cold morning) ensuring the St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Newsletter arrives, on time, through the mail. A great team effort.



The S@SP (Singles at St. Paul) gathered February 5th for discussion and fun. The most we ever had in attendance. We spoke about what we wanted to be remembered for in this life.



(Left) The Veterans of Alpena gathered and we shared stories, we laughed, and we enjoyed our time in community. If you are a veteran, please come and join us on the last Thursday of every month, at 9:00 a.m. in the Art of the Loft.

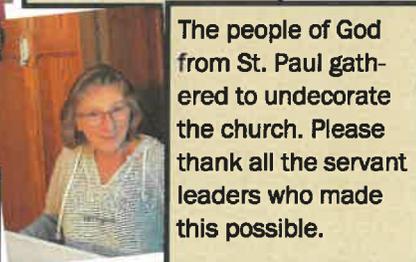


When you visit in the community of Alpena you meet some wonderful people. I was blessed to encounter Connie Elder.

The movie night was a celebration. We watched "Ordinary Angels." If you were unable to make movie night and would like to watch the movie, please stop by the church and take it home and watch it at your convenience.



Staff meeting is held weekly. Thanks to our council President, Jessica for taking time out of her day to attend.



The people of God from St. Paul gathered to undecorate the church. Please thank all the servant leaders who made this possible.



The 3M (Men in Motion for Ministry) gathered together for breakfast. They talked about the things in life that steal our light.



Thanks to the Worship committee for their servant leadership. Many important topics were discussed.



The Breakfast Belles celebrated as they showed up in force. What a wonderful conversation about what makes us glad. Remember that this is the day that the Lord has Made...I will rejoice and be glad in it (Psalm 118)."



The Lenten Soup Luncheon was wonderful, and I celebrate everyone who prepared the meal and all those who were able to take advantage of this very special gift.

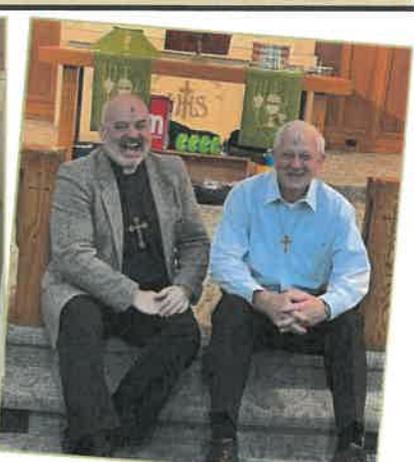
Ash Wednesday services were canceled due to weather in Alpena at St Paul Ev. Lutheran Church. Thank you to everyone who came and participated in worship on the weekend. A special thank you to Jimmy Nensewitz, Myra Gapske, Gary Sims as he began the imposition of ashes this year.



Met with Brian Robarge and Allie Durocher leadership from Alpena High School, to present them with gifts of clothing, shoes, toiletries and a shoes.



Welcome to Linda Ricotta. She trained in February. She is our new Administration Assistant. Please stop by and welcome her to our community.



Another celebration occurred in worship February 21st during the children's sermon. He had all the right answers. Thanks Jimmy!



Tying ties for the prom night. What a special night for all our special people to shine! Prom night. Awesome photo!



Thanks to the DOD (Dinner on a Doorknob) servant leaders for their efforts. Their ministry touches so many people in our community.



Thanks to everyone who came out and supported our Christian Education ministry by coming to the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner.

The Ecumenical Ministers gathering happened this morning at Grace Lutheran Church. We discussed the passages for the weekend.

St Paul Lutheran Church
Council Meeting
January 20, 2026

Present: Scott Brooks, Bernie Wagner, Jessica O'Neil, Cathy Kieliszewski, Val Urban, Donna, Kensa, Andrea Dutcher, Scott Parkham, Cayden Smith, and Pastor John Shipman

Absent: Danielle McDonald and Phil Wickstrom

Secretary's Report: Motion by Val Urban, seconded by Scott Brooks, to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Treasurer Reports: Motion by Scott Brooks, seconded by Andrea Dutcher to approve the treasurer reports. Motion carried.

Committee Reports and Employee Reports: Committee reports were discussed. Donna Kensa discussed the required backflow value that is being required by the city. Lakeshore Plumbing had provided two bids and Donna questioned whether both were needed to be done now or if one could be tabled till later in the year. Scott Parkham stated he would call Lakeshore regarding both bids and get an answer back. The first bid was for backflow preventer and totaled \$1520.00. The second bid again stated backflow preventer and totaled \$2635.00. It was decided by council to proceed with the initial bid of \$1520.00 and the second bid will be tabled until questions are answered. Motion by Scott Parkham, seconded by Scott Brooks to have Lakeshore Plumbing proceed with the first bid of \$1520.00. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Shipman reported that we averaged 179 people per Sunday in 2025 from the three services and finances are doing good. Motion by Scott Brooks, seconded by Val Urban to approve the Pastor's report. Motion carried.

Old Business:

1. Sealant is scheduled to be done in May or June of 2026.
2. Sabbatical – tabled.
3. Review of church polices – tabled till property revises the lake property guidelines.
4. Bishop Julie Schneider has agreed to come to Alpena June 18, 2026 and will give a sermon at the lake property Saturday night and then again on Sunday at the 9:00 and 10:30 am service. Scott Parkham and Andrea Dutcher have agreed to spearhead this event.

Congregational comments and correspondence: Were reviewed.

New Business:

1. Approval of events – Jessica O’Neil has changed the date of her event from 2/12/2026 to 2/19/2026. Motion by Scott Parkham, seconded by Scott Brooks to approve the events of the church. Motion carried.
2. Election of council officers- President Jessica O’Neil, vice-president Andrea Dutcher, Secretary Donna Kensa and Treasurer Bernie Wagner. Motion by Scott Brooks, seconded by Andrea Dutcher to approve the election of officers. Motion carried.
3. Val Urban submitted a letter of resignation from the church council due to health issues. The council thanked her for her time spent on council. Pastor Shipman will contact the nominating comm (Judy Beyers, Mike Lewandowski and John Snyder) to seek a candidate for replacement.
4. Discussion was held regarding the constitution/by-law language regarding council members who resign and how their vacancy is filled. The following council members have agreed to work on the changes; Andrea Dutcher, Donna Kensa, Scott Brooks, Scott Parkham and Cayden Smith.
5. Discussion was held on the separation of the trust into two different investment accounts with LPL Financial. This had been discussed between Bernie Wagner, treasurer and Phil Straley, trust; to separate these into two accounts. On a motion by Andrea Dutcher, seconded by Scott Brooks that “On this day in January 20, 2026, Saint Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church Council resolves to divide The Evangelical Lutheran St. Paul’s Church of the City of Alpena, State of Michigan, (DBA Saint Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church) investment account with LPL Financial into two separate accounts”. Motion carried.
6. Ashley Worth (Sandy Froggett’s daughter) picked up her mother’s nativity set on December 18, 2025.
7. The Veteran office that was located at St. Paul Church is no longer here due to a missing printer issue.
8. Pastor Shipman announced that effective February 28 2026, that Nena Shipman will be resigning as administrative assistant at St. Paul Church. Also, that effective the Friday following Easter, April 10, 2026, Pastor Shipman will be resigning as pastor to St. Paul Lutheran Church.

Motion by Scott Brooks, seconded by Scott Parkham to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. Council closed with Lord’s Prayer.

Respectful submitted, Donna Kensa

Pastor John's Ministry Report – February 2026

Saints at St Paul, as we look to God's future, I remember the words of the prophet Jeremiah 29:11, "*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'*" January was highlighted with the announcement that Nena and I would be leaving this call of God to Saint Paul in the early part of 2026. We celebrated the baptism of Kallyn Timm and honored the lives of Karen Wallace, Dana Panknin and Norman Dutcher and their faithful journeys. We celebrated with the children as they participated in a sledding party at Shipman's Hill. Faithful women gathered at a retreat; New members gathered for a meal, conversation, and faithful exploration. Servant Leaders of the Year were honored and celebrated; We held our Epiphany Candlelight Dessert event attracting the most people since its inception; I completed my annual report to the synod and spoke with the bishop concerning my time at St. Paul. Mike and Dawn continued their Marriage counseling, and a new Confirmation Class was requested and began. AARP is working hard to get everything ready. The 3M (Men in Motion for Ministry) hosted an evening event (a fish Fry). 28 men were in attendance. New information concerning the backflow issue came to light and was dealt with. Leaders, always remember the blessing of Jesus and in these final months we will share, that God has a plan for us...plans to give us hope and a future

Notes for council: January 2026

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Baptism Zaelynn Johnson 2. Baptism Jayla Brown 3. Welcome new members – Olsen Family 4. Welcome new members – Gries Family 5. Funeral – Robert Arthur 6. Funeral – Geraldine Wyman 7. Annie Olsen monetary gift from estate 8. Vacation 9. Christmas eve/Day worship 10. Life Line Screening | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. United Way Christmas Wish Program 12. Dawn and Michael – Marriage prep 13. Advent soup and worship services 14. Advent Book Study 15. Pastoral Candidates gathering 16. Foster Closet Christmas Party 17. Adventure Club – Caroling & Party 18. Gathering of leaders for a holiday celebration 19. Outreach to Hospital/Thunder Bay Jr High 20. Ushers Meeting |
|--|---|

Notes for council: February 2026

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Baptism Kallyn Timm 2. Funeral – Karen Wallace 3. Funeral – Dana Panknin 4. Funeral – Norman Dutcher 5. Movie Night – “Unsung Hero” 6. Sunrise Side conference gathering 7. Trust Fund Issues 8. Vacation 9. Servant Leaders of the Year 10. AARP | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Epiphany Candlelight Dessert Event 12. Dawn and Michael – Marriage prep 13. New Member Meal 14. Annual Report to the Synod/Contact Bishop 15. Feeding Kids Ministry event 16. 3M Fish Dinner (Men's ministry event) 17. Adventure Club – Sledding at Shipman's Hill 18. Confirmation Classes 19. Backflow issue with city of Alpena 20. Women's retreat |
|---|--|

| <u>Ministry Issues</u> | <u>Aug</u> | <u>Sep</u> | <u>Oct</u> | <u>Nov</u> | <u>Dec</u> | <u>Jan</u> |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Counseling | 44 | 81 | 65 | 51 | 57 | 69 |
| Visitation | 250 | 350 | 102 | 215 | 221 | 225 |
| Synod Issues | 5 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Worship Services | 22 | 17 | 12 | 16 | 19 | 15 |
| Ecumenical | 10 | 6 | 11 | 4 | 3 | 5 |
| Meetings | 146 | 132 | 119 | 102 | 106 | 132 |
| Classes | 3 | 7 | 11 | 3 | 10 | 5 |
| Small Group Events | 23 | 43 | 44 | 49 | 41 | 35 |
| Miles traveled | 1545 | 839 | 787 | 789 | 439 | 589 |
| Vacation days | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 4 |
| Worship #s 2024 | 165 | 148 | 152 | 156 | 253 | 140 |
| Worship #s 2025 | 155 | 165 | 158 | 161 | 265 | 161 |
| Worship #s 2026 | | | | | | 140 |
| FB/Youtube sermon ave | 415 | 415 | 432 | 526 | 554 | 707 |

**St. Paul Lutheran Church
727 S. Second Ave.
Alpena, Michigan 49707**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



MARCH 2026



ST. PAUL EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

727 S. SECOND AVE.

ALPENA, MICHIGAN

(OFFICE) (989) 356-1658

SATURDAY EVENING TRADITIONAL WORSHIP AT 5:30 p.m.

SUNDAY LITURGICAL WORSHIP AT 9:00 a.m.

SUNDAY CONTEMPORARY SERVICE AT 10:30 a.m.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY - FRIDAY ♦ 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

E-MAIL ADDRESSES

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