

THE FORWARD

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

ST. Paul's EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

NEWARK, OHIO NOVEMBER 18, 2025

Church Phone: 740-345-6115 Web Site: <www.stpaulselca.org>



Cell phone: 586.864.4004

Cell phone: 360-689-9784

Mon-Fri 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Web Site: www.stpaulselca.org

Pastor: Martin P. Gehring

Office Hours: M T W 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. or by appointment

Congregation Council President: Jerry Young

Office Secretary: Jodie Nickles

Church Phone: 740-345-6115

My Brother's Keeper

For the poor will never cease to be in the land; therefore I command you, saying, "You shall freely open your hand to your brother, to your needy and poor in your land." (Deuteronomy 15:10-11)

"Isn't this the fast that I have chosen ... Isn't it to share your bread with the hungry, to bring the poor and homeless into your home, to clothe the naked when you see him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?" (Isaiah 58:6-7)

Now if your countryman becomes destitute and cannot support himself among you, then you are to help him as you would a foreigner or stranger, so that he can continue to live among you. (Leviticus 25:35)

But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? (1 John 3:17)

Clearly, keeping open hearts and open hands towards those in need is a consistent theme in scripture and a core tenant of our faith. It reflects God's will and God's love for all people, regardless of circumstance. The homeless population in Newark is growing due to the increasing cost of living and political actions taken that now make it even harder for the poor to afford food, health care, and shelter.

For years, Trinity Lutheran on Main Street has been offering a daytime Drop-In Center where unsheltered individuals and families can find food, rest, clothing, and companionship, as well as other services provided by partnering organizations. In addition, they offer a Warming Center where the unsheltered can find overnight shelter when the temperature drops to dangerous levels. However, the increased need for these ministries has quickly outstripped their available space.

We have an opportunity to partner with Trinity Lutheran in these ministries. We are in conversation regarding hosting the Drop-In and Warming Centers here at St. Paul's. Our location and large amount of unused space could provide just what they need to grow along with the increasing need. In early January we will have a vote to determine whether to move ahead with this partnership. Please contact Pastor Martin, Jerry Young, one of our council members, or one of our members currently volunteering with these ministries with your questions or comments.

God bless you all! Pastor Martin

Please keep the following people in your prayers
Immediate: *Lori Donohue, Jaque O'Farrell, Kristen McMillion, Ann Robertson, Lauren Everingham.*



Ongoing: *Cheryl Seabright*

(In order to keep our worship prayer list current, prayer requests will be included in Sunday worship for three weeks, after which they will be printed in the bulletin as an "ongoing" request. After six weeks, names will be removed unless a request is made to renew them.)

If you need an address for anyone or wish to add someone to the list, please call the office.

THE WHENS AND THE WHERE'S - let the office know if something needs to be added to the list below!

PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS - Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday
9 a.m. to 2 p.m. or by appointment.

ON DECEMBER 13TH AND 14TH THERE WILL BE A CONGREGATION MEETING AFTER EACH SERVICE TO VOTE ON THE 2026 BUDGET AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL. PLEASE MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND!

SERVICES CHRISTMAS EVE: *Christmas Eve is Wednesday December 24th. There will be two services, one at 4 p.m. and the Christ Mass will begin at 10 p.m. Volunteers are needed for both services.* Please see below. If you can help, please contact the church office or look for the signup sheet at the back of the church.

The Christmas Eve Services December 24th Volunteers Needed!

4 p.m. Ushers (2) Lector (1) Communion Assistants (2) Bell Ringer (1)

10:00 p.m. Ushers (4) Lector (2) Communion Assistants (2), Bell Ringer (1)
Light Luminaries (2) Greeters (2)

- ***Decorating the church for the Christ Mass*** will take place immediately following the church service Sunday December 21st. Everyone is invited to participate!
- ***Friday Night Game Night – Game Night happens on the first and third Fridays of the month.*** Come join us December 5th and 19th at 7 p.m. in Weisgerber Lounge! Bring your favorite snack and come join the fun!
- ***The Land of Legend Fly Fisherman*** meet in Danford Hall on the second, third and fourth Mondays of each month at 7 p.m.
- ***ST. PAUL'S BOOK CLUB*** meets the third Monday evening of each month at 7 p.m. in Weisgerber Lounge. The book we will begin in December is *Happiness Falls* by Angie Kim. In January we will read *The Women* by Kristin Hannah.
- ***AA*** meets every Saturday morning at 11 a.m. in Danford Hall and on Tuesdays and Fridays at noon.
- ***NA*** meets on Friday evenings at 7 p.m. in Danford Hall.
- ***Friday Fellowship Bible Study*** meets every Friday morning at 10 a.m. in Weisgerber Lounge.
- ***Ruth Circle meets next on December 10th at 10:00 a.m.*** in Danford Hall.
- ***Church Council will meet November 24th at 7 p.m.***
- ***Matthew's Kitchen*** meets on the 2nd Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.
- ***Grief Group*** meets on the 2nd Wednesdays at 1:30 p.m. They meet next on December 10th.
- ***Crafts & Sewing Group*** usually meets the first Saturday of the month at 10 a.m. in Danford Hall. **The group will NOT meet in December.** Please contact Connie Baker, 740-334-8961 if you have any questions.

Notes to the Church and Congregation:

COMMUNITY DROP IN CENTER – AN OPPORTUNITY Over the past few months, the leadership of St. Paul's has been in conversation with that of Holy Trinity, exploring the possibility of cooperating in ministry to the growing unhoused population in Newark. Holy Trinity currently provides a weekday Drop-In ministry offering meals, clothing, phone charging, a social setting, and occasional health care. They also offer a Warming Center for winter nights when temperatures drop to dangerous levels.

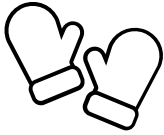
We see an opportunity for cooperation in that these ministries are quickly outgrowing the available space at Holy Trinity, and St. Paul's currently has a large amount of well-suited unused space. St. Paul's downtown location makes us an ideal site. The Drop-In Center, open from 9:30am-4pm, Monday-Friday, would make use of Danford Hall, the kitchen, main floor bathrooms, and the library (for use as a food bank). The nighttime Warming Center, activated only when the temperature drops to 10 degrees or lower, would house women and families in the upstairs education rooms, and men in Danford Hall.

Holy Trinity's current operation of these programs has been supported by a countywide network of volunteers, donations, and grants, and this support would also be applied to any efforts at St. Paul's.

After exploring the possibilities, our two councils now feel ready to bring this to our respective congregations for consideration and input. In the coming weeks you will be hearing more with opportunities to ask questions and discuss.

In January we will be voting to approve looking into the possibility of hosting this ministry in our space in conjunction with Holy Trinity.

URGENT NEED FOR FOOD PANTRY ITEMS! With no food stamp benefits being made available by the federal government, our local food pantry has seen a HUGE increase in need. ***Any shelf-stable items are needed...especially peanut butter.*** Items that can be made without the addition of milk or dairy, like; powdered milk, juice boxes, cereal, soups, crackers instant mashed potatoes, pastas, spaghetti sauces, bread, toilet paper. The need is real and families and children are going hungry in our community. See a good BOGO sale? Donate the extra. If you wish to give a monetary donation, mark your offering envelope designated to the "Food Pantry".



THE MITTEN AND HAT TREE will be making its appearance soon! All donated hats and mittens will be sent to the Salvation Army for their Christmas drive. Let's fill that tree again this year! The tree will be up until after the service on December 21st. Thanks!

Nominees for the 2026 Congregation Council: The council has 9 members and members are elected on a rotating basis. For this election there are open places for men and for women. Please look for biographies in upcoming bulletins. If you are willing to serve, please contact Jerry Young.

SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF CHRISTMAS - This guided musical walking tour of Newark's downtown churches will take place on Thursday December 4th beginning at 6 p.m. Tickets are available for a suggested donation of \$5 and children under 12 are free. Gail Grangaard will have tickets, as well as the church office. St. Paul's Jubilate Ringers will be providing music at our stop. All proceeds from the walk benefit the Food Pantry. For more information, please contact Gail Grangaard, or go to the website: sightsandsoundsofchristmas.org.

2026 CALENDARS are available from Jean Hovland for \$7 each. Please contact Jean if you are interested in a calendar. We order at least 25 to cover expenses

DEADLINE FOR 2026 WITTENBURG TRIP IS DECEMBER 28TH. If you intend to visit our sister congregation between July 1st and July 14th next summer, please confirm by December 28th. A downpayment of \$500 per person will be due on January 15th. Please contact Kerrill Foster or leave a message at church.

COME JOIN THE CHOIRS! Adult & bell choirs rehearse on Wednesdays – 7:30 for the choir and 6:30 p.m. for the bells. Children's choirs rehearse after worship the first and third Sundays of the month. All children are welcome for the children's choir. For information about the adult and bell choirs, please contact Dustin Hill (740) 258-4335; for the Children's choir, please contact Juli Rauch (740) 405-8833.

SHUT-INS – If you are in need of pastoral care, a friendly visit, or would like communion brought to your home, please contact the office and leave a message with Jodie between the hours of 10 and 2. Thanks!

EVERYONE IS WELCOME to experience the fellowship we offer by joining us in the lobby of the educational building each week. A sign up is available for those who can help provide goodies.

ARE YOU GRIEVING THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE? – The Grief Group meets on the 2nd Wednesdays at 1:30 in Danford Hall. If you would like more information, please contact Jean Hovland. The group **meets next on December 10th**.

Unapproved Congregation Council Minutes Oct 20, 2025

Present: Jim Rengert, Gerry DePalmo, Jerry Young, Julie Ingram, Mary Billy, John Grangaard, Kerrill Foster, Pastor Martin Gehring. Excused: Greta Blegvad, Sally Finck.

Jerry opened with prayer.

Last meeting's minutes were approved unanimously. Motioned by Jim, seconded by John.

Property – no report although a temporary sign has been installed while ours is being finished.

Treasurer's Report – 2026 Budget Presented and September Treasurer's Report. Mutual Funds continue to do very well. Discussion on budget. Both Budget (Jerry1, John 2) and TR report (Mary1 Gerry2) approved. Budget will be presented to congregation in November Forward and subsequent bulletins. Will be voted on in December.

Pastor's report – Excited about the possibility of Community drop-in center. Will get with Jerry to host a couple of Sunday meetings to discuss plans with congregation. Advent will have a prayer focus with congregational involvement in service. Fallers may not be able physically to handle sexton duties much longer.

President's report – Picnics have gone very well and interest has been expressed about doing a meal each month year-round. Will discuss more after Community Drop-in center discussion.

Discussion about council terms. Kerrill will get Jerry a copy of Years on Council.

Mary motioned to approve Pastor's and President's reports. Gerry seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Rental Property – Marx's making arrangement to have wheelchair ramp installed by their Medicare provider free of charge. Will let Encore know. Julie Hippen's piano move is still on hold. Jim will let Pastor know the date. Rodent issue being worked on. Julie motion to accept, Martin seconded. Motion unanimously.

Next meeting November 24th 7 p.m.

Pastor closed with prayer. Respectfully submitted, Kerrill Foster Secretary

December Birthdays

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| 1 - John Swisher | 13 - Teresa Beamer | 21 - Levi Hoskinson |
| 2 - Isaac Beamer Karen Lane | Nathan Godenschwager | 23 - Audrey Walther |
| 4 - Emily Leber | Richard Koch | 24 - Marlie Billy Ray Holtz |
| 6 - Bonnie Meyer | Tambra Simon | 27 - Stevie Darner Tyler Harble |
| 7 - Aimee Babb Anne Mayfield | Christopher Woolard | 28 - Vicky Crist Sydney Enderle |
| 8 - Nancy Saylor Ryan Settles | 14 - Jens Blegvad | Diane Fadley |
| 10 - Ellen Larson Johanna Wilson | 17 - Evelyn Heskett Libby Warnock | 29 - Cheri Fischer |
| 12 - Emily Blegvad- Monroe Ron Cline | 18 - Greta Blegvad Emily Larson | 31 - Paul Baker Heather Morrow Marie Oberholtzer (91) |
| | 19 - Maxx Billy Michelle Campbell Marcy Kaercher | |
| | 20 - Layne Brotherton | |

December Anniversaries

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 16- Charles & Sue Mays (61) | 23 - Cynthia & Robert Street (42) |
| 20 - David & Ruth Graham (57) | |

Time to Order Poinsettias for the Christmas Eve Service!



Order Form: *On Christmas Eve the altar will be surrounded by a wonderful array of poinsettia plants. This year the poinsettias cost \$10.00 each. To donate one or more plants, fill in the form below and place in the offering or send it to the church office.*

Your name: _____

No. Of Plants _____

In memory of: _____

Or in honor of: _____

Or to the Glory of God _____

Poinsettias may be taken home after the 10 p.m. Christ Mass.

Proposed Budget for 2026 - This year's proposed budget is in bold, compared to 2025:

| Expenses: | Approved 2025 Budget | 2026 Proposed Budget |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Pastoral Care | \$132,075 | 127,041 |
| Support Staff | 65,783 | 67,691 |
| Care of the Facilities | 41,500 | 42,500 |
| Church Administration | 9,900 | 10,300 |
| Worship & Music | 1,200 | 1,200 |
| Outreach to Others | 2,100 | 2,100 |
| Teaching the Word | <u>4,700</u> | <u>4,700</u> |
| Budget Totals | \$ 257,258 | \$255,533 |

Anticipated Income:

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Estimate of Income | \$177,300.00 |
| Anticipated Deficit | (\$78,232.74) |

Operating Fund Balance October 31, 2025 \$16,464.18

Things to note about the 2026 Budget:

The pastor's salary reflects a 3% increase as mandated by the synod. This has been apportioned between the base salary and housing allowance. Medical costs have decreased significantly with both the pastor and his wife now eligible for Medicare. The church provides continuing spousal health care, 12% pension, as well as disability and life insurance. The allowance amount has remained constant. Disability and Basic Group Life contributions remain the same at .3% and .2% of total defined compensation.

For supporting staff, the committee increased compensation for the secretary, choir director, organist and sextons by 3% as well. For the Financial Secretary, who has not had an increase since 2023 I raised the hourly rate from \$15 to \$15.50 per hour.

Administrative and facilities fees have also increased slightly to account for rising costs and paying for grass mowing and snow removal provided by Sam Hippen.

All other categories remain unchanged.

Income Based on the last few recent months, offerings were calculated at \$13,000 a month. Interest income not adjusted due to market volatility. Rental property return was left at \$20,000 to be conservative.

The expected deficit is \$ 78,232.74. In 2025 we needed to use savings to bolster the amount in the general fund to cover expenses. This was discussed when we prepared to call a full-time pastor, so the deficit is not unexpected, but cannot continue indefinitely.

There will be a brief meeting after church on Sunday December 7th and Saturday December 6th for anyone who has questions regarding the 2026 budget.



Sunday Volunteers for December 2025

| | December 7 | December 14 | December 21 | December 28 |
|-----------------------|---|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Cantor | Juli Rauch | Dustin Hill | Ruth Gehring | Julie Hippen |
| Lector | Gerry Billy | Addison Laidlaw-Smith | Anne Daly | Jerry Young |
| Com. Assistant | Mary Billy | Kerrill Foster | Greta Blegvad | Sadie Smith |
| Usher | Fred Freytag, Charles Cooperider, Steve Wiersma | Charlie Laidlaw-Smith, Charles Cooperider | Greg Everingham, John Grangaard | Jerry Young, Charles Cooperider |
| Counters | Fred & Lindsay Freytag, Sally Finck | Kerrill Foster | Sally Finck, Greg & Kim Everingham | Geoff Kaercher & Don Miller |



FINANCIAL REPORT

| Received 10/5/2025 | | Year to Date | Attendance | |
|--------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------|
| Current | \$ 3,056.00 | \$146,551.84 | Sat. 4 p.m. | 12 |
| Benevolence | <u>135.00</u> | <u>4,020.00</u> | Sun. 10 a.m. | <u>58</u> |
| Total | \$3,191.00 | \$ 150,571.84 | Total | 70 |

| Received 10/12/2025 | | Year to Date | Attendance | |
|---------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------|
| Current | \$ 2,323.00 | \$148,874.84 | Sat. 4 p.m. | 13 |
| Benevolence | <u>15.00</u> | <u>4,035.00</u> | Sun. 10 a.m. | <u>46</u> |
| Total | \$2,338.00 | \$ 152,909.84 | Total | 59 |

| Received 10/19/2025 | | Year to Date | Attendance | |
|---------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------|
| Current | \$ 1,539.25 | \$150,414.09 | Sat. 4 p.m. | 9 |
| Benevolence | <u>15.00</u> | <u>4,050.00</u> | Sun. 10 a.m. | <u>47</u> |
| Total | \$1,554.25 | \$ 154,464.09 | Total | 56 |

| Received 10/26/2025 | | Year to Date | Attendance | |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------|
| Current | \$ 5,614.09 | \$156,028.18 | Sat. 4 p.m. | 12 |
| Benevolence | <u>230.00</u> | <u>4,280.00</u> | Sun. 10 a.m. | <u>39</u> |
| Total | \$5,844.09 | \$ 160,308.19 | Total | 51 |

*A donation was made to the church by Julia McCormack in memory of her father, **The Reverend Clyde McCormack** a Lutheran minister and past member of St. Paul's in celebration of the Festival of All Saints.*

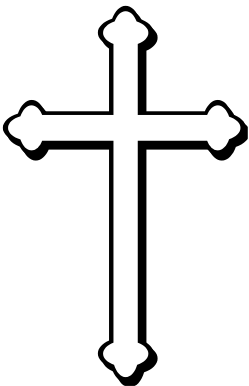
| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Year to date operational revenue as of October 31, 2025 | \$163,032.18 |
| Year to date operational expenses as of October 31, 2025 | <u>212,668.30</u> |
| Deficit | (\$49,636.12) |

THE FORWARD November 18, 2025
St. Paul' s Ev. Lutheran Church
67 North Fifth Street
Newark, OH 43055-5031

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Newark, OH 43055
Permit Number 117

**SUNDAY
SCHEDULE**
Traditional Worship
10 a.m.



**SATURDAY
WORSHIP**
4 p.m. year-round

*“The Mission of St. Paul's
Evangelical Lutheran
Church is to **SHARE**, at all
times and with all people,
the Good News of **GOD'S**
GRACE, through
CHRIST JESUS.”*