

THE FORWARD

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

ST. Paul's EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

NEWARK, OHIO MARCH 17, 2026

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

We Have Met the Enemy, and They are Us

And so we are at war again. In spite of our dismal history in the middle east, surely we will get it right this time, right? It is so easy to get into a war: a decision made, an order given, a trigger pulled, and *voila!* But getting out of a war ... ah, there's the rub. Of course it's helpful if the enemy gives up and lays down their arms, like back in the Good-Ol'-Wars. Now the enemy is more like Monty Python's Black Knight: no matter how many pieces we chop off, they'll never admit they're beaten, because the fact is they're not – not as long as they refuse to say “uncle.”

Once again, the avowed purpose (among many currently being run up the flagpole) is to bring peace to the region. Peace through war – it has a certain ring to it. But frankly, I prefer peace through peace, because the other kind never seems to last very long. The losers always seem to come back around looking for a rematch. History is filled with ex-Great Empires who learned this the hard way.

There is more than a little irony in that we have started this war during Lent, in which we prepare once again to bear witness to Jesus marching off to battle against evil and death, only he will do so without benefit of bombs and missiles, without army or angels. He goes armed only with his loving determination to embrace all people, even his enemies, even his friends, even the vast majority who couldn't care less, as members of one family, one tribe, one nation. He won't win; he doesn't have a chance in hell – well, actually, that's the one place he does have a chance. Because having lost in every imaginable way, he will sink down into the darkness to join with all the other losers, there to tip them off to the good news that there is no such thing as winners and losers; there is only *us*. And once we get that through our thick heads, we too will become winners – all for one and one for all. You see, there are no winners or losers when we are all on the same team, there are no strangers when we are all part of the same family.

“Freedom isn’t free,” a slogan often cited as justification for war. But neither is peace. It requires forbearance, self-control, gentleness, kindness, and other stuff St. Paul refers to as “fruits of the Spirit.” And sometimes it requires recognizing that not everything is about winning or losing, dominating or being dominated. Sometimes it requires blood, sweat, and tears. Jesus can teach us a thing or two about that.

God bless you all! Pastor Martin

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Immediate: *Ardis Reed (Marti Kolb’s neighbor), Anne & Dick Daly, Damien Beamer, Patricia Shiels (Shirley Campbell’s sister).*

Ongoing: *Cheryl Seabright, Ann Robertson (Kerrill Foster’s sister-in-law).*



(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.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Palm Sunday March 28th 4 p.m. and 29th 10 a.m.

Maundy Thursday April 2nd 7 p.m.

Good Friday April 3rd 7 p.m.

Holy Saturday – NO SERVICE

Easter Sunday April 5th 10 a.m.

- **Friday Night Game Night – Game Night happens on the first and third Fridays of the month.** There will be no game night on April 3rd as this is Good Friday. Please join us on April 17th 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 April is to be determined..
- **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 April 8th at 10:00 a.m.** in Danford Hall.
- **Church Council will meet March 23rd and April 27th 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 April 8th.
- **Crafts & Sewing Group** usually meets the first Saturday of the month at 10 a.m. in Danford Hall. *Please contact Connie Baker, 740-334-8961 if you have any questions.*

Notes to the Church and Congregation:

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!

TO THE GREAT FOLKS AT ST. PAUL'S! Thank you for such a festive reception with many cards/well wishes following my final postlude on 2/22/26. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time [again] with you, making beautiful music together – with the choirs, congregation, hand bells, brass & zimblestern. It's also been an added joy of discovering many new hymn tunes, that I was totally unaware of – through the process of selecting hymns for services. Anyhow, I wish everyone well and hope to return as a visitor at some point. I'm in the process of moving to Fort Wayne, IN where I was born & most of my family lives around.

So on this, my 2nd time around, thank you for your continued support & appreciation as we find our way forward. Peace. Tim

COMMUNITY MEAL RETURNS! As we have done for the past two summers, we will be holding monthly community meals starting in May. Our first meal will take place on Sunday, May 17th after church from 11:30 am until 1:00 pm. In the past summers, this has been a really positive way to provide some outreach and fellowship to members of our community through food. Hopefully, this event can grow, but we would like to begin with one meal per month this summer. If you would like to be a part of these community meals, either through bringing a dish to share, donations of tableware or even monetary donations, helping to set up or clean up, please let Juli Rauch know.

ST. PATRICK'S SOCK BOX The collection of socks for the YES (Youth Engaged in Service) club will continue through the end of March. The donation box is located at the back of the church.

SPRING RUMMAGE SALE (Our next organizational meeting will be March 22nd after church.) St. Paul's will host the annual rummage, antiques, collectables, and bake sale on **Friday, April 17th from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. and Saturday, April 18th from 9:00 A.M. to Noon.** You may phone the church during office hours (between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. weekdays) to donate your time for a 2 hour block of sale time, for accepting donations from 5-7 p.m. on Tuesday the 14th, and Wednesday the 15th, helping with setting up on Wednesday the 15th or Thursday the 16th, or boxing left-overs on Saturday immediately after the sale. Sign-up sheets for volunteering and for donating baked goods will also be out at services starting in March.

We will have an 'Antique and Collectables' room for Items of greater value. These items will be valued and priced individually.

The committee has voted that the proceeds from this year's event will be donated to Holy Trinity's Drop-in Center and Warming Center. **Please consider volunteering** for this event which helps congregation members find new homes for items they no longer need as well as benefiting the local community.

Items may be dropped off at the church during office hours starting on Monday, April 13th between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., and between 5 and 7 P.M. on Tuesday and Wednesday (14th and 15th). Signs on the tables will identify where to place specific donations. (No TV's that are not flat screen or soiled items will be accepted.) If you are not able to drop off your donations you may phone Diane Ganz (740-344-9141) to make other arrangements.

Unapproved Congregation Council Minutes February 23, 2026

Attending: Julie Ingram, John Grangaard, Jim Rengert, Sally Finck, Beth Warner, Pastor Martin, Kerrill Foster (non-voting) Excused: Jerry Young, Jerry DePalmo, Julie Hippen Guest: Juli Rauch

With Jerry Young being out of town, Vice-President John Grangaard led the meeting. John opened with today's devotional from Word In Season Psalm 32.

Motion to approve January's Council Minutes by Jim Rengert, 2nd by Sally Finck, motion passed unanimously.

Motion to approve President's Report by Julie Ingram, second by Beth Warner, motion passed unanimously.

Juli Rauch expressed her belief in the importance of hands-on ministry and while the community drop in center might have been too much for us at this time, some sort of social ministry is very important. She encouraged us to consider the Sunday afternoon meals again and is willing to get a group together to make those happen. Juli will provide an article for the March Forward.

Pastor interjected some of his report at this time concurring with Juli's thoughts and then talking about the Organist Search Committee and that Dustin will be the contact person for him. Also told council of the resignation of Dale & Genny Faller and searching for a new sexton. Kerrill suggested an hourly rate of \$15 to \$15.50 per hour in keeping with the budget. This led to a discussion of what to pay Kathy Jordan – Motion to pay \$250 per week as an employee was made by Martin, seconded by Sally and motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report - Income was surprisingly good due to several congregation families making their annual contributions. So for the first month of the year we are in the black. No unusual expenses to comment about, just same old, same old. All reports agree to the Treasurer's Report. The annual Congregation Report has been sent to the ELCA. Jim moved to accept the Treasurer's Report, Beth seconded and motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports – Pastor's, Congregational Care, Property – no report just a note from Diane, Rental – furnace replaced at 28th Street – roof repair at same address in progress. Motion to accept reports made by Julie, seconded by Sally and motion passed unanimously.

Other – Constitution Revision – Kerrill handed out to council a copy of the most current form of the church's constitution. We are fortunate that the 2020 committee left a document that was almost complete except for editing out the old language. Greta Blegvad and Kerrill added the slight language changes that brought it up to date with the August 2025 ELCA version. There are a few areas in chapter 12 and 13 where decisions need to be made concerning the council and standing committees. After discussion, council decided to bring suggestions for revisions to the March council meeting and would like Greta and Kerrill to then add the revisions to the constitution document. Kerrill will attached a copy of the revised constitution draft along with the minutes of this meeting. Kerrill and Greta will continue their revisions of the bylaws and handbook to bring to council.

Next Meeting March 23rd at 7 p.m. Pastor closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Kerrill Foster Secretary & Financial Secretary

Sunday Volunteers for April 2026

	April 5 Easter	April 12	April 19	April 26
Cantor	Juli Rauch	Dustin Hill	Ruth Gehring	Julie Hippen
Lector	Mark Finck	Addison Laidlaw-Smith	Anne Daly	Jon Minard
Com. Assista nt	Mary Billy	Kerrill Foster	Greta Blegvad	Mandy John
Usher	Fred Freytag, Charles Cooperider, Steve Wiersma	Charlie Laidlaw-Smith, Charles Cooperider	Greg Everingham John Grangaard	Jerry Young, Charles Cooperider
Counter s	Fred & Lindsay Freytag, Sally Finck	Kerrill Foster	Sally Finck, Greg & Kim Everingham	Geoff Kaercher & Don Miller

April Anniversaries

- 3 - Brian & Michelle Miller (21) 7 - Fred & Lindsay Freytag (47)
 Thomas & Ann Mullady (45)

April Birthdays

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 - Thomas Zinn | 12 - Doug Berg | 21 - Fred Freytag |
| 2 - Tim Jordan | 13 - Donna King | Shepard Grubb (84) |
| Ann Mullady | 14 - Sheila Carpenter | Robin Stamper |
| 3 - Jim Williams | Becca Godenschwager | 22 - Jennifer Casto |
| 4 - Pastor Bill Rauch | Alex Triplett | Joey Stamper |
| 5 - Erik Larson | Madison Wittman | 23 - Sharon Baumer |
| Dick Shiels | 15 - Samuel Mumaw | Matthew Mumaw |
| Debbie Stamper | 17 - Andrew DeBacco | 24 - Lois Lovelady (101) |
| 6 - Jasmine Swisher | Jadin Mumaw | 26 - Ron Crist |
| 8 - Jessica Freytag | Nic Trainor | 27 - Josh Peterson |
| Sarah O'Keefe | Jocelyn Wilson | Mackenzie Swisher |
| 11 - Deborah Hall | 18 - Ethan McDaniel | 28 - Quilyta Fuller |
| Richard Larson | Oliver Jordan | |
| Stephanie Strobe | 20 - Rita Ricketts | |

FINANCIAL REPORT

Received 2/1/2026	Year to Date	Attendance
Current \$ 8,924.00	\$33,671.00	Sat. 4 p.m. 14
Benevolence <u>560.00</u>	<u>743.00</u>	Sun. 10 a.m. <u>47</u>
Total \$9,484.00	\$ 34,414.00	Total 61

Received 2/8/2026	Year to Date	Attendance
Current \$ 2,672.00	\$36,343.00	Sat. 4 p.m. 11
Benevolence <u>140.00</u>	<u>883.00</u>	Sun. 10 a.m. <u>46</u>
Total \$2,812.00	\$ 37,226.00	Total 57

Received 2/15/2026	Year to Date	Attendance
Current \$ 2,160.00	\$38,503.00	Sat. 4 p.m. 13
Benevolence <u>15.00</u>	<u>898.00</u>	Sun. 10 a.m. <u>51</u>
Total \$2,175.00	\$ 39,401.00	Total 64

Received 2/22/2026	Year to Date	Attendance
Current \$ 2,169.25	\$40,672.25	Sat. 4 p.m. 12
Benevolence <u>15.00</u>	<u>913.00</u>	Sun. 10 a.m. 51
Total \$2,184.25	\$ 41,585.25	Ash Weds. <u>40</u>
		Total 103

*Thank you Thrivent Choice members for your donations to St. Paul's! A donation was made to the Choir Fund in memory of **Susan Wagenheim** by Martin and Dee Altmaier. A donation was made to the Memorial Fund in memory of **Rick Wheeler** by Carol and Ron Wheeler, Vicki Owen, Joyln & Ryan Carpenter and Mike & Sarah Marmie. Donations were made to the Memorial Fund in memory of **Susan Wagenheim** by Steve & Kris Wiersma and an anonymous individual.*

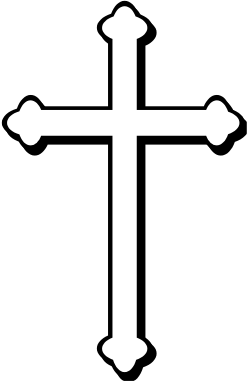
Year to date operational revenue as of February 28, 2026	\$42,938.48
Year to date operational expenses as of February 28, 2026	<u>\$42,158.36</u>
Surplus	\$ 780.12

URGENT NEED FOR FOOD PANTRY ITEMS! Any shelf-stable items are needed...especially peanut butter. Items that can be made without the addition of milk or dairy, like; powered milk, juice boxes, cereal, soups, crackers, instant mashed potatoes, pastas, spaghetti sauces, bread, toilet paper. If you wish to give a monetary donation, mark your offering envelope designated to the "Food Pantry".

THE FORWARD March 17, 2026
St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church
67 North Fifth Street
Newark, OH 43055-5031

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**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."*

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