

Welcome Home!

Saint Paul's Lutheran Church

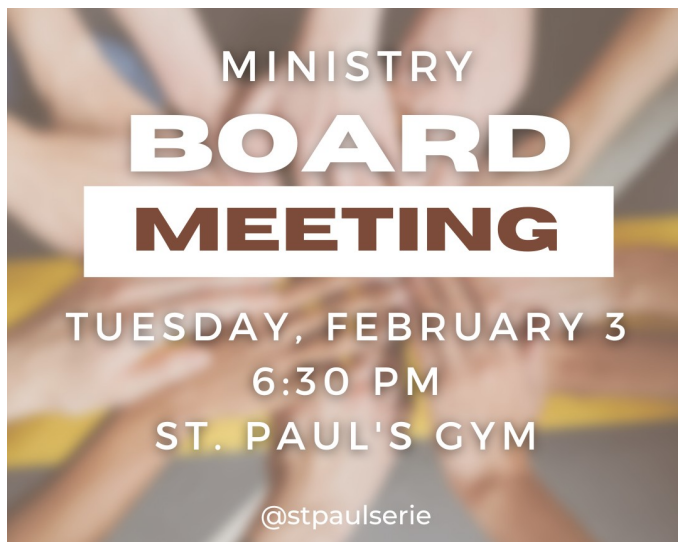
February 2026 Newsletter



Ministry Board Meeting

Join us for St. Paul's next quarterly Ministry Board Meeting on Tuesday, February 3 at 6:30 PM in the gym. Please note, this is a different day of the week from when we previously met. All ministry team members, leaders, & Council members should plan on attending.

This is your opportunity to share & plan with all the other ministries at St. Paul's!



Souper Bowl



Are you ready for St. Paul's Third Annual Souper Bowl?! Bring your non-perishable food items the weekend of February 7 & 8 and "vote" for your favorite team playing in the big game that weekend by placing your donation on the table with that team's color. All donations will benefit St. Paul's Food Pantry. Remember to wear your favorite sports jersey to worship that weekend!

Ash Wednesday

Join us as we begin our Lenten journey with Ash Wednesday, February 18 at 12 PM & 7 PM.

Ash Wednesday derives its name from the practice of placing ashes on the foreheads of believers as a sign of mourning and repentance to God. This day begins our journey to the cross on Good Friday and then the resurrection on Easter Sunday.



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

3108 Sterrettania Road

Erie, PA 16506-2658

www.stpaulserie.org

Saturday Worship Service, 5 PM

Sunday Worship Service, 9 AM

All Sunday worship videos are livestreamed at

www.facebook.com/stpaulserie

and available at

www.youtube.com/user/stpaulslutheranerie.

Wednesday Scripture Study, 9 AM



Office Hours:

Mon-Thu 9 AM-3 PM

814-833-1761

office@stpaulserie.org



Pastor Erik

Pastor Erik Young

814-833-1761

Pastor@stpaulserie.org

Pastor's Office Hours: Mon-Wed 9 AM-1 PM

Lent 2026 Focus– Spiritual Disciplines

It is not uncommon in the church for many people to have heard the term “spiritual discipline,” yet very few know what it truly means. This Lenten season we hope to change that for our faith community by focusing on spiritual disciplines.

Let's begin with the basics: What are spiritual disciplines and why do we practice them? Spiritual disciplines are exercises rooted in scripture that foster spiritual growth and deepen one's relationship with God. They are used to cultivate a Christ-like character, intentionally making us more like Jesus every day. (Yes, the word *discipline* and *disciple* come from the same root!) These spiritual disciplines are deliberately practiced, designed to help individuals grow in their faith and devotion. Not merely rituals, they are transformative activities that align one's heart and mind with what God would have them do and be. 1 Timothy 4:7 tells us to “train ourselves for godliness” – that is to practice being God's presence in the world for the sake of the world. (Please note the word *practice*.)

The spiritual disciplines that we will be covering over the five weeks of Lenten Sunday sermons, with a deeper dive into them on the following Wednesday night, are: fasting, prayer and meditation, Bible reading and study, confession and repentance, and service and generosity.

Pablo Casals, the brilliant cellist, was in his eighties or nineties and was asked why he continued to practice his instrument so intensely in those golden years. His response was simple: “Because I think I'm making progress.”

Join us in learning about spiritual disciplines so that you can continue to practice your faith intensely – you will see that you are making progress in being more like Jesus every day.

-Pastor Erik Young



Community Care Ministries

Food Pantry

Thank you all for your generous contributions to the Food Pantry! In December, we served 19 households; 5 were new to our pantry. 53 neighbors were served and 7 were new to our pantry. We were fortunate enough to be able to purchase gift cards for our neighbors for Christmas. Also, Pati Swanson

reached out to the Books for Kids campaign and started sharing books with the children that we are serving. In December, Pati gave away 21 books! Pati will continue to distribute the books each month. Plus, each family received a quilt! All kids received a small quilt of their own. The neighbors were thrilled

with the quilts, gift cards, and books. Thanks to all who contributed food, quilts, monetary donations, and the volunteers who support this project!!

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, contact us at FoodPantry@stpaulserie.org. We could use more help on the days we pick up food to carry items into the pantry.

Good Gifts Valentines

Valentines Day is almost here! We are selling Good Gifts Valentines again this year on Saturday, February 7 & Sunday, February 8 before & after worship services. They cost \$2 each or 3 for \$5. All proceeds go towards ELCA World Hunger!



Patchwork of Love Quilting & Knitting Ministry



Join our Patchwork of Love team of quilters & knitters! We meet on Tuesdays from 9-11 AM in Clare-Wolfe Lounge.

Sock Drive

St. Paul's Sock Drive continues into the new year! Please continue to donate **NEW** pairs of men's socks in the bin located in the entryway of St. Paul's. Warm & dry socks are an important & much-needed clothing item for those experiencing homelessness. Thank you for your generosity!



Worship Ministries

Join us every Wednesday during Lent, February 25-March 25, as we gather in the gym from 6-7 PM for our Soup Suppers & Study- an hour of food, fellowship & faith-learning.

LENTEN SOUP SUPPER & STUDY

Wednesdays,
February 25- March 25
6-7 PM
Gym



Congregational Care Ministries

Congregational Sympathy

Congregational sympathy is shared with the family & friends of **Candis R. "Candy" Blaszczyk** who passed away December 23, 2025.

Congregational Prayers

Please keep our siblings in Christ in your daily prayers: **Liz & Ted Davis, Dan DeCoursey, Betty Farver, Vicki Fischer, Charlotte Haggerty, Rick Hetrick, Judy Matthews, Becke Moniot, Terry Moyer, & Gary.** Pray for those who are dealing with cancer, financial hardships, & facing illness or surgery.

Continue to pray for those who are homebound or in nursing homes: **Ann Anderson, Vince Balinski, Debi Firment, Noni Gardner, Dottie Johnson, & Sandy Pamin.** Wrap your hearts around those who are alone, broken-hearted, grieving, or anxious.

Bless our teachers everywhere & pray for St. Paul's **Children's Church, Child Development Center, & Preschool teachers.**

We continue to pray for those who are close to us who serve in the military, including their families: **Dylan Green,** as well as friends of St. Paul's— **Samuel Arthur, Luke Goodwin, Brennan Madara, Natalie Ramish-Long, Benjamin Sperring, Brody Swab, Jordan Swab, Christopher Tinsman, Allison Ward, & Zachary Zehner.**

We keep our college students in prayer as they study and prepare for their future vocations: **Corinne Bechtold, Megan Bechtold, Sophie Beilharz, Stella Beilharz, Andrew Collins, Jacob Gross, Sebastien Jones, Xavier Jones, Drew Kwiatkowski, Ethan Leopold, Ellie Schau, & Hannah Schmidt.**

Anniversaries

Feb 12– Rick & Barb Davies
Feb 14– Greg & Pati Swanson
Feb 15– Rick & Betty lou Schau
Feb 21– Tim & Michelle Fuller

Birthdays

Feb 1– Paula Buchanan
Feb 2– Mike Barber
Feb 4– Bob Wright
Feb 5– Colin Berger, Harper Scheuering
Feb 7– Alexa Kwiatkowski
Feb 8– Jacob Gross, Tom Pamin
Feb 9– Vanessa Baran
Feb 10– Donna Crotty
Feb 11– Becky Stroul, Erich Zech
Feb 12– Mike Collins, Carol Davis
Feb 13– Mike Cunningham
Feb 15– Josiah Chiapa, Zachery Combs, Len Toy, Stefanie Young
Feb 16– Gina Berger, George Farantzios, Mark Sandstrom
Feb 17– Debbie DeCoursey, Dylan Green, Jessica Kidd, Susan Snyder
Feb 18– Chris Panitzke
Feb 19– August Wakley
Feb 21– Jill Kelley
Feb 22– Xavier Jones
Feb 25– Gary Bax, Heather McLaughlin
Feb 26– Tristan Leopold
Feb 28– Michelle Colvin

Congregational Thank You Notes

Thank you for the cookies. They were very good. Thanks again.

Jane Heineman

To my Christian brothers & sisters,

I wish to thank you for the cards during my home care. I have been so under the weather, I miss everyone. I have so much going on that I don't think I will be walking anytime soon.

In God's Love, Debi Firment

Thank you all for the cookie tray. It brightened my day. Merry Xmas to all & Happy New Year.

Lois Gilbert

Dear St. Paul's, I want to thank my church family for all their thoughts and prayers during my recent surgery and recovery. I also received some yummy casseroles and a beautiful cookie tray! Your cards, phone calls and texts did wonders for my spirits. I definitely felt wrapped in love and caring. Healing for body, heart and soul.

Thanks again to all!

Cheryl Till

Thank you for your generous gift. Your compassion and support allow us to continue offering more than just shelter. We provide nourishment, comfort, friendship, and a safe place where men who are unhoused are treated with dignity and respect. Because of you, we are making a meaningful difference, one life, one night at a time.

Thank you for the donation of socks~ they are greatly appreciated! God Bless!

St. Patrick's Haven Board

Sisters of St. Joseph of NWPA

To My Church Family,

I am truly humbled by the outpouring of condolences and sympathy on the passing of my husband, Jim. Each card I opened brought a spark of joy, each phone call or text gave me strength, and each prayer brought me peace. You have all reminded me to stay rooted and grounded in my beliefs. Although Jim is not with me, and I miss him, I know where he is and I can rejoice in that.

Thank you all.

Marsha Szymanowicz

Congregational Fellowship

Breakfast Group

Breakfast Group meets on Monday, February 2 at 8:30 AM at Perkins at 4403 Peach St. in Erie. All are welcome & responsible for their own meals.



Well-Watered Disciples Men's Fellowship Group

Well-Watered Disciples meets next on Thursday, February 19 at 6 PM. The location is to be announced.



Church Council Highlights

From the January 2026 meeting:

- ⇒ Stewardship team to kick off this spring with the goal of keeping an eye on expenses.
- ⇒ Christian education task force formed, made up of past teachers, educators & parents. They are tasked with fulfilling one of our 5-year goals for Christian education & intergenerational engagement.
- ⇒ Lenten midweek services will be as usual, including our Seder meal. No Funeral for Jesus this year; we will have a tenebrae instead.
- ⇒ We are very grateful to the Visitation Ministry team, as the folks who are visited are flourishing under their care.

Next meeting: Tuesday, February 17 at 6:15 PM in Clare-Wolfe Lounge.

Attendance & Finances

By The Numbers:	December 2025
Avg. Saturday Attendance	19 in-person
Avg. Sunday Attendance	76 in-person 22 online views
December Income	\$34,128
December Expenses	\$31,273
December Difference	\$2,855
December Budget Income	\$33,230
December Budget Expenses	\$31,208
December Budget Difference	\$2,022
Year-to-Date Income	\$340,756
Year-to-Date Expenses	\$383,648
Year-to-Date Difference	-\$42,892
Year-to-Date Budget Income	\$347,515
Year-to-Date Budget Expenses	\$374,512
Year-to-Date Budget Difference	-\$26,997

Electronic Giving



Have your weekly or monthly contribution debited from your checking or savings account automatically—you'll never have to remember your checkbook again!

Simply scan the QR code. You can also give online at [Give to St. Paul's Lutheran Church \(breezechms.com\)](https://breezechms.com).

Faith Formation Ministries

Children's Ministry with Bridget

We are looking for volunteer teachers for Sunday School through May 2026. Signups are on the Children & Youth Ministries' bulletin board in the entryway of St. Paul's. Thank you!

Children's Church is open to all children in pre-K through grade 5. We could still use more volunteer teachers! Please sign up on the bulletin board in the entryway of St. Paul's.

Questions? Contact Bridget at CDCAssistant@stpaulserie.org.



Confirmation Youth Group with Pastor Erik

Please join us every Monday in the gym & youth room from 6-7:30 PM for youth group! We will gather for fun & games, Bible & faith studies, & solid hang out time.



Preschool Ministries



St. Paul's Preschool Open House is on Sunday, February 22 from 1-3 PM. This is a great opportunity to meet our teachers & see our classrooms! Please share with family and friends with preschool-aged children.

More information & registration forms are on our website at www.stpaulserie.org/pre-school.

Questions? Contact Melissa Collins at PSDirector@stpaulserie.org or 814-833-1761, ext. 1002.

Child Development Center (CDC) Ministries

Congratulations to St. Paul's Child Development Center for winning the Best Daycare category for Erie Reader's Best of Erie 2025!! You can see all the finalists at <https://www.eriereader.com/article/best-of-erie-winners-and-finalists-2025>. Thank you to everyone who voted!

Questions? Contact us at CDCDirector@stpaulserie.org or 814-833-1761, ext. 1004.



February Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:15am Choir Rehearsal 9:00am Children's Church 9:00am Worship 10:15am New Member Reception	2 Groundhog Day 8:30am Breakfast Group 9:45am Children's Chapel 1:45pm Children's Chapel 6:00pm Confirmation Youth Group 6:30pm Property Team Meeting	3 9:00am Patchwork of Love Quilting Ministry 6:15pm Girl Scout Troop Meeting 6:30pm Ministry Board Meeting	4 9:00am Scripture Study 10:00am Staff Meeting 8:00pm Basketball	5 8:00pm Basketball	6 7:00pm Alcoholics Anonymous Marble Group	7 <i>Good Gifts Valentines Souper Bowl Weekend</i> 5:00pm Worship
8 <i>Good Gifts Valentines Souper Bowl Weekend</i> 8:15am Choir Rehearsal 9:00am Children's Church 9:00am Worship	9 5:30pm Security Team Meeting 6:30pm Worship Team Meeting	10 9:00am Patchwork of Love Quilting Ministry 5:30pm Faith Formation Team Meeting 6:15pm Girl Scout Troop Meeting	11 9:00am Scripture Study 8:00pm Basketball	12 8:00pm Basketball	13 <i>Preschool Valentine's Party</i> 7:00pm Alcoholics Anonymous Marble Group	14 Valentine's Day 5:00pm Worship
15 <i>Newsletter Articles Due</i> Transfiguration Sunday 8:15am Choir Rehearsal 9:00am Children's Church 9:00am Worship	16 <i>Child Development Center Closed</i> <i>Church Office Closed</i> <i>Preschool Closed</i> Presidents' Day	17 9:00am Patchwork of Love Quilting Ministry 6:15pm Church Council Meeting 6:15pm Girl Scout Troop Meeting	18 Ash Wednesday 9:00am Scripture Study 12:00pm Ash Wednesday Worship 7:00pm Ash Wednesday Worship 8:00pm Basketball	19 6:00pm Well-Watered Disciples Men's Fellowship Group 8:00pm Basketball	20 7:00pm Alcoholics Anonymous Marble Group	21 5:00pm Worship
22 8:15am Choir Rehearsal 9:00am Children's Church 9:00am Worship 1:00pm Preschool Open House	23 9:45am Children's Chapel 6:00pm Confirmation Youth Group	24 9:00am Patchwork of Love Quilting Ministry 6:00pm ECE Board Meeting 6:15pm Girl Scout Troop Meeting	25 9:00am Scripture Study 6:00pm Lenten Soup Supper & Study	26 4:00pm Food Pantry Distribution 8:00pm Basketball	27 7:00pm Alcoholics Anonymous Marble Group	28 5:00pm Worship

Worship Assistants

Date	Event	Ushers	Assist Minister/ Reader
Feb 1	4 Epiphany	Wright Team	Cheryl Moore
Feb 8	5 Epiphany	Zech/Chiapa Team	Larry Kessler
Feb 15	Transfiguration	Curtis Team	Joe Lang
Feb 22	1 Lent	Gardner/Marzka Team	Wayne Gardner