

# St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church

## Dallas, Pennsylvania



**January 1, 2025**  
**to**  
**December 31, 2025**

### **St. Paul's Mission Statement**

St. Paul's Lutheran Church is a family called together by God and united by a common faith. Our mission is to share with all people, God's Love and Grace through Word and Sacrament.

Through the Holy Spirit, we are empowered to Witness and Serve, treating one another with Love, Compassion, Forgiveness, and Understanding.

By our Commitments, Actions, Deeds, and Resources, we share the Good News of Jesus Christ, reaching out to our Community, Nation and World.

Adopted, May 1993

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Congregation Council Officers, Members, and Staff .....	Page 3
Agenda .....	Page 4
In Memoriam .....	Page 5
Minutes of 2024 Annual Meeting held on January 19, 2025 .....	Pages 6-9
Pastoral Acts - 2025 .....	Page 10
Pastor's Report .....	Pages 11-12

## **COMMITTEE AND SPECIAL REPORTS**

Christian Education.....	Pages 12-13
Communication .....	Page 14
Evangelism .....	Pages 14-15
Fellowship .....	Page 15
Finance/Property .....	Pages 15-17
Head Start .....	Page 17
Health Ministry .....	Page 18
Landscaping.....	Page 18
Long Range Planning .....	Pages 18-19
Social Ministry .....	Page 19
Worship & Music.....	Pages 20-21
Brotherhood.....	Page 21
Dorcas Society .....	Pages 22-23
100 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee Report.....	Page 23
Council Letter of Thanks.....	Page 32
Dorcas Benediction.....	Page 33

† † †

## **CONGREGATION COUNCIL OFFICERS**

President .....	Rev. Charles H. Grube
Vice-President .....	Frank Mariano
Secretary .....	Gail Smallwood
Treasurer.....	Carol Fett

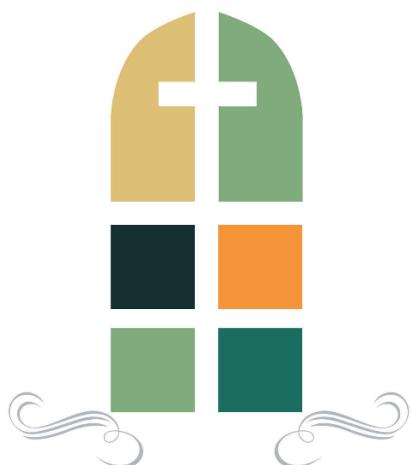
### Congregation Council Members:

<u>2025/2026</u>	<u>2026/2027</u>	<u>2027/2028</u>
Cathy Ridout*	Frank Mariano*	Larry Pierce*
Don Kretchmer	Gail Smallwood*	Bruce Thomas
Tony Linnen	Marissa Miller*	Gail Ide
Julie Holbrook	Amanda Brezovsky	Pat Peiffer

(\*)Final Term

## **STAFF**

Pastor .....	Rev. Charles H. Grube
Director of Music/Organist, Sr. Choir, & Chimes Director .....	Margaret Quintanar
Youth Choir Director .....	Jean Grube
Minister of Technology.....	Marissa Miller
Church Office.....	Gail Smallwood & Carol Fett
Custodian / Sexton .....	James Madonna
Sunday School Superintendent .....	Anthony Linnen
Financial Secretary .....	Ruth Ide



## **AGENDA**

1:00 pm

1. Opening Prayer and Acceptance of Agenda
2. Approval of Minutes from 2024 Congregational Meeting  
held January 19, 2025 (Social Hall & Zoom)
3. Pastor's Report - 2025
4. Reports of Standing Committees and Organizations
  - A. Christian Education
  - B. Communication
  - C. Evangelism
  - D. Fellowship (No Written Report)
  - E. Finance & Property
  - F. Head Start & Early Intervention
  - G. Health Ministry
  - H. Landscaping
  - I. Long Range Planning
  - J. Social Ministry
  - K. Worship & Music
  - L. Brotherhood
  - M. Dorcas Society
  - N. 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee Report
5. Old Business
  - A.
  - B.
6. New Business
  - A. Adoption of 2026 Proposed Budget
  - B. Election of Council Members
  - C. Constitution Revisions
  - D. Newsletter Survey
7. Adjournment

## In Memoriam

During this past year, three members of our congregation died.

We know all of us will face death someday, but we, as Christians, also know that God promises eternal life to those who believe in Him.

So, in memory of these members and the lives of those of our loved ones who are already with God, we dedicate this annual report.

*William Smith*

*Elizabeth (Betty) Schray*

*Nicky D'Agosto*



## **Minutes of Annual Congregational Meeting Calendar Year 2024**

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
JANUARY 19, 2025

President the Rev. Charles H. Grube  
Vice-President Frank Mariano  
Secretary Gail Smallwood  
Treasurer Carol Fett

There being a quorum of voting members, Frank Mariano called the meeting to order at 12:58 pm. He thanked all those who attended in person and on Zoom and who prepared the luncheon. Pastor Grube led the congregation in prayer.

Frank requested a moment of silence in memory of all those church members who had died, especially those who had passed in 2024. He also acknowledged and thanked all church council chairs and members for their efforts on behalf of St. Paul's during the preceding year.

Frank called for approval of minutes from the previous congregational meeting. Ray Mancke moved to approve the minutes and Gail Ide seconded it. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Pastor's report: Written and approved. Pastor thanked the congregation for its dedication, encouragement and financial support of the church and his ministry, and thanked the council members for their leadership, commitment and efforts on behalf of the church. He noted his report reflects his optimism and hope for the future of the church, as well as the joy of celebrating the church's 100th anniversary of its founding, honoring its past and anticipating its future. Joe Hardisky thanked Pastor for his dedication to and work for St. Paul's, and asked him to describe his work outside of St. Paul's. Pastor noted that he serves as assistant to Bishop Christopher deForest of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, focusing on congregations which are in transition, and is able to keep a balance between his work for St. Paul's and for the synod.

Frank gave his report, thanking Pastor for all his work for the church and noted that Pastor's report reflects the church's challenges, especially in regards to declining membership and financial support.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Christian Education Committee:** Written report.

**Communications Committee:** Written report.

**Evangelism Committee:** Written report. Gail Ide invited members of the congregation to join her committee.

**Fellowship Committee:** No written report. Julie Holbrook began leading the committee in May. The committee has been hosting receptions and is always looking for new members.

**Finance/Property Committee:** Written report. Carol Fett reported that 2024 was a challenging year financially and in regards to property, and 2025 likely will be as well. Frank commented that the loss in 2024 of the Early Intervention class resulted in a loss of at least \$30,000 to the church's budget. Council is trying to find a new tenant that would be compatible with Head Start; a new tenant would need to be a non-profit business. He encouraged the members to contact council members with information about potential new tenants. Joe Hardisky suggested contacting local state representative Brenda Pugh for help in finding a new tenant. Frank reported that he was planning to meet with a member of Pugh's staff in a few days and would ask about the possibility of help, as well as sharing information about the Department of Environmental Protection's quarterly inspections of the church's water system. Joe Hardisky also asked if the church's Cradle Roll program was still in effect and Frank noted that it is. The property committee recently installed a new handrail leading up to the lectern in the sanctuary. A current focus of the property committee is the church's aging roofs and the need for repairs or replacement. The roof over the Narthex will need a temporary repair to hold it over until a permanent repair can be made.

**Head Start/Early Intervention Committee:** Written report.

**Health Ministry Committee:** Written report.

**Landscaping Committee:** Written report.

**Long Range Planning Committee:** Written report. Joe Hardisky asked how the Synod's 6261 program could help St. Paul's with its challenges. Frank described the church's self-examination process completed by council and the building of partnerships with Prince of Peace Episcopal Church and Pyramid Health. These steps may lead to partnering with other churches in the area and the possibilities of perhaps sharing staff and pastors, which could help prepare St. Paul's for Pastor Grube's retirement in the future. A current example of partnering with Prince of Peace is the new grief support group, which is led jointly by Prince of Peace and St. Paul's members and meets at St. Paul's. Pastor noted that St. Paul's is looking for likely partners who can help build a sustainable future for all. Frank also described the position of licensed lay ministers and the work they do. He encouraged anyone who might be interested in serving as a licensed lay minister to contact him for more information and how to get started with training.

**Social Ministry Committee:** Written report. Committee chair Karen Mertz will no longer be leading the group, so a new chair is needed. Frank thanked Karen for her efforts in

working with Pyramid clients and organizing their work for the church, especially with the rummage sales and in maintaining the landscape beds.

**Worship and Music Committee:** Written report. Annie Bisher reported that the 2024 World Day of Prayer service was well attended. The 2025 service is scheduled to be held at Prince of Peace.

**Lutheran Brotherhood:** Written report. The Brotherhood expects to offer four roast beef dinners in 2025 and thanks all the volunteers for their hard work and many contributions to the success of the dinners. Frank thanked the group for its support of and generosity to the church.

**Dorcas Society:** Written report. Frank thanked the members for their support and generosity to the church.

**2024 Income Report:** Written report. Frank asked for a motion to approve the report, and Gail Ide made the motion. Annie Bisher seconded the motion, and the report was approved.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

No old business.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Proposed 2025 Budget:** Frank invited comment on the proposed 2025 budget, noting that it will be a challenge to manage the budget because of the church's deficit. Julie Holbrook made a motion to approve the budget and Don Kretchmer seconded it. The budget was approved.

**Election of Council Members:** Pastor announced there are four open positions on the church council, due to the three-year terms of Larry Pierce, Bruce Thomas, Gail Ide and Pat Peiffer ending in January 2025. All four council members have agreed to serve for a second, three-year term. Annie Bisher moved to nominate the members for election to second terms, and Julie Holbrook seconded the motion. The members were re-elected by voice vote.

**Constitution Revisions:** Frank asked for any questions regarding the proposed changes to the church's constitution; there were no questions. Joe Hardisky moved to accept the changes and Pat Peiffer seconded the motion. The changes were adopted.

**100th Anniversary Committee Announcement:** Annie Bisher, chair of the 100th Anniversary Committee, reported that the committee has been meeting once a month and will continue to meet throughout the anniversary year. The first event of the anniversary year was this Sunday's service, which incorporated liturgy and hymns from the church's services held in the 1920s, when the church was founded. Annie provided schedules of

anniversary events and reported the committee has already held two fundraisers. She thanked her committee for all their work and planning. Julie Holbrook is working on a history of the church in photos and plans to add more photos every few weeks. She is looking for photos of each of the church's pastors before Pastor Harold Baer and asked the congregation to send her photos if anyone has any.

Frank noted that he attends the Senior Forum from time to time, and that he and council members are receptive to ideas developed in the forum. Ideas from the forum have helped the church grow in its ministry and helped inspire new ministries, such as the monthly labyrinth walks and grief support group meetings, soup sales in support of Bear Creek camp attendees, and the new meditation garden. He thanked all those present for their support, ideas and comments.

Joe Hardisky thanked the church office staff for providing the annual report and noted he is pleased and honored to be a member of St. Paul's.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Annie Bisher moved to adjourn the meeting, and Pat Peiffer seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m. with the reciting of the Dorcas Benediction.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gail Smallwood, Congregation Secretary

## **2025 PASTORAL ACTS**

**Baptisms:** Annabell LaVey Peve  
Ava Jayne Peve  
Weston Kaine Kovach  
Gracie Ann Kovach  
Austin Matison Smith  
Bennett Walker Smith  
Bellami Matison Smith  
Alaya Dani Masri  
Sienna Hope Roman

**Confirmations:** None

**Marriages:** Mariana Josephine Dymond and Austin Matison Smith  
Adam Bradley O'Brien and Anna Ivasyshyna

**Funerals:** William C. Smith  
Elizabeth (Betty) Schray  
Theresa Gwilliam (\*)

\*Non-Member

**Removed from Rolls:**

**New Members:** Edward & Raelene Napierkowski  
Wayne & Sandra Fassett  
Sabrina Pericich, Rocco and Lena  
Sandra Weaver Charney  
Jodi Sprau



Then Jesus said ..., “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” John 8:31-32

We have focused our attention at various times through this past year on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our congregation. We used the historic setting of the service from the *Common Service Book*, the resource our founders would have used, to kick off the year in January. Special events like a spaghetti dinner, Ash Wednesday Eve Fasnacht gathering, Red Cross Blood Drive, and summertime Quilt and Art Show and Tea complemented the year. We welcomed former pastor Lynn Rothrock as our guest preacher when we gathered for a special brunch in September. And the highlight and center point of our year-long celebration was the special worship with Bishop Christopher deForest and pig roast picnic with special guests and former members and friends of the congregation in May. Throughout the year, photographic displays of historical events, ministries, groups, and former members rooted us solidly in our past and perhaps caused us to pine nostalgically for the glory days of those times gone by. It's especially true when the current times aren't as flourishing, as is the case for us today, to look longingly at the past and yearn for what once was. I personally find myself doing the same thing. As the family grows and the generations pass, I find myself musing over memories of times past with nostalgia, including of my years here at St. Paul's, remembering moments, places, and people that stick in my memory.

Yet, I have always maintained that marking milestones, like an anniversary, while naturally drawing our attention to the past, is also the opportune time to imagine the future, how the legacy handed on to us will be handed on to those who come after us. Partly, it's a matter of accepting the way things are now as the new normal we have to work with and live in. And partly it's a matter of imagining what that new normal can lead to as we move forward.

Our leadership has paid attention to the new normal and worked intentionally to face it, address it, and work in it. We have maintained an active life of mission, ministry, and service, worship, learning, and care for one another beyond those anniversary moments throughout the year. The question before us now is, having marked 100 years of our congregational life, what can we imagine the next 100 years will bring? Or 50 years? Or 10? Or even this next year before us?

We have so many gifts as a community, so many resources in our building, so many caring members, and such a deep well of perspectives, experiences, wisdom, and creativity among us. Ministry and the life of the church will look different in the next decade than it

did in the last decade, and in that is opportunity for creativity, integrity, faithfulness, hope, and productivity as worshipers and disciples of Christ.

We continue as a vital, vibrant community of faith serving our neighborhood and our own community in need. Your generosity of time, skills, and resources continues to mark our congregation as a caring community and faithful disciples of Jesus. And despite the increasing financial deficit under which we operate, we continue to operate and to flourish as the ministers called in baptism that we are, doing the work our Lord Jesus calls us to. We are most grateful to those who struggle week after week, month after month, to address the consistent financial struggles with which we're faced.

Thank you for your partnership in the gospel we share and for all the ways you contribute to our congregation's life and ministry. I have said repeatedly and will continue to say that this is a special congregation of the church of Christ, and it continues to be my honor and joy to serve with you as your pastor in the work to which Christ has called us. I invite you to join me in my daily prayers for the wellbeing of our community and the vitality of our ministry as we begin the next 100 years as a congregation of Christ's church active in the world.

Continuing in the Word,  
Pastor



## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Committee Members: Pastor Grube, Jean Grube, Marissa Miller, Amanda Brezovsky, Tony Linnen, Lavonna Thomas, Julie Miller, Trish/Keith Broscious

The Christian Education team continues to be dedicated to the young children and youth of our church in providing religious education to help them understand their church beliefs and their part in our church community. In 2025, the committee was happy to host many events that included past favorites as well as new activities.

We continued our theme for the 2024-2025 Sunday School year-“Building on Our Foundations” which included some stories of St Paul’s church as we celebrated our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary and several Sundays were devoted to our Lutheran Heritage. During these Sundays, we learned about our beliefs through the sacraments of Baptism and Communion

and more about Prayer. The children seemed to enjoy our “Prayer Web” that we formed as part of this theme.

Starting in September of 2025, we said goodbye to our Whirl characters/curriculum as we finished our third year and jumped into Holy Moly which is our new curriculum for the next two years. For the first part of the year, we studied Old Testament stories including Abraham, Joseph and David to name a few.

Our activities for 2025 included:

- Bible Bowl-A Superbowl Sunday Bible Trivia Day
- Lent Study that used Activity Eggs with symbols inside
- Palm Sunday Event during which we created a bottle lid cross and a Whirl Prayer Catcher
- Mother’s Day Craft
- Ice Cream Social on our final day of Sunday School for the 2024-2025 year.
- Rally Day in September where we kicked off the new year with our new theme-Acts of Kindness. We completed our first Act of Kindness in assembling some hygiene bags for Pyramid with donations from the congregation. Thank you to the congregation for all the donations and to Karen Mertz for delivering the 25 bags we were able to make.
- October Bonfire with singing, smore’s and fire safety talk by Don Kretchmer.
- Turkey Contest with all the Sunday School classes involved. We also invited all congregational members who were interested to join as well. We were able to display more turkeys due to some additional turkeys made by congregational members. The real winner of this event is always the Back Mountain Food Pantry who received all the foods brought in for the voting through this Act of Kindness.
- Advent Event-Each family created a Jesse Tree with symbols from the Bible.
- Christmas Play-This year Pastor and Jean created a Reader’s Theater presentation of the story of Jesus Birth with Sunday School readers, special musical numbers and congregational participation.
- 

We also worked on projects in conjunction with the Social Ministry Team, such as our Valentine’s Day cards and our Fall Pumpkins. Thank you to Pat Kowalek and the Social Ministry team for delivering the pumpkins.

You may have noticed the art work on the bulletins for several Sundays. We are encouraging the talents of our Sunday School youth in many ways this year. You may even see some youth provide readings over the next several months.

Thank you for all those who serve on the committee and participate in the teaching and nurturing of our youth!

Respectfully submitted,  
Julie Holbrook

## **COMMUNICATION**

The communication committee continues to manage the church's external communications efforts through a variety of media.

Each week's Sunday worship service is offered on the Zoom platform; the recording of each service is then edited and uploaded to the church's website, available on the Sermons page early in the week. Special services such as Ash Wednesday and Christmas Eve, as well as the annual congregational meeting, also are made available on Zoom for those who cannot attend.

Committee members also maintain the website, updating the homepage on a monthly basis and updating Dorcas, Brotherhood and other pages as needed. In addition, Pastor Grube's sermons are posted each week to the Sermons page. The monthly newsletter also is posted on the website under the What's Happening tab, along with a weekly posting of the bulletin. Members receive emails with links to the bulletin and the upcoming Zoom worship service meeting, usually on Thursday afternoons.

The committee uses the church's Facebook account to announce many of the church's upcoming activities, announcements, meetings and events, as well as photos of Sunday School programs and church happenings. The Back Mountain Community Facebook page is another location where the committee posts information about the church.

The committee sends out news releases and photos to local daily and monthly newspapers and publications, highlighting events such as the roast beef dinners, rummage and bake sales, labyrinth walks and grief support group meetings, and other events. Ads for the rummage sales, Easter and Christmas services are also placed in local papers.

In 2025 the committee helped facilitate the purchase and setup of a new office computer and updated all computers to the Windows 11 operating system.

The committee reminds all St. Paul's members that members' contact information is NEVER shared with outside businesses, organizations or individuals. If you receive an unusual email, Facebook message or phone call that appears to be from St. Paul's, please do not respond or click on any links! Call the church office first to check to see if the message is actually from the church.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marissa Miller and Gail Smallwood

## **EVANGELISM**

A simple "Thank You" can't come even remotely to cover my feelings for all of you who have done so much to help make this a successful year!

- Harvest Festival
  - Great success at Dallas HS in September.

- Labyrinth
  - Open to the public on the third Wednesday of every month.
  - For 2025, somewhat fewer people, parishioners and people from different faiths walked this scared spiritual path than last year. But absolutely those who walked needed it at that time! Our Lord works in mysterious ways.
- Meditative Garden
  - It is to the left of the church by the handicapped parking area and the three trees.
  - It's almost done! Just a few more things are needed.
  - It is like a bridge from our past (100 years) to our future!
- Pathway and Fire Pit
  - The weather has not been cooperating for the Pathway again this year, plus the need for big equipment.
  - The Fire Pit has been used and enjoyed, especially the s'mores!
- Reconciling In Christ
  - We have four members on our core team: Trish Brosious, Gail Ide, Frank Mariano and Margaret Quintanar. We have room for others.
  - Based on the results of the Faith Community Assessments, we are following the "St. Cautious" program beginning with one-to-one visits.  
Please accept a call from one of our core members. Through all of our conversations, we are looking to understand what draws you to the Lutheran church, especially St. Paul's. What are our mutual interests? How would you include more people from the fringes? We want to explore together ways to include all people as Jesus did in his ministry. So we can better share God's love as we move into the future.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gail Ide

## FELLOWSHIP

No written report.

## FINANCE / PROPERTY

In 2025, we continued our joint committee meetings which kept us on track with the various property issues and expenses. We are grateful to all committee chairpersons for working to stay within budgeted amounts whenever possible, for the continued financial support of all our members and for all the special year end donations that helped us meet our obligations to our vendors. We are especially grateful for the general fund and savings (Roof Repair) donations received from both St. Paul's Dorcas Society and St. Paul's Brotherhood.

Committee work/projects included but not limited to:

- Fulfilling financial obligations to the best of our abilities. We ended the year with a small positive balance in the general fund checking account but worked

with negative balances upwards of \$20,000 throughout the year. Knowing that outstanding invoices/taxes/compensation, etc., still needed to be satisfied, required transfers from our savings accounts. We currently have a negative balance on the line item for Excess General/Interest in our Northwest Money Market Account, which we are in the process of repaying to ourselves.

- Our auditor reviewed our general fund, savings account, long-term accounts, as well as Dorcas and Brotherhood accounts, and found no discrepancies.
- Reviewed our vendors and their charges for services/supplies and made some changes.
- Following are some expenses related to property issues addressed during the year:
  1. Bunn Coffeemaker in the kitchen (\$288.00)
  2. Temporary repairs to flat roof (\$2,000.00)
  3. Replace battery backup to Security Key Pad (\$140.00)
  4. Repairs to the kitchen dishwasher (\$859.00)
  5. Removing mineral deposits on Baptism Font (\$350.00); font was also recalked and sealed.
  6. Gutter Cleaning (\$500.00)
  7. Inspections of Fire Alarm Panel, Strobe Fire lights, smoke detectors, emergency lights, fire extinguishers (\$2,662.00)
  8. HVAC Repairs (\$9,259.00)
  9. Snow Plowing/Cinders (\$9,712.00)
  10. Replaced clutch & blades on lawn mower (\$1,898.00)
- Other property issues included:
  1. Sidewalk expansion joints recaulked
  2. Replace flashing over kitchen “take-out” window
  3. Removal of shrub overgrowth in front of Rt. 118 sign
  4. Repairing driveway pothole and subsidence
  5. Recaulking several joint areas on Columbarium
  6. Teak benches cleaned and resealed
  7. Sanding damaged windowsills in all the classrooms; staining and resealing.
  8. Limestone caps on sidewalk light ballards cleaned
  9. Rust removed and painted the bases of each parking lot light fixture.
  10. Removed bottom limbs from the pine tree by back door.

In July 2026 we will be in our building twenty-five years, and like any building/house there are always maintenance/repairs looming. Our HVAC system and most of the lights in our building are now obsolete and repair parts are becoming harder to find. We are concerned about the age of our commercial hot water heater and the kitchen refrigerator, and we still need to address repairs to the social hall roof and the flat roof over the narthex

and part of the sanctuary. As a reminder, you can use the Building Improvement envelopes to help us build up reserves for these repairs (or donate via Vanco).

Respectfully submitted, Carol Fett, Treasurer,  
Pastor Grube, Bruce Thomas, Pat Peiffer, Bill Peiffer,  
Frank Mariano, John Waschek, Ray Mancke and Don  
Pheasant.

## **HEAD START**

Our ongoing relationship with Head Start is consistent with the mission of St. Paul's to continue to reach out to organizations in our community.

Head Start, a federally funded program, uses two classrooms during the week; their lease agreement also includes an office, kitchenette, janitors closet, and an additional classroom used by the HS Center Manager and family health care worker.

With the departure of the Early Intervention program last year, two classrooms were vacated and we began looking for suitable nonprofit tenants who would be compatible with the Head Start Program. However, in April, we were approached by the Executive Director of Head Start asking if we would be open to accommodating an additional HS classroom – a PreK State Funded program. Council gave immediate approval, a lease addendum was drawn up, and classroom furniture arrived in July. Unfortunately, since this was a state funded program, we had to wait until the State Budget was approved before rent payments could begin – in December we received all the back payments – August through December.

Through the generosity of our congregation the Head Start families and children have been touched by receiving new sneakers in the fall as part of our “God’s Work. Our Hands” Sunday and by the gifts of hats/scarves, gloves/mittens, underwear, etc., which decorated our “Mitten Tree.”

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Fett

## **HEALTH MINISTRY**

- First Aid Kits continue to be kept well stocked. If you use something or see a need let me know.
- Narcan always available in the AED wall cabinet.
- 46 Calls, Texts, Emails  
33 Cards  
14 Visits and other

93 Total

- Monthly newsletter articles continue with links to in-depth health related issues.
- We now have an official Incident Report form. This was due to an incident with no injuries.

In Love, Service and Gratitude,  
Cathy Ridout and Gail Ide

## **LANDSCAPING**

We thank Personal Touch Landscaping and the clients of Pyramid Healthcare for the generous gifts of time and attention they have given to maintaining the church landscaping beds and plantings around the entrance sign, parking lot and the Columbarium. We also want to thank Jim Madonna, Karen Mertz and Larry Pierce for the time and work they give to maintaining the lawns and landscape beds; their dedication is deeply appreciated.

## **LONG RANGE PLANNING / VISIONING COMMITTEE**

Committee Chair: Frank Mariano; Committee Members: Pastor Grube, Don Kretchmer, Amanda Brezovsky, Keith Brosious, Gail Ide

LRP&V Committee Goal: To examine our mission and ministry during a time of transition on an on-going basis.

The Long Range Planning and Visioning Committee began the year with the acceptance of our Narrative Inventory Form by the synod, and to be informed that St Paul's is in a position to continue to develop a ministry community. Pastor Grube contacted Pastor Poole, and the consensus was that the newly formed coalition of Holy Trinity, Kingston and Good Shepard, Wilkes-Barre may not be ready to move forward with a third partner at this time. We will continue our efforts with Prince of Peace and reach out to other congregations when the opportunity presents itself.



To that end, updates were provided to the committee and to Council regarding the startup of a Grief Support Group to be sponsored by St Paul's and Prince of Peace. That group started in February 2025 and met monthly on the third Thursday of each month. The group facilitators comprise Linda Keck and Frank Mariano of St. Paul's, and Deacon Barb Gessner, and Ted Horn from Prince of Peace.

Another area of focus was the continuation of the Reconciling with Christ (RIC) initiative. Frank reviewed the initiative with Council with the idea of moving forward as Council had already voted in favor of moving toward becoming a Reconciling in Christ congregation.

Gail Ide, who chairs the RIC initiative, was invited to the Long Range Planning meeting and was encouraged to form a committee to assist her. To date a committee has been formed and is working through the process.

Respectfully submitted,  
Frank Mariano, Chair



The Social Ministry Committee ministers to members of our own congregation, our local neighbors, our nation and the world through the following programs:

#### CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT:

- Mailing weekly bulletins and Word in Season booklets to shut-ins
- Birthday and Anniversary roses
- Sent Valentines Day cards to shut-ins
- Easter gift bags to shut-ins
- Delivered pumpkins to shut-ins from Sunday School children
- Thanksgiving cards to shut-ins
- Christmas gift bags to shut-ins

#### COMMUNITY SUPPORT:

- God's Work. Our Hands project
- Collected new sneakers for Head Start children, as well as mittens, hats and pull-up diapers
- Souper Bowl of Caring – cash donations and food collected for Back Mountain Food Pantry
- Prayer Shawl Ministry

#### NATIONAL AND WORLD SUPPORT

- Lutheran Disaster Response
- ELCA World Hunger
- ELCA Good Gifts

All these programs/projects are completed through the cooperation of our committee members and more importantly, you, the members of St. Paul's. Thank you for your gifts and support to all our endeavors.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pat Kowalek and Larry Pierce

## **WORSHIP & MUSIC**

The responsibilities of the Worship and Music Committee include guidance to those who contribute to our worship services and the coordinators of our various subcommittees.

During Lent we had a mid-week gathering on Tuesdays with Bible Study followed by a brown bag lunch and ending with a short liturgy.

This year we shared Holy Week Services with Prince of Peace Episcopal Church. Holy Thursday and Easter Sunday were celebrated in each church. Good Friday was held at Prince of Peace and the Easter Vigil at St. Paul's. We will continue in these combined services in 2026 with St. Paul's hosting Good Friday and Prince of Peace the Easter Vigil. This year we had a joint Advent Lessons and Carol's service at St. Paul's. We continued working with Prince of Peace by scheduling four healing services, two in each church and continuing with monthly Grief Support in 2026.

We celebrated our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2025 with a service in January using 1925 liturgy. Synod Bishop deForest presided at our May Anniversary Service. The Anniversary Committee planned special events during the year culminating with a Birthday Party for Jesus in December.

The Adult Forum was concerned about low attendance and discussed different ways to entice members and visitors to attend. They thought a contemporary service might interest more people and help increase our attendance. They visited three different churches that had contemporary services, but after these visits and following more discussion, they decided to request more uplifting music from choirs and soloists, and to have hymns, especially the recessional, that are uplifting.

A meeting was held in October to discuss choirs, since there are so few members. It was decided the Senior Choir would sing one simple anthem a month with one rehearsal. The chimes, children, and soloists would also try to do one Sunday a month.

Eucharist Ministers resumed this fall.

Some of the notable events that were held at St. Paul's in addition to regular Saturday and Sunday services included:

- Holy Week Services were held in conjunction with Prince of Peace.
- Pentecost was celebrated.
- Fleece Blankets were blessed during a service before being delivered to children attending Grief Camp.
- Harvest Home was celebrated in conjunction with the Social Ministry Committee; harvest decorations and food displays courtesy of the Arts & Environment Committee.

- There was a Healing Service with congregants having the ability to participate in the traditional laying on of hands and anointing with oil. Prayer Shawls were on display and blessed during the service.
- We celebrated Reformation with the customary exchange of letters with St. Theresa's Catholic Church.
- In November we celebrated All Saints' and this year included an extended photo display of all our saints.
- A "Hanging of the Greens" event was held after our Sunday service on December 21; following the decorating, hymns were sung and snacks/pizza were provided.
- Christmas Eve services were held at 4:00 pm (also on Zoom) and at 7:00 pm with Communion and Candle Lighting.

Thanks to Worship & Music Committee members, worship coordinators, and musicians who support our services throughout the year. Committee members are Pastor Grube, Margaret Quintanar, Jean Grube, Marianne Mancke, Rachelle Pryor, and Martha Kush.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pat Peiffer, Chairperson

### **ST. PAUL'S BROTHERHOOD**

The Brotherhood served four roast beef dinners and we wish to thank all our volunteers – our church family, friends, and also Boy Scout Troop 241, who provided enthusiastic assistance. All our volunteers gave their time and many talents to make our dinners successful – we couldn't have done it without all your help!

The dates for the 2026 roast beef dinners are April 11, September 19 and November 7. Dates are subject to postponement or cancellation depending on unforeseen circumstances. Due to roast beef supply availability, Brotherhood will not be able to serve a roast beef dinner in May; we are exploring an alternative type of dinner instead. February 10 is the next Brotherhood meeting (7:00 pm) and all are welcome to attend.

Officers for 2025 were:	President	Bill Peiffer
	Vice President	Dave Janoski
	Secretary	Keith Brosious
	Treasurer	Brad Ide

and these dedicated officers will continue in their roles in 2026.

For the Brotherhood,  
Bill Peiffer, President

## **ST. PAUL'S DORCAS SOCIETY**

Once again, we have come to the end of another year; 2025 is now in the books. It really does not seem possible - where did the time go?

I would like to thank the tireless efforts of many individuals. Women of Dorcas and church members who contributed their time and talent in the weeks leading up to the sales, with everything from donations, sorting, organizing, pricing and baking. Special thanks are also extended to Jim Madonna, Ray Mancke, Jim Bellezza, Debbie Maskalis, Shirley Nicely, Stephanie Younger, Peggy Dennis, Byron and Irene Race, Tom and Elizabeth Duffy, Ed Napierkowski, Kelly Spudis, Nicky D'Agosto, Mary Ehret, Karen Henderson, Pat Kowalek, Karen Mertz, members of the Brotherhood and the team from Pyramid Health for all their invaluable assistance with the sales and cleanup. Without everyone pitching in, our sales would not have been able to happen. Thank you one and all.

We had moments of silence at our meetings this year for two women who were closely involved with Dorcas: Betty Schray and Nicky D'Agosto. They will be missed dearly.

We ended our year with our Annual Christmas Luncheon on December 9, 2025 at Appletree Terrace. All those in attendance enjoyed excellent food, music and fellowship with entertainment provided by Changing Habits. In lieu of a gift exchange, a donation of \$145.00 was made to the Back Mountain Food Bank.

Looking ahead to 2026, the Board members are the same as they were in 2025: President, Chris Bellezza; Vice-President, Pam Cypher; Secretary, Rachelle Pryor; and Treasurer, Ruth Ide.

Our monthly meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 1:00 pm. The only exception is our June meeting, which is our Annual Picnic Covered Dish and it is held at 6:00 pm. We do not have meetings in July or August. All women of the church are invited to join us. Refreshments are served following each meeting giving us time for fellowship.

Respectfully submitted,  
Chris Bellezza, President

## **100<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE REPORT**

First, I want to thank the committee members for their dedication during the past year. Without their dedication it would not have been the successful year that it was. There was something happening almost every month. The committee started meeting in September of 2024 and met every first Sunday of the month through October of 2025.

We started in January 2025 with the historical 1925 church service. In February we had a Valentine spaghetti dinner. We also sold shirts. In March we sponsored a blood drive and had a Fat Tuesday celebration and talent show. In April we served an Easter breakfast and handed out crocheted butterflies. In May we celebrated the Anniversary with a special

worship service with Bishop Christopher DeForest presiding and many former members in attendance, followed by a pig roast in the social hall. We also handed out red tote bags with our logo on them. In July we had a quilt and art show that included a tea and a basket raffle. The August event was an outdoor movie and snacks. In September we had a congregational brunch at the Greens at Irem. In November we celebrated All Saints Day, remembering those who went before us and who we are now. In December we celebrated Jesus' birthday and the end of our Anniversary year of events.

All during the year Julie Holbrook kept adding pictures for us to look at, shared by members. The committee consisted of Pastor Grube, Jean Grube, Julie Holbrook, Marissa Miller, Gail Ide, Cathy Ridout, Don Kretchmer, Amanda Brezovsky and myself, Annie Bisher. We also received much-appreciated help from Carol Fett, Gail Smallwood, John Hudak, Tabitha Walters and many others. Thank you to the congregation, for all of your support.

God Bless, Annie Bisher  
Chairperson

# Our Heartfelt Thanks and Deep Appreciation to



for the TIME, TALENTS and FINANCIAL SUPPORT  
given to us in 2025!

# From the Congregation Council of St. Paul's Dorcas Benediction

*May God be with us to refresh us,*

*Around us to protect us,*

*Before us to guide us,*

*Above us to bless us,*

*Beneath us to hold us up,*

*And watch between us,*

*When we are absent*

*One from another.*

*Amen.*