



NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2025

laughter is the best medicine

FOSTERING JOY, CONNECTION, AND CREATIVITY

LEAH ZEHEL

At The Gathering Place, we embrace a simple yet profound philosophy: focus on what people can do, not what they cannot. Every day, our goal is to cultivate an environment where our participants experience success, fulfillment, and joy. Our thoughtfully designed programs foster independence, encourage participation, and instill a sense of purpose. We believe that every individual has unique abilities and valuable contributions to offer, and

our approach ensures that everyone feels appreciated and included.

When planning activities, we adhere to essential principles that contribute to the ongoing success of our program. These guiding elements create meaningful experiences that enrich the lives of our participants. We prioritize active involvement in a social setting, where every participant's input is valued. Whether it's choosing paint colors for an

art project, suggesting new group activities, or sharing organizational expertise, we encourage contributions that lead to a sense of ownership and inclusion. Our activities promote teamwork, conversation, and collaboration, reinforcing the importance of community and mutual support.

Joy and laughter are vital to our daily interactions. A shared laugh has the power to brighten a day and strengthen

connections. We intentionally create opportunities for humor and lightheartedness in every session, ensuring that participants enjoy themselves while engaging in meaningful activities. Whether through storytelling, interactive games, or spontaneous moments of joy, we cultivate an uplifting and lively atmosphere. There is always room for more laughter in our day!

A supportive and welcoming peer group is essential to our participants' well-being. We strive to create an environment where individuals feel comfortable, develop meaningful friendships, and build strong relationships with both peers and staff. Through shared experiences, group projects, and structured social interactions, we host a warm, inclusive space that encourages connection. Our participants not only receive support from our staff but also from one another, creating a true sense of belonging.

We prioritize opportunities for self-expression and personal growth. Each project is a reflection of the participant's vision, allowing them to engage in a way that feels natural and rewarding. Whether through art, music, storytelling, or hands-on activities, we provide avenues for creativity to flourish. Encouraging participants to think outside the box and make independent choices builds self-confidence, instills pride in their work, and nurtures independence. We celebrate their creativity and ensure they have the resources and guidance to bring their ideas to life.

By embracing these principles, we ensure that our participants not only enjoy their time at The Gathering Place but also gain a sense of accomplishment, confidence, and belonging. Through purposeful engagement, a strong support system, and an emphasis we embrace joy and meaningful connections. We cultivate an environment where everyone can flourish. Our dedication to empowering individuals, nurturing friendships, and enriching daily experiences ensures that The Gathering Place remains a beacon of positivity, warmth, and inclusion for all who enter our doors.



LEAH ZEHEL
THE GATHERING PLACE DIRECTOR

TASTY SOUPS, CHILI, TEXAS ROADHOUSE BUNS, CHEESE, AND MANY DESSERTS!!!

SOUPER SUNDAY

COOK-OFF ENTRIES

SUNDAY MARCH 2
11:00 AM TO 1:15 PM
IN PERSON EVENT ONLY, SORRY NO TAKE OUTS.
St. Paul Lutheran Church
730 County Road PPP
Sheboygan Falls

NEW THIS YEAR! 50/50 RAFFLE

\$12⁰⁰ per person
Children 4-12 yrs. \$5
3 yrs. & under FREE

Pastor Kyle.....	Zuppa Toscana
River Park	
Family Restaurant	Creamy Chicken Rice
Amy Kolste	Chicken Vegetable
Ed Henning.....	Chili
Becki Post	Stuffed Green Pepper
TGP – Mary/Thurs Group.....	Corn Chowder
Chris & Sue's	Chicken & Dumpling
Antoinette's.....	Chicken Enchilada
Olive Garden.....	Chicken Gnochli
Texas Road House	Chili
Bonnie and Bonnie	Stuffed Green Pepper
Mary Kempf	Black Bean
Karen Wilterdink	Cabbage
Linda Lorenz	Creamy Potato
Cathy Hughes.....	Beef Brisket Chili
Pastor Tom & Judy. Spicey Chicken or Bean	
Nourish Farms...Hungarian Mushroom Chili	
Kim's 5 Corners Tavern.....	Beef Barley
Sweet Basil.....	TBD

 All proceeds will go to The Gathering Place and Memory Matters day programs for adults with memory loss.

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CONGREGATION MEETING

TUESDAY, APRIL 22

6:45PM – WORSHIP CENTER

PLEASE SEE THE WEEKLY NEWS IN APRIL FOR THE MEETING AGENDA.

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

CHRISTINA ZEUNER, DIRECTOR
PRESCHOOL@STPAULFALLS.COM

As March arrives, we eagerly anticipate the arrival of spring! The children enjoy spending time outside, and while they love the snow, we all look forward to warmer days, lighter clothing, and new outdoor activities.

Parents will soon have another opportunity to meet with a teacher and discuss their child's progress during Parent-Teacher Conferences, held March 11-14.

Spring Break: Preschool and 4K will be on break from March 24-28, but Child Care will remain open for families who need care.

Enrollment for the 2024-2026 School Year

4K is currently full with a waiting list.

A few spots remain in the morning Preschool class, while the afternoon class has plenty of availability. Child Care has limited openings for summer and only one full-time and three part-time spots available for September.

If you are interested in any of these openings, please contact us as soon as possible. If you have any questions or know someone who may be interested, call (920) 467-6733 or email the Early Childhood Center at preschool@stpaulfalls.com.



CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY

SAVANNAH HENN, DIRECTOR
SAVANNAHH@STPAULFALLS.COM

AWANA

This month, we will learn about Jesus, Peter, and Stephen—all heroes in the Bible!

Our dress-up days for the month include:

Stuffed Animal Night

Class Color Night

Penny Night

Additionally, we will be learning a song to sing on Palm Sunday, April 13, during the church services.

Reminders:

We are in the season of Lent, and AWANA will end at 7:05 PM. There will be no AWANA on March 26 due to Spring Break.

Sunday School

Sunday School continues to go very well!

This month our 3K- 3rd graders will be entering a unit about how Jesus is for everyone. They will be learning about different people in the New Testament and their belief in Jesus.

4th and 5th graders will focus on the Book of Acts and study Jesus and His disciples.

Reminder: there will be no Sunday School on March 23.

AWANA Store Donations

We are collecting items for the Spring AWANA Store throughout March. Please see the graphic below for ways to support. Donations can be placed in the labeled bin in the Giving Center.

March Children, Youth, and Family Event

Join us on March 2, from 6:00-7:30 PM at PJ's Party Zone for roller skating! This event is only \$1 per person. Invite your friends and family for a night of fun!

Vacation Bible School (VBS)

VBS will take place July 27-30 from 3:00-6:00 PM.

This year's theme is True North: Trusting Jesus in a Wild World.

Volunteer sign-ups will begin in April—please prayerfully consider helping! Child registration will open in May. Stay tuned for more details next month!



ROLLER SKATING

Children, Youth, & Family Event

March 2

6-7:30 PM

ONLY \$1!

PJ'S PARTY ZONE IN SHEBOYGAN



YOUTH MINISTRY

NICOLE DOLLEVOET, DIRECTOR
NICOLED@STPAULFALLS.COM

Retreat Season is Here!

Our 6th grade confirmands are preparing for their First Communion event! They will dive into the Old Testament, exploring the events leading up to Passover.

Our 8th graders are quickly approaching the end of the year and the day they will celebrate this significant step in their faith journey. Meanwhile, our 7th graders continue their study of the catechism.

We are excited to build Chemo Care Packages, actively using our hands to serve in the name of Jesus! All grades will also have the opportunity to close out the year with a "My Faith Activity," where they reflect on what they have learned and how it has shaped their faith.

Parents: Please check student binders for important upcoming dates!

Youth Group

Sunday night Youth Group has been a fantastic time of serving, playing, and spending time in God's Word. Recently, we had a great time assembling almost 50 college care packages!

Looking ahead to March, we are excited for:

- Fancy Schmancy Night
- Game Night
- Roller Skating!

Stay updated on our latest schedule: <https://stpaulfalls.com/ministries/youth-and-young-adult>

Youth Mission Team

Our amazing Youth Mission Team of 14 recently gathered to connect and prepare for this summer's service trip to Northern Wisconsin.

Together, we:

- Cooked a meal for the Salvation Army, feeding 40 people.
- Learned that we will be building beds for children currently sleeping on the floor.
- Gained insight on how to communicate, stay Christ-focused, and serve together—because no one serves alone!

We are grateful for the congregation's generosity in supporting this mission!



LCMS Youth Gathering Group

At our last meeting, we focused on team-building activities—essential for a trip like this! Communication is key, and everyone did a fantastic job.



We also had the chance to meet our bus buddies from Bethany Lutheran Church in Kaukauna, who will be joining us on the trip.

One of our sweetest fundraisers is coming up—Racine Kringles!

Sale Date: April 13 (after church in the back of the Gathering Area).



Chemo Care Packages

Our Confirmation students will assemble 75-100 care packages for male and female cancer patients on March 19, as part of their service project night.

Your help is needed! We are collecting the following items:

Candy: Lemon drops, peppermints, gum

Personal Care: Hand sanitizer, lip balm, unscented hand lotion, non-alcoholic mouthwash, Kleenex packets

Comfort Items: Warm socks, mittens, hats, neck pillows, special pillowcases, scarves

Entertainment & Encouragement: Devotion books, crossword/search-a-word books, adult coloring books/pages, colored pencils, mini notebooks & pens, deck of cards

Other Items: Tea packets, pill organizers (Monday-Friday slots), blank thank-you cards, dangly earrings, small crosses

Important Notes:

All lotion, moisturizer, and mouthwash must be travel-sized and fragrance-free, as patients may be sensitive to scents.

If you are a Thrivent member, consider using Action Team Dollars to support this effort! Speak with Nicole for details.

Donation deadline: March 16, 2025 (drop off in the Giving Area).

If you know someone on a cancer journey who would benefit from a package, please contact Nicole in the church office to arrange pickup.

Help Needed!

On March 11, Confirmation students will participate in a ceremonial Seder meal.

We are looking for volunteers to assist with:

- Set-up
- Serving
- Clean-up

If you are available to help, please speak with Nicole in the church office.

LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL HIGHLITES

MATTHEW TSCHUDY , EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we enter this Lenten season many of us may take up traditional "Lenten challenges." Which option will you choose? Will you give something up for 40 days, or will you try something new for 40 days? Regardless of which option you choose, I pray that during these 40 days of Lent, you have an opportunity to draw closer to God, and spend time in reflection, repentance, and renewal. At Sheboygan Lutheran there are many Lenten blessings and updates that we are excited to share with our Crusader community.

We are knee-deep in our active and bustling enrollment season. If you have not applied for admission yet, simply go to our website, lutheranhigh.com, and click on the "Apply Today" link at the top of our homepage. We are excited to welcome the Class of 2029 to our campus next year, and to welcome our current students back as sophomores, juniors, and seniors!

The strategic planning process continues to move along at a productive pace. There is a Vision Committee in place that has identified our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, resources, and threats. Now comes the fun part...the Vision Committee is in the process of developing a plan that is based off the answers to the following five questions:

1. How do we continue to build on our strengths?
2. How can we best address our weaknesses?
3. How do we activate our opportunities?
4. How do we employ our resources?
5. How can we defend against our threats?

Both the boys and girls basketball teams have entered their post-season play, and we wish them both the best of luck! Check out our online calendar or Facebook and Instagram pages for the latest game details. Go Crusaders! Planning is officially underway for our Dinner Auction on Saturday, April 12. Sign up today for all the fun, fellowship, and amazing auction items! See the back side of this page for event details.

As Lent continues and we eagerly await the warmer weather of Spring, let us earnestly desire to celebrate the eternal victory that was won for us on Easter morning. I pray that during this Lenten season you are able to remove distractions, focus on God, appreciate the provisions He provides, and experience spiritual growth in your relationship with Jesus.

Get the full publication here



READING THE PRINTED COPY? VISIT -- WWW.LUTHERANHIGH.COM/PUBLICATIONS

CELEBRATE RECOVERY

JULIE JONES, COORDINATOR

We CELEBRATE God's amazing healing and restoration!

Celebrate Recovery now has BABYSITTING available! Contact Julie for more information.

Did you know... that 2 out of 3 people attend CR for NON-addiction issues?

We all have struggles. What do you struggle with?

Depression, Anxiety, Anger, Feelings of Unworthiness and Being Less Than, Paranoia, Perfectionism, Obsessive Thoughts, Co-Dependency, Loneliness, Control, Fear, Resentment, Addiction to Food, Drugs, Sex, Bad relationships, Unforgiveness, Money Issues, Emotional or Sexual Abuse, Pornography, Jealousy, Selfishness, Judgement of Others, Unfaithfulness, etc.

At Celebrate Recovery we CELEBRATE God's amazing healing and restoration!

Are you tired of carrying the pain from past hurts? Are you willing to try a different approach to dealing with the pain in your life? Are you ready to take that first step in your journey of recovery from life's difficulties? God has a Plan and Purpose for your life! You were never meant to walk this life journey alone...

Come join us at **Celebrate Recovery!**

Your forever family is waiting!

You are not alone!

Celebrate Recovery follows a Christian 8 Principal / 12 Step process to heal from life's hurts, hang-ups, and habits!

Entrance #4 – 300 Wing

Dinner: 6:00PM

Large Group: 6:30PM – 7:30PM

Open Share Group (Gender Specific): 7:30PM – 8:30PM

Fellowship: 8:30PM – 9:00PM

No Sign-Up necessary!

The only requirement is confidentiality!

Everyone is Welcome!

We are waiting for you!

BABYSITTING is available!

For additional information contact Julie J. @ 920-207-1397

LOVE INC.

BONNIE JONES, COORDINATOR

Love INC is helping churches help people by developing a network of local churches and connecting them with opportunities to serve their neighbors in need. Sometimes that can look like helping with food, personal needs items, furniture, transportation, or a work project. Other times, it looks like offering educational classes, providing mentorship support, and hosting community events. But it's always about each church leaning into its strengths and working together with others—because we are better together. If you can help by donating or becoming a volunteer, please go to loveincsheboygancounty.org or call them at 920-783-6701

THANK YOUS & OTHER NEWS

CHURCH COUNCIL ELECTIONS: Elections for Church Council and the Endowment Team will take place at the April 22 Congregation Meeting. Positions include President, three Members-at-large and two candidates for the Endowment Team. The meeting will be at 6:45 pm in the Worship Center. Biographies of all nominees can be found on the welcome center after April 1, please stop and pick one up! The Nominating Team includes Donna Felch, Nicole Dollevoet, Jake Baus & Michael Timm. Pr. Kyle Backhaus and Stefanie Trakel are advisors on the team. Are you unable to attend the Congregation meeting? Absentee ballots will be available during office hours (8:30 to 4:30 Mon. to Thurs) from April 14 to 21. Stop in and cast your vote.

HOLY WEEK CANTATA: The Adult Choir will be sharing the cantata "Shadows" by Douglas E. Wagner on Good Friday, April 18 at 6:30 PM. They will be accompanied by an instrumental ensemble. We invite you to attend this Tenebrae service and think upon the great cost Christ paid on our behalf.

GUATEMALA MISSION TEAM: We are looking to build up our Guatemala mission team members for our planned trip in early August of 2026. We will be returning to Casa Aleluya, the childrens home we have been supporting over our last 3 trips. We will also be working with another mission group, Senderos de Luz, to provide support to local Guatemalan families near Casa Aleluya. The trip is planned for 7 days. The first 30 people to fill out the form and get the \$300 commitment deposit into St. Paul Lutheran church will be part of this team. Contact Aaryn Feile at 920-980-9290 if you have any questions.

ST. PAUL LIBRARY: We're excited to introduce two new family DVDs! *God's Compass* follows a doctor's wife who crosses paths with orphaned siblings on the streets. The second film features a pastor and his family in a Quantum Leap-style story. We've also added three Tracie Peterson novels: *Forever Hidden*, *Secrets of My Heart*, and *The Way of Love*, along with Kim Vogel Sawyer's *A Whisper of Peace*. Dianna and I pray you have a blessed and enlightening Lenten season! And while spring cleaning, don't forget to check for overdue library items—I know I will!

GRANT APPLICATIONS: The application process through the Church Endowment Fund as well as the Albertin Scholarship are now open. Visit our website for more details.

FEBRUARY CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY UPDATE: Children, Youth & Family Events are going very well this school year. Confirmation has 55 students with retreat season almost upon us. They have also done several service projects. There are an average of 15-25 youth attending youth group. They do monthly service projects and family events.

There are 2 mission trips this summer Nicole is planning, 15 are serving in Northern Wisconsin and 33 will be attending the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans. A big thank you was extended to Council for developing the matching funds program for fundraisers; that has been incredibly helpful.

Nicole serves as the District Coordinator and as the Parish Pros Coordinator for the District, which gives her great opportunity to connect with other professionals in similar roles throughout South Wisconsin. She also taught a youth ministry class at Concordia one evening recently.

POLICY #37 – Wee Care Nursery: This policy was updated to account for current practices in our nursery.

WORSHIP CENTER CONDENSER: Chad Berke reported that the Worship Center Condenser should be replaced. It is original to the building and parts are becoming difficult to get as the coolant is no longer being used. Costs for this equipment is going up considerably. He is recommending we look at replacing this. Three quotes will be presented at the March Council meeting. This will then be placed on the April Congregation Meeting agenda.

ELDER TEAM: The Elder Team had an informal gathering with both Pastors recently to build relationships.

SENIOR PASTOR REPORT: Pr Adam will be responsible for most of the same areas Pr Rob was responsible for, including Small Groups, Celebrate Recovery, Night to Shine and The Gathering Place. So far he is doing very well, working to build relationships with staff. In March he will be having a Meet the Minister Month, working on meeting individually with church leaders and congregation members to build more relationships. All Council members are encouraged to meet with him.

There are 24 people in the new AIM Class, the last day is March 30, Council members are encouraged to stop in and say hi. The Zeuner Bible Study is going well, with 50-70 people attending. St. Paul Serves is in the planning stages. Projects have been selected and we are working on finding leaders. Pr Kyle is now the Circuit Visitor for Sheboygan West, which is a 3-year commitment. He is responsible for the monthly meeting, conflict resolution in congregations and filling vacancies.

WALK IN ITEM – YOUTUBE SHORTS: It was noticed that we now have YouTube shorts, which is greatly appreciated! A big thank you to Thomas Kelly for implementing this!

WALK IN ITEM – COLUMBARIUM: The Columbarium paperwork is with the lawyer and we anticipate beginning sales in March. During sales, individuals will be reminded that they still need to make arrangements with a funeral home.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial Report - January 2025			
Fiscal Year July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025			
Financial Results- Fiscal Year End Actual, Budget & Variance			
	7 Months Ended 1-31-25 Actual	7 Months Ended 1-31-25 Budget	Variance from Budget (Short)/Over
General Offerings	\$ 698,188	\$ 785,728	\$ (87,540)
Other Income	\$ 28,044	\$ 30,450	\$ (2,405)
Mission Offerings	\$ 46,664	\$ 54,833	\$ (8,169)
Total Income	\$ 772,896	\$ 871,011	\$ (98,115)
Operating Expenses	\$ 785,322	\$ 816,376	\$ (31,054)
Mission Support	\$ 46,664	\$ 54,833	\$ (8,169)
Total Expense	\$ 831,986	\$ 871,209	\$ (39,223)
Suplus (Deficit) Total	\$ (59,089)	\$ (198)	\$ (58,891)

Capital Improvement Fund		
	Monthly Activity Increase (Decrease)	Balance at Month End
Capital Improvement Fund	\$ 5,710	\$ 344,884

Membership Report				
Baptized Members	405	Confirmed Members	1,698	Total Members 2,103

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

730 County Rd. PPP
Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085
Phone: 920-467-6449
Fax: 920-467-4239

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Church Office Hours

Monday - Thursday: 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM
Friday: Closed
Website: www.stpaulfalls.com

Pastors

Kyle Backhaus, Senior Pastor
Adam Wolfe, Associate Pastor
Tom Gudmundson, Pastor Emeritus
Donald Hasse, Pastor Emeritus

Lay Leaders

Tom Splittgerber, Congregation President
Jeff Berg, Congregation Vice President
John Rische, Head Elder
Donna Felch, Treasurer

Worship Schedule

Thursday: 6:30 PM
Sunday: 8:00, 9:30, & 11:00 AM

The Gathering Place & Memory Matters

920-627-6847
The Gathering Place
Monday, Tuesday, & Thursday:
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Memory Matters
Thursday: 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Children & Youth

(During the school year)
Sunday School: 9:30 AM service
AWANA Wed Night: 6:00 PM
Confirmation Wed Night: 6:00 PM
Youth Group Sunday Night: 5:30 PM

Early Childhood Center

ECC Phone: 920-467-6733
3 year-old Class
(during school year)
Tuesday & Thursday:
9:00 - 11:30 AM or 12:30 - 3:00 PM

4K Class

(During school year)
Monday, Wednesday, & Friday:
8:30 - 11:30 AM

Child Care

Monday through Friday:
7:00 AM - 5:30 PM
Ages 2 ½ - 5 years — call for drop-ins

Wee Care Nursery

During Sunday Service, 9:00-12:00 PM



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