

# the CONNECTION

May 2026



Sunday Worship at 9:30 a.m.



**St. Paul's**  
UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST  
Elgin, Illinois



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Website

Visit us on our Website at [www.stpaulucelgin.org](http://www.stpaulucelgin.org) and  
Facebook at St. Paul's United Church of Christ, Elgin, IL

Browse our Church Calendar on our website to keep up to date on  
our various events. You can find the calendar on our website at

[www.stpaulucelgin.org](http://www.stpaulucelgin.org) and click on the  
calendar link



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## What's in this Issue:

- From the Pastor
- Ministry News
- Diaper Ministry
- Christian Education
- Creation Care
- UCC Camps
- Financially Speaking
- May Birthdays and Anniversaries

## Mark Your Calendar:

- Tuesday, May 5 - Serve Dinner at PADS
- Sunday, May 10 - Mother's Day
- Tuesday, May 12 - Food Pantry/Diaper Distribution (Old Sherman Hosp.)
- Sunday, May 17 - Music Appreciation Sunday
- Tuesday, May 19 - Serve Dinner at PADS
- Monday, May 25 - Memorial Day
- Saturday, June 6 - Elgin Pride Parade

**Church:** 40W720 Plank Rd., Elgin, IL 60124

**Office:** 12N268 Switzer Rd., Elgin, IL 60124

**Mailing:** P.O. Box 5598, Elgin, IL 60121

**Phone #:** 847-628-6118 / **Email:** [stpauls4me@yahoo.com](mailto:stpauls4me@yahoo.com) / **Website:** [stpaulucelgin.org](http://stpaulucelgin.org)

**Office Hours:** Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Rev. Liz Patz, Pastor

Sherry Severing, Administrative Assistant

Jon Kobel, Choir Director

Ron Zemke, Pianist

# from the PASTOR



We are all in with Kindness!

St. Paul's is participating in a national initiative called the "United States of Kindness." It is a simple movement tied to America's 250th anniversary that invites us to take part in 250 Acts of Kindness from April through December and share our stories. This effort is sponsored by the Values in Action Foundation (<https://www.viafdn.org/>).

## **Why does kindness matter? It's one way we join God's mission in the world!**

- "Whoever pursues righteousness and kindness will find life and honor." (Proverbs 21:21)
- "He has told you, O mortal, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8)
- "In everything do to others as you would have them do to you" (Matthew 7:12)
- "...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." (Galatians 5:22)

## **How will we celebrate and organize our 250 acts of kindness at St. Paul's?**

A Kindness Tree! Look for the kindness tree by the hall tables. When you show kindness to another, or receive kindness or witness kindness in action, please write out your story on a construction paper leaf provided. Attach the leaf to the branches of the tree. You can write your name or keep your stories anonymous. You are welcome to make your own leaf, flower, bird, or butterfly to write your story and add to the tree.

This is a chance to lead with our values of unity and love, help shape a positive national moment, and partner with other local churches in our denomination. The United Church of Christ has joyfully committed to the "United States of Kindness" movement, too! To learn more (<https://www.ucc.org/the-united-states-of-kindness/>).

The Peace of Christ and the Kindness of the Spirit be with you!  
Pastor Liz

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## MINISTRY NEWS



### Lenten Blessing Bags

A big thank you to everyone for making the Blessing Bags a success.

On March 30th 50 bags were delivered to Well Child Center. The bags were a huge success with the families.

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### Message From Vineyard Breakfast Ministry

*"Effective Memorial Day, Monday May 25th and continuing through the Tuesday after Labor Day, the Breakfast Ministry will shorten its serving schedule from 6 days to 4 days a week. During the summer we will continue serving breakfast Wednesday- Saturday. Breakfast will not be served on Monday or Tuesday."*

St Paul's currently serves breakfast the first Monday of the month, with this announcement we will take the summer off, hopefully to return in the fall.

Thank you to Karen & Fred Vollman and Karen Westerman who have shown up nearly every month at 6:00 a.m. with smiles and a warm heart to cook pancakes, eggs, sausage, and bacon and then serve the wonderful guests that come for breakfast.

Thank you to everyone who has donated food for the breakfast ministry. We couldn't have provided the meals without your generous hearts.

Mission Ministry

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## Diaper Ministry

### First Sunday Diaper Collection

Our next diaper collection is Sunday, May 3rd and we will be collecting size 4 & 6 diapers. Your commitment supporting families experiencing diaper insecurity is truly amazing.

Thank you for your generous donations for the month of March. Together we were able to collect 614 diapers. Zion Church gave us 1,272 diapers to support our ministry. We distributed 196 diapers.

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### Food & Diaper Distribution

We were back at Sherman Hospital on Tuesday, April 14th, distributing diapers and helping at the Northern Illinois Mobile Pantry. A huge thank you to Ginny Mursewick, Polly Russell, and Karen Snyder for distributing diapers. We distributed 768 diapers to families experiencing diaper insecurity. And, thank you to Anne Heinrich, Sam Hebert, Sue Huber, Barb Kamp, and Ellen Volkening for distributing food. Your hands are truly doing the work of the heart and sharing the joy and generosity of St. Paul's Church out into the community.

Our next distribution will be on Tuesday, May 12th from 3:00-5:00 p.m. There will be a sign up sheet in the narthex.



## Ready to Join a Team?

This summer we are creating Diaper Teams!!!

We are looking for ALL families at St. Paul's to join our summer diaper teams. There is no experience required. If you or a child can carry a bag of diapers, give a high-five or a smile, you are overqualified. This is a wonderful opportunity for all of us to spread the word about our Diaper Ministry and share St. Paul's love with the neighbors in our community who are experiencing diaper insecurity.

We once again have the incredible opportunity to partner with EPEL (Enriching Partnerships for Early Learning) at their Learning on the Go Camps to distribute diapers. We are excited for the opportunity to meet families where they are.....at our local parks and provide diapers to those who need them the most.

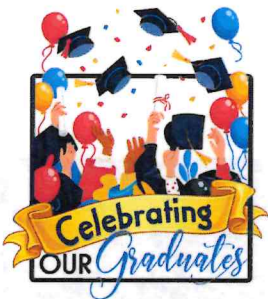
More information and a sign up sheet will be coming soon.

*Together, we are "Changing Lives One Diaper at a Time"*

Blessings, Karen Smith, Karen Snyder, Barb Kamp

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## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



### 2026 Graduates

We would like to recognize your accomplishment this June at church. If you will be a College, High school, 8th grade, or Pre-school graduate, please contact Karen Smith. You can reach her at [ks2teach@gmail.com](mailto:ks2teach@gmail.com).

Christian Ed. Ministry

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## Easter Sunday Thank You

A special thank you to all the children at St. Paul's for helping to lead worship on Easter Sunday. It's always such a highlight to see the younger generation take the reins! It takes a lot of courage for children to stand up there and lead, so a big kudos to:

- All the children for their bravery and hard work sharing their voices.
- The readers (Claire, Iris, Miranda, Violet, Willow, Wini) for speaking with such clarity.
- Iris and Wini for sharing their amazing talent playing their violins.
- And, last but not least, our families for all the behind the scene encouragement and practice.

Thank you to everyone at St. Paul's for helping CE host an Easter Egg hunt for the children after church on Sunday. A huge thank you for your generosity providing candy, filling the Easter eggs and hiding ALL 660 eggs on our church property. It was an amazing morning filled with abundance, community and love.

Blessings,

CE Ministry

Karen Smith (Council Representative), Karen Westerman, Ken Volkening, Janet Werner, Ginny Mursewick



## Sensory Friendly Easter Egg Hunt

Our second sensory friendly Easter egg hunt inspired by Janet Werner and Alison Smith was held on Saturday, March 28th. We had five buses from Marklund (Elgin/Geneva) bring 26 residents and staff. We secured 125 balloons with Easter eggs filled with fidgets in the parking lot.

A huge thank you to our entire church family for your generous donation of fidgets. The residents enjoyed creating a cross craft, painting an Easter watercolor picture, getting a tattoo, taking a photo at the photo booth, and visiting with our therapy dog, Dolan.

We had 26 volunteers and 9 of them were children. A huge thank you to Biggers Chevrolet in Elgin and Sisters Party Decor in Aurora for their generous donation of helium balloons. We are also grateful for the Jewel on Larkin donating \$25.00 and to church members for their financial contributions. It truly was a morning filled with love and outreach.



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## Clothing Donation Thank You

A HUGE THANK YOU to everyone who contributed clothes for the 7-year old boy at PADS. We collected 10 shirts, 10 pants, a pair of pajamas, and a pair of shoes. A special shout out to the children who created an awesome box for the collection.

Thank you for your generous heart and being a blessing to this boy and his family.

CE Ministry

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## Faith at Home

In the church calendar, Easter isn't just a day—it's a 50-day season, starting on Easter known as Eastertide! Keeping the "Alleluia" alive at home helps children understand that the Resurrection is a reality. Here is an "Eastertide" idea for your family to try:

### The "New Life" Collection

Children look for evidence of the resurrection in nature. Help your child(ren) see the resurrection in the world around them!

Give your child(ren) a small basket or bag. Every time you go to the park or on a walk, challenge them to find things that show "New Life."

Whether it's a budding twig or a bright green leaf, gather these "treasures". It's a simple, tactile way to teach children that Easter isn't just one day—it's the beginning of a whole new season of joy.

Bring the items home and place them on a dedicated "Easter Table." As the table fills up with nature's treasures over the next few weeks, it becomes a visual representation of the world waking up because of Jesus

When they find something, say: *"Just like this little sprout is waking up from the dirt, Jesus woke up from the grave to bring new life to everything!"*

CE Ministry,

Karen Smith (Council Representative), Karen Westerman, Ken Volkening, Kylie Smith, Janet Werner, and Ginny Mursewick

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## CREATION CARE

### Prairie Restoration Grant

The Creation Care ministry is dreaming big with a 2026 project to restore part of our land to native prairie habitat. Our goal is to begin preparing a space on the southwest corner of our property this fall. We are excited to announce that we received a \$500 grant from A Rocha USA to cover the cost of soil sampling and herbicide application. Be a part of this learning experience and help us rehabilitate the land for native plants and animals. Stay tuned for project invites and updates.

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### Thank you, Gardeners!

Many hands made for joyful progress out by the church sign on Sunday, April 26th. We planted native Brown-eyed Susans and Coneflowers. All are welcome to come out on Thursday, May 7 at 1:30 p.m. to finish the planting with the addition of Butterfly Milkweed.



# What's Happening at the UCC Camps

Check out what's happening at Pilgrim Park Camp and Retreat Center! It's only about 2 hours away.

Kids Sports Camp June 21-27 for completed 6th-9th grades.  
Making Memories July 6-8 for grandparents and grandchildren.  
Women's Sacred Relax and Renewal October 2-3  
Crafter Retreat December 3-6

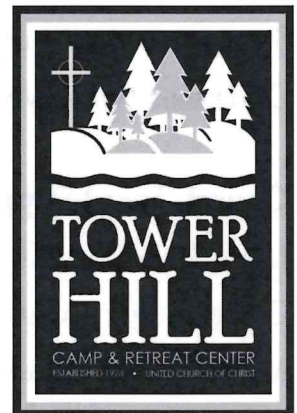
Visit their website for more information or to register by going to this link:  
<https://pilgrimpark.campbrainregistration.com/>



Check out what's happening at Tower Hill Camp and Retreat Center. It's only about 2 hours away!

HUG Camp July 5-10 for completed 4th-11th grades  
HUG Tenderfoot July 8-10 for K-3rd grades  
Godstock July 19-24 for 3rd-9th grades  
Godstock Tenderfoot July 22-24 for K-3rd grade  
Creation Care Camp August 3-6 Intergenerational

Visit their website for more information or to register by going to this link:  
<https://www.towerhillcamp.org/youth-camps>



# Financially Speaking

The March receipts were \$56,485.21 which includes giving for fixed expenses as well as charitable giving. See below:

|   | January     | Year-to-Date |
|---|-------------|--------------|
| <b>Offering</b>                                 |             |              |
| Pledged Offering                                | \$18,324.00 | \$61,512.00  |
| Contributions (Non-Pledged)                     | \$2,225.00  | \$6,094.45   |
| Loose Offering                                  | \$225.18    | \$588.18     |
| <b>Denominational Support</b>                   |             |              |
| OCWM (Illinois Conference)                      | \$510.00    | \$2,645.00   |
| One Great Hour of Sharing                       | \$405.00    | \$405.00     |
| Neighborhoods in Need                           | \$0.00      | \$0.00       |
| Strengthen the Church                           | \$25.00     | \$25.00      |
| Christmas Fund/Veterans of the Cross            | \$0.00      | \$0.00       |
| <b>Church Fund Support</b>                      |             |              |
| Land, Building and Equipment Fund               | \$105.00    | \$4,570.00   |
| Coffee Hour donations                           | \$71.00     | \$211.00     |
| Misc. General Fund                              | \$0.00      | \$32.00      |
| Scholarship Fund                                | \$0.00      | \$0.00       |
| “J” Dollars                                     | \$48.00     | \$415.00     |
| <b>Specific Ministry Support</b>                |             |              |
| Music Fund                                      | \$0.00      | \$80.00      |
| Mission Projects                                | \$0.00      | \$0.00       |
| Diaper Ministry (Including May Community Drive) | \$50.00     | \$550.00     |
| Fellowship and Hospitality                      | \$0.00      | \$0.00       |
| <b>Seasonal Giving</b>                          |             |              |
| Easter Breakfast                                | \$0.00      | \$0.00       |
| Lent/Easter Offering                            | \$175.00    | \$401.00     |
| Heritage Fest                                   | \$0.00      | \$0.00       |
| Christmas Offering                              | \$0.00      | \$100.00     |

|   | January            | Year-to-Date       |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Church Project Support</b>                 |                    |                    |
| Constitution Review                           | \$0.00             | \$300.00           |
| Nursery Makeover                              | \$50.00            | \$50.00            |
| New Chairs                                    | \$2,344.51         | \$2,344.51         |
| <b>Community Support</b>                      |                    |                    |
| Pads 5K Sponsorship                           | \$0.00             | \$0.00             |
| Elgin Pride                                   | \$0.00             | \$0.00             |
| Pads Emergency Appeal                         | \$0.00             | \$0.00             |
| <b>Other</b>                                  |                    |                    |
| CD Interest                                   | \$1,321.52         | \$1,321.52         |
| DC (transferring to higher rate CD)           | \$30,000.00        | \$30,000.00        |
| Memorial Giving                               | \$25.00            | \$2,865.00         |
| Miscellaneous                                 | \$0.00             | \$0.00             |
| Christmas Flowers                             | \$0.00             | \$0.00             |
| Easter Memorial Flowers                       | \$405.00           | \$405.00           |
| Initial Offering (Related to Giving Envelope) | \$0.00             | \$51.00            |
| 150th Celebration Dinner                      | \$0.00             | \$0.00             |
| Donation to CE for VBS                        | \$0.00             | \$0.00             |
| \$1,000 Donation to CE for Confirmation       | \$0.00             | \$0.00             |
| Christmas Trees                               | \$0.00             | \$0.00             |
| CE Pancake Breakfast                          | \$201.00           | \$201.00           |
| Craft Fair                                    | \$0.00             | \$0.00             |
| Living Nativity Free Will Offering            | \$0.00             | \$0.00             |
| <b>Total:</b>                                 | <b>\$24,228.45</b> | <b>\$58,681.45</b> |

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding this report or on your statements.

Karen Westerman  
 Financial Secretary  
 847-727-9973

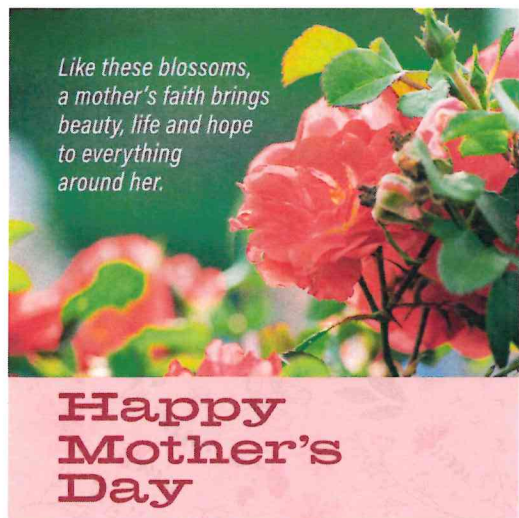
# MAY Birthdays

- 5/02 JoAnn Pate
- 5/03 Olivia Duarte
- 5/04 Grayson Thielke
- 5/04 Jack Westerman
- 5/07 Jeff Volkening
- 5/10 JoAnn Sorenson
- 5/11 Mitch Bryson
- 5/12 Elsie Ward
- 5/13 Kevin Volkening
- 5/17 Alison Smith
- 5/18 Xavier Duarte
- 5/18 Ryan Smith
- 5/19 Daniel Wiggin
- 5/22 Jaxon Young
- 5/23 Olivia Wiggin
- 5/25 Courtney Kaye
- 5/29 Arnold Lauber
- 5/31 Madison Termini

# MAY Anniversaries


- 5/11 Bill & Sally Willson
- 5/20 Brett & Susan Wolfe
- 5/24 Tommy & Liz Patz
- 5/29 Dan & Anne Heinrich

**\*\*Please forgive any omissions. Please contact the Church Office by email or by phone at 847-628-6118 with corrections.**




### Worship Online

Watch our Services live on YouTube every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. or watch them when you have time. Just scan the QR Code or go to YouTube and search St. Paul's United Church of Christ



### Online Giving

Your gifts to the church provide for our ministries and programs. To make an online donation scan the QR Code or go to our website at [www.stpaulucelgin.org](http://www.stpaulucelgin.org) and click on the give link.



### June Newsletter Deadline: May 19th

If you have an article you would like included in the next Newsletter, please submit it to the office by emailing [stpauls4me@yahoo.com](mailto:stpauls4me@yahoo.com) no later than the deadline!

