the CONNECTION

NOVEMBER 2026



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Visit us on our Website at www.stpauluccelgin.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.stpauluccelgin.org under the "about us" tab.

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St. Paul's UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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 / **Website:** stpauluccelgin.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



St. Paul's donates $5,000.00 for Holiday Meals. Read more in the "Missions" section.



Welcome to our 151st year!

November 1st marks the official start of St. Paul's 151st year of being and doing church. Our joy and gratitude for the privilege runs deep. During our year of anniversary celebration, we reflected on God's enduring love. Now we look to the future and ask, how are we called in this time and place to love God who so loves us?

Love God. That was the central and sacred command of Deuteronomy 6 that Jesus learned as a child. The command that shaped the Son of God's every healing touch and challenging word. *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbor as yourself. Do this and you will live*, Jesus taught. *Love one another as I have loved you*, he commanded.

This summer our council leadership reflected on our life together guided by the "Be the Church" statements. Each statement felt like an important priority, but the essence of three statements in particular summarized where we feel our hearts are called in this time and place:

Love God : *Wholeheartedness.*
Embrace diversity : *More than welcome, we seek belonging.*
Protect the environment : *Our interconnectedness and interdependence are sacred.*

What does it look like for the church to love with our whole heart? What do our mission and ministry priorities look like when we "embrace" our neighbor? What do they look like if we truly believe "if one member [of the body of Christ] suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it" (1 Cor 12:26)? What do they look like when we proclaim the worth of every living thing and choose to protect one another?

What does a year of our life together look like when we lead with these faithful truths? Guided by the Spirit, let's find out.

Peace,
Pastor Liz



150th Anniversary Worship & Luncheon
Sunday, November 1st

With Special Guest, Rev. Jennifer Sowell
National Associate General Minister, Love of Church

Join us for a special worship service on Sunday, November 1st as we end our 150th year celebration looking forward with a message and charge from new national Associate General Minister, Rev. Jen Sowell. After worship, please plan to stay for a catered luncheon of hot and cold hors d'oeuvres catered by BBQ On Wheels.





MINISTRY NEWS

Church Council Position Openings

Council Vice-President

The Vice-President position is a two-year term followed by a two-year term as President. When Jon Kobel approached me two years ago about becoming Vice-President it caught me off guard and I thought, "Me??" I told Jon I would think about it and let him know. I did some serious thinking about the four-year commitment and if I had the ability to help lead the church. I made the decision to take the position and have not looked back. The last two years have been interesting and meaningful, and I can't wait for the next two years. If you feel stirred in your heart to consider the Vice-President position, please reach out to me and we can have a talk, and I can answer your questions.

Barb Kamp
Council Vice-President
barb.kamp@yahoo.com
847-815-5242

Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary Council position is open for a 3-year term starting February 2027-January 2030. The Financial Secretary is like an Accounts Receivable position in business. They count, record, and make a weekly deposit of all the money coming in for the week. Every week a volunteer counter records the offering money taken in on Sunday and the Financial Secretary adds money coming in from any other sources that week. The Financial Secretary prepares and presents a monthly report at the council meeting. Please reach out to me for more information about this position.

Karen Westerman
Financial Secretary
847-727-9973
westy582@gmail.com

Treasurer

The Treasure oversees where the money is going, making sure basic accounting procedures are being followed. Duties include doing payroll, signing checks, and assisting with and maintaining the budget. With the help of the Finance Committee, the Treasurer prepares federal and state required filings like our non-profit status, taxes, and maintains investments. The Treasurer prepares month-end reviews and financial reports for the council. Our current Treasurer, Jenn Volkening, is happy to discuss the position and encourages you to reach out to her. Jenn is happy to train and offer help at the start of the term.

Jenn Volkening
Treasurer
jvolk36@gmail.com
847-691-4843

Diaper Ministry

888 Diapers

Were distributed at the Northern Illinois Mobile Pantry food distribution at the old Sherman Hospital parking lot on Tuesday, October 13th.

1,091 Diapers Donated

A donation of 1,091 diapers were given to St. Paul's by Debbie Marin, a volunteer at the Northern Illinois Mobile Food Pantry Old Sherman distribution.

540 Diapers

Diapers were given out to families at the Wash Smart Laundry Grand Opening & Trunk or Treat event at 464 Summit St., Elgin on October 21st.

606 Diapers Donated

606 diapers were donated to St. Paul's in October. Thank you for your continued commitment and generosity.

1 and 2 Sizes

We are in need of 1 & 2 size diapers for our first Sunday of the month collection in November.

Volunteer this Fall

We are distributing diapers at EPEL (Enriching Partnerships for Early Learning) Playgroups at Izaak Walton Youth Center - 899 Jay St., Elgin twice a month (2nd & 3rd Wed. of the month) from 10:00-11:00 a.m. Thank you to those who have signed up to help. We could still use a few more volunteers....the diapers you need to take will be ready for you. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex.

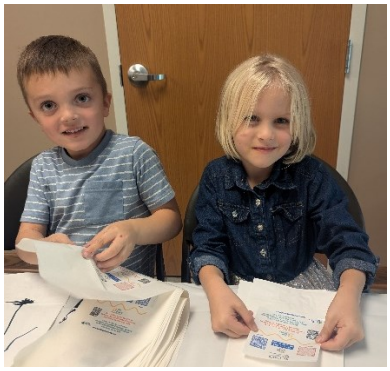
We are looking for volunteers to distribute diapers at the Northern Illinois Food Mobile Holiday Food Box Distribution on Saturday, November 7th from 8:15-11:00 a.m. at Elgin Community College. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex.

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

Diaper Ministry Chairpersons,
Karen Smith, Karen Snyder, Barb Kamp

Thank you, October 25th Volunteers!









CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Pumpkins

On Sunday, Oct. 18th, seventeen children and their families picked pumpkins from their very own pumpkin patch. A huge thank you to Farmer Dan Heinrich for bringing his wagon and giving us all a ride with our pumpkins to the Ministry House. It was a great morning of fellowship, creativity and fall fun.

Book Donations

Book donations are still being accepted for our classroom libraries. Please see the suggested list of books online or at church. Thank you to everyone who has made a donation. We would love for the children to connect with you and we invite you to join us on a Sunday morning to read the book(s) you have so generously given to our library.

Advent Workshop

Join us on Sunday, November 29th for our Advent Workshop following worship. All are invited.

CE Ministry

Karen Smith (Council Representative), Karen Westerman, Ken Volkening, Kylie Smith, Tammy Rath, Ginny Mursewick & Janet Werner

See our Book Wish List on Amazon at:
https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/15VY5S5LDVM7E?ref_=wl_share

Pictures from Christian Educations Pumpkin Harvest & Decorating on October 18th


















MISSIONS

St. Paul's raises over $4,500 to fight hunger

St. Paul's raised $3,050.00 for the September Elgin CROP Hunger Walk. This total included walk day donations of $1,484.50 and half the proceeds from the October Heritage Fest $1,565.50. The other half of the Heritage Fest proceeds, $1,565.50, were donated to the Burlington-Hampshire Food Pantry (220 Keyes Avenue - Suite A, Hampshire). On Wednesday, October 21st, Dale and Sandy Volkening and Pastor Liz presented Burlington-Hampshire Food Pantry long-time volunteer Dorothy Paddock with our donation.



Thank You Letter from Elgin CROP Walk

Dear Barb,

Thank you for your hard work in recruiting walkers and pledges for this year's CROP walk on September 27. We think the money is all in now, and by our count your team raised over $3,050 out of the over $33,500 raised in Elgin.

We beat our goal! More importantly people will get the tools they need to rise out of poverty, people in need will get food and we will respond to disasters around the world. This is in addition to the 150 or so hygiene kits that have been sent on to Church World Service and local supplies given to the Community Crisis Center, PADS and other agencies in need.

CWS (Church World Service) notes that, due to worsening economic times, we are one of the comparatively few communities that raised more money this year than last. ¼ of these funds will be returned to Elgin to help fund our soup kettles and food pantries.

When faced with a challenge, Elgin rises to the task!

Thank you!
Dr. Michael Montgomery for the CROP Walk Planning Team of
Dr. Dave Daubert, Bob Langlois, Peg Lehman, Alexa Martin, Michael Montgomery, Emma Sherman, Rev. Clint Ward and Heather Willson for CWS.

St. Paul's donates $5,000 for Holiday Meals

On Tuesday, October 13th St. Paul's donated $5,000 to the Northern Illinois Food Bank to support the Holiday Meal box distribution at ECC. The St. Paul's volunteers who go every month to Old Sherman to distribute food and diapers at the Mobile Food Pantry learned that the holiday meal boxes were not going to happen this year. With cost of groceries so high, a major sponsor cut its funding in half. This development came to the attention of our Missions Ministry team and Barb Kamp had an idea. Missions asked the council if we could help by using the Interest Fund. This is the fund the congregation established last year at the annual meeting in which we set aside the interest of our investments for new ministry at St. Paul's and for supporting needs in the community. Barb asked the mobile food pantry organizers "How much do you need to make this happen?" $5,000. Barb put that out to council. And council responded with a resounding YES. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. We are so grateful for the yeses of this congregation – again and again – to share our resources when we know of a need in the community.

Disaster Relief for Nepal

St. Paul's donated $1,000 total to the UCC Global HOPE fund for flood disaster relief in Nepal. The UCC, through the Global HOPE team* and Global Ministries, is actively supporting the relief and response activities of local partners who are providing shelter, food and nutrition, WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene), education, and mental and psychosocial support for affected communities.

*The Global HOPE team in the United Church of Christ Love of Neighbor unit brings together the UCC's refugee and migration ministries, volunteer engagement, disaster response and recovery, and sustainable development support. The acronym HOPE makes clear the team's vision: Humanitarian: Opportunities, Partnerships, Empowerment.

CREATION CARE

Sacred Grove Webinar

Join Rev. Christopher Grundy and the Creation Care ministry on Thursday, November 5th at 7:00 p.m. for a conversation about one element of St. Paul's prairie restoration project: a sacred grove. Pastor, Professor, and Musician Rev. Christopher Grundy and his wife Carla were our guests this summer! When Christopher heard about our prairie restoration project, he was eager to share with us the ancient and ongoing tradition of creating natural worship spaces. Come join us!

Sacred Grove Zoom Link – Thursday, Nov 5th at 7:00 p.m. is:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87979061774

WORSHIP

Write for our Advent Devotional

Contribute your own written stories and faith experiences for our St. Paul's Advent Devotional. You do not have to start from scratch! There are many prompts and related scriptures to connect with and inspire us. **Please email your devotion(s) by November Nov 18th.**

We are thinking about "beginnings" and truths of our faith that we should never leave home without, like: "You are a blessing", "We can't go alone", "Do the good thing that is yours to do" and "Hope is worth the risk." **Email Pastor Liz** to receive the complete list of themes, scriptures, and writing tips or pick-up a hard copy at church.

Like a quilt brings together different shapes and textures, our Advent devotional will bring our experiences together to encourage one another. "Sometimes our words can become a life raft, and I imagine that is what might happen for us this Advent. In a world that uses words to divide and demean, we will choose words for belovedness and hope. We will choose words for beginning again." [From Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity, the Creative Director of A Sanctified Art, the writers of our Advent series *Words for the Beginning.]*



FELLOWSHIP & HOSPITALITY

Coffee Hour

Love the morning treats? Help keep it going! If you can sponsor a coffee hour, use the sign-up sheet outside of the kitchen. You choose what to serve. Fan favorites are fresh fruit, cheese and crackers, and cookies, brownies or coffee cakes. Or bring a cake! Sign-up at church across from the kitchen or contact Janet Werner at janwer@aol.com.



THANK YOU,
Fellowship & Hospitality Ministry

WORSHIP SERVERS FOR NOVEMBER

Greeters:
November 1 - Chuck & Karen Smith
November 8 - Kandy Jones & Elsie Ward
November 15 - Bill & Karen Snyder
November 22 - Fred & Karen Vollman
November 29 - Anne Heinrich & Barb Kamp

Ushers:
November 1 - Lee & Nicole Thielke and Dexter & Ashley Young
November 8 - Chuck Smith, Ryan Smith, and Rick & Sara Tustin
November 15 - Linda Meglin, Mike & Ginny Mursewick, and Ken Volkening
November 22 - Dave & Pat Thompson, Craig Whyte, and Dale Volkening
November 29 - Dan Heinrich, Vern Knaak, Connie Moraca, and Mike Westerman

Scripture Readers:
November 1 - Jessica Thomas
November 8 - Anne Heinrich
November 15 - Jim Werner
November 22 - Jay Shircliff
November 29 - Ken Volkening

Counters:
November 1 - Linda Meglin
November 8 - Karen Vollman
November 15 - Fred Vollman
November 22 - Sandy Volkening
November 29 - Linda Meglin

Media:
November 1 – Sandy Volkening/Ryan Smith
November 8 – Anne Heinrich
November 15 – Sandy Volkening
November 22 – Sandy Volkening
November 29 – Sandy Volkening

Communion:
November 1 - Lorrel and Sue Petty

Thank you to our dedicated worship service volunteers each Sunday morning. Your time, commitment, and willingness to serve help make our worship services possible, and we are truly grateful for all you do.

If you are interested in volunteering in one or more areas on Sunday mornings, we would love to have you join us! Please contact the church office for more information or talk to Pastor Liz.

FINANCIALLY SPEAKING

The September receipts were $20,011.70 which includes giving for fixed expenses as well as charitable giving. See below:

Offering	September	YTD
Pledged Offering	$9,429.70	$130,777.07
Offering (Non-Pledged)	$4,920.00	$21,741.80
Loose Offering	$320.00	$2,753.18
Denominational Support		
OCWM (Illinois Conference)	$430.00	$6,068.50
One Great Hour of Sharing	$0.00	$425.00
Strengthen the Church	$0.00	$315.00
Neighbors in Need	$0.00	$120.00
Christmas Fund/Veterans of the Cross	$0.00	$20.00

Offering	September	YTD
Church Fund Support		
Land, Building and Equipment Fund	$1,045.00	$10,552.50
Coffee Hour donations	$62.00	$727.00
General Fund	$0.00	$182.00
"J" Dollars	$91.00	$783.00
Scholarship Fund	$0.00	$750.00
Pads	$0.00	$50.00
Specific Ministry Support		
Diaper Ministry	$50.00	$972.00
Music Fund	$0.00	$90.00
Creation Care Grant	$0.00	$500.00
Seasonal Giving		
Christmas Offering	$0.00	$200.00
Easter/Lent	$0.00	$2,225.00
Easter Breakfast	$0.00	$545.00
Church Project Support		
Constitution Review	$0.00	$300.00
Nursery Makeover	$0.00	$50.00
New Chairs	$0.00	$2,344.51
Video System	$3,000.00	$3,000.00
Other		
Initial Offering (related to Giving Envelopes)	$0.00	$51.00
Memorials	$0.00	$2,865.00
Easter Flowers	$0.00	$474.00
CE Pancake Breakfast	$0.00	$201.00

Offering	September	YTD
CE Book Drive	$100.00	$100.00
CD *(transferring to higher rate CD)*	$0.00	$30,000.00
CD Interest	$0.00	$8,429.00
150th Celebration/Butter Braid Sale & Donation	$150.00	$1,96.00
150th Stain Glass Window	$250.00	$250.00
In & Out	$0.00	$72.00
Starfish Animal Rescue	$30.00	$30.00
Disaster Relief Nepal Flooding	$134.00	$134.00
Total:	**$20,011.70**	**$229,879.66**

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding this report.

Karen Westerman
Financial Secretary





11/01	Jon Kobel
11/01	Jacob Volkening
11/04	Michael Heinrich
11/05	Bernice Bradley
11/06	Tanya Rowe
11/08	Dale Volkening
11/08	Aidan Wilson
11/09	Carol Graeff
11/10	Kenneth Volkening
11/11	Autumn Young
11/15	Duncan Flentge
11/24	Bob Reimer
11/27	Jonathan Cowan
11/30	James Pace

***Please forgive any omissions. Please contact the Church Office by email (stpauls4me@yahoo.com) or by phone at 847-628-6118 with corrections.*

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Upcoming Events

- Sunday, November 1 - 150th Celebration Worship with guest Rev. Jennifer Sowell from the UCC national office & Celebration Brunch
- Sunday, November 8 - All Saints Service of Remembrance
- Sunday, November 15 - Stewardship Sunday
- Sunday, November 22 - Sanctuary Decorating for the Holidays
- Sunday, November 29 - Advent Workshop

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.stpauluccelgin.org.



December Newsletter Deadline: November 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 no later than the deadline!