

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

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Subscribe to our *Weekly Word* e-letter at bit.ly/StP-WeeklyWord

## HOLIDAY WITNESS

**DECEMBER 20 TO JANUARY 4**  
**IN-PERSON WORSHIP TOTAL • 4092**  
Dec. 20-21 weekend • 736  
Christmas Eve & Day • 1919  
    *Christmas Eve: Dec. 24 services • 1601*  
    *Christmas Day: Dec. 25 service • 318*  
Dec. 28 services • 470  
New Year's Eve: Dec. 31 • 139  
Jan. 3-4 weekend • 828  
    *5:00pm worship • 129*  
    *8:00am worship • 248*  
    *9:30am worship • 188*  
    *11:00am worship • 144*  
    *10:45am Living Stone worship • 119*  
**ONLINE VIEWING DEC. 20 - JAN. 4**  
Sanctuary: 932 • Living Stone: 169  
    *Approximately 1762 total online viewers*

## CALENDAR

**SUNDAY, JAN. 11**  
    Worship Services  
**MONDAY, JAN. 12**  
    Morning Men's Bible Study, 6am, Zoom  
    LWML Quilting Group, 9am, FH  
    LWML Mtg., 1pm, FH  
    Comfort Dog Mtg., 6:30pm, FH  
    Social Ministry Mtg., 6:30pm, Conf. Rm.  
    MomCo After Dark Meetup, 7pm  
**TUESDAY, JAN 13**  
    Christian Readers Gr., 7pm, Conf. Rm.  
**WEDNESDAY, JAN. 14**  
    Living Way Bible Study, 9am  
    SPY High School Meetups, 5:30pm, YR  
    8th grade Conf. Family Class, 6pm, FH  
    Choir Rehearsal, 7pm  
**THURSDAY, JAN. 15**  
    MomCo Meetups, 9am, FH  
    Living Way Evening Mtg., 7pm, Conf. Rm.  
    Friday, Jan. 16  
    Bulletin Assembly, 9am, LL4  
**SATURDAY, JAN. 17**  
    Worship Service, 5pm  
**SUNDAY, JAN. 18**  
    Worship Services

## SUNDAY CLASSES


**BIBLE STUDY HOUR • 9:30AM**  
**GOSPEL OF MATTHEW • MUSIC RM.**  
    Simulcast live on 850AM and KFUO.org  
**FOUNDATION • FELLOWSHIP HALL**  
    Topical, discussion-based study  
**SUNDAY SCHOOL • SCHOOL ROOMS**  
    Preschool: Room LL2; K/1st: LL7;  
    2nd/3rd: 106; 4th/5th: 104;  
    6th-8th: Art Rm.; 9th-12th: Youth Rm.  
**LITTLE LAMBS • School Room 103**

## GIVING

Annual offering budget	\$3,309,800
Budget year-to-date (27 weeks)	1,718,550
Received year-to-date	1,625,440
Difference actual/budget	-93,110
Weekly Amount Needed	67,374
Received last week	39,517
<b>CONSTRUCTION LOAN BALANCE</b>	
Current debt	\$ 3,505,851
Gifts received July 2024 to date	\$ 26,391

**MINISTRY EXPANSION CAMPAIGN**

Total Commitments: \$14,585,612 • Gifts received to date: \$7,958,664



## EMPLOYMENT

Visit our church website for job details: [stpaulsdesperes.org/news/employment](http://stpaulsdesperes.org/news/employment)

- Early Childhood Center: Substitute Teacher; Afternoon Shifts
- K-8 School Substitute Teacher; Homework Club

## MISSIONS

★**NEW: DECEMBER MISSION OF THE MONTH TOTAL: \$4,339**  
★**NEW: JANUARY MISSION OF THE MONTH: TYLER MCMILLER**  
Pastor McMiller serves in Italy, where he is providing spiritual care and catechetical instruction for a number of Italians who discovered Lutheranism online; is mentoring Italian men who are studying online to become pastors; and is providing Word and Sacrament ministry to small groups of Lutherans in the region. An LCMS missionary, Tyler's goal is to help geographically isolated believers establish house churches wherever they live.

## LCMS NEWS

**SYNOD NOMINATIONS DUE BY FEB. 18:** As part of the 2026 LCMS Synod Convention, each LCMS congregation is encouraged to nominate up to two pastors as candidates for Synod President, First Vice-President, and Regional Vice-President; find a description of the duties at [www.lcms.org/convention/governance/nominations](http://www.lcms.org/convention/governance/nominations). Each St. Paul's voting member may submit only one ballot, and members are invited to nominate a pastor for each of the three offices. Paper ballots and a collection box are at our east lobby information counter. Prior to the Feb. 18 deadline, St. Paul's will nominate the two names that have received the most nominations for each office.

### INPUT SOUGHT: POTENTIAL LUTHERAN WEST HIGH SCHOOL

A steering committee is exploring launching a new Lutheran high school in west St. Louis County. The five-minute survey at [newlutheranhighschool.com](http://newlutheranhighschool.com) (see QR code) is the first public step in gauging community interest; your voice matters! Learn more from St. Paul's congregation members who are serving on the development committee: Pastor Wade, Andrew Foley, and Rob Claus.





# THE GOOD NEWS

## SUNDAY, JANUARY 11, 2026

## SUNDAY

### ★ NEW: SANCTITY OF LIFE WEEKEND

**Sun., Jan. 11 • Baptism Recognition at 11am Sanctuary & 10:45am Living Stone**  
We joyfully celebrate God's gift of life this Sunday. There will be a special recognition of all those baptized at St. Paul's in the last year, who will each receive a gift in recognition of their Baptism, as well as resources to assist in the annual celebration of their baptismal birthdays.

- **9:30am Bible Study • Fellowship Hall** • Deaconess Jessica Thompson will lead a special Bible study on what it means to be a life-affirming Christian and explore how we, who have been given new life in Christ, can share the mercy that we have received from the Lord of Life with those around us. Jessica will also share about the work she has been called to do as program director with Redeeming Life Outreach Ministries. RLOM is a Registered Service Organization of the LCMS that provides hope, help, and a home to women in crisis pregnancy situations.
- **Learning Materials** • Deaconess Thompson and our congregation's Life Advocacy Group will share educational materials at a table in the west lobby; stop by to learn more.



## THE WEEK AHEAD: JAN. 12-18

### ★ NEW: PDO ENROLLMENT FOR CHURCH MEMBERS

**Opens Mon., Jan. 12**  
As a church member, you have priority enrollment for Parents' Day Out, which serves children ages 3 months to 5 years, before we open enrollment to the community. Priority enrollment opens Monday, January 12! Email director Andrea Bluhm ([abluhm@stpaulsdp.org](mailto:abluhm@stpaulsdp.org)) for more information. Learn more about PDO ministry at [stplutheranschool.org/parents-day-out](http://stplutheranschool.org/parents-day-out).

### ★ NEW: LWML FELLOWSHIP & CHURCH CLEANING

**Mon., Jan. 12 • 12:30pm/1pm • FH**  
All women are invited to join Lutheran Women in Mission at 12:30 for devotion and fellowship; feel free to pack your own brown bag lunch. At 1:00, we'll tidy up the sanctuary, lobbies, and other areas of the church. If you're able, bring a Dustbuster or vacuum cleaner. Cleaning supplies will be provided, but you're welcome to bring any personal favorites.

### CHRISTIAN READERS GROUP

**Tues., Jan. 13 • 7pm • Conf. Room**  
Led by Rev. Dr. Kent Burreson, the group reads across a variety of genres, exploring Christian themes and how literature informs Christian faith and life. January's book is Burreson and Hoeltker's *Lay Me in God's Good Earth*.

### ★ NEW: MITE BOX COLLECTION

**Jan. 17 & 18** • Read more on next page.

### NEWS JUST ADDED

- 1) Life Sunday • Jan. 11
- 2) Deaconess Thompson leads Bible study • Jan. 11
- 3) K-8 & PDO priority enrollment
- 4) Living Way begins 1 Cor. • Jan. 21
- 5) New Foundation series
- 6) LWML meeting • Jan. 12
- 7) Mite box collection • Jan. 18
- 8) Trivia sponsorships available
- 9) Subscribe to *Lutheran Witness*
- 10) Thank yous: Bulletin crew, drone footage, Christmas giving
- 11) Mission of the Month news

### REMINDERS

- Priority K-8 school enrollment opens Jan. 19
- Priority PDO enrollment opens Jan. 12

### LARGE-PRINT

- Find the large-print *Good News* included inside our large-print worship folders (see an usher)

## BACH CANTATA VESPERS

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 25  
3:00PM**

Music at St. Paul's cordially invites you to Cantata Vespers with the American Kantorei chorus and orchestra. The service of Evening Prayer will feature music from Cantatas 72, 73, and 111 by Johann Sebastian Bach. The Kantorei, under the directorship of Dr. Maurice Boyer, specializes in the performance of J. S. Bach's sacred choral works in the original German, accompanied by orchestra. The event is complimentary, with a freewill offering, and is open to the public.



★ NEWS JUST ADDED IS NOTED WITH A STAR



# SERVICE AND SUPPORT

**★NEW: MITE BOX COLLECTION**  
*Sat., Jan. 17 & Sun., Jan. 18*  
**Small Gifts, Big Impact**  
Help support district and national mission grants through Lutheran Women in Mission (LWML). During the weekend of January 17–18, bring your mite box, loose change, or cash and place your gifts in the large mite box in the narthex. Learn how every mite makes a difference at [lwml.org/mission-grants](http://lwml.org/mission-grants) and [missouriwml.org/mission-grants](http://missouriwml.org/mission-grants).

**★NEW: TRIVIA NIGHT**  
**SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE**  
*Sat., Feb. 28* • Trivia “round sponsorships” are still available (sponsor a round and help determine trivia questions to be asked!) although registration for the Feb. 28 event is full.  
Email Laura Siebenman at [Laura.siebenman@gmail.com](mailto:Laura.siebenman@gmail.com) about sponsorship, and see our *Weekly Word* email for current sponsorship listings/logo.



**SERVE AT McDONALD HOUSE**  
*Sun., Jan. 25 and Wed., Feb. 11 • 4:30pm*  
When families of seriously ill children stay at the Ronald McDonald House in Des Peres, our members show care by cooking a homestyle meal for these guests visiting our community. Come cook with us in the RMH kitchen: Sign up at [bit.ly/StP-RMH](http://bit.ly/StP-RMH).

**CLOTHING DRIVE CONCLUDED**  
Trinity Lutheran thanks all who donated clothing and essential items for those in need; your generosity has helped keep others warm and more comfortable during this cold weather. Thank you for being a blessing to our community.



# BIBLE STUDIES

**★NEW: FIRST CORINTHIANS STUDY**  
*Living Way Series Begins Jan. 21 & 22*  
New year: new resolutions. Ever wanted to deepen your faith life or start a habit of Bible reading? Then dig into scripture with us in 2026. Beginning mid-January, we start a new semester in First Corinthians.

Living Way is filled with people who are both new to the Bible and well-versed, who are of all ages, and who attend weekly or just come when they can. Friends are welcome. Join us Wednesday mornings or Thursday evenings; childcare is available. Register and read more about our 2026 series on 1 Corinthians on our website Bible Studies tab or at [bit.ly/StP-LWay](http://bit.ly/StP-LWay).

**★NEW: “FAITH ON THE MOUNT” SERIES**  
*Sundays • 9:30am • FH* • The new year 2026 begins with our Foundation series, “Faith on the Mount,” looking at the specific mountains upon which God acted in miraculous ways for His people — from Mount Carmel to Mount Calvary. The series continues throughout the season of Epiphany and concludes before Lent.

**MONDAY MORNING MEN’S BIBLE STUDY**  
*Starting in January • 6-7am via Zoom*

By Dr. Mark Bender  
Men of St. Paul’s, Begin Monday mornings in 2026 with an hour-long study of Scripture viewed through the Lutheran lens of interpretation. Under discussion will be the *Formula of Concord*, one of the foundational writings of Lutheran theology. We will be using *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions, A Reader’s Edition of the Book of Concord, Second Edition*.

You may wonder: why not study a book of the Bible? The first sentence of the *Formula* declares, “We believe, teach, and confess that the only rule and norm according to which all teachings, together with *all* teachers, should be evaluated and judged (2 Timothy 3:15-17) are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.” The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod ascribes to the entirety of the Book of Concord. Sadly, not all “Lutheran” church bodies do, nor do they hold the Bible as the inherent, infallible Word of God. So, it is incumbent on us to return to the norm of our Christian witness as Lutherans.

Leading our study will be Rev. Jerrold Eickmann, Professor Emeritus of Systematic Theology, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. *The Book of Concord* was a major component of Jerry’s instruction during his tenure as a professor. His approach to the material will result in clear and applicable conversation and discussion.

The class (aka: MMMBS) meets via Zoom 6:00-7:00am. If you have questions, contact Mark Bender ([mark.bender51@gmail.com](mailto:mark.bender51@gmail.com)). Mark can assist you with Zoom protocol and with the purchase of a copy of the Book of Concord at the reduced price of \$27. The first session began on Monday, January 5, 2026.



## BUILDING TIMELINE

SUMMER '24   AUTUMN   WINTER   SPRING '25   SUMMER   AUTUMN   WINTER   SPRING   2ND QUARTER '26

# SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

**★NEW: K-8 PRIORITY ENROLLMENT**  
*Priority Enrollment Opens Mon., Jan. 19*  
*Community Enrollment Opens Jan. 26*  
Over the course of nearly 18 decades, generations of students have grown in Christian confidence and academic excellence at St. Paul’s! We yearn to tell future generations of students the wonders God has done for them (Ps. 78).

St. Paul’s church members, ECC and PDO families, and siblings of current St. Paul’s students are invited to apply for the 2026-2027 school year during the priority window of January 19-25 (National Lutheran Schools Week).

Beginning January 26, remaining spots in the program will be available to new families. Contact Joanna Hoeltge, [jhoeltge@stpaulsdp.org](mailto:jhoeltge@stpaulsdp.org), to check availability and schedule a tour. More information: [stplutheranschool.org/admissions](http://stplutheranschool.org/admissions).

**★NEW: PDO ENROLLMENT FOR CHURCH MEMBERS**  
*Opens Mon. Jan. 12* • Read more on front page.



# GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

**★NEW: RECEIVE LUTHERAN WITNESS MAGAZINE**  
*Reply by Mon., Feb. 2 for Subscription*  
*Lutheran Witness* is the official magazine for the laypeople of the LCMS. To add or remove your name to the April 2026-March 2027 subscription list, please contact Renee in the church office (314-822-0447) by Feb. 2. Suggested donation to offset the cost incurred by St. Paul’s is \$21.

# PASTOR CALL

**CALL COMMITTEE SEEKS YOUR INPUT IN NOMINATIONS**  
St. Paul’s is assembling a new Senior Pastor Call Committee shortly after Christmas. In order to speed up the Call process, we are currently seeking nominations for senior pastor from the congregation. Official Missouri District nomination forms are available in paper format at the east lobby information counter. We value everyone’s input as we seek God’s will on calling our next senior pastor.

As is customary, the previous Call Committee has been honorably released, and our leadership and congregation extend their thanks and deep appreciation for the 2024-2025 committee’s dedicated months of service in this vocation, trusting that the Lord continues to guide His Church in the Call process.

JAN. 2026



# THANK YOU

**★NEW: HOLIDAY BULLETIN THANKS**  
We’re grateful for our bulletin printing and assembly volunteers — a crew of retirees including those who help with printing each Thursday and assembly/stapling each Friday to prepare *all* of the worship folders for our services. This team took on extra work, starting three weeks before Christmas, to prepare thousands of additional bulletins for our Christmas and New Year’s services. Thank you for your steady effort, week after week.



**★NEW: DRONE THANK YOU**  
We thank Dr. Aaron Weber of the congregation for generously recording drone footage during construction. His hobbyist expertise and equipment have provided valuable imagery for our website maps, project documentation, and future timelapse visuals.

**★NEW: CHRISTMAS ROUNDUP**  
**THANK YOU! ST. PAUL’S JOINS IN SEASON OF GIVING**

- **CAROLERS** • Caroling on the Saturday before Christmas, over 100 congregation members brought Christmas cheer to the doorsteps of our valued at-home church members unable to attend Christmas services, sharing carols and gift bags. Our heartfelt thanks!
- **SHOEBOXES** • You made it happen — thank you! From Des Peres to more than 100 countries around the world, 312 Operation Christmas shoeboxes were launched with the Gospel message of CHRISTmas.
- **POINSETTIAS & CARD TREE** • Thank you to all who donated chancel poinsettias and to those who, through our Card Tree, are helping to fund new “Fair Linen” altar cloths; donor names appeared on our lobby banners and in the *Weekly Word*.
- **CFNA GIFT TREE** • Each present started as a wish on our gift tree from a child served by Christian Friends of New Americans. For some refugee and immigrant families, this may be their first experience with Christmas celebrations. We are blessed by the kindness of our congregation members to have shared a gift and a St. Louis welcome.