The Epistle from St. Paul's United Methodist Church

Volume 68 • Number 11 • November 2026

The Senior Pastor's Letter

A Season of Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving invites us to pause, breathe deeply, and remember that gratitude is not merely a feeling — it is a practice shaped by trust in God's goodness. Psalm 100 stands as one of scripture's clearest calls to joyful thanksgiving. It does not ask us to wait until life is perfect, or until every prayer is answered as we hoped. Instead, it summons all the earth to lift a joyful noise, to worship with gladness, and to enter God's presence with singing. Gratitude, in the psalmist's vision, is a way of life rooted in who our God is faithful, steadfast, and eternally loving.

The psalm begins with exuberance: "Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth." Joy is not optional in the life of faith; it is a response to the character of God. Joy does not deny hardship — it transforms it. Joy reminds us that even in seasons of uncertainty, God's presence is steady. Even when we walk through valleys, God's faithfulness does not waver. Thanksgiving becomes the lens through which we see God's hand at work, often quietly, often slowly, but always lovingly.

Psalm 100 also reminds us that we belong to God: "It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture." This belonging is not possessive. It is protective. God claims us so that God may guide us, nourish us, and lead us toward life. In a world that often measures worth by productivity, achievement, or status, Thanksgiving reorients us. We are valuable not because of what we accomplish, but because we are God's beloved. Gratitude grows when we remember that our identity is rooted in grace.

This deep sense of belonging naturally leads to service. The United Methodist Church's vision "to serve joyfully" flows directly from the spirit of Psalm 100. Joyful service is not an obligation — it is an overflow of gratitude. When we recognize how generously God has cared for us, we become people who care generously for others. Thanksgiving is not complete until it becomes action.

To serve joyfully means we offer ourselves with gladness, not reluctance. It means we see service not as one more task on a crowded calendar, but as a sacred opportunity to reflect God's love. Joyful service is the kind that brings light to weary hearts, hope to discouraged spirits, and dignity to those who feel forgotten. It is the kind of service that listens deeply, gives freely, and loves without condition.

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The Senior Pastor's Letter
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In this season of Thanksgiving, we are invited to reflect on how gratitude shapes our service.

Where is God calling us to bring joy?

Who in our community needs encouragement, companionship, or practical help?

How might our congregation embody Psalm 100 by entering God's courts with praise and then stepping into the world with joyful compassion?

Thanksgiving is not only about what God has done — it is about what God is still doing. The psalm ends with a promise: "For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations."

Gratitude anchors us in this truth. God's goodness is not temporary. God's love does not expire. God's faithfulness does not diminish with time. As we serve joyfully, we participate in the ongoing story of God's enduring love.

May this Thanksgiving season deepen our gratitude, strengthen our joy, and renew our commitment to serve others with gladness. And may our lives become living psalms, offering praise, embodying love, and reflecting the joy of the One who made us, claims us, and calls us to serve.

Peace,
Pastor Sheridan





Welcoming Statement

We, the community of St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Kensington, welcome you in love. Jesus Christ accepts all, excluding none. So we welcome and affirm you who are gay, straight, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or queer. We welcome you without regard to your sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, culture, race, ethnicity, ability, education, or age. We welcome you no matter your immigration, marital, or economic status. Wherever you are on your spiritual journey, we welcome and affirm you as one of God's children into our community of God's unbounded love. All are celebrated here and all are safe.

Contact Us

SENIOR PASTOR
Rev. Sheridan Allmond
sallmond@stpaulsk.org
301-933-7933 ext. 101

ASSOCIATE PASTOR
Rev. Joey Heath-Mason
joeyhm@stpaulsk.org
301-933-7933 ext. 103

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC
Mr. N. Thomas Pedersen
tpedersen@stpaulsk.org

ORGANIST
Mr. Marvin Mills
mmills@stpaulsk.org

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS & ADMINISTRATION
Dr. Erin Bone Steele
stpaulsunited@stpaulsk.org
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FACILITIES MANAGER & BOOKKEEPER
Ms. Tracey Furman
tfurman@stpaulsk.org
301-933-7933 ext. 106

Visit us online at
stpaulsk.org/community/meet-the-staff

Office Hours

Drop-in and Telephone Hours
Monday - Thursday
10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

To meet with specific clergy or staff, or for access to the building outside these hours, please make an appointment. Individual availability varies!

St. Paul's is closed on federal holidays and the week between Christmas & New Year's.

Thoughts from Pastor Joey

Our siblings in the Catholic Church have a beautiful practice called the last rites. It is a collection of sacred rituals and sacraments administered to a person who is in grave danger of dying. It is a truly profound and holy task to pray for and with those who are passing from this life.

As Protestants, we have not carried this practice with us in quite the same way. However, one glimpse of this sacred experience I have been privileged to share is when, on occasion, I have been invited to be part of the final hours or even minutes of someone's life.

In those moments, it isn't unusual for someone to be somewhat, or even mostly, unresponsive. I can't always say whether they understand what I'm saying or even know that I'm there. But then, that isn't really the point. The focus of that moment is the Holy Spirit being poured out, offering comfort and peace to that person. My task is simply to come alongside them and be a physical presence of something so much holier than I am. I offer words of prayer and comfort. I remind them that they are loved by God, that God's grace and forgiveness are still offered to them, and that there is peace to be found in the arms of our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.

I can't speak to exactly what happens in those sacred moments. Yet I have had family members tell me afterward that they felt those words, that presence, and those prayers helped their loved one pass from this life in peace.

There is something profoundly holy about simply being present with another person. Not because we have the perfect words to say or the power to fix what is happening. But because, in our willingness to be present, we become a reminder that no one has to face life's most difficult moments alone.

Here's the thing though: we don't have to wait until someone is on their deathbed, and we don't have to be a pastor, to enter into sacred moments with others. We can be saints for one another at any time.

Every November, we celebrate All Saints Sunday, a day when we remember those who have gone before us in faith. We give thanks for their lives, for their witness, and for the ways they helped reveal God's love to us. We remember the saints who taught us, prayed for us, encouraged us, challenged us, and sometimes simply sat beside us when life was hard.

But All Saints Sunday isn't only about remembering the saints who have died. It is also a reminder that we are called to be saints here and now.

In the New Testament, the word saints isn't reserved for a select few who have lived extraordinary lives of holiness. It is a name given to the people of God, ordinary people who are being shaped by God's extraordinary grace.

And perhaps that is what being a saint looks like more often than we realize.

It looks like sitting beside someone who is grieving, even when we don't know what to say. It looks like making a phone call to someone who has been lonely. It looks like extending forgiveness when resentment would be easier. It looks like bringing a meal, offering a prayer, holding a hand, or reminding someone who is struggling that they are loved.

These moments are opportunities for us to make visible the love and grace of a God who is always present, even when that presence is difficult to recognize.

So this All Saints Sunday, as we remember those who have gone before us, I invite you to think about the people who have been saints in your life. Who has helped you experience God's presence? Who has reminded you that you are loved? Who has sat beside you in a difficult moment and, perhaps without even realizing it, become a vessel of God's grace?

And then, perhaps more importantly, I invite you to consider how you might be a saint for someone else today.

Because sometimes the holiest thing we can do is simply show up.

Worship Schedule and Sunday Scripture

Sunday, November 1 - All Saints Sunday
Scripture: 1 John 3:1-3
9:00 AM Worship with Communion
10:30 AM Worship with Communion and Choir
Rev. Joey Heath-Mason, preaching

Sunday, November 8
Scripture: Matthew 25:1-13
9:00 AM Worship with Communion
10:30 AM Worship with Sanctuary Choir
Rev. Joey Heath-Mason, preaching

Sunday, November 15
Scripture: Matthew 25:14-30
9:00 AM Worship with Communion
10:30 AM Worship with Sanctuary Choir
Rev. Sheridan Allmond, preaching

Sunday, November 22
Matthew 25:31-46
9:00 AM Worship with Communion
10:30 AM Worship with Sanctuary Choir
Rev. Joey Heath-Mason, preaching

Sunday, November 29 - First Sunday of Advent
Matthew 25:31-46
Fifth Sunday, One Community
10:30 AM Worship only
Rev. Sheridan Allmond, preaching

Still Wednesday

Wednesdays each week

7:00-8:00 PM in the Octagon

We are called to stillness to cultivate a more direct and personal relationship with God.

Please join Still Wednesday in the Octagon to share scripture, poetry, and fellowship. Our time together always includes time for silent reflection and prayer.

Questions? Call Beth Pierce at 301.366.6851.



Original artwork by Beth Pierce

Community Interfaith Thanksgiving Service



Tuesday, November 24, 2026, 7:30 PM at St. Paul's

St. Paul's is delighted to host the annual Kensington Community Thanksgiving Service! Our Sanctuary Choir and Joyful Ringers will be joined by guest organist John Henderson, Music Director at St. Bernadette's Catholic Church in Silver Spring, along with his high school brass ensemble and choirs from multiple worship communities in the Kensington Ministerium.

The service will feature festive, Psalm-based anthems and hymns combining the glorious sounds of organ, brass, bells, and voices. This interfaith, ecumenical celebration is a wonderful opportunity for our community of faith to come together in song, scripture, and the spoken word to praise God and give thanks for the many blessings we share.

Please note that this service will not be livestreamed, so mark your calendars and plan to join us in person for what promises to be a joyful and inspiring evening of worship and thanksgiving!

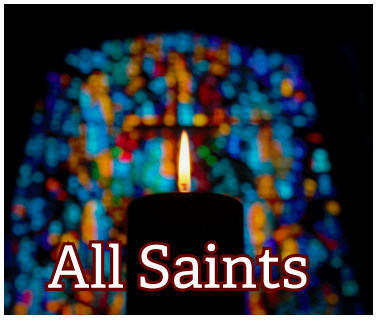
~Tom Pedersen, Director of Music

More Worship News

Many groups meet regularly during the year, and there are many ways to get involved with ministries, outreach, and hospitality at St. Paul's. Here are some of the groups inviting you to join in ministry and fellowship.



Help welcome our friends and neighbors from across the Kensington area to St. Paul's for the Interfaith Community Thanksgiving Service on Tuesday, November 24, with a special sipping ministry in our Octagon following the evening service. We are particularly looking for baked goods and drinks. Contact: Anne Dean, annepdean@gmail.com.



All Saints Sunday, celebrated November 1, is a cherished time in the worship calendar when we remember the lives of members of this church who have died in the past year. As is our tradition, the names of St. Paul's members who passed away in the past calendar year are announced during worship. Their pictures and membership years are also shared in a full-color booklet Memorial Bulletin. We also list the names of beloved family members who passed away between November 1, 2025 and October 25, 2026. If you would like a copy of the Memorial Bulletin or a link to the recording of the worship service, contact Erin in the front office at stpaulsunited@stpaulsk.org.



This music ministry is for adult singers and youth in Grade 7 and up. We rehearse each week on Sunday at 9:30 AM in the Choir Room (Room 211), then sing in worship at 10:30 AM. Singers are welcome on a weekly or ongoing basis. About once a month there is a Sunday afternoon rehearsal workshop to develop more complex music or music for special services, such as Music Sunday or Christmas. Contact Director of Music, Tom Pedersen, at tpedersen@stpaulsk.org with questions.



This is an exciting handbell choir for adults that promises fun and fellowship. We are always looking for new ringers! We rehearse Wednesday nights, 7:00-8:30 PM in Room 109. The Joyful Ringers! handbells ensemble has been ringing since 1966 and includes members of varying levels of musical experience. Our goals are to have fun, strive for musical excellence, and worship God through music. Contact Director of Music, Tom Pedersen at tpedersen@stpaulsk.org for more information!



All children in grades K-6 are encouraged to be part of Children's Choir, under the direction of Ms. Christina Griffin. We meet after worship in the Multi-Purpose Room most Sundays, 11:45-12:30, to learn songs, have fun, and even enjoy a snack, and share our music in worship several times a year. Please contact Christina at childrenschoir@stpaulsk.org with questions.



The flowers that grace our Sanctuary each Sunday are sponsored by members and friends of St. Paul's. The flower chart is available in the main office on the bulletin board. You may select open dates and make dedications in memory, honor, or celebration. You may also contact Erin Steele in the office at stpaulsunited@stpaulsk.org to inquire about sponsoring flowers. The cost is $45. Following 10:30 AM worship, you may take home your flower arrangement.

Sympathy



The St. Paul's community offers our deepest sympathies to those listed here and all who have lost loved ones recently.

The family of
Mabel Baker
following her death

Milestone Birthdays

St. Paul's is blessed with several senior members celebrating milestone birthdays in 2026. In November, we have two members turning 100 years old.

Birthday cards and well-wishes are welcome!

Mr. Arthur Christie
9707 Old Georgetown Road
Maplewood Park Place
Apt. 2315
Bethesda MD 20814

Mrs. Ruth Ann Kuykendall
3210 N. Leisure World Blvd.
#712
Silver Spring MD 20906

Thank You!

Dear Friends from St. Paul's UMC,
We gratefully acknowledge receipt of 200 UMCOR Hygiene Kits. Your generosity provides essential resources that help meet real needs. Supplies are distributed through partners serving people across our region and around the world when emergencies arise. Your donation is part of this work every step of the way.
~ Mira Hewlett, Executive Director
Mission Central, Pennsylvania region

Send a Card or Note

The following St. Paul's members are currently limited in their abilities to participate in the life of the church in-person, and appreciate your thoughts and expressions of care.

Dr. Jo Campa
301 Russell Ave
Wilson Building, #219
Gaithersburg MD 20877

Mrs. Mary Lou DeHaven
900 N. Taylor St.
Apt. 421 West Tower
Arlington, VA 22201

Mrs. Dorothea Depenbrock
6602 Greyswood Road
Larmax Home
North Bethesda MD 20817

Mrs. Carol MacIntyre
2100 Merrifields Dr.
Silver Spring MD 20906

Mrs. Marybelle Waldroff
9901 Capitol View Ave
Silver Spring MD 20910



Thank You!

Dear St. Paul's,
You showed your compassion for hurting youth in your Scattered for Service gift. I am overflowing with gratitude. You helped ensure there will be a warm blanket and safe bed, hat and gloves, proper medical care, nutritious food and a hot shower, and love for the kids who come knocking on our shelter doors. Your support also helps us send out outreach vans to find vulnerable kids on the street before traffickers who would do them harm. Every night I think of the kids who have no home, no family, and no bed to rest their heads. I give thanks for the amazing friends who make it possible for us to keep our doors open wide, every hour of every day. It's because of you that kids are sleeping safe and sound in a Covenant House bed tonight. Thank you.
~William "Bill" Bedrossian
President & CEO
Covenant House

Lay Leader Reflections



From Anne Dean, Lay Leader

Dear friends. Last month, our Bishop LaTrelle Miller Easterling sent a Pastor Appreciation Month message. Although not the target audience, I was heartened by two things.

The first was her reminder of God's grace and blessing for us in Numbers 6:24–26: "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace." With these words, I can feel my heart and breathing slow, a smile appear. I almost cannot get enough of them. There is so much strength, love, and assurance in them.

The second was the Bishop's closing: "May you never mistake a difficult season for a fruitless one. God is still at work. Seeds are still being planted. Lives are still being transformed. And your faithful presence is part of what God is using to write the next chapter of our story." The imagery of fruit and planting is so vivid in this harvest season that gets darker and colder but when we also enjoy the previous seeds that we as a community and God planted together. With ministries in full swing at St. Paul's, we are again planting so that many may harvest now and in the future.

We are so blessed by the One who loved us first and above all else. I pray we all get a little peek of God at work next to us as we help plant and harvest.

To read the Bishop's message for Pastor Appreciation, visit https://www.bwcumc.org/news-and-views/a-message-of-pastor-appreciation-from-bishop-easterling/

Work with Us! Now Seeking a New Facilities Manager

Join our team! St. Paul's announces a job opening for a Facilities Manager.

The Facilities Manager oversees St. Paul's buildings, columbarium, grounds, and parking lot. This position is responsible for scheduling building use and events, managing a full-time tenant, and scheduling, organizing, and managing facility maintenance/operations/yearly state and local inspections. This is a physical, flexible, and collaborative position that involves thoughtful execution, strategic planning, and budget management. A forward-thinking approach to both the Church's day to day and future needs is desired to best manage the Church's assets and create an exceptional, welcoming experience for members and visitors.

We are seeking a motivated individual with 3-5 years demonstrated property management experience or equivalent, physical ability to perform hands on tasks, strong communication and interpersonal skills, experience working in a flexible, dynamic, and collaborative environment, ability to manage contractors and vendors, and ability to manage a budget.

This position is part time (Exempt, 30 hrs/week), and reports to the Senior Pastor. This is an onsite position that offers flexibility in daily schedule to accommodate varying daily and weekly requirements.

The full position description, including compensation, is listed in the document available online at *https://stpaulsk.org/community/meet-the-staff* Please share this job listing with those who might be interested! Applicants should submit a resume and cover letter to Rev. Sheridan Allmond, Senior Pastor, through the St. Paul's office at stpaulsunited@stpaulsk.org.

Looking Ahead, Together: A Season of Stewardship

From Gregg Molander and the Leadership Team

As our annual stewardship campaign continues, we're taking time to reflect on what St. Paul's means to us and what we hope it will become.

Throughout October and November, we've been inviting the congregation to consider five questions about the role our church plays in our lives, the ways we serve others, and the future we're building together.

During November, we'll focus on three questions:

- November 1: What makes St. Paul's a place of belonging?
- November 8: What do you hope St. Paul's will be for future generations?
- November 15: How can your generosity help make that future possible?

These questions remind us that stewardship is about more than finances. It's about recognizing the gifts we've received, celebrating the community we share, and committing ourselves to sustaining that community for others. Our financial pledges are an essential part of that commitment. They allow St. Paul's to plan for the coming year and continue the worship, education, fellowship, and outreach that feed bodies, minds, and spirits.

As you reflect on these questions, we invite you to prayerfully consider your 2027 financial commitment. Please submit your pledge by Friday, November 20. Pledge forms may be returned by mail, dropped off at the church office, or submitted online.

Thank you for the many ways you help make St. Paul's the special community it is today — and for all that we can accomplish together in the years ahead.



Thanksgiving Holiday Giving

Please help make a happy Thanksgiving possible for our neighbors in need by donating towards our special Thanksgiving - Hunger Ministry Holiday Giving project. Our goal is to serve our existing Hunger Ministry recipients and those in the 20895 ZIP code referred to us by Montgomery County's Department of Health & Human Services at the holidays. Your financial support will let us provide about 190 households with a $50 grocery store card. This enables families to select food for their Thanksgiving feast that best reflects their traditions, dietary restrictions, and needs. Please donate any amount by check made out the St. Paul's UMC with "Thanksgiving" in the memo line, or securely online at *stpaulsk.org/giving*. Thank you!



Outreach to Shelters Grows

St. Paul's has a decades-long history of providing assistance to local shelters. During 2026, we have responded to new needs in the Interfaith Works shelters in Montgomery County. With your financial assistance and volunteer help, our outreach now includes weekly hot meals for residents at three sites: North Bethesda (40 residents at the New Leaf shelter), Rockville (70 residents at Taft Court), and Gaithersburg (60 residents at Crabbs Branch Way).

Donations help cover breakfast buffets twice monthly, periodic lunches, and snacks. St. Paul's United Methodist Men's breakfast donations cover a monthly breakfast and contributions to pantry, toiletries, and other special needs. Youth in SPY prepare meals each fall while they learn about the County's assistance to the unhoused. Other individual gifts help supply sheets, towels, pillows, dishware, toiletries, etc.

Special thanks go to Arceli Suley, dedicated head chef, as well as volunteer teams, led by Peggy Graham and Lyn Walker, that cook and shop for meal supplies. Interested in helping cook, shop, and/or donate to shelter meals and related programs? Contact Lyn Walker at lwalker60@hotmail.com.



Arceli & David Suley delivering prepared meals to the New Leaf Shelter

Kensington Coffeehouse



Saturday, November 21, 7:00-10:00 PM

The band Boy Meets Pearl will fire up our show with sea shanties, circus waltzes, and Victorian music hall sing-a-longs, while also sharing their own original pieces. Juels Bland, a soulful artist from Takoma Park, and Alicia Deeny, a guitarist who traces her musical roots to Puerto Rico, will continue our eclectic showcase. Ammonite, a group known for "fierce, genre-bending and ethereal harmonies," will wrap up the night.

JennyCakes specialties, an array of homemade baked goods, and our signature bottomless mug of coffee promise to keep the evening cozy. Tickets are $10, online or at the door while space remains! You can read more about each of these acts and Kensington Coffeehouse at St. Paul's at *https://www.kensingtoncoffeehouse.org/*









Hunger Ministry

St. Paul's Hunger Ministry program is committed to feeding families facing food insecurity. We're seen an increase in residents seeking assistance as prices rise. St. Paul's has also seen an up-tick in what it takes to provide food assistance to our neighbors in need in the 20895 ZIP code every month. Please donate non-perishables from our list or make a financial contribution to help us purchase pantry staples and to cover the grocery store cards that allow our recipients to choose fresh produce, meat, dairy, frozen foods, or hygiene products with dignity.



Donations Needed Every Month

- ***peanut butter***
- ***canned tuna***
- ***canned chicken***
- ***canned vegetables***
- ***canned fruit or applesauce***
- ***pasta***
- ***rice***
- ***beans***
- ***cereal***
- ***soup***
- ***instant/quick-cook oatmeal***
- ***pasta sauce (plastic jars or cans)***
- ***boxed milk or oat milk***

"NO THANK YOU"
--- No dirty or damaged containers.
--- No items beyond their "best by / sell by" dates.
We can't give out damaged or expired containers, and our volunteers have to throw them away.
--- No glass. Glass breaks!



Pancake Breakfast

Schedule for 2026: Nov. 7, Dec. 5
Serving hours: 8:00-10:00 AM
The all-you-can-eat breakfast continues on the first Saturday of each month! We will have delicious buttermilk pancakes, fresh sage sausage, scrambled eggs, grits, fruit, and coffee, tea, or hot chocolate. There will also be a specialty pancake served along with the regular selections. Invite your friends and neighbors to join us in the Fellowship Hall! Diners are asked to make a generous donation at the door. Proceeds from the breakfasts will go towards supporting local charitable organizations.

Bible & Brews

Saturday, November 8, 2026
5:00-6:00 PM
All are welcome at this monthly gathering for interfaith conversations with Pastor Joey, Rabbi Adam, and friends from Temple Emanuel. Family-friendly meetings take place at a local Kensington small business, where you can purchase food or beverages as you like. For October, we plan to meet at Babycat Brewery (10241 Kensington Parkway, Kensington MD). Contact joeyhm@stpaulsk.org to confirm details!





Yarn Ministry and Craft Fair News

November 9 & 23, December 14
7:00-8:30 PM

The Yarn Ministry team has made the decision not to hold a craft fair this year. We are still meeting on Mondays to enjoy a time of fellowship and crafting together, and have plans to make and donate knit hats, mittens, and scarves to shelter residents and families in need. You can join us! Bring your knitting, needlework, or other projects and craft alongside friends in the Library twice a month. Contact Karen Codner (kdc811@gmail.com) with any questions.

Taste & Sing

Tuesday, November 17, 2026
12:00-1:30 PM

Our casual time of food and song is held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, September-May! No musical expertise necessary! We start by singing some hymns from the UM Hymnal. Feel free to request your favorites! Then Erin Steele, Ph.D., will guide us through a short program about a composer, lyricist, or theme, offering a deeper dive into the stories behind some of our worship songs. Our time together culminates with fellowship over a tasty lunch ($5 donation). Each meal is lovingly prepared by Ginny Hagberg.





Sermon Safari

Come one, come all! St. Paul's virtual Sermon Safari adventures continue weekly throughout the fall. This come-when-you-can, drop-in Zoom study invites participants to watch a sermon together and then dive into a lively, thoughtful discussion that sparks insight and connection. Our past sessions have featured sermons from inspiring voices such as Diana Butler Bass, Senator Rev. Raphael Warnock, and Mariann Budde, Bishop of the National Cathedral — each offering fresh perspectives that have fueled meaningful dialogue. While we're blessed with a dedicated (and international!) circle of regulars, new explorers are always warmly welcomed. Your presence and your voice will enrich the journey! For more information or to receive the Zoom link, contact Dr. Meg Baker at megbaker@verizon.net.

Sunday School for Grades K-5

On the first Sunday of November, all children will be in the Sanctuary with their families for worship to experience the full rhythm of worship. Kids will also be in worship on the last Sunday, since it's Fifth Sunday, One Community. Young people in worship are welcome to borrow a Busy Bag from the Welcome Desk with quiet children's activities. Restless friends (with an adult) can take a break in the Library where we have a variety of children's books, or in the Octagon where we can run a livestream of the service on the large TV screen. The rest of the month, we offer Sunday School classes for grades K-5 during the 10:30 AM worship hour. Grades K-2 meet in Room 200 and grades 3-5 meet in the Parlor.



Nursery care is available for children in Pre-K and younger during the 10:30 worship hour. Our young friends are also always welcome in worship!

St. Paul's Youth

St. Paul's Youth is for all friends of St. Paul's in grades 6-12.

- November 1 - There is no meeting at St. Paul's. SPYs will be going to West River Center for the IGNITE Campfire Event, with cookout dinner, games, and prayer around the campfire.
- November 8 - No SPY
- November 15 - Our regular meeting 7:00-8:30 PM in the MPR with fellowship, faith building, and dinner.
- November 22 - Come for a special Service Activity during our usual SPY time, 7:00-8:30 PM.
- November 29 - No SPY meetings. It's Thanksgiving weekend!



SPYs at IGNITE

IGNITE – the big BWC Youth Conference in Ocean City MD – has closed earlybird registration but regular registration continues. Contact Megan Montgomery ASAP at megan.w.montgomery@gmail.com if you're interested!

IGNITE takes place January 22-24, 2027, earlier than previous years. It's still in Ocean City, MD and SPY kids can expect high-energy worship, inspiring concerts, discussions with faith leaders, games, craft stations, down-time at the hotel, pizza as big as your head, walking the OC Boardwalk, and making memories. Be sure to fill out the registration & permissions form at *stpaulsk.org/community/youth*



An Advent Evening of Biblical Storytelling

Thursday, November 12
7:00 PM via Zoom

Join St. Paul's own Meg Baker and friends for an evening of biblical storytelling presenting the birth narrative of Jesus. This online event is brought to you by Voices of the Heart, the Metro-DC Guild of the Network of Biblical Storytellers International (www.nbsint.org). The experience will help us prepare our hearts for the Advent and Christmas seasons to come. Use the QR code in the flyer or contact Meg Baker at megbaker@verizon.net for the Zoom link.

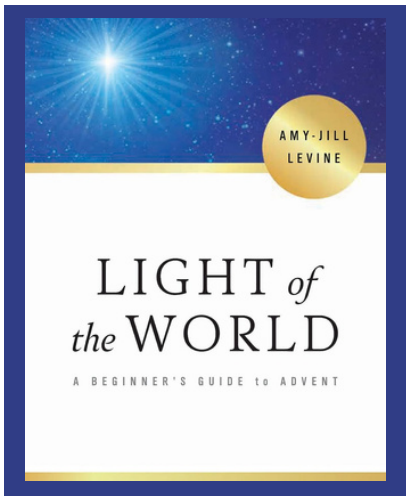


Advent Bible Study

Starting Sunday, November 29, 2026

This Advent, join us as we explore the scriptures that trace the Christmas story from its Old Testament roots through the New Testament accounts. Using Dr. Amy-Jill Levine's book *Light of the World*, we will explore the lives of Zechariah and Elizabeth, the Virgin Mary, the journey to Bethlehem, and the visit of the Magi. Book purchase is optional.

We'll start the first week of Advent and meet for four sessions. There are two weekly opportunities: Sundays, 12:00-1:00 PM in Room 109 or Wednesdays, 12:00-1:00 PM in the Octagon. You may attend either day! A light lunch of soup and bread will be provided. Questions? Contact Pastor Joey (joeyhm@stpaulsk.org).

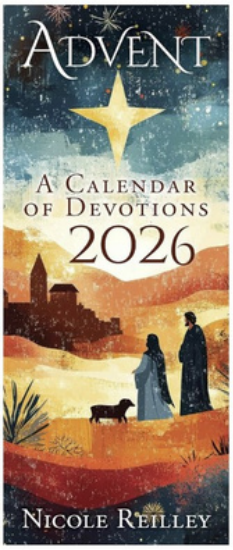


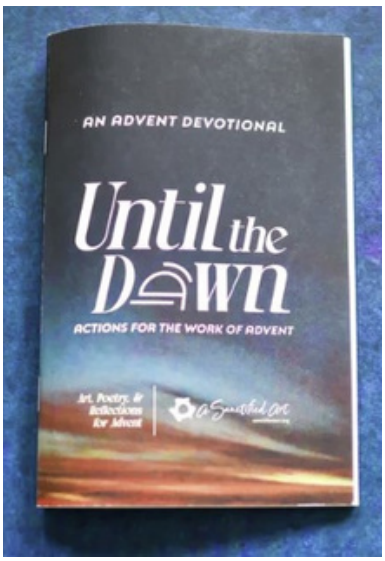
Advent Devotional Resources

We will have two publications available for your personal, self-paced devotional practice beginning the start of the Advent season, November 29.

The pocket volume *Advent: A Calendar of Devotions,* published annually by Abingdon Press, contains daily prompts and prayers.

The Sanctified Art devotional for Advent this year is titled *Until the Dawn*. It offers art, reflections, poetry, and hymns to help us resist despair and put our prayers in motion.

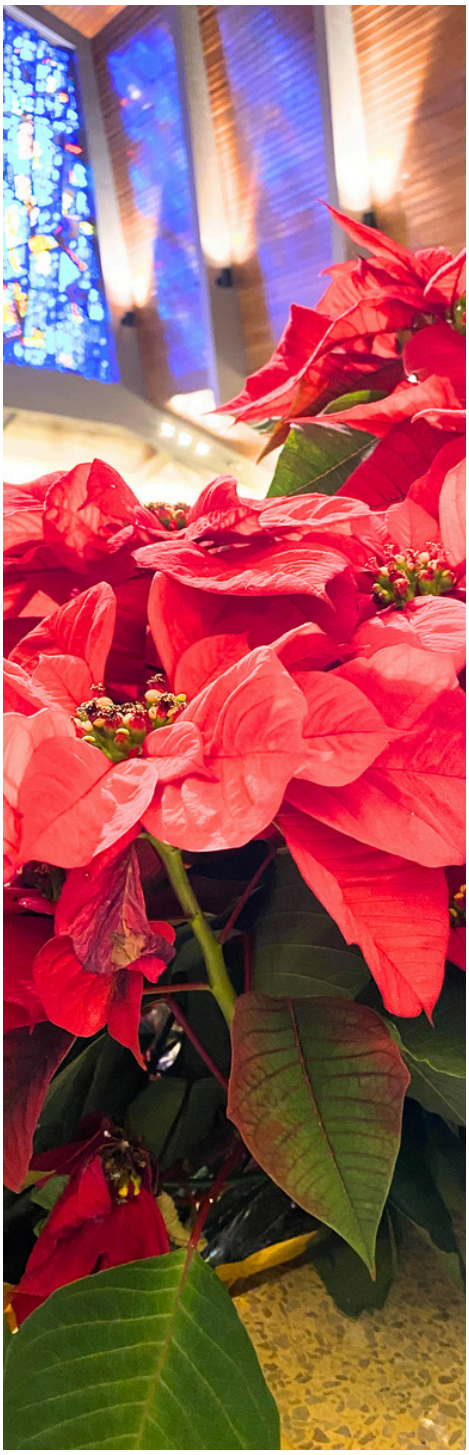




Getting Ready for Advent

Advent & Christmas Music

From Tom Pedersen, Director of Music



As we move into Advent and Christmas, one of St. Paul's most beloved musical traditions returns! On Sunday, December 13, our Sanctuary Choir will be joined by our chamber orchestra featuring strings, woodwinds, French horns, and harp, along with organ, for a special Music Sunday morning celebrating Advent and the wonder and joy of Christ's birth.

The service will unfold as a musical journey through the Advent and Christmas story, beginning with the anticipation of Christ's coming in “Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending” and the comforting words of prophecy in "Comfort, Comfort, O My People." From there, the music carries us toward Bethlehem, moving from the quiet wonder and mystery of the Nativity to the angels' joyous proclamation and the celebration of Christ's birth.

Along the way, we'll hear two magnificent arrangements by the late Richard Proulx, one of America's most distinguished church musicians: Engelbert Humperdinck's “Weihnachten (Christmas Evening)” and Joseph Schnabel's exuberant “Transeamus usque Bethlehem (Let Us Go to Bethlehem).” These beautiful works, with their rich orchestral colors and glorious choral writing, will bring the Christmas story vividly to life.

Scripture, familiar carols, and congregational singing will be woven throughout the service, including a festive setting of “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” featuring David Willcocks's soaring descant. The morning will culminate in Jasper Randall's glorious “Gloria in Excelsis Deo,” bringing choir and instrumentalists together in a jubilant proclamation of the Christmas message.

The celebration doesn't end with the final chord! Following worship, please join us for a special holiday Sipping Ministry, co-hosted by the Jonathan Smith family, Donna Griffin, and the Music Department. It will be a wonderful opportunity to share some Christmas cheer and fellowship with our St. Paul's family.

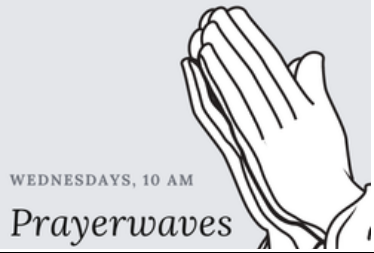
We hope you'll join the celebration as we lift our voices, give thanks, and welcome the Christmas season together. Bring your family, invite a friend, and come celebrate with us!



St. Paul’s Sanctuary will be transformed with poinsettias at Christmas. To sponsor a poinsettia and make a dedication in honor or in memory of a loved one, visit the order table in the Narthex between worship services on November 29, December 8, and December 13. Online ordering by credit card will also be available. Look for the link and announcements in the Weekly News and Sunday worship bulletins.

More Ways to Be Involved

Many groups meet regularly during the year, and there are many ways to get involved with ministries, outreach, and hospitality at St. Paul's. Here are some of the groups inviting you to join in ministry and fellowship.



Wednesdays, 10:00-10:30 AM
Prayerwaves meets each week by phone for 15 to 30 minutes. We take turns lifting up the needs of the church, community, and the world. On Wednesday, dial 425-436-6326 a few minutes before 10:00 AM. Enter access code 774042 followed by the # sign. If you would like to receive the prayer list by email, please contact Erin Steele in the church office at stpaulsunited@stpaulsk.org.



This time for fellowship with drinks and snacks after worship occurs whenever a family, class, or groups offers to host. You might serve the ever-popular coffee and cookies... or it might be lemonade and cheese crackers, tea and tarts, cider and donuts, cocoa and candy canes... you decide! To host, simply add your name or group to the chart on the office bulletin board and take an instructions sheet (also available for download at *stpaulsk.org/community/calendar-events*).

STEPHEN MINISTRY

Would life feel better right now if you had someone to listen to your worries and cares? Stephen Ministers are there for you! Stephen Ministers have received special training to provide one-on-one Christian care to those who are experiencing challenging life events. To learn how you or someone you know can receive care – or how to become a Stephen Minister – contact Martha Lipscomb, Stephen Leader, at mmlipscomb@verizon.net or 301-518-1642.



Few things better demonstrate our hospitality than making sure all of our members and friends receive a warm welcome upon arrival at church, and that new Sunday morning visitors can get some simple questions answered! Please consider participating in St. Paul's Welcome Ministry. We are always looking for volunteers to cover the welcome table by the Sanctuary doors and guide people as they enter for worship. Families are invited to volunteer together!



St. Paul's makes every effort to reach out to those who are experiencing times of sickness, grief, change, or celebration by providing greeting cards each week. On typical Sundays, anyone can stop by the Welcome Desk to pick up a pre-addressed, pre-stamped card. You can write a personal note or simply sign the card and drop it in the mail. We know card recipients are truly thankful for the notes that come their way.

Want to send your own card later, or spend some time in prayer for our members and friends? Pick up a Congregational Care list at the welcome desk on Sunday mornings. Please note that the Congregational Care list is not exhaustive. For privacy reasons, St. Paul's only shares information if given permission to do so by the person(s) involved or an immediate family member. If you have information to share please contact Erin Steele in the church office at stpaulsunited@stpaulsk.org.

St. Paul's Leadership Team

Church leaders at St. Paul's serve in a unified board to guide such things as the church mission and ministry, finances, and personnel. The Leadership Team meets once a month in-person in the Octagon with a Zoom option. All meetings are open to the public. Contact the chairperson for 2026, Bill Stephens (wtstephens@verizon.net) for the meeting schedule and the Zoom link. For more about the Leadership Team, visit *stpaulsk.org/community/meet-the-staff* and scroll to the bottom of the page.

St. Paul's
United Methodist Church
10401 Armory Avenue
Kensington, MD 20895
stpaulsk.org | 301-933-7933

Worship with St. Paul's

Sunday Worship in the Sanctuary
November 1
9:00 AM • Worship with Communion
10:30 AM • Worship with Communion & Sanctuary Choir

November 8, 15, 22
9:00 AM • Worship with Communion
10:30 AM • Worship with Sanctuary Choir

November 29 - Fifth Sunday, One Community
10:30 AM • Worship with Sanctuary Choir

Worship-at-Home
Livestreaming every Sunday at 10:30 AM
stpaulsk.org/worship/worship-at-home



November 2026

Epistle Options

Email (color) or Mail (black & white):
Email stpaulsunited@stpaulsk.org
to be added to the distribution list

Download (color)
stpaulsk.org/community/epistle-weekly-news