

St. Paul's Epistle

An Inviting Community of Christ's Disciples

Volume 48 Issue 8

August, 2025

St. Paul's United
Methodist Church

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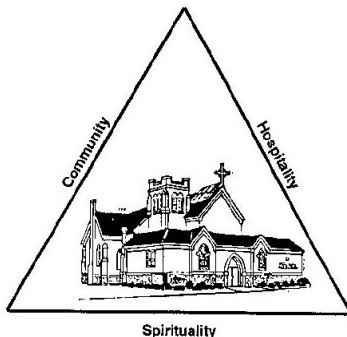
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Hello everyone,

August is upon us, and time continues to move along. We have a couple of things for the month; if you receive the newsletter before the 5th of August, I want to invite you to 'National Night Out' at the Field House, here in Elida. If you have a "Do Unto Others" shirt, please wear it. Come, enjoy the evening with neighbors and friends, and if anyone asks about your shirt, invite them to church. Come, see your booth at the bouncy house with the slide, and say hello!

We also have a mission opportunity at the Allen County Fair with Westside. Sign up to drive a courtesy cart around the fair, giving people rides and enjoying people watching. You, and a partner (if you so desire), will receive a ticket to the fair, and when there, you will drive a 6-passenger golf cart around offering people a ride. There will be a map of the fairgrounds showing where you can and can not take the cart. I hope you are up for an adventure and fun at the fair.

Finally, we will once again be manning the water stations during the Lifewise Academy 5K. Please sign up to hand out water at the church and the Field House on Labor Day morning. From 8:30 AM until about 10:30 AM, we get to help Lifewise Academy in one of their fundraisers by simply handing out a cold drink. Jesus calls us to be living water; here is your chance in real life. If you are a runner or a walker, I want to encourage you to sign up to support a great ministry here in our community. I'll see you on the run!

We will be finishing up the "Generations" sermon series and starting the "Jesus and Me" series in August. I hope you will join us for church, in person or online, as we explore Jesus' will for our lives and His church. Until then, I will see you in the mission field, hanging out at National Night Out, at the fair, or handing out water to those who are thirsty.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Paul

Thought for the Month:

Allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise, and love.

—St. Teresa of Avila

Coins For Communion

August 3, 2025

Will benefit Meals Til' Monday

National Night Out

August 5, 2025

6:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Elida Field House Parking lot.

St. Paul's will have a booth.

Volunteers are needed.

Contact Pastor Paul or the church office.



Food Pantry Sunday

August 24

Breakfast Items:

Cereal, Oatmeal, shelf stable bacon

Donations are taken to the Five Loaves Food Pantry at The Church at Allentown



Blessing of the Backpacks Sunday, August 24

To start off the new school year, all students, teachers, and any school employee, bring your backpacks to worship service to be blessed.

Upcoming Events for St. Paul's



Deadline: the 20th
of each month

Christian Symbol

ALTAR



This central furnishing in a Christian worship space is usually large, with a solid front that may be decorated with symbols or words. The flat surface, often covered with a cloth, is where the Communion elements are prepared and placed, reminding us of Jesus' sacrifice as the Lamb of God. In some churches, the altar looks more like a table, with open legwork. We remember that Jesus invites us into fellowship with God now and to the heavenly banquet for eternity. We place offerings on the altar to symbolize our sacrificial response to God's redeeming love.

St. Paul's Epistle

is published by St. Paul's
United Methodist Church

Secretary	Gail Fessler
Pianist	Lois Cook
Choir Director	Casey Rife
Custodian	Dave Decker

Church Directory (non-pictorial)



If you and your family wish to be included in the directory, please fill out this form and return it to the Church Office by August 10.

2025 DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Name: _____
 Last, Husband, Spouse

Names: children living at home _____

Mailing Address: _____
City, State, Zip _____

Name: _____

Cell # _____ **E-Mail:** _____

Name: _____

Cell # _____ **E-Mail:** _____

Upcoming Events for St. Paul's

Sunnydale House Mission 5K Run

**September 1, at 9:00 AM
(Labor Day)**

Volunteers needed at watering stations for the runners, in front of the church on Main St., and at the fieldhouse parking lot. If you would like to help, there will be a sign-up sheet at the media desk closer to the date.



St. Paul's Book Club Saturday, September 13 9:00 AM.

In the classroom beside the office

The book for discussion is:
**"The Silver Ladies
of Penny Lane"**
By Dee MacDonald

Hymn History

Children of the Heavenly Father

"Then Sings My Soul" Book 2, By Robert J. Morgan

1855

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! 1 John 3:1

This Scandinavian hymn was penned by Caroline (Lina) Sandell-Berg, the "Fanny Crosby of Sweden." She was born in a parsonage in Froderyd, Sweden, on October 3, 1832, into a home full of music and literature, Lina (pronounced Lie-nah) was a "Daddy's girl" in childhood, for her frail health often kept her indoors, in his study, when other children were outside playing.

When she was twelve, she fell ill and was paralyzed. Eventually Lina regained her health, and out of the experience came her first book of poems, published when she was a teenager. But another tragedy awaited her.

When she was twenty-six, she and her dad were traveling by boat outside the harbor of Goteborg when he fell overboard and drowned. Out of this experience came a flood of poems and hymns including her classic, "Day by Day, and with Each Passing Moment."

Some hymn histories claim that "children of the Heavenly Father" was one of the hymns written in response to her father's death; but it was first published in 1855, three years before this tragedy. This has prompted other historians to claim it was one of the poems she wrote as a teenager. All we know is that "Children of the Heavenly Father" first appeared in Lina's book, *Andeliga Dagg-Dropper* in 1855, when she was twenty-three.

The simple, lilting tune to "Children of Our Heavenly Father" is a Swedish folk melody called *Tryggare Kan Ingen Vara*, which translated, is: "No One Can Be Safer." Its origins are unknown, but "Sweden's Spiritual Troubador," Oskar Ahnfelt, a Lutheran Pietist who helped introduce evangelical hymns to the Swedish Church, set many of Lina's poems to music. At the time, the state-sponsored church didn't allow simple pietistic hymns like "Children of the Heavenly Father." But Ahnfelt sang them anyway. Traveling around with his ten-string guitar. When opposition arose, he was ordered to sing before King Karl XV. To the chagrin of church officials, the King loved Ahnfelt's simple melodies and tender hymns, saying "You may sing them as much as you desire in both of my kingdoms."

He did, and many of his texts were written by Lina Sandell-Berg, who wrote about six hundred fifty hymns and poems during her lifetime. "Ahnfelt has sung my songs into the hearts of the people," she later said.



Children of the Heavenly Father

Poem

The Ladder of St. Augustine

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Saint Augustine! Well hast thou said,
That of our voices we can frame
A ladder, if we will but tread
Beneath our feet each deed of shame!

All common things, each day's events,
That with the hour begin and end,
Our pleasures and our discontents,
Are rounds by which we may ascend.

The low desire, the base design,
That makes another's virtue less;
The revel of the ruddy wine,
And all occasions of excess;

The longing for ignoble things;
The strife of triumph more than truth;
The hardening of the heart, that brings
Irreverence for the dreams of youth;

All thoughts of ill; and evil deeds,
That have their root in thoughts of ill;
Whatever hinders or impedes
The action of the noble will;--

All these must be trampled down
Beneath our feet, if we would gain
In the bright fields of fair renown
The right of eminent domain.

We have not wings, we cannot soar;
But we have feet to scale and climb
By slow degrees, by more and more,
The cloudy summits of our time.

The mighty pyramids of stone
That wedge-like cleave the desert airs,
When nearer seen, and better known,
Are but gigantic flights of stairs.

The distant mountains, that uprear
Their solid bastions to the skies,
Are crossed by pathways, that appear
As we to higher levels rise.

The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night.

Standing on what too long we bore
With shoulders bent and downcast eyes,
We may discern --unseen before--
A path to higher destinies.

Nor deem the irrevocable Past,
As wholly wasted, wholly vain,
If, rising on its wrecks, at last
To something nobler we attain.



Faith In Action

Worship Attendance:

June 29, 2025	67
July 6, 2025	63
July 13, 2025	50
July 20, 2025	47
July 27, 2025	61

Financial Giving

Weekly Need for
Unified Ministry Budget
\$4,386.25

Unified Ministry Giving:

Unified Ministry Giving:		Other:
June 29, 2025	\$2,725.94	\$390.00
July 6, 2025	\$5,428.37	\$245.00
July 13, 2025	\$3,042.32	\$130.00
July 20, 2025	\$2,528.48	\$95.00
July 27, 2025	\$2,483.58	\$430.00

Children's Church Attendance

June 29, 2025	7
July 6, 2025	5
July 13, 2025	5
July 20, 2025	7
July 27, 2025	8

Hospitality Cart

August 3, 2025	Vermillion Family
August 10, 2025	OPEN
August 17, 2025	OPEN
August 24, 2025	Ashton Rife
August 31, 2024	OPEN

Flower Calendar

August 3, 2025	Brent & Vicki McAdams
August 10, 2025	Jamie & Jan Wyant
August 17, 2025	Dave & Susan Nartker
August 24, 2025	Jonathan & Chelsey Cook
August 31, 2024	Jeannine & Karla May

Communion Servers: August 3

Station #1:

Steve & Tracy Sdao

Station #2:

Deb Hurd & Cody Scannell

Daily Bible Readings

Friday 8/1

Psalm 140, 141, 142, 143
1 Samuel 13:19-14:15
Acts 9:1-9, Luke 23:26-31

Saturday 8/2

Psalm 104, 137, 144
1 Samuel 14:16-30
Acts 9:10-19a, Luke 23:32-43

Sunday 8/3

Psalm 111, 112, 113, 146, 147
1 Samuel 14:36-45
Romans 5:1-11, Matthew 22:1-14

Monday 8/4

Psalm 1, 2, 3, 7
1 Samuel 15:1-3, 7-23
Acts 9:19-31, Luke 23:44-56

Tuesday 8/5

Psalm 5, 6, 10, 11
1 Samuel 15:24-35
Acts 9:32-43, Luke 23:56-24:11

Wednesday 8/6

Psalm 12, 13, 14, 119:1-24
1 Samuel 16:1-13
Acts 10:1-16, Luke 24:12-35

Thursday 8/7

Psalm 18, 1 Samuel 16:14-17:11
Acts 10:17-33, Luke 24:36-53

Friday 8/8

Psalm 16, 17, 22
1 Samuel 17:17-30
Acts 10:34-48, Mark 1:1-13

Saturday 8/9

Psalm 20, 21, 110, 116, 117
1 Samuel 17:31-49
Acts 11:1-18, Mark 1:14-28

Sunday 8/10

Psalm 114, 115, 148, 149, 150
1 Samuel 17:50-18:4
Romans 10:4-17
Matthew 23:29-39

Monday 8/11

Psalm 9, 15, 25, 1 Samuel 18:5-30
Acts 11:19-30, Mark 1:29-45

Tuesday 8/12

Psalm 26, 28, 36, 39
1 Samuel 19:1-18
Acts 12:1-17, Mark 2:1-12

Wednesday 8/13

Psalm 38, 119:25-48
1 Samuel 20:1-23
Acts 12:18-25, Mark 2:13-22

Thursday 8/14

Psalm 37, 1 Samuel 20:24-42
Acts 13:1-12, Mark 2:23-3:6

Friday 8/15

Psalm 31, 35, 1 Samuel 21:1-15
Acts 13:13-25, Mark 3:7-19

Saturday 8/16

Psalm 30, 32, 42, 43
1 Samuel 22:1-23
Acts 23:26-43, Mark 3:19-35

Sunday 8/17

Psalm 63, 98, 103
1 Samuel 23:7-18
Romans 11:33-12:2
Matthew 25:14-30

Monday 8/18

Psalm 41, 44, 52
1 Samuel 24:1-22
Acts 13:44-52, Mark 4:1-20

Tuesday 8/19

Psalm 45, 47, 48
1 Samuel 25:1-22
Acts 14:1-18, Mark 4:21-34

Wednesday 8/20

Psalm 53, 119:49-72
1 Samuel 25:23-44
Acts 14:19-28, Mark 4:35-41

Thursday 8/21

Psalm 59, 60, 66, 67
1 Samuel 28:3-20
Acts 15:1-11, Mark 5:1-20

Friday 8/22

Psalm 40, 51, 54
1 Samuel 31:1-13
Acts 15:12-21, Mark 5:21-43

Saturday 8/23

Psalm 55, 138, 139
2 Samuel 1:1-16
Acts 15:22-35, Mark 6:1-13

Sunday 8/24

Psalm 8, 24, 29, 84
2 Samuel 1:17-27
Romans 11:2-9-21
Matthew 25:31-46

Monday 8/25

Psalm 58, 64, 65, 2 Samuel 2:1-11
Acts 15:36-16:5, Mark 6:14-29

Tuesday 8/26

Psalm 61, 62, 68
2 Samuel 3:6-21
Acts 16:6-15, Mark 6:30-46

Wednesday 8/27

Psalm 72, 119:73-96
2 Samuel 3:22-39
Acts 16:16-24, Mark 6:47-56

Thursday 8/28

Psalm 70, 74, 2 Samuel 4:1-12
Acts 16:25-40, Mark 7:1-23

Friday 8/29

Psalm 69, 73, 2 Samuel 5:1-12
Acts 17:1-15, Mark 7:24-37

Saturday 8/30

Psalm 23, 27, 75, 76
2 Samuel 5:22-6:11
Acts 17:16-34, Mark 8:1-10

Sunday 8/31

Psalm 34, 93, 96
2 Samuel 6:12-23
Romans 4:7-12, John 1:43-51



Kits Mission

SCHOOL KIT (Kids Kit)

The school kit has now become the **Kids Kit** - an updated, thoughtfully refreshed package filled with essentials to fuel children's creativity and learning.

- One box 12 colored pencils (**leave in box**)
- One 2-pocket folder
- One glue stick
- One pair of blunt scissors (**Round Tip, remove from package**)
- One **70-count** spiral notebook
- One 30-centimeter / 12" ruler
- One hand-held pencil sharpener (**Remove from package**)
- One large eraser (**no pencil cap erasers**)
- Six new, unsharpened pencils with erasers (**remove from package, rubber band together**)
- One box crayons (**24 count only**)

\$2.00 for processing and shipping kits

Pack kit in a **2-gallon size ziplock bag** and place at the altar.

KITS COLLECTION WILL BEGIN AUGUST 3 TO SEPTEMBER 7

HEALTH KIT (Hygiene Kit)

Many of those who receive this kit are living in temporary shelters or on the move. These simple supplies will make all the difference in giving someone a fresh start each day and helping them feel cared for.

- One washcloth
- One fingernail or toenail clipper (**remove from package**)
- One toothbrush (**in original package**)
- One bath-size bar of soap (**in original package**)
- One travel-size stick deodorant (**3.4 oz. or less, non-aerosol**)
- One travel-size lotion (**3.4 oz. or less, fragrance-free**)
- One travel-size shampoo (**3.4 oz. or less**)
- One travel-size toothpaste (**3.4 oz. or less, with expiration date of at least 1 year.**)

\$2.00 for processing and shipping kits

Seal kit in a **gallon-size ziplock bag** and place at the altar.

Kits Mission

KITS COLLECTION WILL BEGIN AUGUST 3 TO SEPTEMBER 7

PERIOD PACK

Menstrual Hygiene Kit

Many of our neighbors live in period poverty, lacking access to necessary feminine care supplies. These period packs give women and girls the essentials they need to feel clean, be healthy, and live with dignity.

- Two - 2 oz. bottle hand sanitizer
- One - travel pack Wet Ones
- Ten - unscented tampons (**5 regular, 5 super absorbency**)
- Twelve - sanitary napkins (**Long super ultra-thin**)
- One - bath-size bar of soap, 3 oz bar or larger, in original Package.
(**NO Ivory or Jergen's soap**)
- One-pack flushable wipes (**unscented, 42 count**)

\$2.00 for processing and shipping kits

Seal kit in a **gallon-size ziplock bag** and place at the altar.

Compassion in Action: Filling Hearts and Hands with Hope

Every FOS Kit you share is more than just supplies—it's a beacon of love and hope for individuals and families facing life's toughest challenges. Whether it's blankets for warmth or hygiene kits for health, your support enables Festival of Sharing to respond quickly—delivering exactly what's needed when it's needed most.

This isn't just a gift; it's a powerful gesture of compassion that reaches far beyond the items inside.

By assembling or donating FOS kits, YOU are sending a message of hope to neighbors around the world. You're part of a movement that empowers and uplifts those in need.



*"Every Act of Love, Every
Act of Kindness, Has Ripple Effects
That Benefit Many"
— Unknown*

Missions



August Coins For Communion

Will benefit Meals Til' Monday

Contrary to what many people think, all students who receive free or reduced lunch are not automatically MTM recipient students or in need of additional food over the weekend. MTM asks partner schools to select elementary students who depend on the school cafeteria for their breakfast and lunch as their main source of nutrition. These are students that are food insecure. They may not know if there will be supper at home, enough food over the weekend, or if the nutritional value of what will be at home will meet their needs. While there are different levels of food insecurity, MTM seeks to provide for those students where their food insecurity is a distraction to their school participation, overall health, and ability to focus on being a kid instead of being hungry. MTM seeks to level the playing field and remove this barrier, hopefully providing those students with a chance to do their best.



Sunnydale House 5K

Labor Day, September 1, 9:00 AM

We have been asked to man the watering stations in front of the church, and at the Fieldhouse parking lot. We will need volunteers to help with this mission to give out cups of water. There will be sign-up sheet at the media desk.

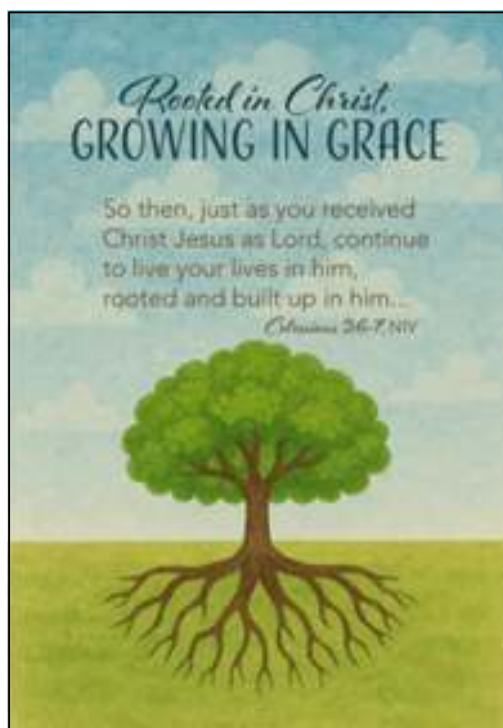
Thank you
VOLUNTEERS!



Golf Cart Mission

Do you enjoy the fair? Do you enjoy helping others? We have an opportunity during the fair, to drive a courtesy golf cart, helping people get around the fairgrounds. You can bring a friend and spend some time shuttling people around the fair. A map of where you may go is provided to every driver. This ministry, is something Westside has been doing for a few years, and they have invited us to help. There will be a sign-up sheet and more information at the Media Desk.

Puzzle



LORD,

help me to REST
in Your presence,
TRUST in Your timing,
and find JOY in the simple,
sacred moments.

Remind me that I don't
need to have it all figured out—
just to WALK WITH YOU,
ONE STEP AT A TIME.

AMEN.



Puzzle!

The biblical calendar had many feasts and festivals. They were connected with the changing of the seasons or special events.

Use the code to find the name of the special days the Israelites observed.

CODE:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Z	Y	X	W	V	U	T	S	R	Q	P	O	N	M	L	K	J	I	H	G	F	E	D	C	B	A

SEASON

HOLIDAY

1. End of Summer

New Year

I L H S S Z H S Z M Z S

2. Fall

Day of Atonement

B L N P R K K F I

3. Fall

Festival of Booths

H F P P L G S

4. Winter

Festival of Rededication

S Z M F P P Z S

5. Winter

Festival of Lots

K F I R N

6. Spring

Festival of Unleavened Bread

K Z H H L E V I

7. Spring

Feast of Weeks/Pentecost

H S Z E F L G

Answers: 1. Rosh Hashanah, 2. Yom Kippur, 3. Sukkot, 4. Hanukkah, 5. Purim, 6. Passover, 7. Shavuot

The People of St. Paul's

Thanks to the people of St. Paul's for the prayers and flowers sent my way. It was so nice of you.

*Sincerely,
Bruce Kizer*

Thank
You!



Remember in Prayer

Recovering from Surgery
or in the Hospital

Those in Need of Healing,
Support, Strength &
Encouragement

In the Military

Nathan Stewart

With Heartfelt
Sympathy

Our sympathy to the Staas Family on the passing of Helen on July 19, she was 89. The focus of her life was her large family. A service was held at St. Paul's on July 26 with her son, Dillion Staas Jr. officiating.

A Path of Persistence

Some Christian converts in an overseas village were diligent about daily prayer. In the thicket outside town, they each had a place where they prayed in solitude. Over time, these believers wore pathways through the brush to their special prayer areas. If someone neglected his or her prayer life, it was evident because fresh grass started growing on that footpath. Out of concern, fellow Christians offered this loving reminder: "Friend, there's grass growing on your path."

How worn is your own path to prayer? Are you persistent when answers don't seem to come? Do you trust that God will answer your prayers, according to his good and gracious will?

When you grow weary, remember this promise in Galatians 6:9 (NIV). "At the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

Our Biblical Purpose Statement:

Elida St. Paul's United Methodist Church exists as God's people embracing His grace through humble service to all.

St. Paul's Vision Statement:

Is for the Elida community to be led to Christ through words and deeds enabling youth to have purpose, families to be nurtured and supported, and senior citizens to feel valued.

August 2025

Sundays
Hospitality...9:30AM
Worship...10:00 AM

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

					1 Mary Grigsby	2
3	4 Joy Fletcher Cody Scannell	5	6 Anne Laman	7	8 Myrna Metzger	9
10 Kathy Furry	11 Nancy Kizer Michele Luhn Emma Scannell	12	13	14 Connie Mault Chris Przekora	15 Virginia Doseck Polly McPheron	16 Ashton Rife
17	18 Tracy Sdao	19	20 Austin Lewis Dennis Metzger	22	22	23 Nellie Cook Jeannine May Aric Thompson
24 Gail Fessler	25 Ira Slemmons	26	27	28	29 Brad Selover Justin Wyant	30 Cole Lewis
31 Paisley Gerdeman						

Featured Recipes

Cake Mix Cookies

By Virginia Hollar

Ingredients		Instructions
1 box	Cake mix, Any flavor	Mix ingredients together and drop onto cookie sheet. (about 2 Tbls. Of batter per cookie.) Bake at 350 degrees for 10-11 minutes.
2	Eggs	
1/2 cup	Vegetable oil	

Variations:

- ◆ For peanut butter cookies, use a yellow cake mix and add 1 cup peanut butter to the ingredients.
- ◆ Can add any kind of baking chips to batter, such as; chocolate, white, butterscotch, caramel. About 1 cup is usually plenty.
- ◆ Can also add nuts and chopped dried fruit.

Customize to your own taste and enjoy!

Shrimp Pizza

By Deb Hurd

Ingredients		Instructions
Bottom Layer:		Combine all ingredients and mix well. Spread thinly on a platter. 2nd Layer: Mix 1 1/2 cups ketchup 3 Tbl. Horseradish (not Sauce) Spread over bottom layer Top Layer: 2-6oz. Pkg. tiny salad shrimp (Thaw and squeeze to drain) Place on top layer. Serve with crackers!
8 oz.	Cream cheese, softened	
2 tsp.	Lemon juice	
2 tsp.	Worcestershire Sauce	
1 Tbl.	Mayonnaise	
2 tsp.	Chopped onion	

KIDZ KORNER

SHINE FOR Jesus



This easy and colorful craft helps kids remember that Jesus is their light—no matter where they go!

What you need:

- Clear plastic cup
- Battery tea lights
- Tissue paper squares (pre-cut)
- Glue stick
- Markers (optional)
- Stickers (optional)



What you do:

1. Use the glue stick to press colorful tissue paper squares around the outside of the cup.
2. Add a simple phrase like "Jesus is my Light" or use fun stickers to decorate.
3. Turn on the tea light and place it inside the cup.
4. Turn off the lights and let your lantern glow!

The Lord is my light
and my salvation—
whom shall I fear?
— Psalm 27:1, NIV



WHO AM I?

Did you know that some Old Testament books are named after prophets? Use the clues to figure out each prophet's name and write it on the lines. Then unscramble, use the circled letters to complete the sentence at the bottom.

1. I was called to preach to Nineveh, but I ran from God instead. My book is number 32 in the Bible.
I am _____.
2. I spoke God's message when the temple was being built. My book is number 37.
I am _____.
3. Israel's unfaithfulness to God is compared to my unfaithful wife. My book is number 28.
I am _____.
4. My book predicts punishment for wickedness and promises of comfort.
It is book 23.
I am _____.
5. I had dreams and visions. My book is number 27.
I am _____.
6. I was often in danger because of my prophecies. I angered officials.
My book is number 24.
I am _____.
7. I was a shepherd from Judah who called people to turn to God and leave their selfish lives. My book is number 30.
I am _____.
8. My book contains descriptions of strange visions. My book is number 26.
I am _____.

Prophets are _____.

Answers: Jonah; Haggai; Hosea; Isaiah; Daniel; Jeremiah; Amos; Ezekiel; Messengers.

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

105 E. Main St.
Elida, OH 45807

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Our Web Address:
www.elidastpaulschurch.org

Our Facebook page
Elida St. Paul's Church

Twitter Account
@ESPCHURCH



Living Our Faith

Beautiful Feet

"How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" (Romans 10:15, NIV). Such beauty has nothing to do with the feet being clean, newly pedicured, elegantly clad. They may be the dusty feet of aid workers bringing food to drought-stricken areas, or the muddy shoes of those rushing disaster relief to flood zones. They may be the swollen feet of a dedicated nurse after a 12-hour hospital shift, or the tired feet of a parent pacing with a baby at 3 a.m.

In the upper room before Jesus' arrest, he declared his disciples' dirty feet beautiful by touching and washing them lovingly, preparing them to go out yet again with his good news for all. And on the cross, Jesus' own feet — nail-pierced — were beautiful.

After Pope Francis died on Easter Monday 2025, many mourners who paid their respects noticed his shoes. Instead of new, well-polished "dress shoes," the scuffed items clearly had walked countless steps. They were the sturdy boots of a worker, a pilgrim, a travel companion on the road of life, the journey of faith. They were the shoes — the feet — of a disciple of Christ willing to go wherever needed to bring the good news of God's love. How beautiful!

—Heidi Hyland Man