

St. Paul's Epistle

Volume 49, Issue I

January, 2026

St. Paul's United
Methodist Church

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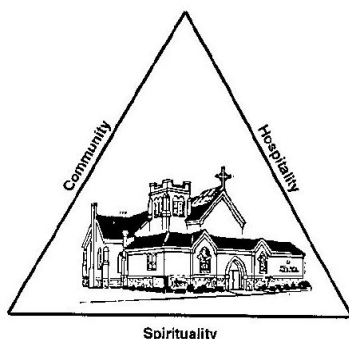
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Pastor's Page

Hello Everyone,

I want to start by saying thank you to everyone who sent Christmas cards, gifts, and food of all kinds. Tomorrow is the day our kids are home to celebrate Christmas, and hopefully, they will eat and/or take home all the sweets. Your gifts and well-wishes make Christmas a wonderful time for my family and I.

January is upon us, and the beginning of a new year, but I can't help thinking about all the great things that happened in 2025, and I am only going to talk about one. I am writing this on the same day as the combined service at Westside church, and oh my, what an event it was. 176 people gathered to worship together and recommit themselves to God. I stood in the pulpit and caught a glimpse of what church could be (or, as Debbie Pedersen said, the way it will be), and I was overwhelmed. I really did pause in awe of what I was looking at before I did announcements, but then we began to sing. "Go Tell It on the Mountain" hasn't sounded that good to me in a long time, the harmonized voices of United Methodists as they sang and filled the sanctuary with praise. I know we can not gather like that every Sunday, because we are called to make each church like that, right where we are. I hope you will work with me in 2026 as we continue to grow God's church, here in Allen County.

We are going to be spending the next 4 weeks looking at 4 United Methodist Women of faith, and how they grew the kingdom of God, even when there were people around them who said they could not do the work they were called to complete. I hope, you will take courage from their story and find something in each one that you can use in your own personal faith journey. We will be looking at names you may know, but at others you will not, but in looking, we will see how Methodists have always followed God, where they are led. Harriet Tubman, Helenor M. Davisson, Jarena Lee, and Mary Bosanquet Fletcher are the 4 women of Faith, and I hope you will join me in January, as we explore "Women of Faith".

Be looking for and listening to God in your journey, and I will see you in the mission field.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Paul

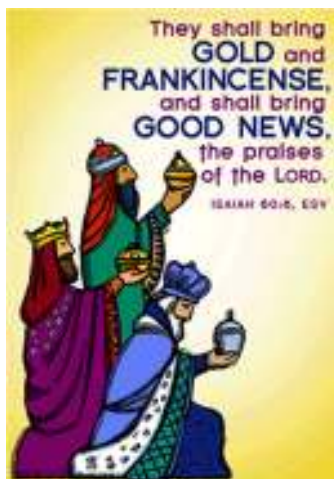
Thought for the Month:

Worry is interest paid
on trouble before it falls due.

—Dean Inge

January 4
Coins For Communion to
benefit Heartbeat of Lima.

Epiphany Sunday
January 4



Food Pantry Sunday
January 18

Items needed:
Complete meal boxes; pizza
mixes with everything in pkg.
Spaghetti meals etc.
Items are taken to the
5 Loaves Food Pantry,
at the Church at Allentown.

January 19
Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 18-25
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Upcoming Events for St. Paul's



Deadline: the 20th
of each month

Christian Symbol



SHIP

The Christian church has long been symbolized by a ship. While the Old Testament tells of Noah's ark preserving righteous people during the flood, the New Testament recounts Jesus calming the storm that battered the disciples' fishing boat. St. Ambrose described the church as a ship with the cross as its mast, and others have compared salvation to being drawn out of the sea of death into the safety of the church (ship). Indeed, many large churches are constructed to represent a big boat, with the main worship space called the nave — Latin for ship

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is published by St. Paul's
 United Methodist Church

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



A Purposeful New Year

The man who goes into the new year without some priorities governing his life and without some principles guiding his behavior, is prey to the tempting, unimportant and destructive things in life.

The new year is an opportunity to sort out the useless tasks and plan for the important; to review the failures and resolve to be successful; to take an inventory of causes and pledge life to purpose and service. These being done, the new will truly be new, different and better.

— C. Neil Strait

Upcoming Events for St. Paul's

On behalf of the members of the Crafty Creatures small group, we would like to thank our church family and friends for your continued support of our candy sale. After deducting expenses and adding donations, we have cleared a total profit of **\$1,000.00. Thank you all for your support!** This allows us to continue our mission of showing God's love by providing prayer shawls and quilts to those in need of comfort and support.

PRAYER
SHAWL MINISTRY



Faith In Action

Worship Attendance:

November 30, 2025	60
December 7, 2025	77
December 14, 2025	68
December 21, 2025	95
<i>Christmas Eve</i> December 24, 2025	90
December 28, 2025 Combined Service <i>St. Paul's Members</i>	Total: 176 28

Sunday School Attendance

November 30, 2025	13
December 7, 2025	16
December 14, 2025	11
December 21, 2025	14
December 28, 2025	0

Altar Flowers

January 4, 2026	Paul & Marla Scannell
January 11, 2026	OPEN
January 18, 2026	Denny & Carole Grapner
January 25, 2026	Larry & Gloria Brunk

FINANCIAL GIVING

Unified Ministry Giving:		Other:
December 7, 2025	\$11,846.76	\$273.00
December 14, 2025	\$12,475.49	\$230.00
December 21, 2025	\$4,069.45	\$1,445.00
December 28, 2025	\$927.00	\$2,168.00
TOTAL:	\$29,318.70	\$5,391.00

Unified Budget:

Weekly Budget Needed = \$4,644.58
 December Total Need = \$18,578.32
 December Total = \$29,318.70

Hospitality Cart

January 4, 2026	OPEN
January 11, 2026	OPEN
January 18, 2026	OPEN
January 25, 2026	OPEN

Communion Servers: January 4

Station #1:

&

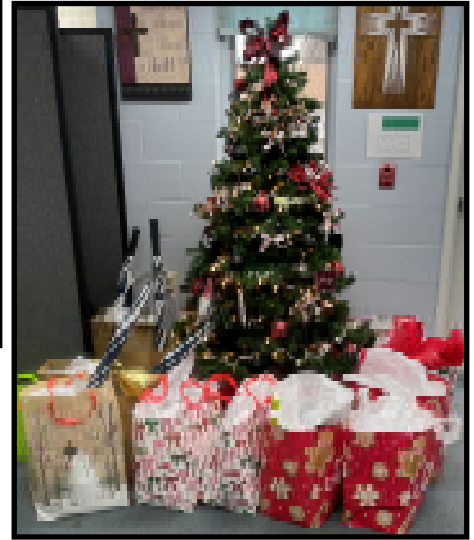
Station #2:

&

Missions

Family Promise 'Sweet Treats with Santa' At Westside UMC

Thank you to those who brought in items given to the parents going thru the Family Promise program. Six bags were assembled and given out. Nineteen families shopped for 66 children to receive Christmas gifts and 35 volunteers helped shop wrap and feed the families.



Thank you!

Ramp Mission

Several ramps have been assembled over the past month, including ramps for Gary and Janet Grigg, and for Linda Craft to ease her recovery after foot surgery. Thank you to all who braved the bitter cold temperatures and snow to help those in our community.



December Worship

Thank You to Brent and Vicki McAdams, Alex and Stacy McAdams, and Ross and Jessie Harmon for beautifully decorating the church for the season of Advent



Thank You!!

Kerry Fremont—Bell Choir Director
and members for their
beautiful music on December 14



Reception Into Membership

December 14
Benjamin and Casey Rife and
Jeff and Kerry Fremont



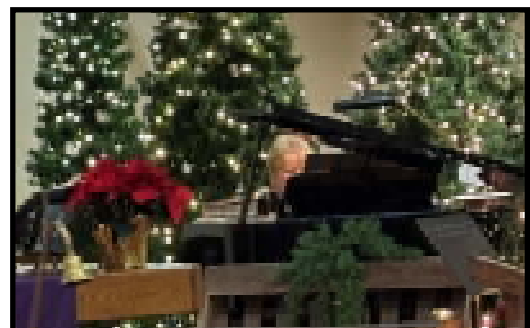
Special Music December 21

Lena Whetstone—Piano Solo
“Mary, Did You Know?” *M. Lowry, B. Greene*



Thank You!!

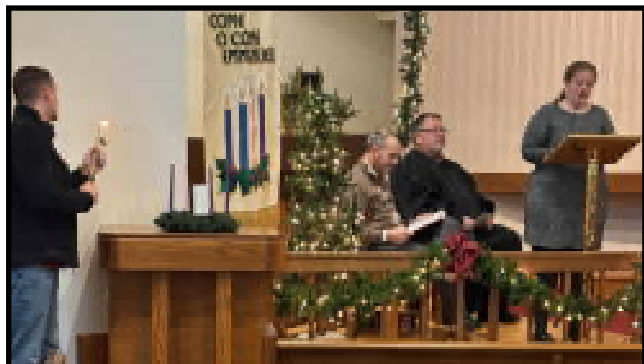
Lois Cook—Pianist.
Casey Rife—Choir director
and Choir members
for the beautiful songs of Christmas



Advent Candle

First Sunday of Advent

Eric and Joella Stern
lighting the Advent Candle of Hope.



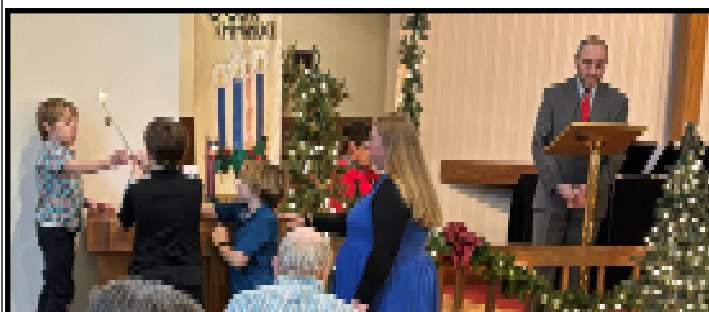
Second Sunday of Advent

Steve and Tracy Sdao
lighting the Advent Candle of Peace



Third Sunday of Advent

The Rife Family
lighting the Advent Candle of Joy



Fourth Sunday of Advent

The McAdams Family
lighting the Advent Candle of Love.



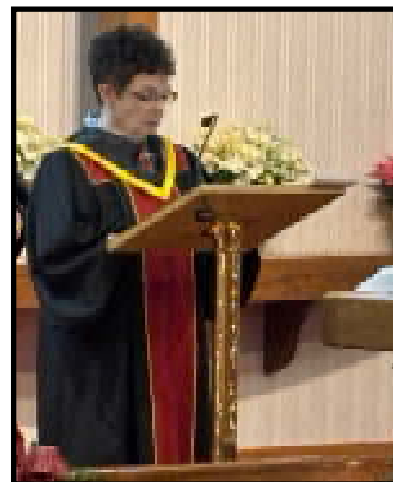
Christmas Eve

Jeff and Kerry Fremont
lighting the Christ Candle



Thank you!!

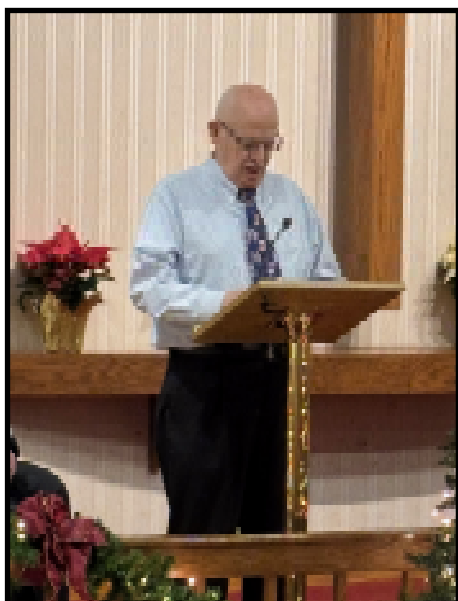
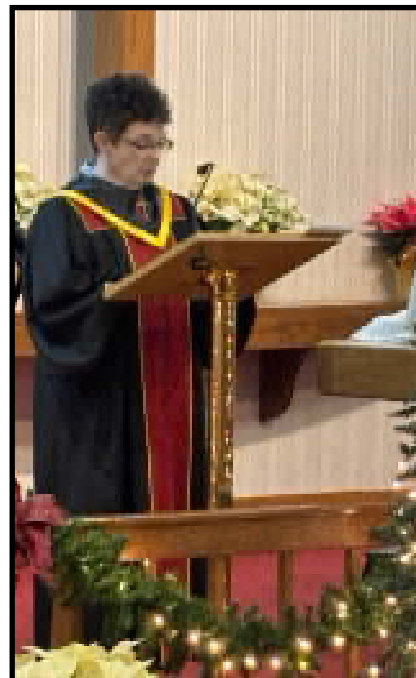
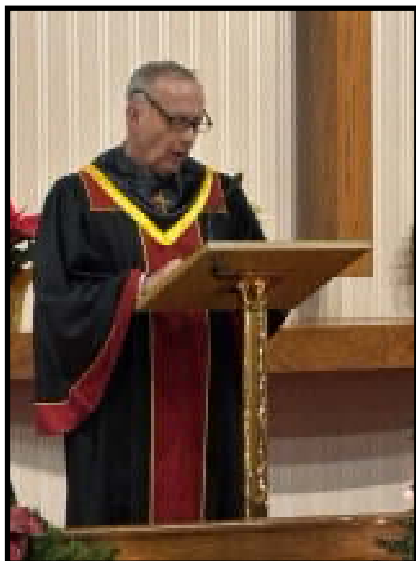
Liturgist
Corinne Piper



Christmas Eve

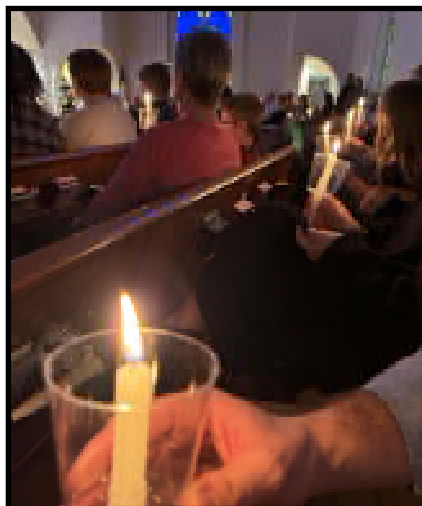
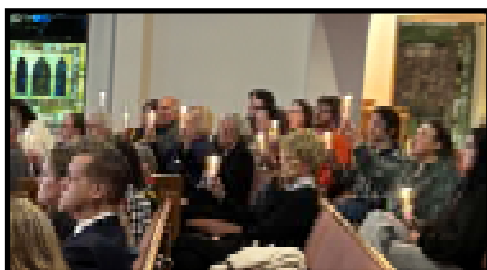
Scripture Readers:

Dan Best, Rylan McAdams, Corinne Piper, Greg Schade, Joella Stern



Christmas Message

Pastor Paul Scannell
"Weary World"



Children's Program

Thank you to everyone who helped with and participated in the Children's Program!

The Narrators were
Lena Whetstone and
Jackson Rife



The People of St. Paul's

*Jamie and Ramp Crew,
What a blessing you all are!
We thank you so much, and what a professional
job. Many people have commented on your work.
We are so pleased and I know God is too. Thank
you from the bottom of our hearts.*

*Sincerely,
Gary and Janet Grigg*

Thank You!

*Dear Church Family,
Thank you for the cheerful vase of
flowers which arrived on Thursday after
my surgery. They are holding up better
than I am. It's frustrating not to be able
to put weight on my foot, but your texts,
cards, prayers, and words of reassurance
are helping me to get through each day.
I am so grateful for the ramp. We are
blessed to have such caring people.*

*Thank you again,
Linda Craft*

Remember in Prayer

*Recovering from Surgery
or in the Hospital*

Linda Craft

*Those in Need of Healing,
Support, Strength &
Encouragement*

Linda Craft

In the Military & Missions

Nathan Stewart

*It was a nice surprise to
receive a vase of flowers after
my recent surgery. Thank
you for your thoughts and
prayers.*

Larry Brunk

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.*

Meetings

January 6, 2026
Trustees...7:00 PM

NO Worship Mtg.

No PPR Mtg.

NO
Ad Council /Finance
Mtg

January 20, 2026
Missions Mtg..7:00 PM

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

Wednesdays
Choir...7:00PM

JANUARY 2026

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

				1 Tim Piper Ron Steiner	2	3 Dakota DeRose Becky Ellinger
4	5 Shara Bowsher Calloway Clark Lois Cook	6 Adia Slemmons	7	8 Cynthia Guess Larry Moser Barry Smith	9 Larkin Wyant	10
11 Nate Craft	12 Jaime Chambers	13 Brian Nartker	14 Roger Henderson	15	16 Steve Sdao	17 Norm Grigsby
18	19 Jessie Harmon	20	21 Adrianna Ellinger Shirley Shoup	22	23	24
25	26 Ginger Fox	27 Jackie Henderson	28 Kayla Vermillion	29 Jeff Fremont	30 Wanda Strayer	31 Austin Clark Izzy Mault

JANUARY
Anniversaries

Paul & Marla
Scannell
January 8

Andrew & Michele
Luhn
January 16

Don & Maedene
Holmes
January 25; 67 yrs.

Happy
New Year
2026

St. Paul's Featured Recipes

Chicken Cheese Melt

By Jan Wyant

Ingredients		Instructions
2 cans 5oz.	White chicken, drained	Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Mix all ingredients, except muffins. Spread on muffins. Bake for 10 minutes.
2 cups	Cheddar Cheese, shredded	
1/2 cup	Mayonnaise	
1/2 cup	Celery, chopped	
1/4 cup	Onion, chopped	
1/4 tsp.	Garlic powder	
1/4 tsp.	Onion powder	
1/8 tsp.	Dry Mustard	
6	English muffins, toasted	



Beef "Crock-n-Off"

By Sue Masters

Ingredients		Instructions
2 lb.	Beef Stew meat	Put in crock pot and cook until done. Serve over egg noodles or Reams frozen noodles. *prepare noodles according package.*
1 can	Cream of mushroom soup	
1 can	Cream of celery soup	
1 can	French onion soup	
	Noodles	



KIDZ KORNER



Celebrate the beauty of winter with these fun snowflake-inspired treats!

What you need:

- Graham cracker squares or sugar cookies
- White frosting or marshmallow fluff
- Pretzel sticks (snowflake arms)
- Shredded coconut or white sprinkles
- Mini marshmallows or candy pearls

What you do:

1. Frost each cracker or cookie.
2. Arrange pretzel sticks in a crisscross for the snowflake base.
3. Sprinkle with coconut or sprinkles for snow.
4. Add marshmallows or candy pearls to the ends for detail.

Lesson tie-in:

Remind kids that God made each of us unique—just like no two snowflakes are alike!
(Psalm 139:14, KJV)



TRANSLATE GOD'S WORD

The Bible we use is translated into English from other languages.
"Translate" the verse below using the code.

CODE	E=△	L=□	R=+
A=■	G=●	M=↗	S=■
B=X	H=◀	N=⋈	SH=☀
D=◀◀	I=▲	O=⊗	T=♪
	K=	P=□	TH=♥

Y ▲ ■ ♥ △

W F ▲ ⋈ ◀◀ ■

W ▲ ■ ◀◀ ⋈ ↗ ■ ⋈ ◀◀ ♥ △

W ⋈ ⋈ △ ▲ ⋈ ● △ ♪ ■

U ⋈ ◀◀ △ + ■ ♪ ■ ⋈ ◀◀ ▲ ⋈ ●

Proverbs 3:13

Answer: Happy is the one who finds wisdom and the one who gets understanding.

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

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Elida, OH 45807

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Living Our Faith

Scripture Keys to a Joyful New Year

Hold fast to your faith (Hebrews 4:14)

Assemble with the saints (Hebrews 10:25)

Pray earnestly every day (1 Thessalonians 5:17, 18)

Pray for great blessings (Malachi 3:10)

Yield not to temptation (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

Neglect not your talents and opportunities (Galatians 6:10)

Examine yourself daily (2 Corinthians 13:5)

Work diligently for the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58)

Yield your members to righteousness (Romans 6:11, 16)

Exercise yourself in godliness (1 Timothy 4:7)

Aim at sinless perfection (Hebrews 6:1)

Redeem the time (Ephesians 5:15, 16)

— Gus Nichols