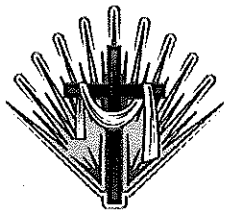
THE LETTER OF ST. PAUL

October 2026 Volume 64, Number 68



St. Paul Lutheran Church
4660 W. 94th Street
Oak Lawn, IL 60453
(708) 423-1040
www.stpauloaklawn.org

The Mission Statement of St. Paul Lutheran Church
By God's grace, we exist to prepare hearts, minds, and souls for life in the world and in eternity.

Our Sunday worship service video is available each week. Visit our website at www.stpauloaklawn.org. To access the video, just click on the Sunday date – or church service – on the homepage.

The Rev. David and Joyce Erber, the missionaries we support, thank you for your gifts to them in their ministry. Keep them in prayer.

WORSHIP SERVICE
SUNDAYS, 9:00AM

BIBLE STUDY& SUNDAY SCHOOL, 10:30AM

STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY

OCTOBER 18, 2026

THE ST. PAUL BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

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- **WELCOMES you and your family to our special 9am worship service on Sunday, October 18. The theme this year is *"His People, His Likeness"*, and the message will be delivered by Pastor Ebel.**

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- **INVITES all present to enjoy a delicious, *free* brunch served by the Board members in the Timothy Room following the service.**

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- **REQUESTS that you pick up a letter at church on Sunday, October 4 (or receive it later in the mail) further explaining our stewardship emphasis and some changes to the pledge cards and Faith Journey message of previous years.**

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- **ASKS that you pray to God for His blessings on our celebration this year!**

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THE PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Luke 8:43-44, 48
"And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and though she had spent all her living on physicians, she could not be healed by anyone. She came up behind Jesus and touched the fringe of his garment, and immediately her discharge of blood ceased.... And He said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace.'"

The beginning of October marks the end of summer. The schools have been in session for a full month. The air has grown cooler. Football season is in full swing. Perhaps, ever so slightly, the leaves have begun to change their color.

Although there is much to appreciate about autumn, there's one feature that no one wants to think about. With the season of fall comes flu season. Colder weather brings with it an influx of the common cold. As the temperature drops, sickness rises.

All sickness is a symptom of a deeper disease that we share. Sin is the glaring reason for every physical affliction in our world, and this illness knows no season. We've carried the sickness of sin ever since we were in the belly of our mothers. While illnesses, disabilities, and other ailments of body or mind are not necessarily the result of particular sins, they are a symptom and effect of sin in general. The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). All creation groans because of sin (Romans 8:22). For that reason, physical sicknesses remind us of our fallen condition.

However, we have a sure and certain remedy in Christ Jesus. He is both doctor and cure of sin! Jesus came to take our illnesses and to bear our diseases (Matthew 8:17; Isaiah 53:4). On the cross, He was nailed for us, taking our sins with Him (Colossians 2:14). By his stripes and sufferings, we are healed (Isaiah 53:5).

Jesus gives Himself to us in the Lord's Supper as the medicine of immortality. In the Supper, we receive forgiveness of sins, which means life for us. When it comes to Holy Communion, I like to think of the time Jesus healed the woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood. She merely touched the fringe of Jesus' garment – the fringe! – and she was healed. With the Lord's Supper, we have more than just the fringe. We touch and eat His true body and blood!

Of course, God does not promise that we will be immediately healed from physical maladies through Holy Communion. We should not expect that to happen. But we do receive God's healing power in the Sacrament! Communion nourishes and sustains our faith unto life everlasting. In this meal, we are given the promise that all our sins have been forgiven. And where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation. In the resurrection from the dead, we with all believers in Christ will live forever with our Lord. "Jesus will wipe away every tear from [our] eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore" (Revelation 21:4). The Sacrament of the Altar brings us forgiveness so that we would believe in Jesus, and that by believing we would have life in His name (John 20:31).

So, if you get sick in the coming months, look to Christ. Pray to Him. He has not forgotten you. He knows your sorrow. He has taken that sorrow upon Himself. And He is truly our Great Physician, who will deliver us from both sin and sickness in the life of the world to come.

Pastor Ebel

OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

4660 W. 94th Street, Oak Lawn, IL 60453
(708) 423-1040 ~ **www.stpauloaklawn.org**

PASTOR: Rev. William H. Ebel III
In case of an emergency, please contact Pastor Ebel at (708) 994-9587
You may also email Pastor Ebel at reverendebel@gmail.com

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC: Mr. Jeff Kiel

CHURCH ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Mrs. Sandra Barry
sbarry@stpauloaklawn.org
OFFICE HOURS: Monday – Friday, 9am – 1pm

To view our Sunday services, calendar, and newsletter, visit www.stpauloaklawn.org

The deadline for placing articles in the newsletter is the 2nd Sunday of the month.
Send submissions to sbarry@stpauloaklawn.org.

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OFFICIAL ACTS

TO BE RECEIVED BY BAPTISM:

On September 6, 2026, we welcomed *Riyad Rakan Chevy Kawar*, son of Rakan Kawar and Nayelly Miranda. His Sponsors are Marion Kawar and Zahi Kawar.

On September 20, 2026, we welcomed *Demi Rose Winkowski*, daughter of Thomas John and Jessica (nee-Mandac) Winkowski, born on July 14, 2025. Her Sponsors are Lauren and Jason Girardin.

On September 20, 2026, we welcomed *Mila Ricki Winkowski*, daughter of Thomas John and Jessica (nee-Mandac) Winkowski, born on August 3, 2023. Her Sponsors are Lauren and Jason Girardin.

On September 20, 2026, we welcomed *Thomas John "TJ" Winkowski*, son of Thomas and Penny Winkowski, born on November 14, 1986. His Sponsor is Jessica Winkowski.

TO BE REMOVED BY DEATH:

Our Christian sympathy is extended to the family of Carolyn Wheeler, called to her eternal rest with Jesus on September 9, 2026, and buried on September 9, 2026.

OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please contact the church office (708-423-1040) or email **sbarry@stpauloaklawn.org** if you have moved or if your phone number or email address has changed. We want you to be able to receive the latest St. Paul news and also keep our records up to date. Thank you!

WHEN YOU ARE HOSPITALIZED

Please call the church office to let us know when you or a member of your family has been admitted to the hospital. We want to include you in our prayers.

IMPORTANT NEWS FROM OUR BANK-HUNTINGTON BANK

When sending in your tithes and/or checks to St. Paul, Huntington has requested that all checks be made payable to **St. Paul Lutheran Church.**

REMEMBER IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS

Those with Urgent Needs: Rev. Kevin Bergmann, Larry Hasting, Frank Hodgeman, Sr. Alfred Hoffman, Carol and Tim McPhillips, Warren Miller, Mary Ann Raff, Katherine Sorensen, Al & Jean Zirbel, Marybeth Prosapio, Adrian Martinez

Those under Long-Term Care: Sandy Barry, Gigi Browning, Selma Carmichael, Sylvia Coronado, Mike Cyganiewicz, John Darge, Laura Dombrowski, Justin & Ashley Fasel, Tristan Ferry, Pamela Gniadek, Al Green, Tom Groh, Larry & Julie Gurga, Monica Kato, Debby Kehrli, Jimmy Kennedy, Jr., Jerry Kreten, Jennie Krzystof, Bob Marcinkowski, Bonnie Masters, Audrey Metes, Andrew Mrochen, George Oberg, Roberta Owens, Carol Pearce, Jorene Pierzga, Jackie Plichta, Barbara Prendergast, Sarah Pullen, Janet Putz, Kimberly Seehofer, Kurt Seehofer, Jillian Serapin, Linda Shuman, Carol Small, Melva Smith, Linda Swinehart, Bernadette & Rich Trusk, Keith Vanselow, Augustine Vega, Gene Wawrzynikowski, Cindy Weber

Our St. Paul Members Who Are Homebound: Betty Beegle, Vic & Marty Both, Jan Briede, Doris Cyga, Betty Kruckow, Betty Larson, Gloria Meyer, Diane Moore, Don Nordstrom, Dorothy Pavella, Ray Pavesic, Dawn Schumann, Beverly Sellers, Norma Silinski, Delores Stegemann, Sarah Weber

Other Members of Our St. Paul Family: Melissa Cardinal, Delphine Cherry, Jennifer Garcia, Roy Hodgeman, Flora Jones, Robert Kaczmarek, Frank Laos, Elaine Lebron, Ingrid Lesko, Audrey Mitchell, Jan Przybycien, Charlotte Thies, Bill Volk, Susan E. Volk, John Weber, Jr.

Family/Friends of Our Members: A. Bonner & family, Tom Domogal, Brad Hasty, Maureen Kelly Ivory, Diane Johannes, Sandy Plath, Katherine Sorenson

Those in the Military: Aurora DeAngelis (daughter of Michelle and Curtis Simonson), USACE, Detroit, MI; Peter Scialabba (son of Susan Scialabba) Special Forces; Adam Skelton (grandson of Rich and Jan Briede) stationed in Dover, Delaware; Christopher Skopec (son of Steven and

OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

Debbie Skopec) stationed in North Carolina; Sean Rosales (son of Ed and Mia Rosales) stationed in Washington.

(Please let the church office (708) 423-1040 know when you or a friend/family member need prayer AND when your need for our prayer list is over.)

ADULT BIBLE STUDY ~ WEDNESDAY PRAYER TIME

All teens and adults are encouraged to attend the Adult Bible Study which meets in the Timothy Room each Sunday morning from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. The current Bible study is working through Luther's Large Catechism. So much can be shared and learned when we study the Bible together! There is also a group prayer time each Wednesday morning from 10 to 10:30 a.m. in the Founders Room (Church Library). All are welcome!

Sunday School for children ages 3-10 is held in Classroom 8 at 10:30 – 11:15 a.m. Come, bring your children and grandchildren and learn of Jesus!

ALTAR FLOWERS

To place flowers for a special occasion or just to beautify our chancel area, please call the church office at (708) 423-1040 to reserve a date. Please make your check payable to our flower chairperson, *Terry Hornburg*. Thank you, Terry, for the beautiful arrangements you make each Sunday morning!

MISSION MATERIALS

Thank you, St. Paul congregation, for always returning your Portals of Prayer devotion books and Bible study materials when you are finished with them. We box and save *"Love Packages"* for the Mission teams in Butler, IL and Decatur, AL to share with people all over the world who want to know more about Jesus, their Lord and Savior. Our collection of these materials is ongoing, and your donations are appreciated. Please place your donations in the Mission Box in the Founders Room. Thank you!

WANTED: A CAR!

Are you in the market to sell your car? If so, one of our members is looking for a car for a decent price. Call the church office (708) 423-1040.

OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

MESSAGES FROM OUR COUNCIL MEMBERS AND ORGANIZATIONS

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF ELDERS

Dear Fellow Members of St. Paul Lutheran Church:

Blessings to you as we say goodbye to summer and greet autumn. The Elders have enjoyed witnessing our congregation's enthusiastic participation in Sunday worship and community outreach. We are grateful for all the dedication and love we observe on a regular basis. We pray that God will continue to give St. Paul a bountiful supply of dynamic, creative, devout members.

Over the past few months, the Elders have been involved in several activities:

1. We provided input to Pastor Ebel concerning proposed changes to the format of regular Sunday services.
2. We set the schedule and finalized arrangements for services on Thanksgiving Eve, Advent Wednesdays, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve. Next month's newsletter will contain details about our plans for November and December.
3. We reviewed the record of active and inactive members, and we considered ways to increase attendance at worship services.
4. We were present at all church services. We greeted members before and after services, assisted with Communion, brought forward the congregation's offerings, and lit/extinguished sanctuary candles. We also helped out at baptisms, funerals, and weddings.
5. We visited homebound members.
6. We supported Operation Barnabas. We helped organize a successful veterans appreciation luncheon on Saturday, 20 September, and we were involved in regular efforts to send care packages to men and women in various branches of the military.
7. We participated, as needed, in the many outreach activities organized by St. Paul's boards and committees. We were happy to help in these efforts to the best of our ability—whether that meant offering an encouraging word, rolling up our sleeves and assisting with set up, or making our presence felt as attendees.

Many days, there is a whirlwind of activity at St. Paul. To do God's work is always a blessing. As we face future challenges, it might seem that what is expected of us is overwhelming. We might be tempted to despair. If that is how we feel, then we need to seek God in prayer and reflect on Bible verses such as Mark 10:27–"Without God, it is utterly impossible. But with God everything is possible." We can be sure that God will lead us to the necessary solutions and give inspiration and strength when He sees fit.

Yours in Christ, David Witkosky, Board of Elders, St. Paul Lutheran Church

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Our Adult Choir and Celebration Ringers have resumed their regular rehearsals and are preparing music for upcoming worship services. Adult Choir meets on Wednesdays at 7:00 PM in the Timothy Room (please enter through the door facing the parking lot), and Celebration Ringers meet on Sundays at 10:30 AM in the front of the church sanctuary. We did get some responses to our request for new members for both Adult Choir and Celebration Ringers, and it's great to see that some are willing to try something new. You, too, are welcome to give it a try as well, just speak to Jeff Kiel if you have questions, or just come to one of our rehearsals.

We are also seeking people to serve as vocalists for Sunday services. The primary responsibility of the vocalist is to lead in chanting the Introit or Psalm, which is sung responsively with the congregation. The vocalist also sings on the hymns and liturgy, providing a soundtrack for anyone watching videos of our services. Anyone who previously served as a reader in our services is welcome to try chanting as well. If you are interested, please speak to Jeff Kiel with any questions.

One thing we should clarify is that membership in St. Paul Lutheran congregation is NOT required to sing or ring with us. One of our Ringers has been playing with us for over a year and is not a member of our church, and yet they are welcomed into the group all the same. If you are a visitor and interested in making music with us, please do not hesitate to ask. We would love to have you.

MESSAGE FROM THE LADIES GUILD

October is a busy month for the Guild! Sunday, October 4th is LWML (Lutheran Women in Mission) Sunday across the entire nation. At St. Paul, LWML is part of the Ladies Living for Christ Guild. The organization funds mission projects internationally, nationally, and in our own Northen Illinois District through donations called "mites". On this Sunday, we will have available small cardboard "mite" boxes which members can take home and fill with mites (coins, cash) and return to church to be deposited in our mite box container located in the narthex.

The Ladies Guild will also sponsor a bake sale AFTER the worship service on Sunday, October 4th. Please stop by the tables in the long hall and purchase some of our delicious baked goods! Ladies Guild members who are bringing food items for sale are reminded to have them already plated and priced, ready for display. Please have them here by 8:45 am on that Sunday.

Our next general meeting will be at 1 pm on Tuesday, October 27th. We have discovered that many of our members have not heard the story/meaning portrayed by our church's beautiful stained-glass windows. We therefore invite ALL congregation members (the men, too!) to attend a special presentation, led by Pastor Ebel, of these windows for our next meeting on the 27th. This presentation will be held in church. After the presentation, refreshments and a short business meeting will follow in the Timothy Room. Please come and enjoy the afternoon with us!

OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF EVANGELISM/PARISH EDUCATION

God is Good!! The Parking Lot Party was a Hugh success. We couldn't have asked for better weather, and exactly what we expected, St. Paul volunteers showed when we needed them. Approximately 170 people attended the event. There were so many compliments on the balloon artist, the face painter and the main attraction, The Rainbow Cone Truck. There was an anonymous member of St. Paul that covered the cost of the Rainbow Cone Truck, and we couldn't be more grateful. Thank you very much. For the last few years David Witkosky has been the caller for bingo. The last two years he asked if he and his brother John could purchase a few gift cards to give out sporadically throughout the game, and of course we said yes for sure! The Bingo prize gift cards were given by David and John Witkosky in memory of their parents, Vernon and Jeanne Witkosky and their grandmother, Leona Witkosky. Thank you very much to the Witkosky family. Every year the attendance increases, so let's keep that tradition going and plan to attend next year and bring friends and relatives.

Sunday School started September 13th with two children. We need to do better! It is so important for the little ones to know Jesus is their friend and know that he loves them unconditionally. If you know any children ages 3 through 10, please encourage their parents to bring them to Sunday School and while the kids are learning about their friend Jesus, they can grab some coffee and snacks and join us for Adult Bible Study. If your more comfortable with us talking to the parents, just give us the information and we will be happy to follow up with the parents.

St, Paul apologizes, but due to circumstances beyond our control we have not had a New Member Reception in several years, Board of Evangelism/Parish Education will be hosting a reception on November 8th. There are some of you who have been here for a while, and were never honored at a New Member Reception, well now St. Paul wants you to know we are blessed to have you as members of our church! Cake and coffee will be served. Keep that date open to attend the reception immediately following the church service. Have a Blessed Autumn!
Board of Evangelism/Parish Education

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

The Board of Stewardship has been busy planning for our Stewardship Sunday celebration on October 18, 2026. As part of the celebration, this year we are including the faith journey message in the newsletter. We thank Sandy Barry for agreeing to write the message this year. Her message follows below.

Dear Friends: At the heart of my vocational journey is my role as the administrative assistant at St. Paul. I have had the privilege of supporting our church family and community daily and it is a calling that is near and dear to my heart.

Born to Christian parents on November 25, 1959, I was baptized on December 20th that same year. Our family belonged to Immanuel Lutheran Church in Chicago, where I began Sunday School at the early age of 3. Immanuel didn't have a school, so I attended Bethlehem Lutheran

OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

School also in Chicago. As our family grew, we relocated from the bustling South Side of Chicago to the quiet suburb of South Holland. From third grade through confirmation and graduation, I attended St. Paul Lutheran Church and School in Dolton, where along with Christian education and through years of Operettas and singing in the choir, I developed a deep love for music and theatre. Growing up alongside 32 peers, I had many friendships, but in my heart, I truly knew Jesus as my truest friend and Savior.

After graduation, I auditioned for The Jack and Jill Players, which was a Children's Theatre in downtown Chicago, much like the Julliard Conservatory in New York. The audition went well, and at age 13, I was blessed to become a member of the Players. It was through Jack and Jill that I began my professional theatrical career. Looking back on those days, I realized how the divine gifts of acting, song, performance, and the stage, ultimately rescued me. Growing up in a difficult family environment, I could step out of being me and become someone else for a little while. In His faithfulness, God used my passion for musical theatre as a lifeline when I needed it most. As Professor Harold Hill in The Music Man said, "I always believe there's a band, kid". Well, I, too, always believed there'd be another show! And there was! God opened doors for me that I never knew where there until I began looking.

During one show's run, Victoria – one of the lead actors – pulled me aside and led me behind the big red curtain. She had me look out at the audience and reminded me that all those people paid to see our show. She told me that despite the sold-out show, there was always one empty seat reserved for the Creator of our art, and it was up to me to talk with Him and invite Him to see me perform for His glory. Our paths never crossed again on the theater circuit, yet what Victoria said stayed with me forever. Because of her, every single performance I give begins and ends with a quiet prayer to my Creator.

Upon entering high school, I was one of 550 freshmen who attended Thornridge, which is a very large public high school in Dolton. I was a little fish in a big pond and was nervous about my new surroundings! But again, God was good. I participated in all kinds of activities and before I knew it, I was blessed with more friends than I graduated from grade school with.

All through this time, I had been an active member of St. Paul in Dolton where Pastor James Dishop served as Associate Pastor. When Pastor Dishop accepted the call to serve as Senior Pastor at St. Paul in Oak Lawn, I transferred my membership to Oak Lawn. For the past 47 years, I have been a proud member of this vibrant and Spirit-filled church family. This special place holds so much of our family's history which began in 1982 when I married Pete, and continued as our two precious children, Brian and Mandy, celebrated their baptisms, confirmations, and graduations within these sacred walls. Precious memories! There was no moment untouched by God's love. His goodness was everywhere! Because of this church, the relationships I formed turned into lifelong friendships that I cherish to this day. Indeed, God is so good!

In the workforce, I had the privilege of contributing to several law firms. I went from serving as a Legal Administrative Assistant to Office Manager. God used that season of my life to bring

hope and light to people facing difficult circumstances as I openly shared the Gospel and even prayed with them. The same is true in my 18-year service to St. Paul. Together we've walked through life's many seasons – weathering storms, navigating challenges, and supporting one another through times of grief. Through it all, we have also celebrated our greatest blessings, stayed true to the mission of St. Paul, cared for families in need, and generously shared our abundance with the community around us. This we do as the body of Christ to give the glory where it belongs. To God. I absolutely *LOVE* the work I do at St. Paul and am deeply thankful for this vocation and for your continued prayers.

To understand the depth of my gratitude, I must take you back to the defining moment when an unexpected illness, Acute Myeloid Leukemia, almost ended my story. Daunting as it was, it was no match for God's goodness. *Isaiah 41:10 (KJV)* has always been one of my favorite scriptures: *"Fear not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."* After my diagnosis, this promise kept me strong and sure and confident that no matter what happened, I was *never* alone, and I was *never* afraid. As my bone marrow transplant team worked tirelessly around the clock to manage my treatments and control my side effects, I knew that God was right there with us through it all. As 11.5 million life-saving stem cells from my brother entered my body, God was watching over the complex process just as He did when I was developing in my mother's womb. Mandy, my incredible daughter, my dearest confidante, and blessing from above, selflessly stepped into the role of caregiver, transforming her life, going above and beyond traditional expectations to become a lifeline for me. The road we traveled was long and arduous, but I am here today, truly a living miracle!

The real heart of my stewardship message is that throughout my health struggles and time in the hospital, I *never* worried about my finances!

1 Kings 17:7-24 tells us the story of the *Widow of Zarephath*, who during a severe famine, provided for the prophet Elijah by making him a cake using the last of her flour and oil. Just as the widow of Zarephath obeyed the prophet Elijah and saw her flour and oil miraculously sustained throughout the famine, God made a way for her through her faith.

In the same way that God provided for my bodily needs, He was faithful in providing for my financial needs. Even though I faced a long-term disability and had limited income, because of a steady stream of grants and financial assistance from multiple sources, my income kept growing. God faithfully kept the blessings flowing in my life. His word IS true! God faithfully provides for all our needs. Through Jesus Christ, we are saved by His sacrifice, and His love never fails.

Our personal faith journeys show that God is always with His children. Sharing our stories can touch, change, and inspire others to live their best life for Christ. As brothers and sisters in Christ, we know that in Him, we are forgiven of our sins, redeemed by His blood on the cross, and can look forward to eternal life with Christ. Won't eternity be wonderful?

OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

MESSAGE FROM OPERATION BARNABAS

Once again, here is a little military history. On October 1, 1877, the U.S. Army took possession of Alaska from Russia. The U.S. flag was raised over the Alaska Territory, which later became the 49th state.

The 10th Veterans Thank You Luncheon is now in the history books, and it was a memorable occasion. To everyone who helped make this event possible, please accept a big heartfelt

Thank You

About 100 veterans and their guests attended, along with 15 members of Scout Troop 863. Despite the rain, which caused a number of Veterans not to attend, the event had a good turnout. Mandy Barry wrote a tribute to the Armed Forces and sang it to the tune of "Galveston." Her performance was excellent. Pictures were taken and we will try to print them and put on display for all to see.

The puzzle book program is on again. You can get them at any of the thrift Dollar stores. The best books are the Word Search, although Crossword and Sudoku would be okay. Hoping to get over 100 books by February 2027, the Veterans look forward to getting them.

Mark it on your calendar, cookies for Veterans in three local nursing homes will be needed by December 6th, with pack up and delivery by December 18th supporting the Worth, American Legion Post. We also distribute cookies to the Veterans at St Paul, and if we get enough interest, we at St Paul can visit a local nursing home with cookies on December 19th.

The Care package program is ongoing, some of the Chaplains are returning home and we are picking up others who are beginning their deployment.

On behalf of the Barnabas group, I would like to thank the Congregation of St Paul for your generous support which allows our mission to "To Honor and Encourage Veterans, Active Military Personnel and Their Families."

May GOD bless all and
May GOD bless the United States of America

MESSAGE FROM FAITH IN ACTION/SOCIAL MINISTRY

It is a new season, FALL; and the thought of sharing overwhelms all of us as Thanksgiving draws near. Thanksgiving is around the corner, and we are already preparing our food pantry for the holiday bags in November. During this season of thankfulness, it has been a tradition here at St. Paul to give forward to others in need. **This year, we will be collecting donations of non-perishable food items for the pantry on Sunday, November 22nd and Wednesday, November 25th.** If you are able to, please consider helping out. Your donations have truly made a difference in the lives of our clients and guests. A flyer of needed holiday items is included in this newsletter. Also, we are always in need of fall items to warm the body as well: soups, stews,

OUR ST. PAUL CHURCH FAMILY

chili, or other meals-in-a-can are items we especially appreciate while the seasons change. We are so **THANKFUL** for your generosity.

Thrivent has also blessed us with several $250 gift cards to use for the holidays. We are so **THANKFUL** for Thrivent and our grant writers to help us *"Live Generously"* by supporting our project. If you also would like to help us with this project you can make a monetary donation to offset the cost of the turkey breasts and holiday items, or you can buy extra items that will be gifted in the holiday bags.

We are so **THANKFUL** for our food pantry partners. In September, we received over 1097 pounds of groceries from our sponsors. We could not fill our bags without our food pantry rescue teams; Barb Rendemen with Panera and Vickie Blust & Kathie Watts with Elmhurst-Yorkfield Food Pantry. Besides the produce and bread products, they support us with meat, dairy, & deli items, along with pastries and snacks. They are constantly at our side with support. We were also blessed with 381#s of shelf stable groceries, plus health & beauty items from The Oak Lawn Library. God has truly blessed us through our sponsors and St. Paul family!

Many businesses are looking for an organization to serve during the holidays. If you know of a business that would like to organize a food drive for us during the holidays let us know, and we would be happy to contact them and share our information. Organizing a food pantry drop-off space is easy to do, and we can provide the information and are willing to make the pick-up. Fliers about our food pantry are in the narthex.

Are you looking for a place to take your leftover Halloween candy? We would be happy to bag your candy and give it to our food pantry clients. They love sweet treats.

As of September 16th, 2026, we have harvested 362.25#'s of produce for our food pantry clients. That includes 281.5#'s from St. Paul while the OLCG has totaled 80.75#'s. We will still get some more tomatoes and peppers. The basil did extremely well this year and while Debbie was preparing bouquets for the clients, we received many comments that the pantry smelled like an Italian deli. The clients appreciate the fresh produce. The perennial garden has developed the purple blooms of the September aster, a symbol of love, wisdom, patience, and beauty. The aster has also been associated with faith, friendship, and purity. It blends in with the black eyed susan that is a constant nectar source for the swallowtail butterflies. Thanks again to all the faithful waterers that make this possible! God is good!

Through you and our sponsors we have been blessed to serve those in need. **The September food pantry** served 69 families, 198 individuals. The September BEDS cook team cooked for 20 individuals. The meal included corned beef with potatoes, carrots, and cabbage; along with pretzel rolls, milk, apples, and Linda Fogarty's apple cake.

Thank you for your constant support of our missions. You are always welcome to join our team, just call the church office and leave us a message (food pantry x18).

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Operation Blessing's Annual Pancake Brunch

Please keep the date of Saturday, November 14th on your calendar. That is the date of Operation Blessing's Annual Pancake Brunch. Operation Blessing is our wonderful sister pantry that shares produce and refrigerated items with us to share with our clients. Supporting this event is a way to give back to them for their gifts. Please support them with your presence at their annual fundraiser. Mike Will is one of the cooks for this event, so please come greet Mike and meet some of the other Operation Blessing team. Please help our sister food pantry raise money to maintain their facility. The cost of the breakfast is $10/person or $25/family. The meal will include: pancakes, sausage, fruit, orange juice, coffee, and baked goods as well. Breakfast will be served from 8 am - 12 pm @ Moraine Valley Church, 6300 West 127th ST, Palos Heights. Fliers about the event are attached and in the bulletin.

MEMORIALS AND THANKOFFERINGS

MEMORIALS

Given by	In Memory Of:	Designated for:
Grace Kreten	My Sister, Kathleen Maldre	Faith in Action
Laura & Mel Safstrom	Grant Freeze	Faith in Action
Debbie & Mike Will	Jose Alvarez	Faith in Action
Debbie & Mike Will	Carolyn Wheeler	Faith in Action
David Purdy	Delbert Purdy's (B-day 9/28)	Operation Barnabas

THANK OFFERINGS

Given by	For:	Designated for:
Brenda & Phillip Burton	Granddaughters Vada, Violet & Vivian	General Fund
Brenda & Phillip Burton	Elizabeth's Birthday 8/28	General Fund
Nayelly Miranda & Rakan Kawar	Riyad Rakan Chevy Kawar's Baptism	General Fund
Sharon Kawar & Family	Riyad Rakan Chevy Kawar's Baptism	General Fund
Janice & Bill Leise	Bill's Birthday	General Fund
Kathy & Anthony Sipich	Sipich-Strong Wedding	General Fund
Debbie & Mike Will	Debbie's Birthday 9/28	Faith in Action

David and Joyce Erber
LCMS International Mission * August 10, 2026

Saint Paul Lutheran Church
4660 W 94th St
Oak Lawn, IL 60453-2513

Dear People of God in Oak Lawn,

In early September, there was a glitch in the LCMS website. If you noticed that we were dropped and felt confused, please know that we are still very much LCMS missionaries and are very much engaged with LCMS work in Africa. Hopefully, by the time you receive this letter, the LCMS website will be back in order.

We remain grateful for your prayers and for your support for our mission work in Africa! Thank you for your donations in May, June and July!

One of Joyce's more enjoyable responsibilities is to organize and host the monthly Africa Information Briefing Zoom call where our LCMS Africa mission team connects on a Zoom call. Each monthly session includes a devotion and prayer. In each meeting, a special guest is invited to speak about their role in mission and about their own story of how they became a missionary. These guests are often someone from the office in St. Louis or another missionary from another part of the world. Secondly, these meetings give each of our missionaries and team members a chance to share what is going on in his or her life and work. A lot of information is shared during these meetings. Many of our missionaries are quite isolated and located at great distances from other team members. This computer-screen meeting is a blessing to our LCMS work in Africa.

Lately, Joyce has also been busy helping new missionaries with all the financial dynamics of getting started in their mission service. She is working with new missionaries in both Tanzania and Kenya. Moving; immigration and work permits; taxes; rent and setting up a new home; purchasing a vehicle and acquiring various licenses; beginning language study, these dynamics and others quickly add up to a lot of details for both the new missionaries and for Joyce. It's a hard job.

Please join us in praying that God raises up someone to take over the financial responsibility for LCMS missionaries and mission work in Africa! Joyce would really like to hand this work over to someone else. Yet, she doesn't want to simply leave our missionaries and their work in a vulnerable situation. LCMS is looking for people to take on these responsibilities in both Africa and Asia.

LCMS is working in or is connected to churches in 25 countries in Africa and is connected to 17 seminaries across these countries. Joyce is involved in each connection. Regarding the 17 seminaries, presently there are 3 LCMS pastors, 3 Lutheran pastors from Brazil and 1 Lutheran pastor from Finland serving as seminary instructors. By far, most of the seminary instructors are local Lutheran pastors from those countries.

My work is to further develop and equip local African pastors who are serving as seminary instructors or as leaders in the church on national levels. Using internet communications and working with Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, these men are working on master's degrees in Lutheran theology. This is a great opportunity for the men teaching at these 17 seminaries!

Presently, I am working with 6 men who are completing their final papers (about 100 pages) for the degree. I am very happy I don't have to do such work in one of the African languages or in one of the African educational systems! I don't believe I could do it! One of our pastors didn't begin learning English until he was conscripted into the Sudanese army! These men have my greatest respect and appreciation! These men and others are training the next generation of pastors for Africa.

In addition to this group of men, there are 20 or more other pastors, scattered across ten countries in Africa who desire to start this work. The church in Africa needs them! The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Jesus instructed us to pray for workers for the harvest fields! (Matthew 9:37-38) We are working to put these prayers into action!

Thank you for your prayers and partnership in these Great Commission efforts!

Our work keeps us really busy, but we are trying to visit our supporting congregations and donors as we are able. You too are in our thoughts and prayers!

The Lord be with you!

David and Joyce

David and Joyce Erber
Missionaries
The Office of International Mission
The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

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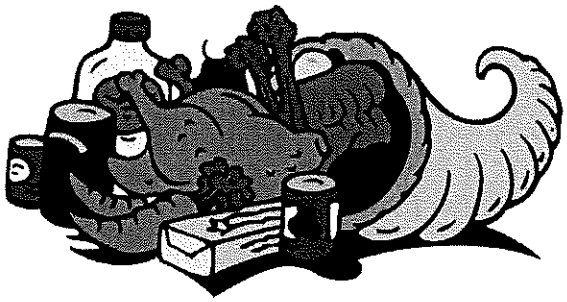


THANKSGIVING PANTRY NEEDS

Turkey Stuffing/Gravy Packets
Chicken Broth/Instant Mashed Potatoes Peas/Carrots/Cranberry Sauce
Jello or Pudding Package/Frosting
Cake or Brownie Mix/Canned Tomatoes
Cream of Mushroom Soup/ Pork 'n Beans
Extras: Olives, Mushrooms, Manwich,
Salad dressing

$$$ Money is always welcome! $$$

Yes, Thanksgiving is around the corner! During the month of October, we are preparing Thanksgiving bags for families in need.
*On **November 4th & 18th,** these holiday bags will also include a turkey breast.*

We need your help! FIA is asking for monetary donations to help offset the cost of these special additions to our bags. If you would like to help, any monetary donation would be appreciated.
On Sunday, November 22nd & Wednesday, November 25th, we will take up a collection of non-perishable items for the food pantry. Monetary donations can be made to St. Paul Lutheran Church via a church envelope or 'Simply Giving' on-line, but *please designate FIA donation on the by line.*
FIA will also distribute Christmas bags on December 2nd & 16th. Your support with donations of non-perishable food is always appreciated, and a list of needed items for the holiday bags are listed above. We thank you ahead of time for your generosity, and we do not mind shopping for you!

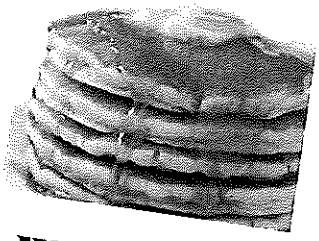
Annual pancake Brunch

To benefit

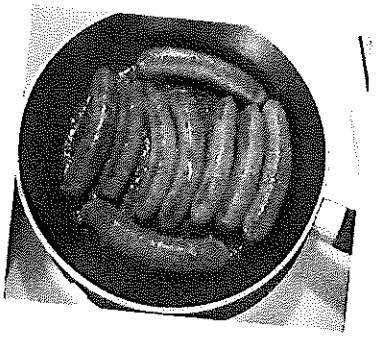
Operation Blessing

Of

Southwest Chicagoland

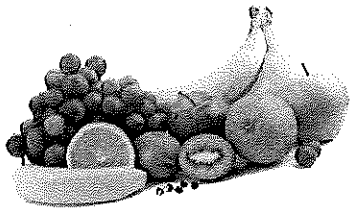


We offer gluten free pancakes too!



Saturday, Nov.14 2026

8 am—12 pm



Moraine Valley Church

6300 West 127th ST.

Palos Heights, IL.

Bake Sale too!

Suggested donation:

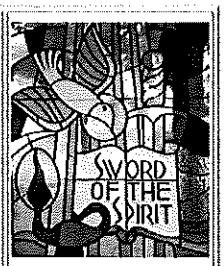
$10.00 per person -

$25.00 per family

A tradition for over 40 years!

St. Paul Lutheran Church - Oak Lawn, Illinois

October 2026



September ⇦⇨ November

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4 9:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 10:30 am Sun School & Bible Study 10:30 am Celebration Ringers rehearsal	5 7:00 pm SW Lutheran Chorus rehearsal	6 10:00 am Bd of Elders 5:00 pm FIA Care Cards 6:30 pm Bd of Evangelism/Parish Ed 6:30 pm Bd of Trustees	7 10:00 am Prayer 11:00 am Bible Study FOOD PANTRY 2:00 pm Food Pantry 7:00 pm Adult choir rehearsal	8	9	10
11 9:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 10:30 am Sun School & Bible Study 10:30 am Celebration Ringers rehearsal	12 7:00 pm SW Lutheran Chorus rehearsal	13 10:00 am Ladies Guild Board 10:30 am Operation Barnabas 6:30 pm Church Council	14 10:00 am Prayer 11:00 am Bible Study 7:00 pm Adult Choir rehearsal	15	16	17
18 9:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 10:30 am Sun School & Bible Study 10:30 am Celebration Ringers rehearsal	19 3:00 pm BEDS Cook Team 7:00 pm SW Lutheran Chorus rehearsal	20	21 10:00 am Prayer 11:00 am Bible Study FOOD PANTRY 2:00 pm Food Pantry 7:00 pm Adult Choir rehearsal	22	23	24 /p>
25 9:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 10:30 am Sun School & Bible Study 10:30 am Celebration Ringers rehearsal	26 7:00 pm SW Lutheran Chorus rehearsal	27 1:00 pm Ladies Guild	28 10:00 am Prayer 11:00 am Bible Study 7:00 pm Adult Choir rehearsal	29	30	31 Halloween Daylight Savings Time Ends at 2:00 am Sunday - Set your clocks BACK one hour tonight