

Summer/Fall
2025

St. Paul Lutheran Church Newsletter

Rooted & Growing



ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

What Matters?

In life, we must make choices about what matters the most to us:

- Do I attend a music concert or save up for a new house?
- Do I hang out with my friends or give my mom a call on the phone?
- Do I hold in confidence the information my friend shared with me or do I tell someone else because I worry their life is in danger?

Decision after decision, we reveal to ourselves and the world what matters to us: not only things, but which people and which values matter to us.

This fall we will reflect together on what matters. To guide our reflections, we will of course, look at the teachings and life of Jesus. This year though, we will use another “tool” to guide our reflections – the Augsburg Confession.

The Augsburg Confession was confessed in 1526 by the first “Lutherans.” A group of church leaders presented their teaching to Emperor Charles V. They hoped by focusing on what matters, truly the core, they could convince the Emperor that they were not heretics and that the church could remain united.

...that unfortunately didn't happen...

That said, the Augsburg Confession, which celebrates its 500th anniversary next June, continues to offer enduring reflection on what matters. My hope this fall is to introduce many of you to the Augsburg Confession and the way in which it still provides insight into our daily lives. A little preview – we will start where the Augsburg Confession begins, with the affirmation that God matters!



Besides listening to the sermons on Sundays, a few other ways to delve deeper into this theme:

- Pastor's Bible studies on Thursdays will address this theme.
- A number of the common ground classes and groups that meet on Sunday mornings will discuss the Gospel passages with questions that revolve around this theme.
- Pastor Randy Chrissis will teach an Introduction to Lutheran Theology, aka, *Let's Talk*, this fall. People really enjoyed his teaching last year and he kindly agreed to come back and continue to teach.

The Augsburg Confession focuses on what matters, not only to us as humans, but also what matters to God. Ultimately what matters to God is your salvation and the renewal of all things in Jesus Christ. We will get there on All Saint's Sunday. But in the meantime, join us as we reflect together on what matters.

Pastor Rob



On the cover: St. Paul Youth hanging out during Diaconos week.

Sunday Morning *Learning Together*

Welcome to our Adult Sunday School classes! We invite you to join us every Sunday from 9:30 to 10:30 AM for a time of learning, reflection, and community. Whether you're seeking to deepen your faith, explore new spiritual insights, or engage in thoughtful discussions, our classes offer a welcoming space for everyone. Come and be part of a supportive group where you can grow spiritually and connect with others on a meaningful journey. We look forward to seeing you there!

Splash

Parents of children aged 0-3 gather for faith formation, friendship, and support as they raise the next generation Christian disciples. Parents attend this class with their children.

Facilitators: *Derek and Casey Cole*

Location: *Room 104*

Talk the Walk

For parents with children in elementary school and entering middle school. This group holds a lesson based discussion while sharing about the week and what following Christ looks like as a family.

Facilitator: *Rachael Frase*

Location: *Room 113*

Parents of Teens

For parents of teenagers. This class offers discussions on parenting issues, and the challenges and joys of raising teenagers.

Facilitators: *Lyle and Joy Hosler*

Location: *Room 111*

Families in Faith

Parents and educators of teenagers and young adults gather for study and discussion to nurture the faith that produces healthy family relationships and supportive friendships.

Facilitators: *Art and Barb Paynter*

Location: *Room 107*

Together in Christ

This cross-generational group meets to discuss the sermon's theme and its application to our lives.

Facilitator: *Todd Harpel and others.*

Location: *Social Hall*

Life Together

Discussion group to support one another in life's challenges and joys of empty-nest, caring for aging parents, adult children, and grandchildren.

Facilitators: *Jay Rairigh, Al Rothermel, and Rick Shober*

Location: *Room 116*

Faith Building

This Bible study provides insight into Scripture through lesson background, questions and discussion of how to apply the truth of Scripture to our lives. The curriculum this fall will be a study of Judah; From Isaiah to Exile.

Facilitators: *Thomas Herrmann and others*

Location: *Media Room*

Sisters in Christ Bible Study

For women of all ages. This Bible study utilizes curriculum from *Gather* magazine, a publication of the Women of the ELCA.

Facilitator: *Phyllis Frankhouser*

Location: *Choir Room*

Date and Time: *1st Sunday of the month at 9:25 am. Begins on Oct. 5th*

Seminary Nook

This class offers an in-depth discussion of influential theologians and Christian thought leaders across the centuries, including Rowan Williams, Henri Nouwen, Fleming Rutledge and Bartolomé de las Casas.

Facilitator: *Jonathan Matias*

Location: *Room 108*

Let's Talk; A Discussion about Lutheran Theology

For those who are new to the Lutheran tradition or would like to better understand Lutheranism. This class will provide the opportunity to explore our rich theological heritage.

Facilitator: *Randy Chrissis*

Location: *Room 7*

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



ST. PAUL | Children

SPF 25

NEW this summer, we introduced an intergenerational hour of freeplay following the outdoor worship - all summer long! We offered kickball, legos, painting, playgrounds and more. It was a joy to see kids playing, parents visiting, and even folks enjoying the Sacred Grounds.

Send us your feedback: should we offer this again?!

By Heart Challenge



The By Heart Challenge for Summer 2025 was woven throughout our summer in our Kids Sermon Series where we built a wooden heart puzzle, piece by piece each week. The pieces were parts of the catechism / bible. 15 kids took the challenge this summer, memorizing their grade's assigned catechism piece "by heart". Thanks to the Ziegler family at Candyology for donating a gift card to each of these kids! And to the Paynter family for hosting a pool party for them!

Creek Walk

We had our annual Creek Walk led by Mr. Jim Hovan in June. He helped the older kids explore God's creation through the study of water. We found critters, explored rocks and tested the water. Thank you to the parents for joining us!



Church Camp



St. Paul supported over 30 kids/youth/families at one of our local Lutheran Camps this summer: Kirchenwald or Nawakwa.

We were proud to have two youth on staff at Kirchenwald as well. Thank you to all the generous donations toward camperships to help offset the cost of camp.

On August 31, we had an annual "Donut Ya Wanna Chat About Camp?" to share our camp stories over long-johns and write thank you cards to the donors. Camp fun continues in the off-season. Check out lutherancamping.org for more ways to help and have fun!



Faith Step-Stones

Each month, we highlight one age group as they take a new step in Faith. Step-stones in the fall are listed below.

Sept 7 – our 3 year olds celebrate the September Step by receiving a preschool bible in worship! This marks their welcome into Sunday School.

Oct 26 – our K&1 class takes the October Step by leading the congregation in the Lord's Prayer. They are memorizing it in Sunday School & at home.

Nov. 23 - our 2nd graders will receive their First Holy Communion in worship. They will prepare for this at a special class with their parents.



Deacon Emily shows off our new faith step stone banner to be displayed each month we're celebrating a new step in faith for our kids ♥

Mentoring Mornings

Monthly mentoring mornings are a time when our enthusiastic high school students will guide and inspire children in grades 4 through 6 during Sunday School. These sessions, scheduled for September 21, October 19, and November 16, are an opportunity for younger students to learn from their older peers in a supportive environment.



Mentoring morning in the youth room.

Chapel

CELC Chapel resumes in September! We welcome back to the Sanctuary all the CELC kids for their weekly Thursday morning worship time with Deacon Emily. The space is filled with over 85 kids & staff making a joyful noise. Ages 2 - 5 come eagerly to sing songs, hear a bible story, offer prayers and enjoy surprises. Thank you to Marsha Campbell for accompanying the music. Our 1-year-olds welcome Deacon Emily to their classroom for weekly chapel. And our after-school-kids (ages 5+) have chapel worship once/month with Deacon Emily and Becky Rairigh accompanying. What a joy!



Chapel overflowing with kids!

YOUTH MINISTRY

by Scott Frase

As I write this, it does not seem possible that the summer has passed quickly and the school year has begun again. I attended the Twilight Tuneup at Warwick HS last weekend and the energy was palpable. The crowds, the music, the food trucks, and of course the runners! As the seasons change, so does the work at the church as we continue to become rooted in the gospel of Christ and this community at St. Paul, and grow as we share our space, fellowship, and faith with each other and those in the community.

Here are some of the highlights from the last few months.

In June we hosted an evening for youth and their families to gather. It was a great opportunity to get to know each other and celebrate the completion of another school year.

From there, we prepared for a service trip to Martin, Kentucky in July to work with the Christian Appalachian Project. Bobbi Jo Curty and I led a team of 7 youth and had such a tremendous experience. We partnered with youth and leaders from other churches in the Synod to help improve the homes of people impacted by severe flooding, or unable to make necessary improvements or repairs. This shared experience of serving together formed a great bond and built momentum among the group as we head into the fall. The youth were such great representatives of St. Paul and more importantly as ambassadors of Christ.



Shortly after returning from Kentucky, Johnna McCormick and I led 9 youth during Diaconos week at Camp Kirchenwald. Diaconos is a week where we partner with various organizations in the community to support the good work they are doing.



This was our first year participating in the Diaconos program and it was such a positive experience. We facilitated activity time with residents at a long term healthcare facility, pitchforked a ton of manure and cleaned the pens of horses at an equine therapy center, and prepared a week's worth of meals for mothers and their kids experiencing or at risk of homelessness. After completing service projects, we returned to camp for activities such as pool time, soccer tournaments, ropes course, climbing tower and the zip line. It was an amazing time of being able to live out the gospel and have fun while doing it!



CULTIVATING FAITH



I am excited as the Sunday School year is about to begin to have the opportunity to continue to get to know the youth of St. Paul and their families. The theme of this fall for grades 9-12 is **Cultivating Faith**. We will be using a new curriculum published by Storymakers NYC, The volume we will use this fall is Faith. It works through the Apostle's Creed while giving teens the space to creatively process through their faith and questions as they navigate the journey of being Christ followers.

For grades 7-8, students will be participating in Confirmation, led by Pastor Robert Wallace assisted by Confirmation mentors.. This year they will be focusing on the story of Scripture as students explore who Christ is as revealed throughout the Bible, and grounding our identity as image bearers of the triune God to better understand our story in light of the divine story.



vision

Our approach to cultivating faith comes from our vision of youth ministry

why?

(The Why) We believe that Jesus Christ invites us to walk in his way. On this path, we find forgiveness, restoration, wholeness, peace, and community. Christ our Good Shepherd who cares for us,, the cosmic Gardener who cultivates our hearts, continually calls us as individuals and a community, guides us, nourishes us and renews us by his Spirit to the glory of the Father.

how?

(The How) To that end, we aim to provide space for the youth of St. Paul and the broader community to regularly gather. Through Sunday mornings, service projects, and other events, we seek to create places where the youth can breathe, reset, cultivate community, and be equipped to navigate life and to carry the fire that pushes back the darkness.

what?

(The What) We provide the opportunity for youth to find refuge, community, and a safe space to ask questions and grow in their faith while seeking understanding. A place where youth would be encountered and transformed by the good news of Christ, and to see them rooted and growing in the love of God and love for the other, for the life of the world.

To that end, we will gather on Sunday mornings, participate in worship, and have other opportunities to gather to build relationships and serve throughout the community.

Fall happenings

Rally Day

Sunday, September 7, 2025

Rally day marks the beginning of the church calendar year for everyone! Let's rally together and return to church and Sunday school.

- Worship services will take place at **8:15 AM and 10:45 AM** in the sanctuary.
- Join us in the social hall at **9:00 AM** for a pancake breakfast, followed by a brief presentation from our youth. (*Donations are welcome to support our youth ministry.*)
- The Sunday school teachers for the Children's Ministry will be introduced to the children, along with their classmates.

Youth and Adult Sunday School will kick off on **September 14th at 9:30 AM.**

We also want to extend our gratitude to Thrivent for contributing to Rally Day through the Thrivent Action Kit. This includes t-shirts for volunteers and a \$250 donation for the food for this event. Thank you Thrivent!

American Guild of Organists Concert

Sunday, September 21, 2025

4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

The Lancaster Chapter of the American Guild of Organists is kicking off their program year at St. Paul's. Bring your singing voices as chapter members lead us in song, and present organ arrangements of favorite hymns.

There will be an offering to benefit the Lancaster Chapter which includes a scholarship fund for beginning organists.

<https://www.lancasterago.org/>

Fall Festival

Saturday, October 4, 2025

10 AM - 2 PM

St. Paul Lutheran Church Pavilion



Join the Christian Early Learning Center and St. Paul Lutheran Church for a day of festivities, feasting, and fun as we come together to give thanks for life's bountiful blessings. Partake in exciting activities for the whole family, rain or shine! Activities will include a cake & stuffed animal walk, face painting, raffle, pumpkin decorating, photo booth, Blessing of the Animals (at 10am), and MORE!

We are looking for church volunteers to work at each station, donations for the cake walk, and crock pot macaroni and cheese donations. Sign up in the Narthex, under the Connect & Serve kiosk.

Join Our Music Community!

Are you passionate about music? Whether you love singing, playing an instrument, or want to venture into something new, we have a place for you! Don't hesitate to reach out to Becky Rairigh, the St. Paul Music Ministry Director. She is excited to connect with you!

Choir

The St. Paul Choir will meet every Wednesday, 7:30-8:30 PM, in the Choir Room. New people are always welcome to join. Rehearsals begin September 10, 2025.

- **Men's Ensemble:** The St. Paul Men's Ensemble will be back this Fall! Rehearsals will be 20-25 minutes after the second worship service. Don't miss out! Dates TBD
- **Youth Choir & Handbell Ensemble:** Kicking off Monday, December 1st from 3:30-4:20 PM. This group will rehearse music for Christmas Eve.

Praise Band

No matter what instrument you play, we would be thrilled to have you join us! Rehearsals take place on Tuesday evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 PM, starting September 2, 2025.

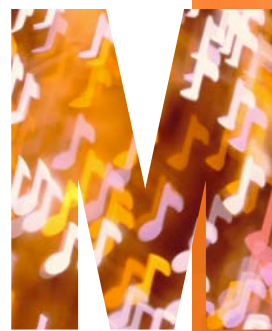
Handbells & Chimes & More!

- **Jubilate Handbells:** Come join our handbell group! Rehearsals are on Wednesdays at 6:30-7:25 PM. Practice begins on September 10, 2025.
- **Chime Time for Kids:** Beginning Monday, October 6, 4:30-5:15 PM. Join us weekly in the Sanctuary! Kids in grades 2-6 are invited to learn hand chimes, explore basic music skills, and prepare songs for worship.
- **Cantors:** Help lead the congregation in worship through song.
- **Instrumentalists:** Play along with hymns and liturgy to enrich our worship experience.



Becky Rairigh
Music Ministry Director

✉ becky@stpaulstiz.net
☎ 717-824-5913



What's New? in the Sacred Grounds

We are grateful to announce the addition of new benches to the Sacred Grounds this summer! These benches are a gift made possible through the generosity of Michael Byler and Kathy Schmick, along with the support of the church. Their kindness provides a welcoming place for rest, reflection, and prayer for all who visit. May these benches serve as a blessing to everyone who spends time in our Sacred Grounds.



This photo is one of four benches added to the Sacred Grounds.

Caretaking Team

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to

Al Rothermel for his leadership in putting together a Sacred Grounds Caretaking Team. Through his efforts, a dedicated group will now help care for the Prayer Labyrinth, weeding, mowing and trimming, as well as tending to the Monarch Waystation. With the help of our volunteers and Al's vision and commitment, it will ensure that these sacred spaces remain places of beauty, prayer, and reflection for all who visit. If you would like to join us, or have any questions, please contact Al Rothermel at Rothermel16@gmail.com or Suzanne Black at sblack@stpaulsitiz.net.



Sacred Grounds Book Club

We launched the Sacred Grounds Book Club this summer! We had a wonderful time diving into great books which helped us reflect upon the beauty of God's creation. Through nature, there is so much to learn about God and our faith, how it can benefit humanity, and how we are called to steward it well. It was an encouraging and edifying time.



Pictured Above: Summer Sacred Grounds Book Club attendees.

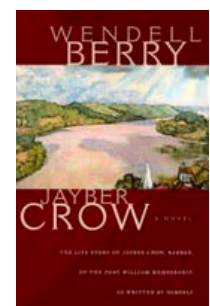
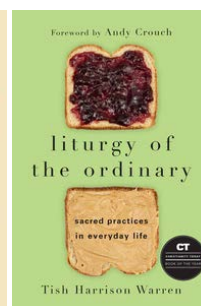
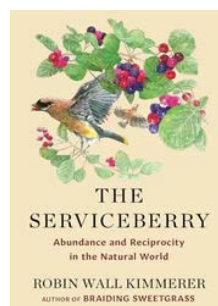
We will offer book club this fall, aimed at cultivating community and faith while expanding our perspectives through reading and conversation. During this season, we will explore the idea of what it means to be present in the places and time we live in.

Facilitator: Scott Frase

Time: 7 PM

Dates & Books

- **9/29, *The Serviceberry; Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer**
- **10/27, *Liturgy of the Ordinary: Sacred Practices in Everyday Life*.**
- **11/24 *Jayber Crow*, by Wendell Berry**



Rejoice! in God's Creation



Changes are coming to the Prayer Labyrinth! This fall we will be lovingly amending the prayer labyrinth walkway to smooth the path, making it easier for all to journey in prayer and reflection. Just as God guides us along life's uneven roads, these improvements will help create a gentle, welcoming way for each step taken in quiet conversation with Him.

A "Prayer Library" will be added to the Sacred Grounds, offering guidance on how to use the Prayer Labyrinth along with a curated collection of written prayers. These prayers can serve as words to share with God during times of joy, gratitude, sorrow, worry or hardship. This resource provides a space to discover words when you're unsure of what to express, or to unite your heart with the prayers of others who have experienced similar feelings.

In October, we are excited to partner with Mr. McClain's classes at Warwick High School to plant 210 native flower plugs across the Sacred Grounds and Prayer Labyrinth. The selected plants will feature:

- *Asclepias tuberosa* – Butterfly Weed
- *Baptisia australis* – Blue False Indigo
- *Echinacea purpurea* – Purple Coneflower
- *Physostegia virginiana* – Obedient Plant



This image shows a Monarch butterfly feeding on Liatris that is not in full bloom.



This is a photo of the Monarch Waystation, it is filled with beneficial native plants to provide essential resources monarch butterflies need to survive and reproduce during their long migration.



Contact Suzanne Black at sblack@stpaulstitz.net for more info.

Congregational Care & Prayer



As devoted followers of Jesus Christ we want to live into the “great commandment” through loving God with our entire being and loving our neighbor. A way this gets manifested is providing care — a listening year, an encouraging note, a helping hand, a compassionate presence. Doing this are the volunteers serving on one of the five groups of the ministry branch called Congregational Care. Each of these groups is overseen by Associate Pastor Robert Wallace and provides support and encouragement to congregants, especially those in need.

Caring Connections

Caring Connections Ministry reaches out to congregation members during significant moments in their lives by sending cards and notes that offer encouragement, sympathy, celebration, and gratitude. Furthermore, the group also maintains connections with St. Paul students who are currently attending college. Caring Connections meets the second Monday of each month at 1:00 pm.

Communion Ministers

Communion Ministers bring the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to members who cannot attend worship in the sanctuary. Once a month, the minister brings the sacrament and holds a brief worship service. Pastor Robert provides training for new ministers. As a group, communion ministers meet three or four times a year.

Companion Ministers

Grief, trauma, and illness can lead to isolation. Companion ministers offer friendship and regular connections. They arrange visits and occasionally go on outings. If further assistance is needed, Pastor Robert is notified. Companions gather monthly on the third Monday at 7 PM.

Dementia Support

Many St. Paul families are caregivers for relatives with dementia and frequently experience feelings of being overwhelmed. To provide assistance, a monthly support group gathers at St. Paul on the fourth Monday at 7 PM. Participants share their stories, offer mutual encouragement, learn connection strategies, and pray for one another.

Prayer Group

God gave humans both the desire and the ability to remain in constant dialogue with the Triune God (1 Thes.5:16-18). Yet, many struggle with being still and open in His presence. Simply put, prayer is conversation (both speaking and listening) from the heart with God. Prayer is also a life routine to cultivate and learn. On the first Thursday of the month Pastor Robert meets with those interested in learning and practicing prayer. This ministry has helped write Advent and Lenten devotion books and assisted with prayer services.

St. Paul also provides Congregational Care through pastoral visits and counseling. Please call the church office and let the pastors know if there is the desire to connect or if you or family members face hospitalization or other crossroads moments.

If you would like to get involved with one of the congregational care ministries, please contact Pastor Robert by either calling the church office or sending an email at rwallace@stpaulstitz.net

Giving Culture

St. Paul Annual Lititz Warwick Community Chest Food Drive

Get ready for another exciting showdown between the 8:15 AM and 10:45 AM services in the St. Paul Annual Lititz Warwick Community Chest Food Drive!

- **Which service will contribute the highest total weight?**
- **Can we hit our goal of 2000 lbs. this year?**

We welcome donations of any shelf-stable food items, paper products, laundry detergent (no pods), as well as toothbrushes and toothpaste. Please refrain from donating expired items.

Mark your calendars and bring your donations on Sunday, September 28th, and October 5th.

The 5th Quarter: A Safe Haven for Youth

The 5th Quarter is a special initiative where we welcome the youth of the Warwick School District after a Varsity football game, providing a safe and supervised environment to enjoy food, games, and connect with friends—all at no charge. Last year, we had the privilege of serving nearly 200 young people, thanks to the generosity of our wonderful volunteers and donors!

We will host two 5th Quarter events this fall.

- Friday, September 19: Exclusively for Middle School students.
- Friday, October 17: Reserved for High School students.

We are looking for enthusiastic volunteers to chaperone both events, along with donations of baked goods, drinks and snacks. Sign ups are coming soon. Contact Johnna McCormick for more information, jmccormick@stpaulnititz.net.



Lititz Empty Bowls Dinner

The Empty Bowls Dinner is scheduled for Sunday, November 2, 2025, at Rock Lititz Pod 2 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. This year, all proceeds will support the Lititz/Warwick Community Chest Food Bank.

Ticket Prices:

- \$40 includes a bowl
- \$25 for general admission (no bowl)
- \$10 for children (no bowl)

Ticket Sales:

- Pre-sale for St. Paul will take place on Sunday, September 28th, after both worship services.
- General public tickets will be available on Eventbrite starting Monday, September 29th.

All guests will enjoy an evening of delicious soups, bread and delectable desserts generously provided by local restaurants. \$40 ticket holders can select a ceramic bowl bowl by community artisans.

Over the past five years of hosting this event, St. Paul has successfully raised more than \$50,000 for local charities dedicated to fight hunger.



Back this fall!

Pod & Pub

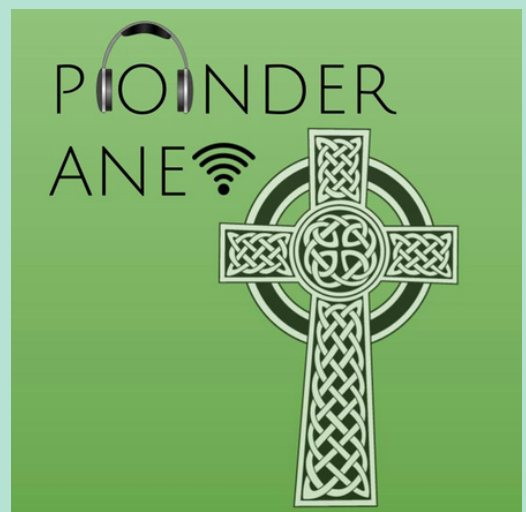
Date & time: Weekly - Starts on Thursday, Sept. 10th at 7pm

Location: Bulls Head Public House

Thirsty for the word in a casual setting? Join us on Thursday evenings at the Bulls Head Pub for engaging discussion and fellowship.

Tune into the latest episode of Pastor Rob's podcast "Ponder Anew", and be part of the discussion. You can find "Ponder Anew" on our website, stpaulsititz.net, as well as on Apple Podcasts and Spotify..

Thirsty Thursdays!



GET INVOLVED VOLUNTEER!

Treasurer Position Available at St. Paul's Christian Early Learning Center

St. Paul's Christian Early Learning Center (CELC) is in search of a treasurer for its governing committee. The responsibilities of the treasurer include:

- Preparing a summary financial report for bi-monthly board meetings
- Reviewing the budget prepared by the CELC director
- Signing checks
- Acting as the primary contact for financial inquiries within the committee and attending bi-monthly meetings.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please reach out to the committee chair, Cynthia Kensinger, kensingers@gmail.com or Karen Schaeffer, karen@stpaulcelc.org.

Office Help and Substitutes

We are seeking volunteers to help assist in the office during the week as needed, from 9 AM to 1 PM.

This role involves light office tasks, handling phone calls, and warmly greeting visitors to the church.

If you can spare a few hours, we would be thrilled to have you join us. Please contact the church office or Ellen Harpel at eharpel@stpaulclititz.net to express your interest.



Sunday Morning Coffee Ministry

We are looking for volunteers to help with coffee preparation on Sunday mornings in the narthex, as well as cleanup afterward.

Details:

- Arrival Time: 8:30 AM
- Coffee Service: 9:15 - 10:45 AM

Once the coffee is brewed, you are welcome to leave the coffee station and attend Sunday School. Return for cleanup before the late service starts at 10:45.

Instructions are available at the coffee station, or training can be provided upon request.

To sign up, visit Timetosignup.com/stpaulworship, or reach out to Ellen Harpel at eharpel@stpaulclititz.net.



ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH
ROOTED AND GROWING

Fall Fest '25



Fall Fest & Blessing of Animals

Saturday, October 4

10AM - 2PM

Join the fun!