

Living Waters

April 2026

Season of Easter

Pastor Zak

Every Sunday we gather to celebrate the Good News of Easter and the power of the resurrection. The joy of this event is so great that it cannot be contained to a single Sunday but an entire season of Easter. This year during the season of Easter, we will be introducing a minor change to our celebration of the resurrection in Holy Communion as we introduce the use of white wine (and dark grape juice). This change to our liturgical practices reflects a deepened connection to the historical and theological Lutheran tradition. According to the ELCA's handbook for worship:

"In the ancient and medieval church, the kind of wine that was used was most likely the wine of the region, whatever its type or color. But in the early Lutheran churches, the most common use was white wine. That may have been because white wine was most common in Germany. But it came to be so, even more, because Lutherans wanted to say that Christ truly gives his blood to us, in, with, under this cup of wine. It is not that the red of the wine makes us think of Christ's blood. It is not that this wine is *like* Christ's blood. But this cup of wine *is* Christ's blood. Lutherans used white wine so that we all would see that this shared cup really is wine, not pretend blood. By Christ's word and promise, not by our pretending or thinking, the wine is also his very blood." ("The Sunday Assembly", pp. 189-190)

As we gather to share in this life-giving meal this Easter, I encourage you to reflect on how it is that Christ meets us in the bread and wine. May we not just think that we hold Christ's body and blood but truly hear that Jesus is really present in these elements that give us the everlasting joy of the Easter resurrection. Have a blessed Holy Week as we enter the joy of Easter once more.

Congregational Meeting April 12 at 11am

There will be a brief congregational meeting on Sunday, April 12 in the Café following the 10am worship service. We will be holding the second vote on the constitutional changes that were outlined at the January annual meeting. Please plan on attending so we can finalize these necessary changes.



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Worship Information

In Person

Sundays

Worship in the sanctuary at 8am and 10am.

Online/Livestream

Watch the service live on [YouTube](#), or anytime after that!

Altar Flowers Sign-Up

Sign up now using our [digital sign-up](#)! Two bouquet slots available for each Sunday; each bouquet is \$30.

Congregational Life...

Letters from Vicar Lyndsay

As we round out our Lenten journey and shift toward Palm Sunday and Holy Week, my gratitude overflows for our community of faith. Between Wednesday evening soup suppers and Holden Evening Prayer to Lenten Sunday School activities, these past weeks have fed my spirit in myriad ways. I hope they have for you, too.

The themes of Holy Week also lend themselves to remembering our nearly 2 million siblings in jail, prison, and other detention centers right now across the country. Last year, a man incarcerated in Division 9 of Cook County Jail wrote, "Remembering Jesus' passion means being changed, taking a step toward life. It's an old story made of people and events that keeps giving light to new situations, showing the way from death to life." Another wrote, "In these days, just as you predicted, you will be handed over to powerful sinners. Here in this place, I am shut in the four walls of my cell. Every morning, I look for the new day's light out of a tiny window and I ask for your mercy. I pray that the powerful of this world who are in charge of the system will not abuse it and violate our rights. I pray to you, Lord Jesus."



I invite you to join us on Palm Sunday as we travel together to Cook County Jail for a family-friendly ecumenical Prayer Walk, where we will sing together and pray for the hope of the resurrection to remind us that no human being is beyond the reach of God's transformative power. More information, including an RSVP form, is available [here](#) on our website.



Two Ways to Celebrate Earth Day 2026

St. Paul members are invited to participate in the Spring Illinois Prairie Path Clean-up project organized by the Friends of the Illinois Prairie Path and the Villa Park F.U.N. (Focus on Unifying Neighbors) Commission on Saturday, April 25, from 9-noon. We will gather at the Historical Museum's Pavillion on Villa Avenue and walk over to the Cortesi Veterans Park for our project. Registration is required at <https://ipp.org/cleanup/>, indicating Villa Park as the location. Each person needs to sign up individually as there is also a liability waiver to sign. There's also a place to indicate an organization that you represent, which would be St. Paul Lutheran Church of Villa Park. Trash bags and pooper-scoopers are provided. Bring your own gloves. We are advised to dress comfortably for the weather. Youth and families are welcome. Contact Marti Seaton with any questions.

The newish Land Acknowledgement sign on St. Paul's property (between the driveways on Ardmore Avenue) will be dedicated on Sunday, April 26, as part of the worship services.

...and More!

Mental Health First Aid Training May 9 at 9am

On Saturday, May 9 at 9am St. Paul will host a Mental Health First Aid Training with [NAMI Metro Suburban](#). Just as CPR helps you respond to a physical emergency, Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) equips you to recognize and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges. This evidence-based, interactive training teaches adults how to support friends, family members, and neighbors who may be struggling. Participants will learn how to identify early warning signs, offer initial support, and connect individuals to appropriate care, all while reducing stigma and building a more compassionate community.

Join us in strengthening our community's ability to care for one another. No prior experience is needed. Lunch will be served at the training.

February 2026 Numbers

Giving: \$37,507 (including online: \$24,013)

Expenses: \$52,991

YTD Giving vs. Expenses: \$(34,088)

Other Statistics

Date	Attendance	Viewers
2/1	127	76
2/8	166	41
2/15	206	45
2/18	100	7
2/22	165	53



Hands & Feet Donations

Although Hands and Feet will not be open in April, we are still collecting items in April. The April collection items are Baby Wash or Baby Shampoo. Thank you for your continued support of this important ministry.

Book Club April 6

A reminder that book club will meet in the Café on Monday, April 6 at 7pm.

May Book Club will feature *The House in the Cerulean Sea* by T.J. Klune. This delightful fantasy book makes for great escape reading. Linus, the quiet and unhappy main character, is a caseworker with the "Department in Charge of Magical Youth." His life is upended by an encounter with orphanage youth who change his life for the better. Join us Monday, May 4 at 7pm in the Cafe to discuss this magical story of acceptance.

Women, Wine, & the Word April 7

Women, Wine and the Word will be meeting on Tuesday, April 7 at the home of Judy Nuehring at 7pm. We will continue our study of the Bible using the Animate series. This month our video presentation is by Nadia Bolz Weber. All are welcome.

Hands & Feet

Hands and Feet will **not** be open on April 5, Easter Sunday. We will reopen on Sunday, May 3.

Under 105 April 16

The next Under 105 Luncheon is Thursday, April 16th. Pastor, librarian, children's author and former St. Paul member, Robin Currie, will share her post retirement global volunteer stories. We gather at 11:30 in the Cafe and lunch is served at 12:00 p.m. The menu includes ham, scalloped and au gratin potatoes, mostaccioli, pineapple casserole, corn casserole, assorted salads, rolls/bread, and assorted desserts. R.S.V.P. by Sunday, April 12th, to Merry Freedlund. See you there!

Family Ministry & Event Photos

Family Ministry Update



“The Great Bake-Down” Murder Mystery Dinner April 11

It’s time for a Bake Down! World renown baker, author, and artisan chef Barry Merry is finally retiring after over 40 years and 40 bakeries opened up in 40 countries, and he’s giving one lucky person the chance of a lifetime. The keys to this multi-million-pound business. Do you know what that means? Contestants are dying to win! This competition features the best bakers from around the world who bake off against each other in weekly challenges that test their creative kitchen skills. At the end of the competition, the baker with the most points wins the coveted golden key, gaining access to the entire Barry Merry bakery franchise. Lennon Drizzle, the front runner with the most points, is found dead, apparently poisoned! Whodunit? You decide! Join the youth of St. Paul for their annual murder mystery fundraiser on Saturday, April 11 from 6-8:30pm. Doors open at 5:30pm. Cost is \$30.00 per person. Reserve your seat [HERE](#). Proceeds go toward the combined High School/Middle School service trip this summer.

VBS 2026—Operation Restoration: Repair. Renew. Re-Create—June 15 thru June 18

Join in the fun with Inventor/Scientist Professor Zak and his assistant robot R.O.S.I.E. (Restorations Operations Support Intelligence Entity) as they share their inventions to repair, renew and re-create our planet and help people. Activities will include crafts, music, service projects & outdoor games. Dinner will be served each night. Volunteers are welcome! Please see Roxanne for more information. Click [HERE](#) to register on our website!

Middle School & High School Combined Summer Service Trip - June 21 to June 27

This year the middle school and high school students will travel together on a joint service trip to Asheville, NC. Middle school students who have completed 6th grade and high school students who have completed 9th grade are invited to participate. The cost is \$350.00/person which includes all travel and housing expenses, and some meal expenses. Deposit: \$100.00. Scholarships are available. Register here. Questions? Please see Roxanne.

Trivia Night Recap – Oh What a Night!

A great time was had by all at the annual Trivia Night held on March 21. An amazing 54 people participated! The night raised \$560.00 towards the combined youth summer service trip to Asheville, NC in June. Placing first, and receiving the traveling “Top Banana” trophy, was “Where in the World is Franklin?” (top) The award for Best Decorations & Theme went to “Beauties and the Beasts” a tribute to Disney (bottom). They even made the Mickey Mouse logo out of Oreos!

Hugs to our youth for helping: Austin Clot, Zane Pedersen, Nathan Hauser, Owen Mohr, and Benny Clot. They each earned \$112.00. Special thanks to the following local businesses who donated gift cards for the two winning teams: Michael Anthony’s, Villa Perk, Mike’s Meat Market, Kuppies, Funky Java, Simon’s, and Anyways! And finally, thank you to the committee members for planning a wonderful evening: Doreen Fritz, Dave Clot, Hannah Hull-Sansone and Roxanne Doremus.



Worship and Prayers

Holy Saturday Virtual Prayer Vigil Saturday, April 4 at 7:00 a.m. to Sunday, April 5 at 7:00 a.m.

Please join us in this virtual experience—a live stream prayer vigil. The stream will become live at 7am on Saturday and will continue until 7am Easter Sunday. Join any time and stay as long as you like. Submit prayer requests by March 29 in the Foyer or use [our online form](#). Prayer requests will appear on the screen during the stream. Join the live stream on our [YouTube channel](#). Help us fill these 24 hours with prayer.

This is a wonderful opportunity to spend some time praying in silence, enjoying that special connection with our God. And you are invited! Thank you for being a part of this special gift of prayer to our congregation, community, and the world.

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.” – Ephesians 6:18



Prayer List

Names will remain on the prayer list for three weeks, or longer by request. To submit a prayer request please use the online [Prayer Request form](#), email prayers@stpaulvp.org, or contact the church office.

Prayers of Healing and God’s Presence

Zaccara & her children (Elm Tree Child Care family), Mike Sansone (brother of Jude Hull-Sansone), Jo-Ann Hooper (sister of Madeline Hooper), Chip & Judy Pacey (parents of Wendy Biggs), Dave Ferge (brother-in-law of Carol Freidheim), Tom & Nell Shallcross, Carole Batek, Danah Boehmer (niece of Teri Fash), Melinda Brent, Paige Cady (friend of Carrie Lavorini), Kristy Fash-Alvarez (daughter of Teri Fash), Margaret Golden, Barb Schreck, Jim Thacker (brother of Cindi Thacker), All Caregivers

Community



Elm Tree News

March has been a busy and joyful month at Elm Tree! Our classroom calves continue to grow right along with our students. Ivy is now 375 pounds and 41 inches tall, while Rizzo has reached 395 pounds and 47 inches. Our girls are getting bigger each month, and the children love checking in on their growth and learning about how to care for animals. March also brought us a small taste of spring, and we are eagerly waiting for more warm days so we can spend extra time learning and playing outdoors.

One of the highlights of the month was Grandfriend's Day, when we welcomed grandparents and special friends into our classrooms for a morning of treats, activities, and time together. It was such a joy to share our learning environment with the special people who mean so much to our children.

We also celebrated St. Patrick's Day, though our mischievous leprechaun managed to evade every trap the children set! Despite our best efforts, he snuck through the classrooms leaving tiny messes behind—and even managed to turn Mrs. Jude's hair green. Thankfully, Mrs. Jude helped us celebrate with some delicious green and rainbow-themed snacks, which the children thoroughly enjoyed.

Of course, we couldn't let the month go by without celebrating Dr. Seuss Week! The children enjoyed crazy hair day, green eggs and ham, and many other wonderfully Seuss-ical activities.

And finally, several of our teachers attended the ILASCD Pump It Up Primary Conference. They returned full of inspiration and have already begun bringing new ideas, activities, and teaching techniques back into our classrooms.

We are grateful for another wonderful month together and look forward to all that spring will bring!

With gratitude,
Ms. Maggy and The Elm Tree Staff



April 2026

All events subject to change. [View the calendar at www.spaulvp.org](http://www.spaulvp.org) for more information and Zoom links, or contact the church office.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 12p Bunco 4:45p Wings Choir 6p Handbells 7p Chancel Choir	2 Maundy Thursday 5:30p Maundy Thursday Dinner Church	3 Good Friday 12p Worship 7p Worship	4 Holy Saturday 24 Hour Virtual Prayer Vigil beginning at 7a
5 Easter Sunday 8a Worship 9a Wired Word 10a Worship	6 10a Prayers & Squares 7p Book Club	7 7p M.E.N.D. 7p Women, Wine, Word	8 9:30a Bible Study 4:45p Wings Choir 5:30p Confirmation 5:30p Wed Dinner	9 11a Chair Yoga	10	11 5:30p Murder Mystery Dinner
12 8a Worship 9a Kairos Class 9a Sunday School 9a Wired Word 10a Worship 11a Congregational Meeting	13 7p Internship Meeting	14 11a Hands & Feet Taskforce Mtg. 2p Rachel Circle	15 9:30a Bible Study 1p Under 105 Setup 4:45p Wings Choir 5:30p Confirmation 5:30p Wed Dinner 6p Handbells 7p Chancel Choir	16 11:30a Under 105 Luncheon	17	18
19 8a Worship 9a Kairos Class 9a Sunday School 9a Wired Word 10a Worship	20 11a Beacon Hill Worship 6:30p Elm Tree Board Mtg.	21 6:30p Council Mtg.	22 9:30a Bible Study 4:45p Wings Choir 5:30p Confirmation 5:30p Wed Dinner 6p Handbells 7p Chancel Choir	23 11a Chair Yoga	24	25
26 Elm Tree 8a Worship 9a Kairos Class 9a Sunday School 9a Wired Word 10a Worship	27	28	29 9:30a Bible Study 4:45p Wings Choir 5:30p Confirmation 5:30p Wed Dinner 6p Handbells 7p Chancel Choir	30		



545 S. Ardmore Ave. Villa Park, IL 60181
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Loved by God, we grow, care, give, and share in Jesus' name.

St. Paul Leadership

Church Council

President, Dan Pedersen
Vice President, Doreen Fritz
Secretary, Sandy Giza
Treasurer, Kathleen Murphy

Representatives

Community Engagement, Marti Seaton
Faith Formation, Julie Frakes
Property, Dave Bard
Stewardship, Kristen Rosenwinkel & Gay Nass
Worship Music and Arts, Carol Freidheim
Youth, Ginger Riccio

Staff

Pastor: Rev. Zachary Wagner
Vicar: Lyndsay Monsen
Parish Administrator: Elizabeth Chitester
Administrative & Computer Specialist: Alice Ramsay
Director of Music: Cynthia Viise
Assistant Director of Music: Margaret Colletti
Coordinator of Youth & Family: Roxanne Doremus
Coordinator of Sunday School: Laura Albert
Social Media/ Wedding Coordinator: Katie Briseno
Worship AV Techs:
Fiona Kordyban, Tony Clavio, Keith Root
Nursery Attendant: Nina Matthis

St. Paul Lutheran Church is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and a Reconciling in Christ community.



Stay Connected

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[Website](http://www.stpaulvp.org): www.stpaulvp.org

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