St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
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Sarver, PA 16055
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stpaulssarver@gmail.com
724-353-2424

Mark your Calendar

November 1
All Saint's Sunday

November 8
Hymn Sing during worship
Thanksgiving Lunch

November 9
Church Council Meeting
6:30pm

November 17
Women's Group Meeting
10:00am

November 21
Women's Craft Day

December 14
Church Council Meeting
6:30pm

December 19
Community Christmas Gift Wrapping Noon-4pm

December 20
Christmas Concert by the Kiski Valley Community Band 3:00pm

December 27
Christmas Caroling

January 11
Church Council Meeting
6:30pm

January 17
Annual Congregation Meeting
Immediately following the worship service

Join us for Worship!
Sunday Mornings
@10:10 am

Sunday School &
Pastor's Coffee Talk
@9:00 am



Demystifying Church Council: Part I by Pastor Shawn

As St. Paul's continues to grow and welcome new members from different backgrounds, we can no longer assume everyone shares the same understanding of how a local Lutheran congregation orders its life. This is especially true of Church Council—what it is, what it does, and who serves on it.

To help, my next several newsletter articles will focus on "Demystifying Church Council." This month we look at what Church Council is and what it does.

The best place to start is St. Paul's Church Constitution that reads, "*The Church Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God, the Lutheran Confessions and the faith and practice of the NALC.*"

Think of it this way. At the end of Matthew's gospel Jesus tells the church to, "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." Church Council simply exists to make sure we do that in a loving, orderly, and fruitful way.

So how does Council do that? Our Church Constitution lists these duties (with a brief explanation of each):

a. "*To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.*" In short, Council exists to keep our church on its God-given mission.

b. "*To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.*" In other words, Council doesn't exist to do all the work of St. Paul's. Rather, it exists to empower ***you*** for ministry.

c. "*To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.*" In short, to do ministry, you need administration. If not, we'll run around like headless chickens. Council seeks to provide that much-needed service.

d. *"To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and to evaluate with them the fulfillment of their calling or employment.*" To put it simply, professional church work can be tough. Council seeks to provide the support and accountability to help my fellow staff and I thrive.

e. *"To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.*" St. Paul writes, "join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us." At its best, Council should be doing just that.

f. "*To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to foster resolution of such conflicts according to Biblical principles.*" To say it another way: with a hundred-plus active members at our church, there's going to be conflict from time to time. Council is a means for our church to address these disagreements in a Godly way.

(Demystifying Church Council: Part I continued)

g. "*To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor*." St. Paul's benefited from this service at the end of Pastor Barnett's tenure as he dealt with numerous health challenges. Some of those serving on Council to this day helped St. Paul's stay afloat during that tough time.

h. "*To emphasize partnership with the NALC as well as cooperation with other Christian congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran*." In other words, though it goes without saying that we are part of a larger Church body that is part of the "One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church," we can tend to forget that as we go about our business here at St. Paul's. Part of Council's purpose is to make sure we stay connected to the larger body of Christ.

i. "*To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel*." The Church needs future pastors. Council is charged with finding them.

j. "*To be responsible for financial and property matters of this congregation*." To put it practically: from keeping the lights on, to taxes, to making sure the parsonage toilet flushes—someone needs to oversee those things, or they would never get done. Well, Council does just that.

So, that's the "official duties" of Church Council at St. Paul's. If you have questions about any of these responsibilities, feel free to ask a Council member or me—we're glad to talk.

Next month we'll look at how they get done through the various committees that Council oversees.

Also, check out the "Council Spotlight" articles. These seek to put a face and name on the various ministries of our Church Council.

Members of St. Paul's
Thank you for your recent contribution to the Adopt a Seminarian Program. As the number of seminarians at the NALS continues to increase, your support is crucial in ensuring they receive a quality education that prepares them to serve as our future pastors and leaders. Thank you!

Maddie Benson
North American Lutheran Seminary

Annual Thanksgiving Lunch
Sunday, November 8 following the worship service. You may sign up for a dish of your choice at the kiosk.

Annual Congregation Meeting
Sunday, January 17 immediately following the worship service. In case of inclement weather the meeting will be held on January 24.

Join us for an afternoon of Holiday Music performed by the Kiski Valley Community Band on Sunday, December 20 @3:00pm.

Christmas Caroling ~ Sunday, December 27
Meet after the worship service in Heide Hall

To Activate St. Paul's Prayer Chain
Call Cheryl Young at 724-822-0579

If you would like to add someone to our prayer list contact the church office.

Dear Church Family,

God is leading me into a new season, and part of that journey includes moving out of the area. On Tuesday, October 13, I am moving from the Saxonburg Community that I have known most of my life to Lutheran SeniorLife Passavant Community in Zelienople. I will be living in a small first floor apartment (850 square feet). It's bittersweet — I'm excited for what's ahead, but it's hard to leave a church family that has meant so much to me. As I prepare for this transition, I want you to know how much your support and faith have meant to me. You have helped strengthen my walk with Christ, and I'm thankful for every prayer, every hug, and every moment of fellowship. I have no plans to transfer my membership to another church. St. Paul's will always be my home. I will miss being here, but I trust God will continue to guide Pastor Shawn and the Members of this Congregation. In closing, I'm reminded of the Halverson Benediction: "You go nowhere by accident. Wherever you go, God is sending you. Wherever you are, God has put you there. God has a purpose in your being there. Christ lives in you and has something He wants to do through you and where you are. Believe this and go in the grace and love and power of Jesus Christ."

P.S. I'll let you know when the boxes are unpacked and my home (or as I call it "my sweet cubicle") is ready for visitors.

Onward and Upward !!

Marlene Lacanic
101 Burgess Drive, Apt. 103
Zelienople, PA 16063
412-443-2241



Council Committee Spot Light

Meridith McGinnis heads the Outreach Committee. Living in Sarver, PA all her life she has attended St. Paul's Lutheran church. Three dogs Bacchus, Luna and Finnegan along with her husband Mike and son Mason makes up the McGinnis family. *I am so blessed to have my St. Paul's family!*

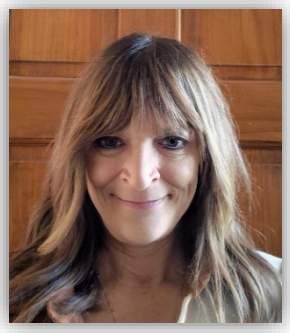
∴ **Outreach in Action: Sharing God's Love in Our Community!**

Great things happen when we come together to serve!

Our Outreach Committee is all about taking God's love **beyond the walls of our church** and into the community around us. Through helping neighbors, supporting local organizations, collecting needed items, lending a hand, and simply showing someone that they are cared for, we have the opportunity to make a real difference.

And the best part? **Everyone can be involved!**

Outreach doesn't require a big commitment. A donated item, an hour of your time, a helping hand, a new idea, or a prayer can have a bigger impact than you might imagine. Every act of kindness matters!



❤ **There's a Place for You!**

Do you enjoy helping others? Have an idea for a community project? Know of a local organization or family that could use some extra support? **We want to hear from you!** Throughout the year, the Outreach Committee will be sharing new ways for our church family to get involved. Watch the newsletter, bulletin, and church announcements for upcoming opportunities to **give, serve, connect, and make a difference.**

Outreach isn't just something we do—it's one of the ways we show our community **who we are and what we believe.**

"Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth." — 1 John 3:18

Let's Make a Difference Together!

Whether you give, volunteer, pray, or share an idea, **you are part of our outreach ministry.** Together, we can share kindness, bring hope, strengthen our community, and show God's love in action.

Come join us—the next opportunity to make a difference may be closer than you think!

Council Notes

- The soffit and facia have been repaired on Heide Hall along with the missing shingles from the sanctuary. Miller Roofing's work and clean up work is all complete.
- Parsonage Pluming Predicaments…Two issues have recently been successfully repaired. Repairs to water supply lines were completed during the year (thank you Eric Brickett) and more recently, leaks developed in an original internal drain line. A plumbing contractor repaired the drain line where the leak occurred. The contractor also identified additional issues that need addressed. Council will budget for this work in 2027 as it is not an immediate emergency at this point.
- "Rigatoni for a Roof" A successful rigatoni dinner was held Thursday October 8 with about 100 dinners being served. A little over $1200 was raise with most items for the dinner begin donated. A matching gift of $1200 was pledged bringing the total to $2400 raised. Thanks to all who set up, cooked, baked, served, organized, and cleaned up. Special thanks to Michelle Hindman and Matt Wilson.
- Thanks to all who donated to Harvest Home. Donated items were delivered to the Cabot Food Bank on Monday, October 19. The need for food in our community is significant. Cabot Food Bank supplies food for 100 people/families each month.
- **Looking ahead to needs at St. Paul's for 2027 and beyond.** Church Council positions need to be filled for 2027 and certainly each year afterward. Every believer is called to serve, using the unique gifts and talents God has given them. Serving is a privilege to steward God's grace and bring his love to others and serving the congregation at the same time. Consider how you can serve St. Paul's Church. **1 Peter 4:10** *"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various*

Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes are due by Sunday, November 15.



Luther's Corner

""As our heavenly Father has freely helped us in Christ, so ought we freely to help our neighbor by our body and works..."

Martin Luther "The Freedom of a Christian" 1520

Deaths IN THE CHURCH FAMILY

Our hearts go out in Christian Love and Sympathy to the following families:
The Negley family on the loss of Clarence Negley
The Schmeider family on the loss of Paul Schmeider

Baptisms IN THE CHURCH FAMILY

Charlie Creedon September 20, 2026
Clark Wells September 27, 2026
Bennett Donatelli October 4, 2026
Maddie Siemer October 25, 2026

Welcome New Members

We welcome into our family of St. Paul's
Chip and Hannah Hasek along with their children
Harry and Karston.

Thanks to our partner, St Paul's Lutheran Church Sarver, for hosting a Shoe Drop Box to help make this project a success!



Certificate of Impact

THIS CERTIFICATE IS PRESENTED TO:

South Butler Community Library

For Completing an Impactful Shoe Drive Fundraiser

We collected 1,716 pounds of shoes!

42.9K Pounds of CO2 Displaced 715K Gallons of Water Saved

Wayne Elsey, Chief Sustainability Officer — funds2orgs group — August 31, 2026 Date

Church Council Contact Information

President: Greg Carns ~ 724-524-0455
Vice President: Hobie Kenton ~ 724-504-5603
Secretary: Meridith McGinnis ~ 724-841-5408
Treasurer: Hobie Kenton ~ 724-504-5603
Christian Ed.: Kendra Smith ~ 412-860-3048
Finance: Doug Donatelli ~ 724-882-5484
Social Ministry: Michelle Hindman ~ 724-290-9647
Stewardship: Ron Mariotti ~ 724-991-4771
Outreach: Meridith McGinnis ~ 724-841-5408
Property/Stewardship: Matt Wilson ~ 724-713-7625

TOY DRIVE

The Outreach Committee hosting a Christmas Toy Drive to benefit the Lighthouse Foundation of Butler. Due to the kindness of donors last year, the Lighthouse Foundation provided toys for more than 500 children throughout our community. The Christmas Tree will be up in November for you to take a tag as a reminder. We will be colleting new, unwrapped toys for children between the ages of 0-17. We will also be collecting gift cards (Walmart, Tar-get, Amazon, etc.) with a value of at least $25 to be given to the older children. Please place your donations under the tree by Sunday, December 6. Thank you in advance for your support in this special ministry.

Church Council is Hosting a Community Gift Wrapping Event on Saturday, December 19 from 12:00pm-4:00pm. Donations of wrapping paper, tissue paper, and tape are needed. We are also in need a few more people who are willing to work as "present wrappers", signing people in/out, and keeping the cookie table organized. You can volunteer for as little or as long as you are willing. Please bring your donations of paper & tape to the church by Sunday, December 6

Candlelight SERVICE

Christmas Eve
Thursday,
December 24
3:00pm & 7:00pm