

The Messenger
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
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FEBRUARY
2026



It was a joyous celebration of the Epiphany of Our Lord on Tuesday, January 6, as we heard again the story of the wise men from the East bringing their gifts to the baby Jesus. We too brought gifts for the baby Jesus, including diapers, wipes, and other baby items to share with local social services.

73 of us gathered for the Holy Eucharist, singing, fellowship, cocoa, and cider... and of course we shared that time with a bunch of cows and a donkey! The children amongst us dressed as the sages from the East and helped the pastor bless the chalk for the Epiphany home blessings.

Thank you to everyone who made our Epiphany celebration so wonderful!





What is Lent?

The word “Lent” comes from a word in Old English—and it means “to lengthen.” It notes that as we journey from Winter towards Spring the days are getting longer—and we are about to embark on a journey with our Lord. In the early church, the time before Easter—the time which corresponds to the lengthening days—was used as a time of prayer, penitence, self-examination, and preparation for celebrating the Resurrection of our Lord. However, during the 2nd century, as recorded by Bishop Irenaeus of Lyons, the time of preparation was quite short. The Council of Nicaea in 325 recommended the approximate length of the season as it now stands. It was during this time that persons would be instructed in the faith and prepared to receive Holy Baptism and Confirmation, rites which are most appropriately celebrated at Easter. Reaching into the rest of the Church, this was the time that penitents—those broken by sin and shame—were reconciled to amendment of life and relationship with the Church. In Latin, the name for Lent is Quadragesima, which indicates that Lent lasts 40 days (Sundays are excluded from that count). These 40 days correspond to the time that Jesus was taken into the wilderness and tempted by the powers of evil. This numbering of days shows that we are on a journey during this season. This is a journey which will see us accompanying Jesus to the cross and eventually to his resurrection from the dead.

Often we give the impression that Christians only experience celebration and the “comfortable” feelings. However in Lent, we confront our own brokenness, depression, sin, and heartbreak and bring them to the foot of the cross, waiting in hope for the Risen Christ to make us whole.

Many people ask about the practice of “giving something up” for Lent. In the Lutheran tradition, we are free indeed to take up such a practice to cultivate discipline, or we are free to not do so. In more recent years, people have been encouraged to take on a helpful spiritual practice, rather than giving something up. So instead of giving up chocolate, consider praying Morning Prayer from the front of the hymnal each day or by making a time for conversation and reflection with the Pastor, using the form for Individual Confession and Forgiveness in the front of the hymnal (page 243).

We are people who are together on a journey, following Jesus Christ. We will follow Jesus through the wilderness, witness his signs and wonders, and go with him to the cross. Don’t miss the opportunity to be in worship and study during these days!

First Holy Communion

Is your family interested in having your child receive their first Holy Communion? Please be in contact with Pastor Moyers or the church office (info@stpaulscordova.org) to discuss our Communion preparation sessions which will be available during Lent. We will schedule these sessions based on the needs of the families who indicate interest. We will offer a First Communion Sunday on Sunday, April 12th.

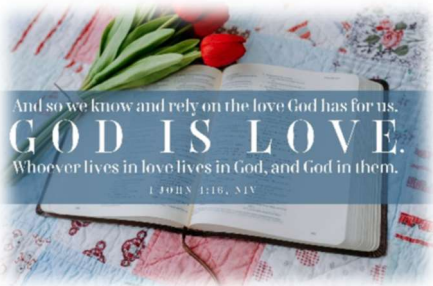


Soup and Sandwich

Saturday, February 28, 2026

We will be in contact with everyone that has helped in the past.

We are always looking for new help! You can contact Donna Saathoff with any questions.



“We love because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19, NIV). This month let’s share God’s love in simple ways — a kind note, a prayer, a helping hand. Look for ways to bless someone around you!

From some of the earliest points in written Scripture, we hear of “sackcloth and ashes,” used as symbols of mourning, humiliation, and weakness in time of danger. In Genesis 37, Jacob puts on sackcloth and ashes as he mourns for his son Joseph, whom he thinks is dead. The ashes themselves were the remains of burnt wood – a symbol that the human body is formed from earthen elements and to the earth shall the body return.

In the ninth chapter of Daniel, the prophet turns to God, begging for the Jews to not be taken into captivity in Babylon. “I turned to the Lord God, pleading in earnest prayer, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes” (Daniel 9:3). Likewise, once God’s message has been preached through Jonah to the city of Ninevah, even the king of Ninevah covers himself in uncomfortable sackcloth – a rough, dark goat hair fabric—and ashes as a sign of repentance or dying to the old way and self.

Jesus makes reference to repenting in sackcloth and ashes in both Luke’s and Matthew’s gospels, saying that if the unrepentant and wicked cities of Tyre and Sidon (himself referencing Ezekiel 26-28) had seen the miracles he had recently performed in Chorazin and Bethsaida they themselves would have, and rightly so, repented in sackcloth and ashes. Chorazin and Bethsaida, however, did not, provoking Jesus’ curse on them: “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida!” (Luke 10:13).

We must remember in this Lenten season what repentance is and what it is not. Repentance is not a mere “sorry” for breaking some rule. We have not repented



2/1 Beth Roesel
2/1 Vicki Sump
2/1 Gareth Davis
2/1 Ember Stichberry
2/2 Preston Rickwood
2/8 Alison Ward
2/8 Bailey Cep
2/9 Tyler Shannon
2/10 Diana Oburgh
2/13 Aubrie Stichberry
2/14 Ella Barletta
2/15 Chris Rice
2/16 Catherine Stichberry
2/17 Henry Spies V
2/19 Bobbie Leaverton
2/19 Liam Brown
2/21 Casey Edsall
2/21 Deneen Rickwood
2/22 Olivia Hawley
2/24 Mackenzie Short
2/28 Sandy Cep

when we are simply sorry for telling a lie, spreading gossip, or hurting another person. Repentance means a complete turnaround. During Advent, we heard of John the Baptist baptize people for repentance, and the word used in Mark 1:4 is *μετάνοια* (metanoia), which Treadwell Walden, in his 1896 work *The Great Meaning of the Word Metanoia: Lost in the Old Version, Uncovered in the New*, describes as a "change of Mind, a change in the trend and action of the whole inner nature, intellectual, affectional and moral." In other words, it is not just about being sorrowful for the ways in which we fail God and our neighbor, but a literal turning away from those things which we allow to draw us into that failure in the first place. We turn from those and turn our hearts back to God.

Early generations of Christians maintained the use of ashes as an outward and tangible sign of inward turnaround, or repentance. Both historians Tertullian (third century) and Eusebius (fourth century) recall persons who were publicly repenting of notorious sin or apostasy did so in ashes, as was prescribed by the Church. By the 700s, a ritual had developed in which a dying person would be laid upon sackcloth and sprinkled with ashes, hearing the words from Genesis 3:19: "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Also by the 700s, the use of ashes to mark the Christian's Lenten journey of repentance made its way into the official liturgies of the Church. William Saunders, former dean of the Notre Dame Graduate School, in an editorial on the use of ashes reminds us of the words of the Anglo-Saxon priest Aelfric, "'We read in the books both in the Old Law and in the New that the men who repented of their sins bestrewed themselves with ashes and clothed their bodies with sackcloth. Now let us do this little at the beginning of our Lent that we strew ashes upon our heads to signify that we ought to repent of our sins during the Lenten fast.'"

This Ash Wednesday, February 18th, we gather and continue the ancient tradition of signing ourselves with ashes as a symbol of our turn back to God.

7 am Ash Wednesday Early Service at Grace Lutheran

**4 pm Ash Wednesday: Holy Eucharist with Imposition of
Ashes at Grace Lutheran**

**7 pm Ash Wednesday: Holy Eucharist with Imposition of
Ashes at St. Paul's**



God has been generous to us in many ways. We believe that sharing these gifts in His name is a tangible way of expressing one's faith. As active Christians, we are called to give generously to assist our neighbors through our time, talents and treasures. If you are not able to attend services in-person, but still want to send offerings to the church; this can be done by mailing offerings to the church or by using Tithe.ly.



The direct link to our Tithe.ly account is <https://tithe.ly/give?c=1747825>



CELEBRARY

2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 8:45 am Holy Eucharist at St. Paul's 10:45 am Holy Eucharist at Grace 4 pm WinterSong at Grace	2 Pastor Away	3 Pastor Away	4 Pastor Away	5	6	7
8 8:45 am Holy Eucharist at St. Paul's 10:45 am Holy Eucharist at Grace	9 Groundhog Day	10	11	12	13	14 Valentine's Day
15 Transfiguration Sunday 8:45 am Holy Eucharist at St. Paul's Sunday School Valentine's Day Celebration 10:45 am Holy Eucharist at Grace	16 Presidents Day	17	18 7 am Grace 4 pm Grace 7 pm St. Paul's Ash Wednesday	19	20	21
22 8:45 am Holy Eucharist at St. Paul's 10:45 am Holy Eucharist at Grace	23 Pastor Away	24 Pastor Away	25 Pastor Away	26 Pastor Away	27 Pastor Away	28 Pastor Away



Pastor	Jonathon Moyers	304 400-5379	revjmoyers@gmail.com
President	Lyn Hollingsworth	410 714-3876	laph@goeaston.net
Vice President, Property	Fred Meers	410 289-1841	fcmeers@comcast.net
Treasurer	Beth Roesel	202 560-4798	elizabeth.m.roesel@gmail.com
Secretary	Nicole Barth	717 682-4857	nmb9393@yahoo.com
Financial Secretary	Henry Hollingsworth	410 714-3877	henryh4640@gmail.com
Worship, Music, Education	Beth Shortall	480 215-5543	bmdshortall@gmail.com
Evangelism, Outreach	Ralph Smith	443 844-4131	ralphwsmith0418@yahoo.com

***WinterSong: The Festival of Candlemas
February 1, 2026
4 pm
Grace Lutheran Church
Easton, MD***




A Winter Festival of Hymns, Music and Scripture commemorating the celebrations of Epiphany, Candlemas, The Baptism of Jesus and the Transfiguration along with the blessing of lights and Candlemas Procession (Candlelight Hymn). This celebration will feature David Nicholson at the organ, the Rev. Jonathon Moyers on French horn, and the choir of Grace Lutheran Church.

A light reception will follow.

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Bible Quiz

The New Testament uses several Greek words to describe love. Which of the following best represents the **selfless, sacrificial love** that God shows to humanity?



A) Eros

B) Phileo

C) Agape

D) Storge

Answer: C (See John 3:16 and 1 Corinthians 13)

The 2026 Sign-Up for the Talbot Interfaith Shelter is on the bulletin board outside the offices; please take the opportunity to sign up for any days/times you are available.



Homeless Outreach



February 1 Joseph Comer
 February 8 Beth Roesel
 February 15 Declan Corley
 February 22 Bobbie Leaverton



February 1 Donnie Davis and Keith Davis
 February 8 Kathy Barletta and Susan Behrens
 February 15 Lee Heinsohn and Lee Moore
 February 22 Henry and Lyn Hollingsworth

February 1 Henry and Lyn Hollingsworth
 February 8 Kathy Barletta and Susan Behrens
 February 15 Lee Heinsohn and Lee Moore
 February 22 Henry and Lyn Hollingsworth



February 1 Joshua Lewis
 February 8 Tom Roesel
 February 15 Declan Corley
 February 22 Couper Barletta



Acolytes

February 1 Ella Barletta
 February 8
 February 15 Declan Corley
 February 22 Couper Barletta

Crucifers

Joshua Lewis



Tellers



Betty Jean Mumford and
 Samantha Lewis

Washington Art Glass has been contracted to fabricate and install heavy—duty custom aluminum frames to protect our 12 stained glass windows. The frames are ordered and will be ready in 6 to 8 weeks, which means the removal of the old material from our windows will take place in mid to late March.

The total cost of the project is \$39,750 and will ensure that our stained-glass windows will continue to bring beauty to our church for years into the future. A sample of the frame and protective glazing is available on the bulletin board outside the offices. A deposit of \$13,250 has been made and our capital fund has a balance of \$28,970. We will incur the final window payment in April/May in the amount of \$16,715 plus about \$2,000 for painting. Our end balance after these costs should be \$10,255.

Thank you for your continued support of these necessary repairs.

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Return Service Requested

Worship Service Begins at 8:45 am
Please inform the church office of any
changes in your personal information:
Address, phone number, marriage or
divorce, or new births so that we
can keep our records up to date.

Secretary: Meredith Lewis—

Cell: 443-496-0903

Office: 410-364-5147

Office Hours: Tue. Wed. & Thurs. 8:00-2:00

Office Email: info@stpaulscordova.org

 **Our Staff**

Reverend Jonathon Moyers

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Choir Director and Organist: Julie Hawley

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