



# Walking Together

St. Paul Lutheran Church and School  
Catonsville, MD  
May 2026

## **ASCENSION: THE GREAT GOODBYE?**

The Ascension of Jesus can seem a little puzzling to us. After all, on the surface it seems like nothing more than “The Great Goodbye.” Luke tells us that while Jesus blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. There you go: the Great Goodbye. Jesus was there one instant and gone the next. Why celebrate and sing about Jesus going away? It seems sad more than anything else.

But appearances can be deceiving. One hymn, Up through Endless Ranks of Angels (#491 in our hymnal), helps us to see that the Ascension is not a farewell scene. It summarizes the full Scriptural truth about Christ rising up into heaven. The hymn shows Jesus in the act of ascending to heaven with “cries of triumph in his ears,” and he has “vanquished” all the fears of his faithful. The Ascension is not goodbye but the final act in Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection victory over evil and death.

The hymn goes on to reveal Christ in heaven, having ascended to his Father. And what he is doing up in heaven is interceding, praying for us. “Before the Father, as our brother, intercede.” Jesus is not gone. He doesn’t go into hiding after his Ascension. He is busy and working. He is praying for us, interceding with his mercy and cross-won forgiveness on our behalf at the throne of God.

The next verse points to the great result of the Ascension for us: the gift of the Spirit. “To our lives of wanton wandering, send your Spirit, promised guide”. Pentecost follows the Ascension in exactly ten days. Jesus ascends and the Spirit descends. Jesus’ victory is communicated to us by the Spirit. The Spirit uses His tools: Word and font and body and blood, and forgiveness. Jesus isn’t far away. He is up close. He is with us through his Spirit and never leaves us.

The Ascension is not “The Great Goodbye.” This wonderful hymn makes sure we know that. It is a glorious event which means life and salvation for us.

Pastor Alms

PS. We are singing this hymn on Thursday, May 14, at our Ascension service at 7 p.m. See you there.

## **FROM THE CONGREGATIONAL PRESIDENT**

Oh wow...this year is getting away from me. I keep thinking we have time to do things, but time keeps running out and here we are...almost summertime. Here are a few things to keep on your radar.

Voters Meeting – The voters meeting this year will be on Sunday, June 14th, after the service. We will vote on next year's budget, have elections for open positions, and cover a few other items of business. The budget will be (as it has the past few years) a deficit budget. Remember, this is meant to be conservative view of our income and a liberal view of our expenditures. As we go through our year, the boards and council are always looking to be good stewards of the gracious gifts that God has given to us.

Our “temporary” bookkeeper, Debbie O, will be relinquishing her title and helping the church transition to a long-term solution. We are looking at hiring someone external to the church to do this function. The long-term goal is to have the bookkeeper and church staff do most of the day-to-day functions so the treasurer can focus on larger issues like budget, consolidation of bank accounts and look to have us set up to do an audit in the next 2 years. We will have more details at the voters meeting on this.

The cemetery house...that has been a long, drawn out, mess. Literally and figuratively. We moved forward with the sale of the house only to find out there were some paperwork snags with the City of Baltimore and the State of Maryland. That has finally been resolved, but the house ended up with some damage from sitting vacant over the winter months. We have finally resolved the paperwork and are now working (again) with our realtor to sell the house.

The learning cottage...has been a source of frustration and a test of our patience. We still have some formal meetings with the county that need to happen for approval. The cottage itself has been purchased and built, we are just waiting on all the correct approvals so we can proceed with the installation.

The capital campaign...we met with LCEF and will be moving forward with the capital campaign in the fall. Cameron Jones will be leading the effort with several other volunteers. We are working through the initial stages and set up with LCEF and will provide an update, along with financials, at our voters meeting.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about anything feel free to contact me.

Blessings to all,  
Aaron Nelson

## **CAPITAL CAMPAIGN**

St. Paul will be working with LCEF to launch a Capital Campaign for our congregation, beginning late-Summer/Fall. The support by LCEF will include responsibilities such as providing guidance on financial structures and establishing realistic goals, training and supervision of the campaign (including provision of training materials), providing initial direction and encouragement, as well as other administrative and project management support. Representing St. Paul as the executive leadership team are Cameron Jones (Campaign Director); Christina Nelson (Campaign Manager); and Jon Brooks (Communications Manager). There will be an initial kickoff meeting led by LCEF held the evenings of May 26 and May 27 at St. Paul. Details, updates, and financials will be shared on or prior to the congregational voters meeting. Any questions or concerns can be initially directed to Cameron Jones. May the Lord guide and bless our efforts to better serve Him and those in our community.

## **NEWS FROM THE ELDERS**

Just two short notes from the Elders this month:

Pastor Alms has been informed that St. Paul, in partnership with the Lutheran Mission Society, will be assigned a vicar from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. By the time you read this, we will know the new vicar's name (the vicar assignment service was held on April 28) and we'll share more information about him with you in a future newsletter article. The new vicar will arrive sometime in August and will serve through the end of July next year. As we look forward to meeting our new vicar, please be sure to let Vicar Tom know how much you have enjoyed having him serve and learn with us this year.

For Sunday morning adult Bible study this summer, we will again have a series of 1-, 2- or (at most) 3- week classes led by (we hope) a wide variety of leaders. If you would like to lead a class, please let Pastor Alms, Kevin Dungey or Bill Oldhouser know. If one of us approaches you to ask you to lead a class, please prayerfully consider doing so (it's just a 1-week commitment!). If you need help deciding on a topic or finding class materials, we have abundant resources (including printed Bible studies, reference works and even video presentations) to help with that.

In His service,  
Bill Oldhouser,  
Board of Elders

## **BALTIMORE AREA NEW MINISTRY EFFORT**

St. Paul 2030 envisioned St. Paul helping to launch a new ministry in the Baltimore area. Churches in Circuit 5 have been meeting at St. Paul to discuss this possibility. Seventeen people from five different congregations are participating in these conversations and in this work. Among the ministries being considered are a campus ministry at UMBC and a new mission presence in Northern Carroll County. Please pray for this effort. Talk to Pastor Alms if you want to join in. The next meeting will be held on May 31 at 3:00 p.m. at St. Paul.

## **ST. PAUL 2030 UPDATE**

As many of you may remember, over the past few months we have discussed St. Paul 2030, the strategy document that paints a picture of where we hope St. Paul will be by 2030. You can review the document here. <https://tinyurl.com/22v6vkb5> This update briefly highlights some of the progress being made as we move toward these goals.

### **1. Church Council Planning for the Next Years**

The Church Council has outlined goals and objectives for the coming year, along with the resources needed to support them and the role the capital campaign may play in that work. Among the goals identified are:

- expanding physical space for the church and school
- creating a mission opportunity in the Baltimore area
- increasing opportunities for spiritual formation and fellowship
- improving the reliability of heating and air conditioning
- updating playground and bathroom spaces

### **2. Creation of a New Ministry in the Baltimore Area**

St. Paul 2030 envisions St. Paul helping to launch a new ministry in the Baltimore area. Inspired by this vision, churches in Circuit 5 have met twice at St. Paul to discuss this possibility. Seventeen people from five different congregations are participating in these conversations and in this work.

Among the ministries being considered are a campus ministry at UMBC and a new mission presence in Northern Carroll County. The next meeting will be held on May 31 at 3:00 p.m. at St. Paul.

### **3. Strengthening Spiritual Formation**

St. Paul 2030 also anticipates new opportunities for spiritual formation in practical Christian topics such as parenting, relationships, and similar areas. The Adult Education Committee has begun discussing ways to offer classes on these topics over the next year or so.

The strategy also pointed toward expanded fellowship and social opportunities. A new Young Adult Group is active at St. Paul, along with a men's group (Memento) and a new walking and hiking fellowship group.

All of this will require both staff and volunteers to help lead and support these efforts. We are continuing the vicar program and will also explore additional staffing opportunities as the years move forward.

## **ONE SPOT LEFT FOR THE MISSION TRIP**

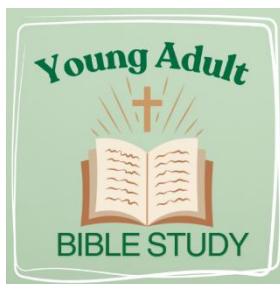
We have one spot left for our rebuild trip to Western North Carolina on July 12-17. We will work to rebuild and repair homes damaged during Hurricane Helene as well as spiritual and emotional support. If you are interested contact Heather or Roy Krakat.

## **ASCENSION DAY SERVICE ON THURSDAY MAY 14 TH AT 7 P.M.**

St. Paul will have an Ascension Day service at 7 p.m. on May 14. According to the Scriptures, Jesus ascended forty days after His resurrection. Jesus' Ascension is a joyous victory, filled with promises and hope for us as we follow our risen Lord. Join us.

## **MEN'S GROUP MEETS MAY 9TH**

The Men's Group at St. Paul will meet again on Saturday, May 9th from 8:30-10 am in the Fellowship Hall. We will start with some food and fellowship. Following that we will complete our Bible study of Noah, using a video series from Lutheran Hour Ministries. We will talk about St. Paul and the Chesapeake Baysox trip for this summer! We will finish with some prayer time. Please RSVP to Jim Baeder. All confirmed males at St. Paul, as well as friends are welcome.



## **YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY**

As usual, we will be meeting on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month at 5:00 p.m. in the sacristy (unless you would like to meet outside in instances of good weather). If you would like to do any additional activities this month, please contact Vicar Malmstrom.

## **YOUTH GROUP BIBLE STUDY AND GAME NIGHT**

As always, we will be meeting on the fourth Friday of the month at 7:00 p.m. for a Bible Study and game night following the office of Compline. We are also trying to organize a hike towards the end of May; please contact Vicar Malmstrom if interested.



## **THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY**

Please join us in the sacristy for a discussion-based Bible study of the Gospel of John. In May we will meet Thursday May 7<sup>th</sup> and May 21<sup>st</sup> from 10 -11 AM.

## **FLOWER CALENDAR FOR 2026 IS UP!**

Please note: There is a new 2026 sign-up sheet for Altar Flowers on the bulletin board. Sign up to honor and to celebrate people in your life and to beautify our sanctuary for worship.

## **EASTER EGG HUNT**

It was an Egg~cellent day in the neighborhood! We welcomed over 100 children and their families from the St. Paul community and neighborhood. Everyone enjoyed a fun-filled morning sharing the Resurrection story, hunting for eggs, and claiming prizes. There were lots of smiles, wonderful fellowship, and several prayer requests. All to the glory of God!



Many thanks to St Paul members for your support and candy donations that filled 2,000 eggs! Special thanks to our Resurrection Trunk leaders:

Cameron & Vanessa Jones, Charlotte McKay and Rachel Johnson, Vicar Tom and Aaliyah Prince; and the incomparable “Bubbleman” team Ron & Betty Bennett for entertaining the crowd.

We also had a fantastic team of volunteers who helped with preparation, publicity, decorating, filling eggs, greeting visitors, registration, hospitality, supervising hunts, assisting, set-up, clean-up, and the list goes on. Thank you to: Jim, Kate and Paul Baeder, Suzanne, Irene & Norm Giguere, Betsy Mitchell, Christina Unglesbee, Brian Erwin, Jeff & Michael Hemmeter, Denise Frech, Yvette Prince, Pam Johnsson, Heather Krakat, Karen Eichelman, Diane Jaeger, Jim & Janet Lister, Pam Piegols, Ed Cohen, Linda Jones, John Borth, Pastor Alms and anyone else we forgot to mention.

Community Events Committee - Keegan Guyett, Irene Giguere, Betsy Mitchell, Kate Baeder, Emily Kolenda, Diane Jaeger, and Karyn Borth.

## **HELP FOR UKRAINE**

The Maryland Branch of The Orphan Grain Train has been sending humanitarian aid to Ukraine since the war began in 2022. Several years ago, we partnered with Alla Vasylieva with Bible Orphan Ministry to help support Ukrainian orphanages in need of supplies due to the war. Plans are underway to ship Alla a forty-foot container of much-needed aid. We are currently collecting the following items: children’s diapers (all sizes), wipes, sanitary pads, NEW underwear and socks (all sizes), toys and games for all ages (NO batteries, None requiring reading of English), bicycles, scooters, roller skates, backpacks and school supplies. Most of these items can be new or slightly used. If you would like to help the children of Ukraine, please drop items off at the church on or before May 24 th . Your donation will be greatly appreciated by the children and their caregivers! If you have any questions, please contact Irene Giguere at [irmiguere@gmail.com](mailto:irmiguere@gmail.com). God bless you, in advance, for caring!



## **SCHOOL NEWS**

**May 8** We present an Evening of Music and Art on Friday, May 8. We would love to have you there enjoying the students' enthusiasm for spring, music, and life in general. The music portion of this event will begin at 6:00 sharp in the chapel. Come early to check out the artwork and writing in the Fellowship Hall.

For those of you who prefer a daytime show, we have our Dress Rehearsal on Friday, May 8, at 1:00 pm.

**May 28** Graduation at 6:00 pm. Our class of 16 students will be graduating, including one whose father graduated from St. Paul! These students will go on to attend various schools in the area. Including: local public schools, Concordia Prep, St. Mark's, and Notre Dame. We're always excited when our graduates return to functions here, and we can catch up. We'll pray God's richest blessings on this group and look forward to hearing about all their successes as they go forward.

### **ST. PAUL TAKES A WALK!**

A group of 10 gathered on a beautiful Saturday morning for St Paul's first walking group adventure along the historic Trolley Trail #9. It was a gentle 2.2-mile round-trip walk starting in Old Ellicott City, continuing to Oella and back. We enjoyed the fresh air, fellowship, and some easy exercise. The fun continued with lunch at the Trolley Stop Restaurant.

In case you didn't know! This trail serves as a connection between Catonsville and Main Street in EC. It follows the historic route of the #9 electric trolley line which served the area for 55 years until 1955. It has since become a popular family-friendly, easy walking path with scenic woodland views, a gentle stream with small waterfalls, and a unique elevated boardwalk.

Join us next time! We'll meet again at 10:00am, Saturday, May 9th in parking Lot A, next to the Trolley Stop (6 Oella Ave, Ellicott City). If the lot is full, parking is permitted along Frederick Road. Contact Heather Krakat or Karyn Borth



## SPRING FEST ON MAY 2, 2026, FROM 11 AM TO 3 PM!

Spring Fest is a welcoming, family-friendly gathering that invites members of the surrounding community to have fun together with church members and school families. There will be all sorts of things to do!

- a visit from the Southeastern District comfort dog, Kezia,
- a bookmobile/book exchange,
- food trucks,
- children's attractions,
- outdoor games
- a craft fair.
- And more activities coming.



## RAINFOREST VBS



Get ready to explore the nature of God at this year's Vacation Bible School. June 22-26 from 9am-12pm. There are many ways to serve at VBS. If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering this summer, please contact Kirsten Hall at [kirsten.hall@splscatonsville.org](mailto:kirsten.hall@splscatonsville.org) <https://tinyurl.com/4bc59m2a>

Sign-up your child 3 yrs. old to fifth grade on the church website at [www.stpaulcatonsville.org](http://www.stpaulcatonsville.org)



## ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN THANK YOU!

Thank you for your generous donation to help us serve others in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Aid was sent to Ghana, Liberia, South Sudan, Cameroon, Ukraine, Kentucky and Baltimore City. God's gifts abound. We thank you, St. Paul for your generosity.

On April 23, OGT loaded a shipment to Hazel Green Food Project (HGFP), Hazel Green, Kentucky. HGFP sits in one of the poorest counties in all of Appalachia. We loaded winter and summer clothes for men, women, and children; plus-sized clothes; linens including those marked specifically for Appalachia; medical and hygiene supplies; soft toys; sewing machines; and more. This totaled 1,227 pieces and weighed 21,920 lbs. Our partners in Hazel Green eagerly awaited the shipment which arrived on Friday, the 24th. Thank you to all St. Paul members who volunteer at the warehouse and to those who continue to donate needed items.

## SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT THANK YOU!

Thank you for your faithful partnership in the Gospel through your Mission Partnership Support. Your generosity is a true blessing, and I give thanks to God for each of you.

Because of your support, mission and ministry are happening every day throughout our District. Congregations are being strengthened, new starts are being planted, and lives are being touched with the hope of Christ. Your gifts help train and form church workers, support our schools and educators, care for congregations in transition, and provide resources for outreach in communities to hear the Gospel. Thank you!

Your Mission Partnership Support is making it possible for us to walk alongside congregations and leaders through times of challenge and opportunity, offering guidance, encouragement, and tangible support. From worker wellness initiatives to leadership development, from disaster response to ministry renewals, your partnership is at work in powerful and meaningful ways. Thank you!

## SERVING IN MARCH

	Cantor	Reader	Greeter	Usher 1	Usher 2
May 3 <sup>rd</sup>	JB Jaeger	Jay Barringer	Dave Carnes	Ben Haberl	Jim Baeder
May 10 <sup>th</sup>	Jim Baeder	Michelle Johnson	Pat Wesselman	Jon Brooks	John Brooks
May 17 <sup>th</sup>	Jim Baeder	Pastor Roemer	Ed Cohen	Roy Krakat	Caleb Ferry
May 24 <sup>th</sup>	Caleb Ferry	Kate Baeder	Debbie Oldhouser	Jeffrey Hemmeter	Keegan Guyett
May 31 <sup>st</sup>	Caleb Ferry	Ed Cohen	Irene Giguere	Bill Oldhouser	Cole Peterson

## DAILY READINGS

	May 3	Fifth S. of Easter (Cantate)	Isaiah 12:1-6	Psalm 66:1-8	James 1:16-21	John 16:5-15
	May 10	Sixth S. of Easter (Rogate)	Num. 21:4-9	Psalm 107:1-9	James 1:22-27 or 1 Tim. 2:1-6	John 16:23-30 (31-33)
	May 14	The Ascension of Our Lord	2 Kings 2:5-15	Psalm 110	Acts 1:1-11	Mark 16:14-20 or Luke 24:44-53
	May 17	Seventh S. of Easter (Exaudi)	Ezek. 36:22-28	Psalm 51:1-12	1 Peter 4:7-11 (12-14)	John 15:26-16:4
<b>PENTECOST</b>	May 24	The Day of Pentecost	Gen. 11:1-9	Psalm 143	Acts 2:1-21	John 14:23-31
<b>TRINITY</b>	May 31	The Holy Trinity	Isaiah 6:1-7	Psalm 29	Rom. 11:33-36	John 3:1-15 (16-17)

# Orphan Grain Train †

## Maryland Branch

### Disaster Relief for Victims of Hurricane Helene

A Free Marketplace event will be held in Spartanburg, SC on May 30 to provide resources for families still in recovery from Hurricane Helene. Working with Lutheran Church Charities (LCC), Samaritan Feet, LCC Comfort Dogs, and a host of other organizations active in disaster response. Help is needed in securing items for this event. There is a special call for space heaters and oscillating fans. Samaritan Feet is assisting with 275 pairs of shoes, LCC is helping with organizing and funding the shoes. At a recent meeting with Orphan Grain Train – Millersville, when they noticed that space (warming) blankets were needed for emergency kits, they donated 750 of them. The response is growing. The hearts of God's people are being moved to compassionate response.

Also needed are basic pantry goods, such as flour, sugar, baking powder and baking soda. We are also working on building emergency "go bags". Supplies needed include: Glow sticks, solar camping lanterns.

#### Link for Amazon Wish List:

<https://a.co/030tOe7c>

#### Link for Solar Camping Lanterns

[Amazon.com: Solar Camping Lantern 4 Pack, Rechargeable LED Lantern with Flashlight, USB-C & Solar Powered, Collapsible Emergency Lights for Hurricane, Power Outages, Outdoor Use : Sports & Outdoors](#)

**Materials can be sent directly to Spartanburg County Emergency Management Center at 175 Community College DR, Spartanburg SC 29303**

Deaconess Sally J Hiller  
1536 Meyers Station Rd.  
Odenton MD 21113

## **FROM LACHELLE REDD AND FAITH/WORK: SPRING HAS SPRUNG AND JESUS IS IN FULL BLOOM!!!**

Through the consistent support of St. Andrews, the Bride Builders group, and St. Paul in Catonsville, we were able to host a Good Friday Food Giveaway for our incredible community. The sight was unforgettable—cars pulling up to find neighbors lined up with shopping carts and bags, stretching nearly two blocks long. To God be the glory!

And just when it felt like the blessings could not overflow any further, Pastor Sorenson of Emmanuel Lutheran and I felt called to take our faith directly to the people. We stepped out on a prayer walk, meeting individuals right where they are—in places of pain, struggle, and need—simply asking, “Would you like prayer?” The response was overwhelming. So many said yes. My heart is still overflowing from the goodness of those moments.

We are reminded that the seeds planted in this community long ago are bearing fruit. God continues to show us that Sandtown is fertile ground—all we must do is pray, and He will do the rest.

Please take a moment to enjoy the pictures from these beautiful experiences. We humbly ask that you join us in prayer for our next walk on the 30th—that it will be just as impactful—and that God will raise up more pastors to support the work being done in Sandtown. Pictured you will see, Pastor Sorenson (Emmanuel Lutheran Church), Pastor Alms (St. Paul, Catonsville), Pastor Sorenson Sr. (Pastor Sorenson's Father), and Pastor Suah Deddeh (Crosswalk, Columbia)

We cannot continue this mission without your support. Please continue to pray, to give, and to share this work with others. And then, pray and give some more.

With gratitude and love,  
LaChelle Redd

P.S. Our pastors were joined of course, by me, but most importantly by residents from the community and members of our program!!! GOD IS THE GREATEST!!!

