

St. Paul's News

February 2026

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 156, 215 North Warren Street
Orwigsburg, PA 17961
Office: 570-366-2316
Fax: 570-366-7357

www.stpauls-orwigsburg.org

LENT AND ASH WEDNESDAY ACCORDING TO LUTHER

As we approach Ash Wednesday and prepare to enter the season of Lent, it's worth remembering how Martin Luther understood this time in the church year.

Lent: A Season of Returning to Christ

Luther did not object to the season of Lent. He valued it as a time for believers to slow down, reflect, and return to the heart of the gospel. He *did* however reject the idea that Lent (or any spiritual discipline) could earn God's favor.

Luther believed Lent could be deeply meaningful when practiced in the right spirit. In the Small Catechism he wrote that "fasting and bodily preparation are indeed a fine outward training." In other words, spiritual disciplines are good when they help us focus on Christ, rather than on ourselves.

For Luther, Lent was a season for:

- honest self-examination
- renewed trust in God's mercy
- deeper engagement with Scripture
- practices that shape the heart, not impress God

Lent, he believed, was a time to remember and be who we are and whose we are.

Ash Wednesday: Repentance and Hope

Luther did not object to Ash Wednesday, nor did he insist on it. The imposition of ashes continued in many "Lutheran" churches, but he treated it as a practice neither commanded nor forbidden by Scripture.

What mattered to him was not the ashes themselves, but the truth they point to:

- we are dust
- we are mortal
- and our hope rests in Christ alone

Ash Wednesday, for Luther, was a time for believers to honestly acknowledge their sinfulness and their need for God's grace. It should never leave believers in despair. Rather, it should point them back to the promises of baptism—that is, daily dying to sin and rising to new life in Christ Jesus.

A Season Rooted in Grace

If Luther were to speak to us today, he might remind us that Lent is not a burden but a gift. It is a time to clean our hearts and lives, to return to the basics of our faith, and most importantly, to rediscover the depth of God's love for us in Jesus Christ.

As we enter this holy season, may we do so with open hearts—ready to be renewed, reshaped, and drawn closer to the One who walks with us from ashes to Easter.

Peace to you and yours!
Pastor Mike

“SECOND SUNDAY” SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School continues on February 8! For students aged **7 through 12** we study the Bible and do activities based on the lectionary series from **9:15 to 10:15 a.m.** Children ages **1 through 6** are invited to join us for Bible stories, crafts, a snack, fun, and fellowship **during the 10:30 a.m. worship service.** Bring a friend, all are welcome!

Below is a list of Sunday School dates for this school year: February 8, March 8, April 12, and May 10

Movie Night!

As a Valentine's Day treat, all students are invited to join us Friday, February 13 for a movie night in Reidler Hall! Parents can drop off their child/children at 5:30 p.m. Pizza, popcorn, candy, and drinks will be provided. Get ready to relax and cuddle up by bringing a blanket and pillow. To avoid spills, please also bring a water bottle that can be closed. Please pick up your child by 8:00 p.m.

Reminders:

Looking ahead for when the snow starts flying...Families, please make sure I have your cell phone number. If we have to cancel church on a Second Sunday I will text you to let you know.

If you have not filled out a contact/information sheet and Media Release Form, please see me for one.

Thank you for your continued support of the Sunday School program!

Sarah Eger 570-394-3522 (cell)
swoodring86@hotmail.com

EASTER FLOWERS

With Easter falling on Sunday, April 5, it's time to order your Easter flowers. Order forms can be found later in this newsletter. The deadline to order Easter flowers is Sunday, March 8.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Our annual congregational meeting will be on Sunday February 8, immediately following the 10:30 a.m. service. In case of inclement weather (or other emergencies), our annual meeting will be held on the following Sunday at the same time.

Members should pick up and review our 2025 Annual Report PRIOR TO this meeting. Reports are available in the narthex or can be requested by calling our church office. Please make a special effort to attend this important annual meeting!

ASH WEDNESDAY

This year, our Ash Wednesday service will take place on Wednesday, February 18 at 7 p.m. The service will include the imposition of ashes and the sharing of Holy Communion. Please invite a neighbor or friend to join you for this special service.

PROGRESSIVE DINNER

The Evangelism Committee has set Saturday, February 28, as the date for a “progressive” dinner which will begin at 6:00 p.m. A sign-up sheet is in the Gathering Room. You can also call our church office to reserve a place for this event. Please sign-up or call by Saturday, February 14.

ADULT FORUM

Adult Forum will continue the study of Psalms on Sunday, February 1 and 8. We will then turn our attention to the Lenten season using Adam Hamilton's book “Why Did Jesus Have To Die?” beginning February 15 and continuing through March 22.

We meet on Sundays at 9:15 a.m. in the church parlor and Pastor Mike takes part in our study. Any questions, please contact Barbara Lafko at bjlafko@yahoo.com or call (570) 366-1208 or the church office.

CRAFTERS' GUILD NEWS

Beloved, let us love one another -1 John 4:7

The Crafters' Guild has a small selection of Valentine's Day items - handmade Valentine scripture cards, earrings, table runners, Cookies in a Jar gifts, note cards, and more available for purchase in the Gathering room until Valentine's Day. Take any items you like and leave a donation. All proceeds will go to support the ministries of the church.

This year, Robin Zimmerman and other crafters are creating beautifully knitted Pocket Prayer Squares as an outreach ministry of the Crafters' Guild. The squares have a cross knitted into the pattern and a small poem is attached as a message of comfort. Look for the baskets with the Pocket Prayers in the narthex and Gathering room. They are free for you to take for yourself or share with others.

Join us Friday, **February 27 at 12 noon** in the basement craft room. We will be creating Spring-themed items while we wait out the cold winter weather.

On **Sunday March 29**, the Crafters' Spring creations will be on display in the basement and available for purchase through Mother's Day. We are also planning a Mother's Day bracelet project. Stay tuned for more information.

For more information or to join our email list, please contact Amy at the church office (570-366-2316).

VALENTINES FOR THE HOMEBOUND

Our STiC group has potted plants, gift bags, and Valentine's Day cards for our homebound members. Please stop by the Gathering Room to sign our "Valentines."

Every drop counts, and so does every penny! Thanks to the generosity of folks who put change in our penny jar, we were able to completely cover the costs of sending plants and cards to our homebound!

PRESIDENT'S DAY IS FEBRUARY 16

President's Day invites us to look back with gratitude at leaders who helped shape our country and allowed us to look to the future with hope. As we remember the presidents who guided this nation in its most challenging days, the examples of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln stand out.

Washington offered steady leadership when the young republic was still fragile, modeling integrity and restraint. Lincoln, guiding a nation divided, called Americans to courage, compassion, and renewed unity. Together, their words and witness continue to show us what principled thoughtful leadership can be.

As we begin to celebrate the 250th anniversary of our nation, we are reminded that the American experiment—grounded in liberty, responsibility, and the pursuit of the common good—must continue in our own time.

May we honor the past by striving to live out our nation's values and ideals with wisdom, humility, and a renewed commitment to one another.

REBATES FROM BOYER'S FOOD MARKETS

If you participate in Boyer's Food Market's Rebate Program, St. Paul's will receive a rebate of 1% of your grocery shopping bill.

Please pick up a scannable Boyer's Food Market keychain card today! Shop locally and help your congregation and your neighbors!

DON'T WANT CHURCH ENVELOPES?

If you prefer not to receive church envelopes, please contact our church office. If you call outside office hours, leave a message with your name and phone number. We will ask our envelope provider to remove your information from our mailing list, as soon as they can.

STiC NEWS

Dear Friends,

The interconnectedness of the people here at Saint Paul's has been noticeable and dear to our hearts ever since we joined in 2019...we see the gospel in action everyday! And so, it is no surprise that putting Valentine cards and gifts together for our homebound has grown to include not only our home visitation people and Sunday School children, but our crafters group as well. Much creative thinking goes into putting it all together for what would bring the most blessing to these members and friends of the congregation! The cards are in the Gathering Room for everyone to sign and we are especially grateful for those volunteers who carry these gifts to folks who cannot be with us. Blessings to all who had a part in making this happen!

Plans are underway for Earth Day, on Saturday April 18, here in Reidler Hall, so please save the date! Details are coming!

En Cristo,
Sue Reier and the STiC crew

SOUP & CHILI SALE RETURNS!

As an "appetizer" to Super Bowl Sunday, the award-winning Men of St. Paul's will host a Chili & Soup Sale "on the square" on Saturday, February 7, beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Come early for the best selection of delicious chilis, tasty homemade soups, and just baked breads and pastries.

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

- 1.) Council is looking forward to the near-term installation of four handrails on the sanctuary steps to ensure a safer worship environment.
- 2.) To the great joy of the Reidler Hall Care Committee, there has been a flurry of rental requests by members and the community to utilize newly renovated Reidler Hall.

WEATHER CHECK

If you're unsure if worship is still on due to bad weather, just give us a call at (570) 366-2316 and listen to the outgoing message. You can also check our Facebook page for any updates. Stay safe — check before you head out!

A CARD CAN MAKE A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE!

Our Evangelism Committee enjoys sending cards to brighten the day of those who are unable to join us for worship. To continue this outreach, it relies on up-to-date information—especially for military members and college students who are away from home.

If you have new details or address changes, please call the church office at 570-366-2316. Thank you for helping us stay connected and continue this valuable ministry.

“SIMPLY GIVING” MAKES GIVING SIMPLE

“Simply Giving” is a secure and convenient way to support our church through electronic funds transfer.

You can set up recurring gifts from your bank account, debit, or credit card, with no fees and full flexibility to adjust your giving anytime. Contributions can go to the general offering or specific church funds, helping you to give on a regular basis.

For more information or to enroll, contact our Treasurer, Karen Travor, or leave a message at the church office (570-366-2316).

GET READY TO “SPRING FORWARD”

Daylight Saving Time begins at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 8. Remember to set your clocks ahead one hour (“spring forward”) before going to bed on Saturday, March 7.

REIDLER HALL NEWS

Winter is a perfect time to work on indoor projects...so the Reidler Hall Committee is ready to give our kitchen a facelift!!

Kerry Sterner will replace the counters, remove the wooded island and replace it with a stainless-steel island, add new sinks with higher faucets to accommodate bigger pots and pans, add in a dishwasher and rework the cabinets to accommodate the dishwasher and the second fridge.

Due to the floors being in poor shape, Kerry will also lay flooring to match the new flooring in the hallway. These changes will happen in a few stages, over the next few months to accommodate current rental appointments and shipment of materials.

If you missed the Reidler Hall Shower or you would still like to help transform this space and you would like to sponsor a new item in the kitchen (ex: dishwasher, sink, island), please see a committee member. Any and all help is greatly and gratefully appreciated!! We hope to use the kitchen to serve both our church and community in loving and meaningful ways.

If you, your family, or friends are interested in renting or using the space in the basement, the Facility Use and Rental Agreement forms have been updated. Please see Amy, in the church office, for an updated form.

Thank you for your continued support!

The Reidler Hall Committee
Sarah Eger

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

If you're a parent or guardian of a young person who has not yet received Holy Communion and would like to begin their preparation for the Sacrament, please contact Pastor Mike.



UP-COMING COMMUNITY EVENTS AT REIDLER HALL

The Reidler Hall Committee is excited to announce that we will host 2 free community events in March and April:

Spring Fling Book B-I-N-G-O!!

Saturday, March 7 from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Free admission and
light refreshments for sale

*Everyone will leave
with at least 1 book!!*

Run by
the Orwigsburg Area Free Public Library

"Healthier Living with Diabetes"

A free 6-week program
for adults aged 60+
taught by certified instructors from
Diakon Community Services.
Participants will learn techniques to
manage symptoms of Type II diabetes.

**To enroll
you must sign up with Diakon
at (570) 624-3017**

This group will meet on
Thursdays from 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
starting on March 19 and
ending on April 23.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR FOOD PANTRY

We invite everyone to continue supporting our Community Food Pantry. During these cold winter months, many local families depend on this ministry to help them get through these difficult times.

When you shop for groceries, please consider picking up one or more non-perishable items for the pantry. When each of us does even a little, our hungry neighbors will be truly blessed.

Thank you for your generosity and kindness!

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Jean Premich
- 3 Kate Bolinsky, Janice Blair
- 4 Fern Houser, Kathleen Miller,
Chris Kerzman
- 5 Walter Kennett, Grayson Dewald
- 6 Dominick Just
- 7 Trisha Bachman
- 8 Wayne Withers, Sydney Spotts
- 9 Kurt Schenck, Cadey Spotts,
William Wimbrow
- 10 Lindsay Cable, Lauren Cable,
Riley Pontician, Brady Seigfried
- 12 Kim Rismiller
- 14 Debbie Ferrar
- 15 Dan Mosher
- 16 Barbara Kaunas
- 18 Cheryl Riotto
- 19 Sharon Starr
- 20 Gail Wolfe, Skyla Baer
- 21 Abigayle Krewson, Amy Kokitus,
Greg Shappell, Elizabeth Tomko,
Patty Marcusky, Carol Hannaway
- 22 Tonya Shappell, Mya Kline,
Ivey Hinnershitz
- 23 Joanne Emerich
- 25 Fritz Miller, Ryan Miller, Nora Goessel
- 26 Doug Hinnershitz
- 27 Karen Shoener
- 28 Chase Horbal, Mateo Patterson

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 14 Leslie & Bruce Guldin

LARGE PRINT NEWSLETTERS ARE AVAILABLE

If you or someone you know has difficulty reading our newsletter and would like to receive a large print version, please contact Pastor Mike, Amy, or leave a message on our answering machine in our church office.

*"Let us have faith that right makes might,
and in that faith let us, to the end, dare to
do our duty as we understand it."*

Abraham Lincoln, Cooper Union Address, 1860

FEBRUARY FLOWER SPONSORS

FEBRUARY 1

Altar: OPEN

Chancel: OPEN

FEBRUARY 8

Altar: In loving memory of my husband, Tom's
birthday by his wife, Gwen.

Chancel: In honor of Kurt's birthday by Sue
and Juli Schenck.

FEBRUARY 15

Altar: In loving memory of my husband, Tom
Wertman by Faith, Cody, and Kendra.

Chancel: In honor of Samantha and Chintan
Patel-Clarke on the occasion of their
marriage.

FEBRUARY 22

Altar: OPEN

Chancel: OPEN

FEBRUARY BULLETIN SPONSORS

FEBRUARY 1

In memory of Irma Kamp by Tina Butler,
Victoria Gallagher, & Alexandria Spittler.

FEBRUARY 8

In memory of my father, Francis Piacine, by
daughter, Danielle.

FEBRUARY 15

OPEN

FEBRUARY 22

OPEN

CONTACT YOUR PASTOR


Your pastor is here for you in life's important moments. Please reach out to him when you or a loved one is seriously ill, injured, hospitalized, or facing surgery. Contact him in times of grief, crisis, or major life changes. Let him know when you need prayer, spiritual guidance, a listening ear, or help to deal with relationship problems. Your pastor is also available to visit homes, share Holy Communion, and plan baptisms, weddings, and funerals. If you aren't sure that you should call Pastor Mike, please call him anyway!

FEBRUARY 2026

SERVICE SCHEDULE



SUNDAY	FEBRUARY 1	FEBRUARY 8	FEBRUARY 15	FEBRUARY 23
	<u>8:00 AM</u>	<u>8:00 AM</u>	<u>8:00 AM</u>	<u>8:00 AM</u>
GREETER	Krista Harding	Krista Harding	Krista Harding	Krista Harding
USHER	Pastor Mike	Pastor Mike	Pastor Mike	Pastor Mike
LECTOR/COMMUNION ASSISTANT	Connie Teter	Kay Weidensaul	Amy Dewald	Ruth Ann Withers
	<u>10:30 AM</u>	<u>10:30 AM</u>	<u>10:30 AM</u>	<u>10:30 AM</u>
GREETER	Evan Davis	Jerry Goessel	Tina Butler	Sarah Eger
USHER	Gwen Wehr	Karen Travor	Wendy Schuld	Carl Heintzelman
LECTOR	Deb Bolinsky	Eric Eger	Jeff Ritschel	Juli Schenck
COMMUNION ASSISTANT Zimmerman	Becky Smoot	Bill Smoot	Sue Reier	Robin
ALTAR GUILD	Glenda Bright Diane Brobst	Glenda Bright Diane Brobst	Tina Butler Chris Long	Joyce O'Rourke Becky Smoot
COUNTERS	Gwen Wehr Glenda Bright	Rosalie Wingle Diane Brobst	Joyce O'Rourke Gloria Dierwechter Pat Davis	Connie Teter Joanne Emerich Barb Sterner



ASH WEDNESDAY at 7 PM ON FEBRUARY 18

GREETER	Deb Bolinsky
USHERS	Diane Brobst
LECTOR	Pat Kunkle
COMMUNION ASSISTANT	Tina Butler
ALTAR GUILD	Tina Butler and Chris Long



OUR PASTOR & STAFF

Reverend Michael T. Petresky	570-366-2316 - Ext 11	pastormike@stpauls-orwigsburg.org
Justin McClure, Organist/Choir Director	570-573-4076	justin@stpauls-orwigsburg.org
Amy Dewald, Office Support Staff	570-366-2316	office@stpauls-orwigsburg.org
Carl Heintzelman, Sexton	484-408-5152	No Email Address
Karen Travor, Treasurer	610-507-2797	karen@stpauls-orwigsburg.org
Wayne Lutsey, Financial Secretary	570-617-9617	cwlutsey@gmail.com
Jessica Swick, Social Media Manager	936-648-6809	jessica@stpauls-orwigsburg.org

OUR CHURCH OFFICE IS OPEN MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY FROM 9:00 A.M. TO 12 NOON.



FEBRUARY 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 4 EPIPHANY Worship with Holy Communion 8 & 10:30 a.m. Adult Forum 9:15 a.m.	2 GROUNDHOG DAY! Property 6:30 p.m.	3 Evangelism 6:30 p.m.	4 Bell Choir 6 p.m. Chancel Choir 7 p.m.	5 BSF 7:00 p.m.	6	7 Super Bowl Eve Chili & Soup Sale on the Square 8:30 a.m. Worship w/ Holy Communion 5:30 p.m.
8 5 EPIPHANY & ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING “Second Sunday” Worship with Holy Communion 8 & 10:30 a.m. Adult Forum & Youth Sunday School 9:15 a.m. Children’s Sunday School 10:30 a.m. Congregational Meeting follows the 10:30 a.m. service	9 Council 7 p.m.	10	11 Bell Choir 6 p.m. Chancel Choir 7 p.m.	12 BSF 7:00 p.m.	13 Second Sunday Movie Night 5:30 p.m.	14 VALENTINE’S DAY  Worship 5:30 p.m.
15 TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD & “NEW MEMBERS” SUNDAY Worship with Holy Communion 8 & 10:30 a.m. Adult Forum 9:15 a.m. Refreshments & fellowship follow our 10:30 a.m. service.	16 PRESIDENTS’ DAY HOLIDAY Church office is closed!	17	18 ASH WEDNESDAY 7:00 p.m.	19 BSF 7:00 p.m.	20	21 Worship 5:30 p.m.
22 1 LENT Worship with Holy Communion 8 & 10:30 a.m. Adult Forum 9:15 a.m.	23	24	25 Bell Choir 6 p.m. Chancel Choir 7 p.m.	26 BSF 7:00 p.m.	27 Crafters’ Guild 12 noon	28 Worship 5:30 p.m. Progressive Dinner 6 p.m.

GROUNDHOG DAY

Every year on February 2, all eyes turn to Punxsutawney, PA, where Phil, the groundhog, makes his annual weather prediction. Tradition says that if he sees his shadow, winter will linger for six more weeks; if not, an early spring is on the way. Groundhog Day has roots in old European Candlemas traditions, brought to Pennsylvania by German settlers. Over time, the humble groundhog became the star of the celebration. Punxsutawney Phil reminds us that spring is never too far off—and that a little fun and good fellowship can brighten even the darkest and coldest days.

Easter Flower Orders

Please detach lower portion of this form and place it along with your payment in the offering basket located in the Gathering Room or return it to church by US Mail.

Deadline: Sunday, March 8, 2026

Please "PRINT" all necessary information!

Your name: _____

FLOWER TYPE	QUANTITY	PRICE	DEDICATION
Easter Lilies	_____ X	\$11.00	H/M _____
Daffodils	_____ X	\$9.00	H/M _____
6-bulb Tulips	_____ X	\$9.00	H/M _____
3-bulb Hyacinths (Purple)	_____ X	\$9.00	H/M _____
3-bulb Hyacinths (Pink)	_____ X	\$9.00	H/M _____
3-bulb Hyacinths (White)	_____ X	\$9.00	H/M _____
Hydrangeas	_____ X	\$19.50	H/M _____

[NOTE: H = In Honor of *or* M = In Memory of]

TOTAL \$ _____

DON'T FORGET TO SAVE YOUR FLOWERPOT COVERS!

Please check this box if you wish to donate the flowers to the church and not take them home.

If more space is needed for dedications, please attach another sheet.

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**ST PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
P.O. BOX 156
ORWIGSBURG, PA 17961**

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Pottsville, PA
17901

PERMIT NO. 52

DATES TO REMEMBER

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7 – CHILI & SOUP SALE AT 8:30 A.M. ON THE SQUARE

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8 – CONGREGATIONAL MEETING AFTER THE 10:30 A.M. SERVICE

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18 – LENT BEGINS WITH ASH WEDNESDAY AT 7:00 P.M.

**WATCH US ON YOUTUBE. VISIT US AT OUR WEBSITE. FIND US ON FACEBOOK.
COME AND SEE. EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**