

United Methodist Church

February

2026

stpaulneunitedmethodistchurch.com



Office hours
Tues-Thurs
9am –3:00 pm
754-4247

Staff

Rev. Nicole
Schwartz-Eck

Church Secretary
Carrie Hancock

Custodian
Integrated Life Choices
Call Church Office

Committee Chairpersons:

Admin Council
Bob Rasmussen

Board of Trustees
Doug Voigt

Finance
Dave Harrington

Staff/Parish Relations
Tom Knutson

Worship
Darla Voigt

Mission-Outreach

UMM
Jeremiah Eck

UWF
Deb Wells

Education
Nancy Harrington

We are about to enter into one of my favorite seasons of the church year, Lent. For some, the season feels like a hard ask— requirements and solemnity that feel strange. However, it's never felt like that to me. I have found the intentionality of practices and traditions comforting and nurturing to my faith, to my soul. The timing of the season, beginning when all is cold and dark, growing and emerging as the world comes to life again in the spring with the celebration of Easter, the resurrection of Christ, and the empty tomb, is powerful.

This growth is reflected in the historical context and purpose of the season. Historically, the church has used this time to prepare new converts for baptism and to become part of the body of Christ, and to prepare those who had been separated from the community of faith for whatever reason to reintegrate their lives into the community of faith. We continue to use this time to examine our lives of faith, remove obstacles to our growth, and begin practices that center, or re-center, our lives in and on Christ. This is why we are called to fast (give things up) or intentionally take on practices during the season between Ash Wednesday and Easter, not as a punishment or another thing on the to-do list, but to enable us to grow in our relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

This year, as we go through Lent, we will not only center our lives on Christ, but our church will be walking with 7 young people as they go through Confirmation, which will be celebrated on Easter. For some of these young people, they will take on the responsibility of the baptismal vows that their parents and families made when they were baptized as infants or children and remember that they are baptized. For others, they will choose to be baptized for the first time. We will explore faith, theology, the Bible, and what it means to be a Christian and a United Methodist.

I have two requests and an invitation for our congregation during Confirmation.

Request 1: Consider volunteering as a Confirmation Mentor. You don't need to be perfect, have a Master of Divinity degree, or have all the answers. You only need to be willing to share your faith, be open to questions, and give of your time. If you're not comfortable being a mentor or don't wish to get paired with a youth, write notes of encouragement for each youth (a list will be available). Leave them in the church office or give them to me to distribute at Confirmation class.

Request 2: We'll meet from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Sunday nights from February 22 through Palm Sunday. If you'd like to provide a meal for Confirmation class, visit <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040B4FACA82AA6FE3-62113742-confirmation>. We'll take a break to watch a confirmation video or meet with our confirmation mentors while we eat about halfway through class each week. Once mentors are finalized, I'll let you know which weeks to include them in our numbers.

Invitation: You're welcome to come support the Confirmation class as an additional adult in the room. I've even had parishioners say it was a great refresher on whatever topic we were discussing.

One other note about coming events. In addition to the "normal" Lenten offerings of Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday (again featuring the Stations of Jesus' Life), and Good Friday, we will have a Breakfast Church and Hands-on Worship service on March 22nd. Our church will be assembling United Methodist Committee on Relief Cleaning and Hygiene Kits. Our UMW will be assembling feminine hygiene kits. These kits will be stored at our church for a time, until they are called into service or sent to our UMCOR distribution centers. We will begin collecting items for the kits this coming Sunday with sign-up sheets available in the narthex. You can also contact the church office to find out what is still needed and sign up. Not only are these kits part of our conference's 12X12 Church initiative, but meeting a current need. While our assembly has been planned for quite a while, I read an article yesterday sharing that due to the winter storms in January, the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference has encouraged churches to assemble kits for collection at a later date to replenish warehouse supplies, which are currently being depleted. This is one way that we can intentionally serve our neighbors during the season of Lent.

I am looking forward to the season of Lent and all that it has to offer us, individually and corporately. May we enter into it intentionally to grow in our faith and emerge with Christ in celebration.

Blessings, Pastor Nicole



February



1st	Adult Sunday School 9 am Worship 10am Children's Church during Worship Communion	17th	UWF meeting 1:30pm
4th	Youth Group 6:30 pm	18th	Youth Group 6:30 pm Ash Wednesday Service 7:00pm
5th	Community Office Hours— Bedhead 8am-11am	19th	Community Office Hours— Bedhead 8am-11am
8th	Adult Sunday School 9 am Worship 10 am Children's Church during Worship	21st	UMC helps at Food Pantry 9-11am
11th	NO Prayer Group Youth Group 6:30 pm	22nd	Adult Sunday School 9 am Worship 10 am Children's Church during Worship Confirmation Class 5:30pm Voigt/ Craigs Home Group @ the Andersons 6:30pm
12th	Community Office Hours— Bedhead 8am-11am	25th	Prayer Group 11am Youth Group 6:30 pm
15th	Adult Sunday School 9 am Worship 10 am Children's Church during Worship Nursing Home Services- Brookefield 1:30 Matelyn 2:30	26th	Community Office Hours— Bedhead 8am-11am
16th	Fairbanks Home Group 11am		

Howard Greeley Food Pantry Offering

Thanks to the generosity from our Christmas Eve offering, a check in the amount of \$924 was gifted to the Food Pantry on January 11th during worship service.



Above: Pastor Nicole handing off the Howard Greeley Food Pantry check to Theda Van Horn, longtime volunteer at the Food Pantry.

Teacher's Prayers

At St. Paul United Methodist Church, we have made a commitment to our local schools.

As we have done in the past, we will start our weekly prayers for the teachers and school staff for the school year.

If you know of teachers from our congregation that teach at other districts or substitute teachers that would not be listed on the St. Paul district website, please let Pastor Nicole or the church office know so we can add them to our teacher prayers. *Thank You!*

Each Sunday, we will begin praying for the following teachers:

Feb 1– Roberta Hazen, Heidi Hiebner, Kelli McClellan, Chasity Dubbs, Tara Sjuts

Feb 8 – Jaime Camden, Megan Stapel, Shayla Tibbetts, Jami Wemhoff, Chloe Younger

Feb 15– Amanda Hoshor, Morgan Skibinski, CaLee Thomsen, Trish Berggren, Andrea Eacker

Feb 22– Courtney Griebel, Kathy Herbig, Brittany Holtz, Connie Lothrop, Mandy Richter, Jessica Usasz



Feb 1	Robyn Rasmussen	Feb 14	Kelby Feeney
Feb 2	Logan Berggren	Feb 15	Mark Starkey
Feb 2	Addison Ruzicka	Feb 17	Rose Ross
Feb 11	Marlene Kremlacek	Feb 19	Doug Voigt
Feb 13	Ryan Rasmussen	Feb 27	James Hansen
Feb 14	Adam Feeney		

Feb 4	Paul & Toni Bentz
Feb 25	Russ & Becky Schwenk



United Methodist Church of St. Paul
MISSION STATEMENT
‘Making and Nurturing Disciples’

Around our Connection

Take a look at what's happening around us!
 Click on the links in blue to learn more.

High School Seniors & College Students: United Methodist Scholarships: Deadline March 6

<https://www.gbhem.org/scholarships/>

Rural Response Hotline helps struggling rural families

https://gp-email.brtaapp.com/files/gpconnect/2026/01.14.26/mj_01.14.26_rural+hotline.pdf

Lay persons needed to volunteer for various conference committees

The Great Plains Conference Nominations Committee beginning its work for 2026 and is inviting lay and clergy members to express their interest in serving on a conference committee. This is a great way for those who want to expand their own leadership skills and/or who want to lift up emerging leaders across Kansas and Nebraska.

How is God calling you to serve? Each year we have open positions for both clergy and lay persons. And there is definitely a significant shortage of lay persons in the nomination pool. As you think about nominating yourself or who a good person is to lift up is, here are some things you need to know about the nominations process.

*The nominations process involves two steps, where the person nominates themselves or lifts up someone else's name via the nomination form and then the nominee is sent a more extensive survey questionnaire about interest areas, skills, etc. A person cannot be considered for a committee unless that survey form is completed.

To indicate your interest or to lift up the name of another person please fill out the nominations form on the Great Plains

Conference website <https://gp-reg.brtaapp.com/leadershipnomination25>

- Esther Hay, nominations committee chair- estherhay56@gmail.com

United Methodists Invited to Participate in Leadership Gathering Initiative via Survey, Webinars

https://www.umc.org/en/content/united-methodists-invited-to-participate-in-leadership-gathering-initiative-via-survey-webinars?_hsmi=399936810

Christian nationalism being explored in six workshops across Great Plains

<https://www.greatplainsumc.org/newsdetail/christian-nationalism-being-explored-in-six-workshops-across-great-plains-19598197>

Lent at Home Playlist Collection for Families

<https://lifelongfaith.org/children/faith-family-playlists/faith-practices-playlists/lent-at-home-playlists/>

January Attendance

January 4th:	51 In-person 20 Views/YouTube
January 11th:	49 In-person 13 Views/YouTube
January 18th:	39 In-person 15 Views/YouTube
January 25th:	44 In-person 24 Views/YouTube

January Offering Totals

January 4th:	\$3,561
January 11th:	\$4,128
January 18th:	\$8,223
January 25th:	\$1,652



United Methodist Church Prayer Chain

The purpose of the prayer chain is to offer special prayers for individuals in critical need. The chain cannot be activated without the permission of the family in need. Call prayer requests to the church office 754-4247. The prayer request will be called to the first person on these lists. Each caller then calls the next person on the list. If that person is unavailable, a call should be placed to the following name and contact made with the first party later in the day.

Last name on list does not call anyone. We are in need of more people joining the prayer chain.

Praying for each other is an important ministry that we can do for our church family.

If you would be interested in becoming part of this mission, please contact the church office.

We are in need of more people joining the prayer chain. All you have to do is pray for someone as the requests are made. **Please consider this request to help.**

Marilyn Wall	754-5100	Martha Voigt	750-4319	Jackie Cook	754-9115
Deb Wells	754-5620	Darla Voigt	750-1401	Charlene Craig	754-5503
Nancy Harrington	750-0279	Rose Ross	754-4993	Mary Pearson	308-219-0060
Theda Van Horn	754-4541	Cherri & Scott Klinginsmith	750-0615	Brenda Starkey	750-7967
Cleo Edwards	754-4853	Charlotte Rasmussen	308-968-3375	Becky Schwenk	750-4590
Nancy OR Mike McCarthy	750-2117-Nancy (775)-830-9521 -Mike	Susan Hartley	(641)-485-7349	Lory Thomsen	754-4286
Sheila Studley	750-6973	Robyn Dvoracek	754-8468		

United Women of Faith

January 20th, 2026 Meeting Minutes

The UWF meeting was called to order at 1:40 by President Deb Wells. Those present were Theda Van Horn, Rose Ross, Mary Pearson, Darla Voigt, Jackie Cook, Pastor Nicole, Deb Wells, Mary Ann Rickertsen and her daughter Sally, Dorthea Fairbanks and Carol Phillips. Theda gave devotions reading from three different books, *God's Little Devotional*, *Chicken Soup for the Soul* and *Help Lord, I'm having a Senior Moment*. The minutes were read from the last meeting and approved as read. Jackie gave the treasurer's report. Current balance is \$213.51.

She reported that due to a low balance, end of year donations were not made to The Crisis Center and Hope Harbor. A bill was received today for the meat that was purchased, prepared and served at the All Faiths Christmas Luncheon in December. It was decided that the Hometown Market bill needs to be paid now. The donations to the above mentioned businesses will be made at a later date. We had also received a bill for the Response Magazine, after discussion, Darla made a motion to not renew the subscription, Carol seconded.

Motion passed.

A combination of old business and new business is the days that UWF will host Fellowship after Sunday service. We had previously decided that we would host the third Sunday of each month. There are several third Sundays that fall before our monthly meeting. Carol will remind members prior to the third Sunday and make sure that we have members that will host on that Sunday. That schedule is flexible if anyone has a celebration or special occasion they would like to share with the congregation on that day.

Another item Pastor brought up was the UMCOR Relief kits There are only three different types of kits requested currently. Those are Cleaning kits, Hygiene kits and Menstrual Hygiene kits. As part of our mission, UWF will fill the menstrual kits. The list of items needed for each group and more information will be made available soon. We will have breakfast church on March 22nd. At that time items for UMCOR kits will be collected. Pastor also mentioned the Ash Wednesday service will be held at 5:30 on February 18, Palm Sunday is March 29th and Easter Sunday on April 5. More information on those services will be made available closer to those dates.

The officers will stay the same for this upcoming year. Deb Wells president, Jackie Cook treasurer and Ursula Sorlie secretary.

Dorthea will again be helping with mission work at the Midwest Distribution Center. It is the end of May and first part of June. If you would be interested in helping or have any questions, please contact Dorthea.

Darla gave the lesson on 'January Resolutions or Transformation'? The meeting was adjourned followed by lunch provided by Mary and Darla. Our next meeting will be February 17th at 1:30. Dorthea will give the lesson, Theda will serve lunch. Devotions to be determined.

Acting Secretary
Carol Phillips



United Women in Faith (UMW)

The next meeting of the
UWF will be on
February 17th at 1:30pm.
All ladies are welcome!



Churches Praying for Churches



Every year each church receives a list of UMC churches to pray over each week. Please join us in lifting these churches up in prayer this month.

Feb. 1st– Shelton/Wood River

Feb. 8th– Archer Zion/Fairview

Feb. 15th– Aurora

Feb. 22nd– Greeley/North Loup/Scotia First



Sunday

Worship time
10:00 a.m.

Adult Bible Study

Sunday morning 9:00 am

Children's Education

Children's Church
-during Worship service

FOOD PANTRY

February is our church's Food Pantry Month. We will take a collection at the church all month long. Please consider helping with this cause.

The **Food Pantry** here in St. Paul is always looking for food donations. Please help us stock the shelves. Any food or paper item is accepted but these items are in high demand every month.

Jello– Strawberry	Juice
Ketchup and Mustard	Pork & Beans
Laundry Soap-small bottles	Pudding-Instant-Chocolate
Mayo	Syrup
Sugar	Shampoo
Brownie mixes	Conditioner
Jelly	Toilet Paper
Cookies	Salad Dressing (Ranch,Dorothy Lynch)
Cereal	Frosting
Crackers– Salad & Soup (Saltines)	Cake Mixes
Dish Soap	Spaghetti Sauce
Flour	Toothpaste
Hamburger Helper	Canned Fruit
Pancake Mix	

Food Pantry

The United Methodist Church is responsible for operating the Food Pantry every third Saturday from 9-11 am. If you could volunteer to help any one of these Saturdays, it would be greatly appreciated.

February 21st is the next work date.

Precautions are taken to insure the health and protection of both the worker and the consumer.

Thank you, Theda Van Horn

Food Pantry hours

Saturday
9:00-11:00 am

Tuesday
4:00-6:00 pm

February is the month for United Methodist Church to donate to the Food Pantry.



United Methodist Church
1320 Baxter Street
St. Paul, NE 68873
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stpaulneumc@gmail.com



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