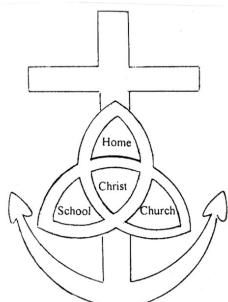


ST. PAUL EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

January 2026



Building Relationships
in Christ

St Paul Ev Lutheran Church

1415 Tenth Ave
Rochelle IL 61068
Ph: 815-562-2744

Church Email:
churchoffice@stpaulrochelleil.org

Website: stpaullev.org
Pastor

Rev. Michael Gudgel
Marcia Schnorr, DCM
Parish Nurse
After hours: 562-6823

St. Paul Lutheran School

Ph: 815-562-6323
Steve Hall, Principal
School Email:
office@stpaulrochelleil.org
Website:
stpaulrochelleil.org

JOIN US!

In person at
6:00pm Saturday
or 9:00am Sunday

OR

FacebookLive
At 9:00 am

OR

WRHL Radio
1060AM
At 10:00 am
Or
93.5 FM

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As I sit down to write my first letter, I think about roots. Deep roots. A healthy plant, deeply rooted below the surface, can bear abundant fruit above the surface. A healthy Christian, deeply rooted in grace and truth, can bear abundantly the Spirit's fruit of "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23).

I look forward to getting to know all of you. You will quickly discover that I am a curious person who asks many questions. I like to listen and look forward to listening to your story. Your problems. Your pain. Your joys. Your sorrows. Your hopes and dreams for the future.

My hope and dream for the future is that St. Paul becomes known more and more as a caring community of Christians, deeply rooted in grace and truth. John 1:17 states, "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." Grace – God's undeserved love – is what we receive for the sake of Christ crucified and what we share with one another. (I will make many mistakes and ask for grace along the way. I ask you to give it freely, and I will do the same.)

Let us strive to be deeply rooted in God's grace and in His truth. The world around us is crying out for something substantive and lasting, something reverent and eternal, something that does not change continually (like the weather in Northern Illinois). The world needs His truth, and we will share it with people in and around Rochelle. But first we need to make sure we get it. That we know it. That we are deeply rooted in it.

So, come to worship weekly. Attend Bible Study frequently. Dig deeper into the Word of God. Learn to love the hidden treasure of Lutheran theology. (It is the best exposition of grace and truth.) That is what the world needs and what we need.

Let us strive to grow together, becoming deeply rooted in grace and truth. The fruit will be evident with joyful bundles of blessings rippling out into our church, school, families, and the people of Rochelle.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,
Pastor Gudgel



How Do You Say That Strange Name?

Our new pastor's last name is not common and multiple people have asked how to pronounce it. Pastor has given this advice: Think of the first syllable as rhyming with fudge or judge or nudge. Then add in the "el" sound. You will quickly learn to pronounce correctly a name that is not easy to pronounce.

Semi-Annual Congregation Meeting

The congregation semi-annual meeting will be held on Sunday February 8th after our worship service. The meeting will include election of officers and board members. A list of open positions is printed in this newsletter. Other items will be announced later in January.

E-Mail Addresses Needed

A big change is coming to the delivery of our newsletter early this spring. Please turn in or send in (office@stpaulrochelleil.org) your email address so that we have time to prepare. Announcements as needed can also be sent out this way. If you think we have your email, please send it in anyway. THANKS!

2026 ALTAR FLOWERS

The 2026 flower sign up sheet is on the back table of the sanctuary. The cost to sponsor a Sunday and be provided by the Inreach/Outreach Board is \$20. Please turn in your check or \$ to Sue Duffy, the office, or in a separate envelope in the offering plate. You may also provide flowers or plants yourselves. Please let the office know what you would like in the bulletin.



2026 Radio Broadcasts

The sign-up sheet for open 2026 radio broadcasts is posted on the back table of the sanctuary. Previous sponsors have been contacted. The cost remains at \$40 per Sunday. Please turn in your payment to the office or in a separate envelope in the offering plate. Call the office with any questions.



President's Notes

I know that I should be focusing on the upcoming month of January and the physical things before us. Please forgive me this one time.

What a wonderful time of joy and celebration we all have had during the month of December. We waited, prepared and celebrated the gift of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We waited and we prepared and celebrated the installation of Pastor Gudgel as our Pastor here at St. Paul. What a joyous time for our congregation.

It's been a long vacancy, and I have heard from many of you that have shared your worries about whether we would ever find a Pastor. I will admit that I too was losing patience, not being sure of what the next year would bring, how to proceed. But as usual, and thankfully, I was wrong.

Welcome Pastor Gudgel!!

Just like all of you I heard the words from James in the recent sermon, "Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains." How applicable for us. When we despair HE strengthens our faith. What a gift.

Just a reminder, our annual voters meeting and elections for Board and Council positions will be on February 8, 2026 after the service. Included elsewhere in the newsletter is a listing of all available positions. (Like vice-president hint, hint) New thoughts and ideas are encouraged. This is a new beginning for all of us so please consider serving where your talents may best be used.

Blessings,
Bob Mortimer
312.316.6519

Thank You

The Women's Guild would like to thank all those that made contributions to our bake sale. A total of \$771.00 was raised plus money received from Thrivent. Thank you also to those who made the baked goods for us to sell.



The Parish Nurse's Notes:

NEW YEAR NEW BEGINNINGS....

"Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name." Psalm 100:4



Now is the time of year we can sit back and reflect on the previous year and vision and plan for the year ahead. Increase your odds on achieving the things prioritize the most important by getting really clear on what they are, look like and how to get there. To help you get there here are some questions you can ask yourself.

Reflecting: Highlights to celebrate in the previous year.

- What am I most grateful for?
- Meaningful moments?
- Most proud of?

Key lessons you learned from and would do differently:

- What worked well?
- What do you want to continue?
- What did not work well?
- What do you need to let go of?

How have you grown or expanded in the previous year:

- What was the biggest game changer of the year?
- How did I grow?
- What did I learn?
- How am I different now from when I started last year?
- Lesson or wisdom to carry forward?

Eyes open and looking ahead:

- How do you want to feel in the new year? (creative, effective, confident etc)
- Do you have 3 top priorities for the year ahead?
- What is possible for the year ahead?

Deeper look:

- What are the top 3-5 values I want to honor this year?
- What do you want to create (more of) in your work and/or life?
- Need less of? Let go of?
- What one thing will positively impact on all the rest?
- What is your intention for the year ahead?

Action:

- What can I do to turn these possibilities into reality?
- What do I want to stop, start, or continue doing?
- What is one thing I can do this month?
- What can I do to keep the way I want to feel in this new year?

God, As the dawn breaks on a new year, let us give thanks for all we hold dear: our health, our family and our friends. Let us release our grudges, our anger and our pains, for these are nothing but binding chains. Let us live each day in the most loving ways, the God-conscious way.

God, please grant me wisdom in the new year. Help me discern where You are leading and what opportunities you have placed in front of me. Help renew my heart so that I can be ready for a new beginning. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Linette Feltes BSN, RN
Parish Nurse

The Health Letter this month was written by Linette Feltes, BSN, RN. Linette has served on the parish nurse team for several years in various roles. The last few years she has made visits to newborns and their families as well as regular visits to some of our homebound members.

Marcy Schnorr (the director of our parish nurse team) will not be available from January 3-19 because she will be teaching a parish nurse course in Ethiopia. During her absence Maggie Niemi will be the primary contact person if you need a parish nurse. Maggie teaches full time at Rockford Career College, so may not be immediately available. Please call her (815-677-6600) and leave a message. She will respond as soon as possible. If you need something quicker, please call Julie Dilling (815-562-274) in the church office. She will do her best to locate one of the other nurses on the parish nurse team.

Marcy will resume her usual hours on Wednesday, January 21 (8:00-11:30). She will be home late Monday and Tuesday but catching up on some well needed sleep. If you have an urgent need, you may contact her at home (815-562-6823).

REMINDER: The NID Parish Nurse Network is planning a short trip for seniors to Mission Central in Mapleton, IA and a few other stops along the way. The trip is planned for August 3-6—and an estimate of the number of participants is needed by **February 14th** to determine the cost which is based on number of participants. This is not a fundraiser, but we do need to charge for the cost of transportation and lodging with breakfasts. There is no cost to visit Mission Central. **The trip is senior friendly with minimal walking, frequent rest breaks, and a reasonable cost.** The actual costs will be determined soon after the travel agent (AAA) receives the estimated numbers. Deposits will be due by Easter, and full payment will be due prior to departure date. Contact Marcy for additional information or to add your name to the list of interested participants.





Thank you to the many people who donated cash, presents, and/or time and talents to provide gifts for the residents in local nursing homes (133), decorated Christmas cards for seniors in assisted living and senior independent living apartments (158), known homebound members of St. Paul (17), pre-Christmas cards to International Lutheran Church in Seoul, South Korea (48), Christmas cards for the Christmas outreach using the Coptic calendar in Hosanna Synod of the Mekene Yesus (house where Jesus lives) in Ethiopia (96), and other personal acts of caring in Jesus' Name during the Advent-Christmas season.

Thanks also for the many Christmas greetings received from individuals in the St. Paul family *and* for the assurance of prayers for the mission and ministry trip to Ethiopia. A special thanks to the students and staff of St. Paul school for having an ice cream fundraiser and donating the proceeds for the mission in Ethiopia. Marcy

Senior Special will not meet in January due to New Year traditions.

OK Club will meet on January 9th at noon at the Sunrise. Thanks to Evelyn Hintzsche for facilitating the devotion and discussion. If you wish to participate, please contact Evelyn at 815-562-4668.

The Board for Health and Human Care will not meet in January due to Marcy's trip and two board members traveling out of state. If there are any needs for the Health and Human Care board, please contact chairperson, Pat Burch.

The Parish Nurse Team will not meet in January due to Marcy's trip to Ethiopia. Members of the parish nurse team are asked to check their mailbox in the parish nurse office for the book for our 2026 Bible study.

Senior Supper Club will meet Friday, January 16th at 5:30pm at the Country School. Dave Stewart will facilitate the devotion and discussion. If you would like to participate, please contact Dave at 815-973-4938.

Thursday Worship Fellowship will be **January 22 at 2:15pm**. This service is especially designed for those whose health care needs make attending a regular week-end services difficult. Pastor Gudgel will lead an abbreviated service with communion. Marcy will be available to assist with any health-related needs and provide a fellowship time after the service. If you need assistance with transportation, please let Marcy or the church office know a couple of days in advance and every effort will be made to arrange transportation for you.

OK Club will meet Friday, January 23rd at noon at church with lunch from the Country School. Marcy will facilitate the Bible study/discussion from *Devotions for the Chronologically Gifted* edited by Les Beyer (CPH).



LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES WRHL 1060 AM—7:30am Sundays

January 4	"Knowing and Being Known in a New Year"
January 11	"Solidarity"
January 18	TBA
January 25	"Cross Words--Words of Power"

Join us for our 9:00am Sunday service or listen to our broadcast on WRHL(1060AM) or (93.5 FM) at 10a.m. It is also on Facebook Live at 9:00am.

Worship Anew

Comcast channel 138 on TLN—11:30am Sundays

January 4	Where's Jesus?
January 11	The Baptism of Jesus
January 18	Who Is "The Real Jesus"?
January 25	Fishers of Men

February Newsletter Deadline

January 15

Please turn your items in by the deadline.
Thanks!

St. Paul Lutheran School

“Putting Faith in Education”



Thoughts from the Principal...

Happy New Year!

As most of you know, I announced that I would be retiring on December 31st and that is indeed the case. However, I will still be the principal until the end of the school year.

When I went to congregational leadership to let them know of my plan to retire, I was asked to consider finishing out the school year on a part-time basis. My retirement pension does allow me to work part-time, and so I will be able to continue as principal for twenty hours per week until second semester ends in May. I am happy to do this for the congregation, school families, and the teachers, and most importantly, for the Lord. Generally, I will be in the office from 7:30-11:30 am each day, as well as coordinating and supervising the athletic program through the end of basketball season.

I started my professional ministry in the LCMS in 1985. I have been blessed beyond measure by the congregations I have served. I strongly believe in the ministry of Lutheran schools, and so being a part of that ministry for forty years has been a privilege. But God has made it very clear to me that He needs me to serve Him in another way. I am not exactly sure what that is at this moment, but I know He does and so I am listening for that “still, small voice”. In the meantime, I plan to continue to serve St. Paul by playing for church services and filling in for pastor whenever I am needed.

Exciting things are ahead for St. Paul Lutheran Church and School. God has blessed St. Paul for a long time, and He continues to do so. I pray that all of us continue to embrace the ministries of our church, including the school. The school ministry is so very important, and St. Paul congregation should be extremely proud of its school, and the generous way it has supported it.

Finally, I thank God from the bottom of my heart that He has sent Pastor Gudgel to us. We are so very blessed to have him and his wonderful family. God is so GOOD!

May the peace of God keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus for 2026, and for life eternal.

Steve Hall; Principal

hello
2025



The teachers and staff would like to wish you a very Happy and Healthy 2026!!

The 59th Annual St. Paul JV Boys Basketball Tournament is coming up February 20-21. Help is needed for gate, hall monitors, and concessions. Please contact Mr. Hall if you are willing to help out!



Coupon Books are being sold to fundraise for the school. The books are filled with great deals and savings opportunities. Contact your favorite student, the school office, or Marissa Svela if you are interested in purchasing one.

Welcome

On behalf of the children, families, and staff of St. Paul we welcome Pastor Gudgel and his family! Praise God for His goodness!

School chapel services are held each Wednesday at 8:40 and the congregation is invited. Mark your calendars as we are blessed to have President Buss leading chapel at St. Paul on January 14 and April 8. God is good!



Plans are underway for the annual Jane Reineck Crusader Dinner/Auction. Mark your calendars for Friday, April 17th.

This year more than ever funds are needed to support the Frieda Pickreign /Jane Reineck Scholarship Fund. Please consider a donation to this essential fund as we “Make Disciples of All Nations”!



OPEN 2026 CHURCH COUNCIL & BOARD POSITIONS

The blanks represent the open positions for 2026.

The names in italics are those members who have consented at this time to run for the position. There can be more than one person running for each open position. All positions are two year terms unless indicated otherwise. If there is an open one year position, the elected candidate receiving the least number of votes will receive that term. All candidates for each open position are listed in the order they were received. If you would like to add your name for consideration or would like more information about any position, please contact the Board Chairperson, or the church office (815-562-2744).

The election meeting will be after the worship service on February 8, 2026.

Candidates

President	<i>Bob Mortimer</i>
Vice-President:	_____
Treasurer:	_____
Recording Secretary:	_____

until 2/28/27
until 2/28/27
until 2/28/26
until 2/28/26

Candidates Board of Elders

Jeff Truckenbrod Chair until 2/28/27

Glen Mehrings	until 2/28/27
Jeff Warner	until 2/28/27
Anthony Rowley	until 2/28/27
_____	until 2/28/27
_____	until 2/28/28

Candidates

Board of Property Management	Chair until 2/28/28
Mark Metzger	until 2/28/27
Steve Dilling	until 2/28/27
_____	until 2/28/28
_____	until 2/28/28

Board of Parish Education & Youth

_____ Chair	until 2/28/28
Craig Reineck	until 2/28/27
Joyce Thompson	until 2/28/27
Kyle Furman	until 2/28/27
_____	until 2/28/28
_____	until 2/28/28

Board of Health/Human Care

Pat Burch Chair	until 2/28/27
Marilyn Murphy	until 2/28/27
Joyce Soost	until 2/28/27
_____	until 2/28/28
_____	until 2/28/28

Board of Inreach & Outreach

_____ Chair	until 2/28/28
Dave Stewart	until 2/28/27
Gail Schabacker	until 2/28/27
_____	until 2/28/27
_____	until 2/28/28
_____	until 2/28/28
_____	until 2/28/28

Dayschool Board

_____ Chair *	until 2/28/27
Janet Sarver	until 2/28/27
Brandi Johnson	until 2/28/27
Kelly Soost	until 2/28/27
_____	until 2/28/28
_____	until 2/28/28
_____	until 2/28/28

****If there is a one year term available, the person elected with the least amount of votes is granted the one year term. A candidate cannot run for a 1 yr position.**

***If an elected 2 year position becomes vacant, a person can be appointed until the next scheduled election. The remaining 1 year term will be on the ballot.**

12/17/2025

January 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 9:00am Worship 10:00am Bible Class	29	30 7:00am Men's Bible Breakfast @ Sunrise	31 9:45am Women's Bible Studies	1 Church Office Closed	2	3 6:00pm Contemporary Worship
4 9:00am Worship w/Comm 10:00am Bible Class	5	6 5:30pm Dayschool Board	7 7:00am Men's Bible Breakfast @ Sunrise 6:00pm Inreach/Outreach	8 8:40am Chapel 9:45am Women's Bible Studies	9 12:00pm OK Club @ Sunrise RSVP Evelyn 815-562-4668	10 6:00pm Worship w/ Communion
11 9:00am Worship 10:00am Bible Class	12	13 4:30pm Board of Health & Human Care 5:30pm Elders	14 7:00am Men's Bible Breakfast @ Sunrise 6:30pm WOW Bible Study	15 Newsletter Deadline	16 5:30pm Sr Supper Club @ Country School	17 6:00pm Contemporary Worship
18 9:00am Worship w/Comm 10:00am Bible Class	19	20 6:00pm Church Council	21 7:00am Men's Bible Breakfast @ Sunrise	22 8:40am Chapel 9:45am Women's Bible Studies	23 OK Club @ Church RSVP to Evelyn 815-562-4668	24 6:00pm Worship w/ Communion
25 9:00am Worship 10:00am Bible Class	26	27	28 7:00am Men's Bible Breakfast @ Sunrise 6:30pm WOW Bible Study	29	30	31 6:00pm Contemporary Worship

Prayer Chain Requests: Glennie Eyster 815-761-2782

Pastor Gudgel: 815-562-2744 After hours emergency: 708-253-5761

Parish Nurse – Marcy Schnorr Office 815-562-2744 Home 815-562-6823 Office Hours M-F 8:30 – 11:30

Marcy will be out of the office from January 5 through January 20th. Call Maggie 815-677-6600 or the church office 815-562-2744 for assistance.

Puzzles!

In the New Testament, followers of Christ are called by many names. Use the hints to fill in the blanks. Need help? Check an NIV Bible for the missing letters.

D _____ s 
(Acts 6:7)

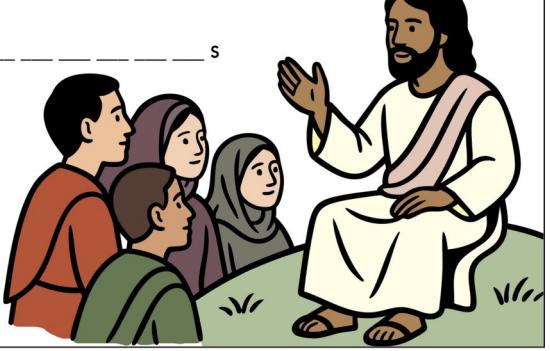
C _____ n P _____ e 
(1 Peter 2:9)

S _____ s of C _____ t 
(1 Corinthians 4:1)

C _____ s 
(Acts 11: 26)

B _____ s and S _____ s 
(1 Thessalonians 4:9-10)

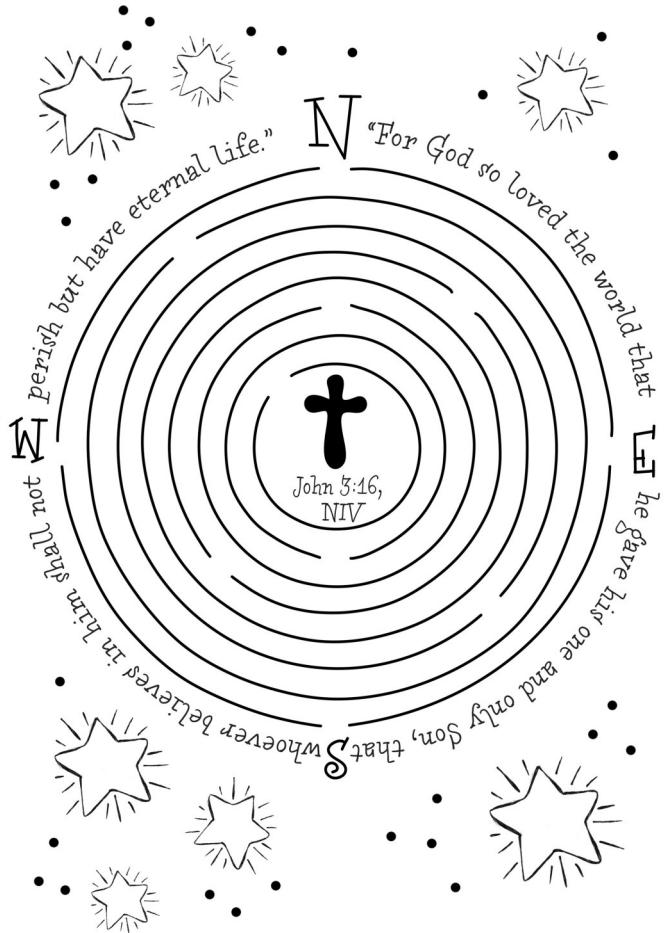
B _____ s 
(Acts 5:14)

W _____ s 
(Acts 1:8)

Believers; Witnesses; Disciples; Chosen People; Servants of Christ; Christians; Brothers and Sisters;

Puzzles!

Complete the maze to help people from all directions hear the good news. Then, starting at the N (north) and going clockwise, read John 3:16, NIV.



ST PAUL EV LUTHERAN CHURCH
1415 Tenth Avenue
Rochelle IL 61068

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PERMIT NUMBER 93

The mission of St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church:
Building relationships in Christ now and forever.

JOIN US!

Live in person on Saturday at 6:00pm or Sunday at 9:00am

OR

9:00 am Facebook Live - St. Paul Lutheran Church Page

OR

10:00 am on WRHL Radio 1060AM or 93.5 FM

Pastor Michael Gudgel, Vacancy Pastor 562-2744

Marcia Schnorr, Parish Nurse 562-6823

Steve Hall, Principal 562-6323

Church Office 562-2744, School Office 562-6323,
Church Office E-Mail Address: churchoffice@stpaulrochelleil.org Website: stpaulev.org

BLESS US
in this new year, Lord.



My future is in
YOUR
HANDS.
PSALM 31:15, NLT