



# “ The Epistle Pauline ”

St. Paul's Digital Newsletter

Volume 59, Number 12

December 2025

In its life and mission St. Paul's UCC seeks to worship the triune God; proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ; practice loving service toward the needy; embody God's reign of peace and justice; establish a Christian community of faith; and be a faithful member of the church universal.

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## The Season of Advent from Rev Epps

What does this picture have to do with the season of Advent?



On the pulpit is a cloth with the picture of a tree and a symbol of the cross of Jesus. It reminds us that the coming of Jesus (Advent) is a fulfillment of the scripture from Isaiah that the Messiah would come out of the root of Jesse's tree.

The cross in the background on the altar is the reminder that the coming (Advent) of Jesus was to die on the cross for all our sins.

Finally the stained glass window behind the altar of the Shepherd and the sheep reminds us the coming (Advent) of Jesus was to model for us that none are to be lost and Jesus is the Good

Shepherd.

These are just some of the symbols of our faith that help to better understand the Advent season. We are so blessed to have a sanctuary where we can grow in our faith with symbols left behind by those who walked and worshiped at St. Paul's.

Isaiah 43:2 NIV

[2] When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.

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## November Consistory Highlights from Curt Clifford

Consistory met on Wednesday evening, November 12th beginning at 7 p.m. in room 8 of the church. Jackie Hertzog presented a devotion.

**Treasurer's Report** –Total 2025 income at the end of October was \$460,044, which was \$4,004 less than expenses. October included Turkey Supper expenses but did not include Turkey Supper income. However, Treasurer Pete Dadey reported that the Nov. 1 st Turkey Supper income after expenses totaled \$19,985.50

### **Missions**

- The Christmas Wish Tree is up and the 30 tags for children from LIFE House were “adopted” so quickly that we asked Fostering Hope for 50 more names and gift requests from their program. All gifts are due back by November 30.
- The Blessing Box has been installed, filled and dedicated.
- The Living Nativity will take place at the Amity Community Park on December 7 from 4-7 p.m. All character roles have been filled, but help is still needed for set-up and tear-down.

**Capital Campaign Challenge** – President Clifford reported that church members had met the \$6,000 challenge which, when matched at the end of October as promised, enabled payment from the Capital Campaign paid-up pledge account to the Endowment fund of the \$65,000 loaned for HVAC upgrades in advance of last year's winter weather.

**Winter Weather Advisory Procedure** – In the event of inclement weather on Sunday mornings, Rev. Epps will decide no later than 7:30 a.m. whether he will be coming to the church for services. If he cannot be there, our Newsletter staff will communicate a cancellation notice to members by email, and post a notice to our web site [stpaulsuccamity.org](http://stpaulsuccamity.org) and to WFMZ–TV Channel 69 News.

- **Next Meeting** – The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 10 beginning with a holiday meal at 6:30 p.m. in the FLMC. Business meeting to follow.

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## Shut - In Christmas Card Bags

Let's not forget our shut-ins this holiday season. Once again we will have bags hanging on the pews with the names of those that are unable to worship with us on a regular basis. Please take the time to "send" them Christmas wishes through a card.



You may drop your cards in each bag or place them in the basket at the back of the sanctuary for distribution. The cards will be delivered by hand or mailed to each recipient.

The bags will be on the pews beginning November 30 through December 14. Card recipients are: Virginia Althouse, George Clauser, Joy Harner, Marian Kirlin, Sandy Mensch, Bette Mooney, and Joyce Yergey.

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## 2025 Christmas Offerings

Please be sure your 2025 offerings are received by the church no later than December 29 to be posted to 2025. You may mail offerings to the church at 1979 Weavertown Road.



You may also make an online donation with the QR Code or by going to our website [www.stpaulsuccamity.org](http://www.stpaulsuccamity.org) and click on "Giving" at the top.

An easy way to be sure your offerings are received monthly is to enroll in "automated giving." At the bottom of the website you can access a form to be completed and mailed to the attention of our financial secretary under "[Quick Links Automated Giving Enrollment Form](#)."

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## Christmas Eve Worship

**Family Service** at 6 PM - It's not just for children! All are invited as the children help to tell the Christmas Story. We haven't done this service since COVID. We are delighted to have enough children to participate. So come show them your support.

**Candlelight Service** at 11:00 PM - Our traditional Christmas Eve service. The Christmas Story and we will sing Christmas Hymns.

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## Church Office Holiday Schedule

The Church Office will be closed December 23 - January 2. Marlene will be out of the office during this time.

Phone messages and emails will be checked and attended to by Marlene remotely.

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## Christmas Wish Tree

The Christmas season is quickly approaching. This month, you will find a traditional styled Christmas Wish Tree filled with tags of local Berks county children and infants in need of some extra help this season.

We have partnered with "L.I.F.E House", an accommodation shelter for children removed from their homes in an emergency situation. They are with this group until a foster family can be located. Our Missions Team is honored to support and love on these children by providing Christmas gifts.

Participation instructions are located next to the Wish Tree.

**THERE IS A STRICT NOVEMBER 30th DEADLINE for all gifts/bags to be returned to our church.**

If you have any questions please contact Sara Trejo directly at 484-644-5417 or ask a member of the Missions Team.

Thank you for your annual support of our Christmas programs. Let's come together to make this Christmas one to remember—for our church and for the children we're reaching out to with God's love.

Sara A. Trejo [saraaerdman@yahoo.com](mailto:saraaerdman@yahoo.com) 484-644-5417

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## Poinsettias / Heifer International

Poinsettias to beautify our sanctuary and/or gifts to Heifer International area available for purchase this Christmas season. Poinsettias are \$12 each and Heifer shares are \$10 each.

Use the pink envelope in your offering envelope pack and be sure to check your choice of Poinsettia or Heifer Project. The deadline to order is November 30.

## Poinsettias Pick-UP

We kindly ask that you wait to take your poinsettia home until AFTER the Christmas Eve service.

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## LIVE NATIVITY

As the Christmas season approaches in the next few weeks, we're excited to once again present our Live Nativity to the community on Sunday, December 7th, - a powerful outreach led by our Missions and Evangelism Team.

**Location:** Daniel Boone Middle School **Time:** 4-6pm

This event brings the story of Christ's birth to life in a meaningful way for all who attend—and we need your help to make it happen!



We're looking for volunteers to assist in the following areas:

**Set-Up Crew** (help prepare the scene before the event) this could take place Friday the 5th and Saturday, the 6th during the day. Looking for 3 to 4 several strong, skilled men and women that have carpentry background to help assembly the Stable scene with supervision, prepare lighting & extension cords, signage, luminary displays, E-Z ups with tables/church displays

**Actors** (3 wise men, Mary, Joseph, 1 angel.—no speaking parts required!) We have costumes for all....

**Tear-Down Crew** (help clean up after the event) some will be done when the event is over and some could happen on Monday, December 8th during the day hours. Again, looking to have 3 to 4 strong members to take down and store the Nativity scene, return hay/straw bales to the local farm.

Whether you can lend a hand for a few hours or stay the whole time, your help will make a big difference! A sign up sheet is in the library and members of the committees will be reaching out. Please consider getting the whole family involved! It's a wonderful opportunity for St Paul's to serve, have fellowship, and share the true meaning of Christmas - sharing the love of Jesus Christ with our neighbors and community.

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## 2026 Offering Envelopes

The 2026 offering envelopes are available in the Library. Please take all envelopes for your family. We would appreciate it if you would also take envelopes for neighbors or friends who are not currently attending.

If you are not attending and would like to pick up your envelopes please contact the church office at 610.689.9364 or [office@stpaulsuccamity.org](mailto:office@stpaulsuccamity.org).

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## Christian Ed News from Marlene Dadey

- **Sunday School** - classes for preschool (age 3 by 9/1/25) through sixth grade are held weekly during worship in Rooms 8 and 9.
- **Adult Sunday School** - We offer three adult group offerings. If you are not already participating in one of them, take three weeks to visit each class and decide which is right for you. Adult groups meet from 8:30 to 9:30 each week on the lower level of the FLMC.
- **Nursery Service** - Rachael Rogers and Crystalynn Willman provide care for infants, toddlers and twos during worship on the lower level of the Sunday School building. There is NO nursery service on Christmas Eve.
- **Confirmation Class** will not meet on Sunday, December 21, Sunday, December 28 or Sunday, January 4.
- There is **NO Sunday School** on December 28.

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## Youth Youth Ministry News from Stacey Ambrose

Is there anything more heartwarming than witnessing a child's faith shine during the Christmas season? I am thrilled to watch the Spirit of Christmas come alive in each of St. Paul's children as they take part in the fun and meaningful activities planned this month. There truly is something for everyone—children, teens, and parents alike!

### Second Sunday – Family Fellowship

Join us after service from **11:00 AM to 12:00 PM** for fellowship and fun! This month, we'll gather in the youth room for free play time in the gym and a Christmas craft. Light refreshments will be provided. It's a wonderful chance to connect, play, and enjoy time together as a church family.

### Caroling & Family Meal

Spread Christmas cheer with us! The Youth Ministry and Evangelism teams are partnering to bring joy to our homebound members through Christmas caroling on December 14th. We will depart from St. Paul's at 2:30 PM.

Afterward, we'll return to church for a **Family Christmas Pizza Party**—and everyone is welcome, even if you can't join the caroling! Enjoy pizza, festive games, and a photo station to capture a special family Christmas picture.

### ["David" Movie Outing](#)

The Youth Ministry is going to the movies! We're planning a group outing to see **David** at the AMC Pottsgrove on **December 21st**. If you'd like to come along, please email Stacey at [sambrose4@gmail.com](mailto:sambrose4@gmail.com) to let us know.

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## Scouting America News Troop 597 from Samantha Henry



We are proud to say that we have 2 more Eagle Scouts in our books. On October

14th twin brothers, Gabriel and Gideon Wilson passed their individual Eagle Boards of review. We congratulate them and their families. Their ceremony will be held in the upcoming months along with multiple other ceremonies. Oh, and we aren't finished with our scouts striving for Eagle rank as we have many more in the last stages who will schedule their board soon!

November was a month of service for our troop. Amity township made us proud in our Scouting for Food drive. We collected 4775 pounds of food – that's right over 2 TONS – that

was combined with other troops throughout Hawk Mountain Council for a collective nearly

70,000 pounds of food to help fill the food bank. We also served at the church turkey dinner and assisted Douglass Village with winter clean-up.

Our November trip to Dover Air Force base was rescheduled due to the government shutdown so we camped for the weekend at Dreibelbis Farm in Hamburg. November also had

an evening first aid meet where our scouts worked on their skills. Many thanks to Krise for their help with transportation! We will end November with our fall spaghetti dinner and thank all who are attending.

We exist solely on fundraisers and donations to run our program and keep costs down for all families to be able to participate. Come visit us at the Daniel Boone tree lighting on Dec 7 th for samples of warm apple or peach cobbler. December will also see a roller skating party and a holiday party and then a small holiday break for scouts and leaders.

It's official! Scouting America has passed the rule that troops may be co-ed, just male or just female as they choose. We were part of a pilot program to see how it works as co-ed and are pleased to say that it is going well for us. We are open to any youth – male or female – between 11 and 18 who wish to join us for fun activities in the outdoors and learning leadership skills.

If your son or daughter or anyone that you know would like to join us, please stop in on a Monday night between 7-8:30 or contact Rick Henry at [scoutmaster597@gmail.com](mailto:scoutmaster597@gmail.com) or 484-332-9455. If you would like to help as an adult, we can always use another pair of hands.

Per youth and BSA rules, all adults in contact with youth must complete youth protection training and have background checks in place.

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## Committee Spotlight - The Missions Committee

### The New Blessing Box

It's here! Check out the Blessing Box at the Weavertown Road entrance to the parking lot.



The Missions committee thanks Wayne Elser for building and installation, and Wendy Elser for the lettering and message painting.

It contains the message "Take What You Need, Leave What You Can". It will be

stocked before the Turkey Supper so the community can see it and spread the word it is there.

There will be an official "dedication" by Reverend Epps on November 9 after the service.

It will contain non-perishable food items, hygiene products, and other items people may need.

ANYONE in the community can drop off things to add to keep the box stocked. A list of item ideas will be placed inside the box and a list will be on the missions bulletin board so you can drop items in the box as you like. Encourage your friends and family to drop items off.

Blessing Bags: Please do NOT bring any filled Blessing Bags into Church, feel free to take an empty bag, fill it at home and distribute to someone in need. We can't guarantee any food items will remain fresh if they are kept here. Please take any bags already filled to give to someone in need. Thank you for helping those in need!

\*We also have plenty of Bible Tracts at this time. Anyone can feel free to take some to hand out. Thank you for helping to spread God's Word!

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## Inclement Weather Policy

For many years, St. Paul's has had a pastor living in the parsonage – right across from the church. So, the policy on snowy or icy weather was "if the minister can get there, we'll have worship." Because Rev. Epps lives about 8 miles from the church, the Consistory felt the need to change that policy.

In case of snowy or icy conditions on Sunday morning, Rev. Epps will make the decision on whether or not to cancel worship.

Cancellations will be listed on [WFMZ-TV beginning no later than 7:30 a.m.](#) In addition, [church members will receive an email message from the church office.](#) You can also check the [church website or Facebook page for cancellation information.](#)

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## Final Meeting of the Pennsylvania South East Conference of the UCC

The final meeting of the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference was held here at St. Paul's on Saturday, November 8. Beginning in January, the four conferences in Pennsylvania will merge to form one statewide conference to be known as the Keystone Conference of the United Church of Christ.

The meeting featured time to remember places and people that played a part in the 62-year history of PSEC. Many reminisced about the first "Church House", located in an older house in Colledgeville. Others recalled the "new" Conference Center, Camp Fernbrook, Camp Mensch Mill, the Boyertown Workshops and spiritual retreats with Rev. Wanda Craner. Past and current Conference staff and volunteers were recognized and thanked.

Fittingly, the meeting concluded with worship led by outgoing Conference Minister Rev. William Worley, who will be stepping down from church leadership at the end of December.

One of the highlights of the service was a 28-person choir made up of singers from around the Conference singing "I Will Make All Things New", a very appropriate anthem focusing on God's continuing guidance and love as we transition into a new way of serving UCC congregations throughout the state.

Watch for updates on the Keystone Conference in the new year.

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### Ministry Support Needed from Kerry Kuhns

Kerry Kuhns is in need of financial support for his ministry.

In 3 Prisons Kerry provides Bible studies, mentoring and shares messages. He also volunteers in after care housing and is still discipling people from homelessness under bridges and/or the woods. Lost now found!

Hebrews 13:3 - Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

If you are able to help support this Ministry please see Kerry or you can also provide direct support through the Missions Committee. Thank you, Blessings  
Kerry Kuhn 484-388-9988

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## Scams and Fraudulent Messages and Emails – from the Tech Committee

This is the time of year when people are receiving dozens of fraudulent emails and text messages that are trying to scam you by phishing for money..

They often say your account has been charged with a large dollar amount and you must call a number or they ask you to click on a link to go to another place to pay or for more information. The latest gimmicks involve your Social Security account income boosts or getting gift cards for charities.

Text messages often ask an ambiguous question first - like "How are you doing?" or "Are you available now?" or "Do you have a minute to talk?" Sometimes they call and say a loved one is in jail or has been in an accident and they need money to bail them out or help them.

**STAY CALM and DO NOT PANIC. Do Not Reply. Do Not Click on Any Links. Do not give them any money.**

If it is a live caller on the phone

- say you have to hang up and jot down the phone number they are calling from.
- If you can't see the number ask them to give you a phone number where you can call them back.
- If they refuse to give you a phone number, hang up. Check first with relatives or trusted friends
- If you can't find out any information, report the incident to your local police department. They can check to see if a loved one has been in an accident or is in jail. Remember -
- Do not call them back. This is what they want - for you to become scared and panic and send money or click into something where they can get your information and money.

Instead, If you get an email or a mail notice...

1. Go to your own credit card account through your credit card app or go online directly to the credit card site - or call the number on the back of your credit card - do not click any links or call the phone numbers they give you.
2. Check if there have been charges against your account that you did not make. Call the company or the bank if you are not sure.
3. If you don't have an account with that company or if you don't find any charges, or if your bank does not have a record, DELETE the email, text message, or voicemail.
4. You can also block that phone number so they can't call you again.
5. If it is a text message check the phone number against your list of contacts before you answer.
6. And always talk it over with a relative, loved one or trusted friend before paying any money or giving any information to anyone.

In the past several months we have heard about these scams:

- A text asking "Are you free for a sec?" from area code (254) from Waco Texas and we don't know anyone there.
- A call asking if to sell a house - which is already listed on the market with a realtor.
- Notices that a Reverse Mortgage is overdue but the person does not have a reverse mortgage.
- Notice that the PECO electric bill has not been paid and over \$500 is owed but the person does not have an account with PECO
- An urgent EZ Pass text message notice saying you will be prosecuted in 24 hours because you violated NY Code 16C-16.003 and if I don't click the link and pay within 24 hours it will affect your credit score. The phone number is +44-7480-420497. The +44 in front of the phone number is the international calling country code for the United Kingdom.
- A +1 in front of the phone number is the U.S. and North America international calling country code. This usually means the person is calling from outside the United States.
- A notice that a PayPal account has been charged with a large sum of money and to click a link to see the charges. The person does not have a PayPal account.
- A text message asking to verify a Boscov's credit card account which is not a new account or a new card. Boscov's credit card company said it was not them.
- A text message that someone brought 'specialties' back from their trip to Hawaii with a "Hope you are well" message at the end.

Yes, this is really crazy - but it is really happening. And around the holidays you often have the most activity from Scammers. So [Stay Calm](#) and [Be Diligent](#), and always [Look Twice](#), [Check with a Friend](#), and make sure it's not a scam before taking action!

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## [Have you Heard of the Friday Special?](#) from Rev. Epps

Here it is!

When you pass through whatever you pass through I will be with you, says God! No matter what's happening with you today, God will be with you. You are not going to drown! Why? Because God is with us, keeping our heads above the flood of circumstances that seem to overwhelm us.

This passage from Isaiah is just a wonderful blessing this morning! Be an overcomer, it says. Knowing that you can overcome, not of your own strength, but by the Spirit of God that will lift you up and take you through the fire, the water or whatever else life throws at you today.

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### [December Birthdays](#)

December 1 Jennifer Davidheiser, Judy Harley  
December 3 Tiffany Dunning, Pete Kunsch  
December 4 Amanda Boyer  
December 5 Claire Cunningham  
December 7 Nancy Houck, Rob Millard,  
Colin Richards  
December 8 Samantha Henry  
December 9 Grace Miller  
December 10 Tammy Naus, Grant Pingitore  
December 13 Trevor Conrad, Kristi Harrison  
Winnie Hayik, Michelle Stern  
December 15 Kay Nyman  
December 16 Jeffrey Kline  
December 17 Pete Stern  
December 20 Kendra Hettel  
December 21 Ed Merkel  
December 23 Eric Lizbinski  
December 26 Ralph Schafer

### [December Anniversaries](#)

December 19 Marcy & Bruce Woods  
December 23 Samantha & Ethan  
Armstrong  
December 24 Stevi & Robert  
Burgess  
December 31 Steph & Tim Prout

### [December Greeters](#)

Dec 7 - Tom & Judy Reitz  
Dec 14 - Madison Fleischman  
& Anita Zuber  
Dec 21 - Susan Lincoln  
Dec 25 - 6 pm The Pauley Family  
Dec 25 - 11 pm Tom & Judy Reitz  
Dec 28 - John & Debbie Boyer

December 28 Cindy Severson  
December 29 Alexandra Dunning  
December 29 Chad Gaiser, Owen Kammerdeiner  
December 30 Jacob Dunning  
December 31 Virginia Althouse, Nathan Millard

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## Scripture Readers for December -

Dec 7 - Bruce Delong

Dec 21 - Alex Falstich

Dec 14 - Jackie Hoffman

Dec 28 - Autumn Herbst

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## Thank You!

A special thank you to Susan Newland and family for the donation of microphone, stand, and speaker system. This will greatly enhance our ability to provide sound at events when we cannot be connected to one of our internal sound systems.

The Technology Committee

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## Do you Have News or Articles to Share?

The Committee Members take turns publishing the Weekly Word and the Newsletter each month and we don't want to miss anything you send us. It is important for you to email all content you want published to us at:

[Communications@stpaulsuccamity.org](mailto:Communications@stpaulsuccamity.org)

Thank- You! - The Communications Committee - Kay, Matt, Rob, & Wendy.

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## Just for fun...!

Do you have memories, photos or stories you would like to share with your Church family? Send them to us and we will include them here for everyone to enjoy!

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## The Suggestion Box!

What do you want to see in the newsletter? Let us know your thoughts and we'll try to include them in the Newsletter or Weekly Word.

eMail us at [Communications@stpaulsuccamity.org](mailto:Communications@stpaulsuccamity.org)

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## Can you give a few extra \$\$?

Expenses are going up and we've had a lot of unplanned but necessary repairs this year but there is still a lot more to do and our giving has been lower than normal this year.



Every dollar helps us reach our goals but many dollars help us keep our buildings and grounds of your Church in shape and looking good. Please prayerfully consider giving a little extra if you can. We can't do this without you!

You can sign up for automated giving or support St. Paul's one donation at a time in the general fund, make Memorial Donations, or contribute towards ongoing HVAC repairs online.

It's also easy to give on your mobile device at <https://stpaulsuccamity.churchcenter.com/giving>



Or you can simply scan the QR Code to go to the online giving site. The QR code for online giving is also on the Church service weekly bulletin.



To read the weekly word scan the QR Code here.

This edition of the monthly newsletter was prepared by Kay Nyman

**January Newsletter Deadline: Sunday, December 21, 2025.**

[Click Here to Read More on our Website](#)

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