



THE SPIRIT



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | ST. PAUL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH | FEBRUARY 2026

St. Paul UMC

2130 W. Okmulgee
Muskogee, OK 74401

918-687-7571

church@stpaulmuskogee.com

Senior Pastor, Rev. Dylan Ward

918-408-7029

Rev.DylanWard@stpaulmuskogee.com

Music Ministry, Ineta Bebb

918-869-7201

ibebb@stpaulmuskogee.com

Director of Children's Ministry & Learning Tree Preschool

Abigail Shaw

918-348-9262

learningtree@stpaulmuskogee.com

Teacher: Stephanie MacInnis

Aide: Sydney Hayes

Aide: Wendi Michael

Director of Youth Ministry

Barbara Kent

918-687-7571

bkent@stpaulmuskogee.com

Nursery & Pre-School Ministry

Beth Dunn

918-577-0938

bethtucker61@yahoo.com

Business Administrator

Lynnette Lewis

918-687-7571

llewis@stpaulmuskogee.com

Administrative Assistant

Joanne Nilsson

918-687-7571

adminassistant@stpaulmuskogee.com

Custodian, A. J. McLeland

918-687-7571

LETTER FROM THE PASTOR . . .

February always feels like a turning point in the church year. The days are still short, winter has not quite loosened its grip, and yet the calendar begins to lean us toward Lent. It is a season that asks us to slow down, pay attention, and take our faith seriously in practical ways.

Lent begins this year with **Ash Wednesday on February 18**, and I hope you will make plans to be there. We will gather at **6:00 p.m.** for worship, prayer, and the imposition of ashes. Ash Wednesday is simple and honest. We come forward, hear the words "remember that you are dust," and are marked with the sign of the cross. It is not meant to be heavy-handed or gloomy. It is meant to tell the truth about who we are and who God is. We are finite, fragile, and deeply loved. Grace meets us right there.

The weeks of Lent that follow are not about guilt or religious performance. They are about creating space. Space to listen for God again. Space to examine our habits, our loves, and our assumptions. Space to be formed, rather than simply being busy. Lent prepares us for Easter by walking us through reflection, repentance, and renewed trust.

I also want to say a word about Sunday worship during this season. Lent is a powerful time to invite others. Many people are already thinking about faith, church, or meaning during this part of the year, even if they would never say it out loud. A simple invitation can matter more than you realize. Bring a friend. Invite a neighbor. Sit together. Worship is not something we keep to ourselves.

I am grateful for this church and for the way you show up for one another. I am looking forward to walking through Lent with you, beginning on Ash Wednesday and continuing each Sunday as we gather to worship God together.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Dylan



"MARDI GRAS" POTLUCK Sunday, February 8 Following the 11:00 a.m. Service

Bring your favorite Mardi Gras inspired dishes for our monthly potluck in the gym. And some \$\$ for the dessert auction!

Bakers & dessert makers, the YOUTH GROUP DESSERT AUCTION needs you! Let Barbara know what you can donate. 918-840-0104

Dessert
Auction
Sunday
Feb. 8!

Sweets for
Your Sweetie

Youth Dessert Auction

Bakers needed!



cupcakes,
cookies,
snack bags,
pies, cakes, &
Valentine themed.
All are appreciated!

CHILDREN'S BACKPACK FOOD MINISTRY



Packing food bags
assembly line style.

10:00 a.m. Wednesdays
February 11 & 25



Happy Face Attendance Challenge!

Receive a HAPPY FACE for
your name badge by attending
24 Sundays (weather permitting!)
by Sunday, June 28, 2026

February Meetings
Monday, February 23
5:30 p.m. Finance
6:30 p.m. Trustees



10:00 a.m. Thursdays
Ladies Handbell
Choir Rehearsals

Rehearsals 7PM - Wednesdays

**CHANCEL
CHOIR**

See you there!

Come
Tuesday
Morning for
Bible Study 11:00 a.m.



10:00 a.m. Sunday School Classes

Children's
Sunday
School
ALL AGES!



YOUTH (6-12 grade)
SUNDAY SCHOOL



Adult Sunday School

CrossRoads
Upstairs in the Ed. Bldg.
&
New Life
Upstairs in the
Fellowship Hall



PARENT'S NIGHT OUT 6:00—8:00 P.M. FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13

Kids will enjoy **pizza, crafts, games, and activities**, all supervised by church staff and volunteers! The event is free, but children must be signed up by Tuesday, February 10 to attend. The link for registration is on our Facebook page or click [REGISTRATION](#).



Come dine with us!

Volunteers to help cook, serve, and greet guests are always welcome. Donations of desserts are greatly appreciated.

Senior Mobility Classes



9:00 a.m. Senior Mobility Class

St. Paul UMC is excited to offer a FREE weekly senior fitness and mobility class for our members. The 1-hour class will meet twice weekly on Monday & Thursday mornings at 9AM at St. Paul UMC and is limited to members or regular attendees ages 50+, with a maximum of 12 participants. The instructor, Mark Unger, is a church member as well as a certified NASM personal trainer, specializing in Senior Fitness, which includes fall prevention, low-impact exercise, and improved movement. Those interested must fill out the registration form, a questionnaire, and sign a waiver to participate in the class.

There will be a **“Meet & Greet”** on at **9AM on Thursday, Feb. 12**, in the Parlor, to answer any questions and fill out the forms. The classes will begin at 9AM on Monday, February 16. Once there are 12 people signed up, a waitlist will be created to possibly offer additional classes in the future.

LEARNING TREE NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2026



Hi, Church!

We have been so happy to be back in January after the break and can't wait for all the learning, creativity, and love ahead in February. Here's a quick look at what our kiddos will be exploring!

Ms. Stephanie's Class

January

We jumped back into our letter and number of the week routine. We ended before break with C and 3, so we started back with D and 4!

Students created and decorated noise makers while talking about the New Year, practiced letter and number recognition, colored, and traced, and learned words that begin with each letter. January also focused on fine motor skills, especially scissor and glue practice using fun materials like play-dough, paper, cardboard, paper towel rolls, and string!



February

We'll continue building confidence with letters and numbers while adding lots of color exploration. Students will match colors, explore sensory bins, paint, mix colors, and hunt for colors around the classroom, church, and outdoors! We'll also enjoy fun Valentine activities, including creating Valentine boxes and celebrating friendship and kindness!

Upcoming Dates!

Friday, February 13 | 11:00 AM

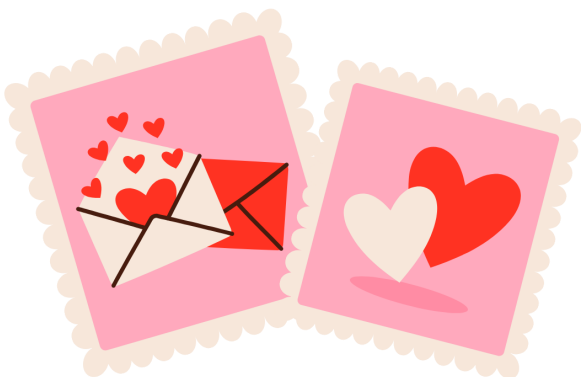
🎉 Valentine's Day Class Party
Pizza and cookie cake provided!
Valentines are welcome but not required. Mailboxes may be sent from home or decorated in class.

Friday, February 13 | 6:00–8:00 PM

♥ Parents' Night Out at St. Paul UMC
RSVP through Brightwheel

Monday, February 16

🇺🇸 No School (Presidents Day)





Miss Abigail's Class

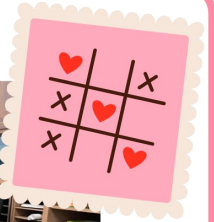
Faith & Learning

Our class is beginning a new unit: God Is Love, exploring the life and teachings of Jesus through stories from the Gospels! This will include stories of Jesus as a child in the temple, His baptism, the Woman at the Well, the Good Samaritan, and parables about loving our neighbors!

Faith learning will be hands-on and often paired with science activities, beginning with transformation and God's transforming love and how faith changes everything!

Academics

Students will be busy with daily practice with handwriting, letter recognition, early spelling, and phonetic sounding out to build confidence and readiness for reading. Each week, students will also participate in hands-on science experiences that encourage curiosity, build vocabulary, and naturally reinforce literacy skills along the way!



Valentine Fun!

Valentine Mission Project:

Over the next couple of weeks, students will create Valentine art to share with our community, including the VA Hospital, nursing homes, shelters, St. Francis Hospital, and First Responders. No identifying information will be included, just joy and creativity!

Thank you for supporting Learning Tree! We are so grateful to partner with you as we learn, grow, & experience God's love together! ♥

Contact Us:
learningtree@stpaulmuskogee.com



FEBRUARY

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|--|---|--|---|--|--|-----------|
| 1 COMMUNION SERVICE Worship Services 8:45 am - Rowsey Chapel 10:00 am - Sunday School 11:00 am - Sanctuary 6:15 pm - Discipleship | 2 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool 1 pm - Discipleship 5:30 pm Finance Committee 6:30 pm Church Council | 3 11:00 a.m. Bible Study 5:30 p.m. Bridges Out of Poverty | 4 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool 6:00 p.m. Youth Group 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir | 5 | 6 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool | 7 |
| 8 Worship Services 8:45 am - Rowsey Chapel 10:00 am - Sunday School 11:00 am - Sanctuary Potluck Lunch YOUTH Dessert Auction today! | 9 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool 1 pm - Discipleship 6:15 pm Discipleship | 10 5:30 p.m. Bridges Out of Poverty | 11 10:00 a.m. Backpack Ministry - Weight Rm 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool 5:30 pm DINNER CHURCH 6:00 p.m. Youth Group 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir | 12 9:00 a.m. Senior Mobility Class Meet & Greet 10:00 a.m. Ladies Handbell Choir Reh. | 13 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. | 14 |
| 15 Worship Services 8:45 am - Rowsey Chapel 10:00 am - Sunday School 11:00 am - Sanctuary | 16 Presidents Day No CARD lunch Learning Tree OUT Youth Group Day 9:00 a.m. Senior Mobility Class 1 pm - Discipleship 6:15 pm Discipleship | 17 5:30 p.m. Bridges Out of Poverty | 18 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool ASH WED 6PM Service 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir | 19 9:00 a.m. Senior Mobility Class 10:00 a.m. Ladies Handbell Choir Reh. | 20 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool | 21 |
| 22 Worship Services 9:00 am - Rowsey Chapel 10:00 am - Sunday School 11:00 am - Sanctuary 6:15 pm - Discipleship | 23 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool 9:00 a.m. Senior Mobility Class 1 pm - Discipleship 5:30 pm Finance Committee 6:30 pm Trustee Meeting | 24 5:30 p.m. Bridges Out of Poverty | 25 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool 5:30 pm DINNER CHURCH 6:00 p.m. Youth Group 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir | 26 9:00 a.m. Senior Mobility Class 10:00 a.m. Ladies Handbell Choir Reh. | 27 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool | 28 |

Weekly at St. Paul:

Monday:

AM 7:00 Donut Hole Group (AA)
9:00 Learning Tree Preschool
Senior Mobility Class
CARD Senior Nutrition Program

Tuesday:

AM 7:00 Donut Hole Group (AA)
9:00 CARD Senior Nutrition Program
9:30 Staff Meeting
11:00 Tuesday Bible Study
PM 12:00 Al-Anon
5:30 Bridges Out of Poverty

Wednesday:

AM 7:00 Donut Hole Group (AA)
9:00 Learning Tree Preschool
CARD Senior Nutrition Program
PM 5:30 Dinner Church (2nd & 4th)
6:00 Youth Group (6-12 Grade)
7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Thursday:

AM 7:00 Donut Hole Group (AA)
9:00 CARD Senior Nutrition Program
Senior Mobility Class
10:00 Ladies Handbell Choir Rehearsal
PM 7:00 It's in the Book (AA) Women only
6:30 Good Shepherd Clinic (1st & 3rd)

Friday:

AM 7:00 Donut Hole Group (AA)
9:00 Learning Tree Preschool
CARD Senior Nutrition Program

Saturday:

AM 9:00 Donut Hole Group (AA)

Sunday:

AM 8:45 Worship—Rowsey Chapel
10:00 Sunday School
11:00 Worship—Sanctuary



Bakers & dessert makers, you are needed for the YOUTH GROUP DESSERT AUCTION. Contact Barbara Kent to help! 918-840-0104

ST. PAUL UMC KIDS MINISTRY FEBRUARY 2026

Hello St. Paul Family!

February is here after January's surprise snow days and winter fun! We are so glad to share a few photos with you in this newsletter so you can see what our kids were up to during those extra days at home! Even in unexpected changes, there is always joy, creativity, and connection happening. We had a lot of fun celebrating our volunteers in January with goodies, thank you cards, and tokens of appreciation!



We are excited to continue our H.O.M.E. model of ministry together. This month we are focusing on H for Habits of Faith, and our big theme is putting love into action. This is our way of bringing it HOME!

Kids will be learning that loving God goes hand in hand with loving others. We will talk about how we can show care, kindness, and encouragement to our neighbors and to our church family in ways that are simple, meaningful, and joyful.



February Mission Project

Our kids will be creating Valentine cards and messages of encouragement for people in our community who work hard to care for others, including: nurses and doctors at Saint Francis Hospital and the VA, first responders, residents of local nursing homes, counselors, and care centers.

Upcoming Event: Parents' Night Out

Thursday, February 13 | 6:00-8:00 pm

Parents' Night Out is coming up, and we cannot wait. Kids will enjoy a fun evening with us in the gym filled with dinner, games, creative activities, and faith-based learning, while parents get the chance to enjoy a date night!

Register via the link on Facebook



Valentine
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

—❤—
PARENTS' NIGHT OUT
FEB. 13TH 6-8PM
Contact Abigail to Help!

Thank you for making St. Paul UMC
a place where kids and families are
welcomed! Your support makes a
huge difference to so many little lives!

Love,
Abigail Shaw
Children's Director
learningtree@stpaulmuskogee.com

Youth Group

January Lock-In



Birthdays

| | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Alaine Lambert | 17 Gayle Valor |
| 3 Gary Lambert | 19 Mike Martin |
| 3 Sidney Daniels | 19 Paula Christensen |
| 4 Marilyn Gilder | 19 Manny Ramirez |
| 4 Melissa Raper | 20 Debbie Gregg |
| 5 Donna Woods | 21 Harriet Sullivan |
| 7 Abbie Heymans | 23 Mary Pat Cole |
| 7 Faye Waits | 23 Melysa Cobb |
| 8 Margaret Thacker | 23 Kelie Cobb |
| 9 Donald Reed | 23 Taylor Foster |
| 10 Diane Beach | 25 Eric Elgin |
| 14 Sophia Hensley | 26 Suzanne Jobe |
| 15 Nikki Foster | |

Anniversaries

2/6 Bob & Donna Woods
2/28 John & Diane Reynolds Jr.

Altar Flowers

to the glory of God

Feb. 1 Charlene Pruden, in loving memory of Booker Pruden.
Feb. 8 Mr. & Mrs. Jack Cooper, in loving memory of Jack's Son, Doug, parents, J.W. & Lena Cooper, and Carol's parents, Mr. & Mrs. Neal Westall.
Feb. 15 Dennis Smith, in loving memory of Dixie Smith, a life well lived.
Feb. 22 Barbara Wright, in gratitude for four delightful daughters.



6:00 P.M. FEBRUARY 18 ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

USHER MINISTRY

8:45 a.m. Ushers

1st Sun.: Jim Davis, Mark Unger
2nd Sun.: Marilyn Gilder, Jo Gibbs
3rd Sun.: Omar Reed
4th Sun.: Don Elgin, Jim Erb
5th Sun.: Bob & Bonnie Belle Dunkelberger



11:00 a.m. Ushers

1st Sun.: Mike Pierceall, Michael Blakeslee, Ted Hine, Ed Johnson, Weldon Key
2nd Sun.: Ron Wright, Don Elgin, Todd Graybill, John Griffin, Scott Kanny, Manny Ramirez
3rd Sun.: Johnny Broome, Kelly Beach, Scott Hensley, Bob Woods
4th Sun.: Erin Goss, Diane Beach, Jenee' Hensley, Amber Hilfiger, Patty Ramirez, Margaret Thacker
5th Sun.: Roy Flinn, Taylor Foster

GREETER MINISTRY

8:45 a.m.

1st Sun.:

2nd Sun.:

3rd Sun.: Christina Booher

4th Sun.:

5th Sun.:

11:00 a.m.

Ed & Pam Johnson

J. Boydston, Ted Hine

B. Flinn / B. Hearon

Sidney Daniels

J. Boydston/B. Hearon

VAN MINISTRY

1st Sun.: Drivers: Kelly & Diane Beach
Caller: Linda Foster

2nd Sun.: Drivers: Scott & Manny Ramirez
Caller: Joan Odell

3rd Sun.: Driver: Robbie Evans, Tamra Scherer
Caller: Renee McMillin

4th Sun.: Driver: Roy & Billie Flinn
Caller: Margaret Thacker

5th Sun.: Driver: Andrew Heymans, Manny Ramirez
Caller: Sidney Daniels