



THE SPIRIT



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | ST. PAUL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH | MARCH 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. McClellen

918-687-7571

LETTER FROM THE PASTOR . . .

March always feels like a turning point. Winter begins to loosen its grip. The days stretch a little longer. Signs of life show up where everything looked dormant just weeks ago. That rhythm of death and renewal is part of why Lent fits this season so well. Lent invites us to pay attention to what God is doing beneath the surface, both in the world around us and in our own lives. It is not a gloomy season, it is an honest one. A season for reflection, repentance, and renewed focus, trusting that God is always at work bringing new life.

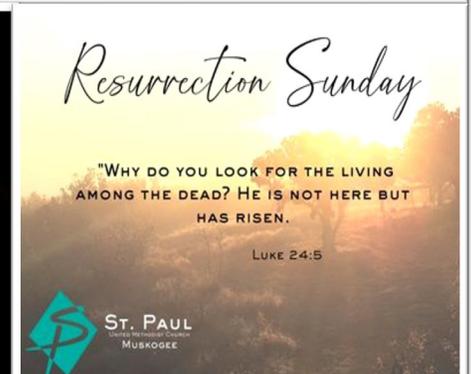
As we move through Lent this year, our worship will center on our sermon series, *The Final Week*. Together, we will walk day by day through the last week of Jesus' life. These are familiar stories, but they are meant to be experienced slowly, not rushed. When we stay with them, they shape us. They challenge our assumptions, deepen our faith, and prepare our hearts for Easter in a way that feels grounded and real.

This is also a season when showing up matters. Worship has a way of re-centering us, especially when life feels scattered or heavy. Being present week after week forms us more than we often realize.

Lent and Holy Week are powerful moments for others as well. Many people are more open to church during this season than at almost any other time of year. I want to encourage you to make worship a priority in the weeks ahead and to invite someone to come with you. A simple invitation can make more of a difference than we can imagine.

My prayer is that this season refreshes your faith and reminds you that God is still at work, bringing life, hope, and renewal.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Dylan



CHILDREN'S BACKPACK FOOD MINISTRY



Packing food bags
assembly line style.

10:00 a.m. Wednesdays
March 11 & April 1



Happy Face Attendance Challenge!
Receive a **HAPPY FACE**
for your name badge by
attending 24 Sundays by
Sunday, June 28, 2026

March Meetings
Monday, March 23
5:30 p.m. Finance Comm.
6:30 p.m. Church Council



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

Adult Sunday School



Youth Group

February Dessert Auction

THANK YOU!

HUGE SHOUT OUT!!

Thank you to *ALL who assisted* in every way possible for the YOUTH GROUP Dessert Auction Fundraiser last month! Together we raised over \$2,400 for the youth group. Special thanks goes to our "MC & Vanna" Scott & Tiffany Kanny. This truly was a "community" project, and we thank God for our St. Paul family!



Dinner Church - March 11 & 25

Dinner Church is dinner open to all our friends and family. Come and enjoy a delicious meal together.

5:30 p.m. on the 2nd & 4th Wednesdays of the month.

Come dine with us!

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

EASTER BRUNCH POTLUCK

10:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 29
Break out those delicious holiday recipes for a special Easter Brunch in the gym.



Senior Mobility Classes

9:00 a.m. Mondays and Thursdays in the GYM.



EASTER LILIES

St. Paul has a tradition of placing **Easter Lilies** in the Sanctuary on Easter Sunday that are dedicated in memory of loved ones or in honor of an event or special celebration. All the dedications are published in a special keepsake bulletin insert. Request forms are in the Atrium and the church office. The cost is \$20, and checks can be put in the offering or you can pay online at our website. Requests are due by Palm Sunday.



CANDY FOR EASTER

While you're out getting Easter candy for the kids or grandkids, pick up a bag or two for St. Paul's Annual Children's Easter Egg hunt. Drop off the candy in the basket in the Atrium. If you would rather let us do the shopping and donate funds, just mark your envelope/check "Easter Candy." Thank you



Children's Easter Egg Hunt for children in attendance after the 11:00 a.m. Worship Service on Sunday, April 5

MARCH

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	2 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool 9:00 a.m. Senior Mobility Class 1 pm - Discipleship 6:15 pm Discipleship	3 11:00 a.m. Bible Study 6:15 p.m. Bridges out of Poverty presentation	4 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool 6:00 p.m. Youth Group 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	5 9:00 a.m. Senior Mobility Class 10:00 a.m. Ladies Handbell Choir Reh. 6:00 p.m. Missions Committee Meeting	6 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool 	7
8 Daylight Savings  Worship Services 8:45 am - Rowsey Chapel 10:00 am - Sunday School 11:00 am - Sanctuary Trustees Walkthrough	9 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool 9:00 a.m. Senior Mobility Class 1 pm - Discipleship 6:15 pm Discipleship	10 11:00 a.m. Bible Study 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 10:00 a.m. Ladies Handbell Choir Reh.	13 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool	14
15 UMCOR Sunday Worship Services 8:45 am - Rowsey Chapel 10:00 am - Sunday School 11:00 am - Sanctuary	16 9:00 a.m. Senior Mobility Class 1 pm - Discipleship 6:15 pm Discipleship	17 St. Patrick's Day 11:00 a.m. Bible Study 5:30 p.m. Bridges Out of Poverty	18 SPRING BREAK 6:00 p.m. Youth Group 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	19 9:00 a.m. Senior Mobility Class 10:00 a.m. Ladies Handbell Choir Reh.	20	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 Church Council	24 11:00 a.m. Bible Study 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
29 10:00 a.m. POTLUCK BRUNCH - GYM Worship Services 9:00 am - Rowsey Chapel 10:00 am - Sunday School 11:00 am - Sanctuary 	30 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool 9:00 a.m. Senior Mobility Class 1 pm - Discipleship 6:15 pm Discipleship	31 11:00 a.m. Bible Study 5:30 p.m. Bridges Out of Poverty	APRIL 1 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool 10:00 a.m. Backpack Ministry - Weight Rm 6:00 p.m. Youth Group 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	2 9:00 a.m. Senior Mobility Class 10:00 a.m. Ladies Handbell Choir Reh. 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross 6:00 P.M. Maundy Thursday Service	3 9am-2pm Learning Tree Preschool	4 8:00 p.m. Easter Vigil Service

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

Birthdays

2 Linda Garrison	14 Grace Evans
2 John Pool	14 Terra Patrick
2 Joan Odell	16 Brett Baker
3 Linda Foster	16 Ben Heymans
5 Ellie Heymans	17 Roy Flinn
7 Rex Houser	19 Andrew Hilfiger
7 Clarence Mayberry	22 Ben Hilfiger
7 Courtney Moore	23 Betty Gill
8 Suzanne Koenig	23 Wesley Gilder
8 Rex Eskridge	25 Sara Wright
9 Michelle Andrews	26 Graci Wilkerson
9 Luke Pool	27 Marilyn Hinshaw
11 Callaway Davis	28 Jeffrey Griffin
11 Jacob Kent	31 Chris Hoffman
13 Alison Hine	31 Trisha Melhouse
14 Lee Egdorf	31 Omar Reed



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

Anniversaries

- 1 Donald & Lana Reed
- 6 Doug & Kayla Boos
- 13 Clay & Carolyn Blevins
- 22 Andrew & Jamie Heymans

Altar Flowers

to the glory of God

- Mar. 1 **Ron Wright**, in memory of Nancy Wright & Seth Wright.
- Mar. 8 **Robbie & Shannon Evans**, memory of our grandmothers, Dorothy Dunlap & Jean Clothier
- Mar. 15 **Weldon & Connie Stout**, in memory of Bill & Billie Stout and John & Jean Mose.
- Mar. 22 **Margaret Thacker, Manny, Gabriel, & Patty Ramirez**, in loving memory of our parents' anniversary, Jose & Aurora Ramirez
- Mar. 29 **Dennis Smith**, in loving memory of Susan Asquith.



GREETER MINISTRY

- | | 8:45 a.m. | 11:00 a.m. |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 st Sun.: | | Ed & Pam Johnson |
| 2 nd Sun.: | | J. Boydston, Ted Hine |
| 3 rd Sun.: | Christina Booher | B. Flinn / B. Hearon |
| 4 th Sun.: | | Sidney Daniels |
| 5 th Sun.: | | J. Boydston/B. Hearon |

VAN MINISTRY

- 1st Sun.: Drivers: Kelly & Diane Beach
Caller: Linda Foster
- 2nd Sun.: Drivers: Scott Hensley & 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

LEARNING TREE PRESCHOOL

MARCH 2026 UPDATE

What We're Learning

Miss Abigail's Class

Our students are wrapping up an exciting unit on the skeletal and muscular systems. The children loved building their very own skeleton model, "Bony Joanie," and creating a muscular system friend, "Muscle Russell." We were especially grateful for two special guests from St. Paul who helped bring our learning to life: Dr. Robbie Evans and personal trainer Mark Unger.

Next up, we will begin exploring the digestive system, learning how our bodies turn food into energy to help us grow, move, and play. We are wonderfully made!

Miss Stephanie's Class

In Miss Stephanie's class, students have been learning about Dr. Mae Jemison, astronaut, and artist Alma Thomas, whose vibrant artwork continues to inspire. In the next few weeks, we will focus on the five senses and the Easter story!

Thank you for supporting Learning Tree and praying for our little learners as they grow in knowledge, confidence, and faith!



Children's Ministry

March 2026 Update

Let's Catch Up

This past month in Children's Ministry has been full of love and meaningful moments. Our kids created **122** Valentine's cards as a mission project for employees at the hospital, local nursing homes, and the VA! We smashed our goal and were able to tell **122** people in Muskogee that St. Paul loves them this Valentine's Day! We also had a wonderful turnout for Parents' Night Out with sixteen children joining us for an evening of fun while their parents enjoyed a well deserved break. Our theme reminded the kids of a powerful truth: God's love is beyond measure.

Lenten Lessons

On Ash Wednesday, **19** children received ashes between Learning Tree and our evening chapel service. Pastor Dylan shared how Lent is a season to prepare our hearts for Easter, and it was a beautiful time of reflection for our youngest disciples. As we look ahead, our focus turns to Easter. If you would like to donate candy for Easter eggs or volunteer to help us fill them, we would be so grateful for your support as we prepare to celebrate the hope and joy of the resurrection together!

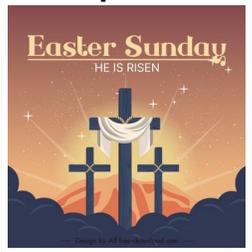


Contact Director of Children's & Preschool Ministries: learningtree@stpaulmuskogee.com



HOLY WEEK



<p>Palm Sunday March 29</p>  <p>10:00 a.m. Easter Potluck Brunch</p>	<p>Thursday, April 2</p>  <p>6:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Worship</p>	<p>Thursday, April 2</p>  <p>STATIONS of the CROSS</p> <p>9 a.m.- 4 p.m. Stations of the Cross</p>	<p>Friday, April 3</p>  <p>STATIONS of the CROSS</p> <p>9 a.m.- 6 p.m. Stations of the Cross</p>	<p>Saturday, April 4</p>  <p>8:00 p.m. Easter Vigil Service</p>	<p>Sunday, April 5</p>  <p>Easter Sunday HE IS RISEN</p> <p>Children's egg hunt following the service.</p>
---	---	---	---	--	--



MONTHLY POTLUCK BRUNCH

Sunday, March 29

10:00 a.m. Palm Sunday, March 29, we will have our **monthly potluck as a BRUNCH!** Bring your favorite brunch dish to share and enjoy in the Activity Center at 10:00 a.m. during the Sunday School hour. Then, our traditional **Children's Palm Processional** will be during the 11:00 a.m. Service.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Thursday, April 2 & Friday, April 3

Stations of the Cross, is a "drop in" interactive display in the Atrium that will lead visitors symbolically through the journey that Jesus traveled to the cross and the ultimate cost of our salvation at Calvary. Come when you can and take as much time as you need, between 9am-4pm on Thursday, April 2, and between 9am-6pm on Friday, April 3.

MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE

Thursday, April 2

6:00 p.m. Thurs., April 2, is our **Maundy Thursday Service**, where we take time to recall Jesus' new commandment to "love one another." Communion will be observed.

EASTER VIGIL

Saturday, April 4

8:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 4, St. Paul will begin the celebration of Resurrection Sunday with a traditional **Easter Vigil** that marks the transition from darkness to light and the beginning of Easter Sunday. This service is one of the earliest recorded ceremonies performed by the early church. It begins outside the church where an Easter fire is kindled and the Paschal candle is blessed and then lit. The Paschal candle will be used throughout the season of Easter, remaining in the sanctuary and will be used at baptisms and funerals, reminding us all that the Christ is "Light and Life."

EASTER MORNING

Sunday, April 5

8:45 a.m. Rowsey Chapel & 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary EASTER Sunday, April 5. We are looking forward to celebrating the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ with our whole church family. Sunday School will be at 10:00 a.m. Following the 11:00 a.m. service we will host an Easter egg hunt for the children who are present.