



# The Messenger

## March 2026

**St. Paul's  
Evangelical  
Lutheran  
Church**

3295 S. Union Ave.  
Alliance, Ohio 44601  
330-823-2285

### FROM PASTOR MUSE

““And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.” Mark 1:12

Every year, as Lent returns, we are told that Jesus is driven into the wilderness. It happens so quickly that we almost miss it. One moment Jesus is standing in the waters of the Jordan, the heavens torn open, the voice of the Father proclaiming him “beloved.” The next moment He is pushed—driven—into a barren landscape filled with danger, silence, hunger, and temptation. And yet, it is precisely there that Jesus is prepared for everything that follows.

The wilderness in Scripture is not punishment. It is preparation. Israel was not abandoned in the wilderness; they were shaped there. Prophets were not discarded in lonely places; they were refined there. And Jesus was not defeated in His wilderness; He was strengthened for His mission through it.

Lent, then, is not simply a season of giving things up—it is a season of going out with Jesus into the places we would normally avoid. The quiet moments we fill with noise or the emotions we bury. The sins we excuse, the griefs we carry quietly, the habits that bind us, the relationships waiting for healing. The wilderness is honest space. And the truth is: we all have one.

As we move toward the Passion and finally the joyful burst of Easter, we remember that resurrection never comes without a trek through barrenness. There is no empty tomb without the Cross, and there is no Cross without the long road that leads through the desert.

In the ELCA, we often describe Lent as a journey of turning—turning back to God, turning toward neighbor, turning toward the life that Christ is forming in us. But turning requires space to stop, reflect, notice, and respond. The wilderness gives us that space.

This Lent, I invite you to take an active approach to your wilderness work. Name your wilderness. Where is God inviting you to slow down, listen, and be transformed? Engage it intentionally. Set aside time for prayer, Scripture reflection, journaling, or silence. Even five minutes a day becomes holy ground. Walk with a companion. A friend, a spouse, a trusted Christian brother or sister. God often speaks through those who journey with us. Expect God to act. The wilderness is not empty—it is full of God’s hidden work. Jesus did not walk into the desert alone; the Spirit led Him there, and the angels ministered to Him.

Martin Luther once wrote: “This life, therefore, is not righteousness, but growth in righteousness;

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*...not being,  
but  
Becoming.*

Cont. from pg. 1

not health, but healing; not being, but becoming.” That is Lent—becoming, not perfect, but honest, not finished, but formed, not abandoned, but accompanied by Christ Himself.

Here in our own community, our own mix of busy schedules, winter weariness, hopes, anxieties, and the longing for renewal—we need the wilderness more than we realize.

We need a season to remember that God meets us not only in our strength, but in our emptiness; not only in our worship, but in our wandering.

As we share in worship, devotions, Wednesday gatherings, and our shared Lenten disciplines, let us encourage one another to remain open to what God is doing in us. The wilderness is never the final word—but it is often the necessary first step toward resurrection life.

May your Lent be a season of honest reflection, courageous faith, and quiet awakening. And may the same Spirit who drove Jesus into the wilderness lead you, guide you, and renew you—so that when Easter dawns, your heart will be ready to burst with joy at the power of God’s redeeming love.

*Soli deo Gloria, Pastor Muse*

St. Paul's Lutheran Church is thankful for the service of Pastor Diana Thompson. Her dedication to moving the ministry forward has shown forth in many ways. We wish her well and Godspeed as she embraces her call to serve the Kingdom of God in a different community,

## Apostle Build 2025

We have been invited into the 2025—2026 Apostle Build program. This is a unique opportunity for the church to partner with Habitat for Humanity to help provide a house for a family. We are blessed to be one of ten churches in this process. We invite you support in this program. There are three ways you can support this work. 1) Prayer. As you come before God in prayer, lift up this program that it will have success. 2) Volunteer. This program involves an investment of time. Either working on the site at the house or making lunch for a work day. More information will be brought forward in the spring. 3) Financial donation. We do have a financial investment in this program and would welcome any support and participation from the community. You can make a direct donation through the offering plate, there will be a change collection container in the welcome center. Please consider a donation, even in a small way to this incredible project.

**HOLY WEEK:**

**MAUNDY THURSDAY:**

**10:30 AM AND 7:00 PM**

**GOOD FRIDAY:**

**7:00 PM**

**EASTER SUNDAY:**

**9:30 AM**

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Our theme for 2025-2026 School year

“Great are the works of the Lord; they are studied by all who delight in them.”

*Psalm 111:2*

The Season of Lent is a time of renewal and growth, as we wander the wilderness. Let our education program be part of that growth. We have classes for all ages, so we invite you to come out and grow in faith. If you would like to participate in the teaching team, please see Pastor Muse.

Bible Study is pause during Lent and will return after Easter.

Lent devotionals are available in Garnes Hall for your use during the season.

“Christ in our home” devotional books are available on the table in Garnes Hall. If you would like to receive the Daily

Devotional email sign up through the web-site or contact the pastor for assistance.

The youth group meets every Wednesday. We gather at 5:30 PM for a meal and conclude at 7:00 PM. Our leaders are Pastor Muse, Diana Cullen and Jill Mehl.

Our Library continues to grow and expand. Take the opportunity to visit our collection and see if there is something that speaks to you.

### HEALING EVENT TUESDAY, MARCH 17 AT 7:00 PM.

A healing event will be held on Tuesday, March 17th at 7:00 PM. This event will include a sound bath, meditation, Reiki, Hot stones, deep heat, Light therapy, Red Light, and other avenues of healing. All are welcome to attend, and no experience is needed.

### LENTEN MID-WEEKS CONTINUE THROUGH WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25TH.

Soup supper at 6:00 PM  
Worship service at 7:00 PM

Lenten Devotional Material will be available on the table in Garnes Hall prior to the season.

### MUSIC & WORSHIP

Music & Worship Committee will meet on Tuesday, March 3 at 7:00 PM. Please see Gina Falconer if you are unable to attend.

REMINDER: Spring Forward on March 8! Please remember to turn your clocks ahead one hour on Saturday, March 7.

Midweek Lenten services will continue on Wednesdays through March 25th. Please join us for a casual worship every Wednesday at 7:00 PM. There is a soup supper each week at 6:00 PM, prior to worship.

Please help us adorn the sanctuary with lilies, tulips and daffodils on Easter Sunday. The order forms are included with the messenger or can be picked up and filled out at church.

If you are willing to lector, usher, greet or help lead the singing for online worship, please let Pastor or Gina Falconer know. Your service would be greatly appreciated. There will be no regular choir rehearsals on Thursday, April 2 or 9.

#### **HOLY WEEK SERVICES:**

Palm Sunday – March 29 – 9:30 AM communion worship  
Maundy Thursday – April 2 – 10:30 AM communion worship in the chapel 7:00 PM communion worship in the sanctuary

Good Friday – April 3 – 7:00 PM worship in the sanctuary  
Easter Sunday – April 5 – 9:30 AM – communion worship (Easter Breakfast at 8:00 AM)

## KLUSCH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Now is the time for eligible youth of St. Paul's to apply for consideration for The Klusch Memorial Scholarships.

**Please use the following guidelines:**

An applicant, in addition to the letter of application, submits a copy of any financial grants, a college or high school transcript, and a listing of registered courses for the next semester. A copy of the student's financial awards from the school will be requested.

**Requests for scholarship consideration should be made in writing by June 1 .** It is the intent of the Committee to notify applicants by July 1.

**Send to:** Pastor Muse,  
3295 S. Union Ave  
Alliance, Oh 44601

The Klusch Memorial Scholarships are primarily intended to get students initially into school, they can be used for any type of higher education such as trade schools, adult education etc., and after that the amount will depend on the number of applicants and availability of funds. The month of August is designed as Scholarship emphasis month.

**Spring Forward on March 8! Please remember to turn your clocks ahead one hour on Saturday, March 7.**



*The Eternal Flame is given to the glory of God  
In memory of my grandson Kaden and  
thank offering for my grandchildren,  
Julianna, Blaze, Alana, Luke, Lena, Devon  
and Preston by Deb Garrott.*



### Happy March Birthday to You!

May you enjoy many more and may God bless each one of you in many ways as you enjoy another year in God's grace.

- |                       |                        |                       |                          |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 2 - Michael Molnar    | 9 - Patty Wilson       | 14 - Patty Kridler    | 30 - Annie Menegay       |
| 4 - Deagan Leasure    | 9 - Jason Worley       | 16 - Shirley Rill     | 30 - Emily Moore         |
| 4 - Vicki Wiggs       | 9 - Owen Marriner      | 19 - Alexis Hunt      | 30 - Kim Moretti         |
| 5 - Norita Webb       | 10 - Adam Pifer        | 21 - Carol Carmen     | 31 - Taylor Lee Campbell |
| 6 - Barb Broadwater   | 11 - Merlin Jones      | 21 - Jill Loudin      |                          |
| 7 - Troy Russell      | 11 - Kyle Ince         | 24 - David Blaisman   |                          |
| 7 - Rhonda Scott      | 12 - Alexis Wak        | 24 - Karen Wolfe      |                          |
| 8 - Adrienne Wyss     | 12 - Matthew Strumbley | 27 - Jason Yost       |                          |
| 8 - Rachel Hays       | 13 - Chad Dennis       | 28 - Courtney Kridler |                          |
| 8 - Janice Marschinke | 13 - Cathy Brookes     | 30 - Amanda Boyce     |                          |



### Sunday, March 1, 2026

#### **Introduction**

During Lent we journey with all those around the world who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil. In today's gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and Spirit. At the font we are given a new birth as children of God. As God made a covenant with Abraham, in baptism God promises to raise us up with Christ to new life. From worship we are sent forth to proclaim God's love for all the world.

#### **Prayer of the Day**

O God, our leader and guide, in the waters of baptism you bring us to new birth to live as your children. Strengthen our faith in your promises, that by your Spirit we may lift up your life to all the world through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**Readings and Psalm** Genesis 12:1-4a The blessing of God upon Abram Psalm 121 I lift up my eyes to the hills; my help comes from the Lord. (Ps. 121:1, 2) Romans 4:1-5, 13-17 The promise to those who share Abraham's faith John 3:1-17 The mission of Christ: to save the world

### Sunday, March 8, 2026

#### **Introduction**

In today's gospel the Samaritan woman asks Jesus for water, an image of our thirst for God. Jesus offers living water, a sign of God's grace flowing from the waters of baptism. The early church used this gospel and those of the next two Sundays to deepen baptismal reflection during the final days of preparation before baptism at Easter. As we journey to the resurrection feast, Christ comes among us in word, bath, and meal—offering us the life-giving water of God's mercy and forgiveness.

#### **Prayer of the Day**

Merciful God, the fountain of living water, you quench our thirst and wash away our sin. Give us this water always. Bring us to drink from the well that flows with the beauty of your truth through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. **Readings and Psalm** Exodus 17:1-7 Water from the rock in the wilderness Psalm 95 Let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation. (Ps. 95:1) Romans 5:1-11 Reconciled to God by Christ's death John 4:5-42 Baptismal image: the woman at the well

### Sunday, March 15, 2026

#### **Introduction**

Baptism is sometimes called enlightenment. The gospel for this Sunday is the story of the man born blind healed by Christ. "I was blind, now I see," declares the man. In baptism God opens our eyes to see the truth of who we are: God's beloved children. As David was anointed king of Israel, in baptism God anoints our head with oil, and calls us to bear witness to the light of Christ in our daily lives.

#### **Prayer of the Day**

Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the dark-

ness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**Readings and Psalm** 1 Samuel 16:1-13 David is chosen and anointed Psalm 23 You anoint my head with oil. (Ps. 23:5) Ephesians 5:8-14 Awake from sleep, live as children of light John 9:1-41 Baptismal image: the man born blind

### Sunday, March 22, 2026

#### **Introduction**

In today's gospel Jesus reveals his power over death by raising Lazarus from the dead. The prophet Ezekiel prophesies God breathing new life into dry bones. To those in exile or living in the shadows of death, these stories proclaim God's promise of resurrection. In baptism we die with Christ that we might also be raised with him to new life. At the Easter Vigil we will welcome the newly baptized as we remember God's unfailing promise in our baptism.

#### **Prayer of the Day**

Almighty God, your Son came into the world to free us all from sin and death. Breathe upon us the power of your Spirit, that we may be raised to new life in Christ and serve you in righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**Readings and Psalm** Ezekiel 37:1-14 The dry bones of Israel brought to life Psalm 130 I wait for you, O Lord; in your word is my hope. (Ps. 130:5) Romans 8:6-11 Life in the Spirit John 11:1-45 Baptismal image: the raising of Lazarus

### Sunday, March 29, 2026

#### **Introduction**

Today, we encounter the paradox that defines our faith: Jesus Christ is glorified king and humiliated servant. We too are full of paradox: like Peter, we fervently desire to follow Christ, but find ourselves afraid, denying God. We wave palms in celebration today as Christ comes into our midst, and we follow with trepidation as his path leads to death on the cross. Amid it all we are invited into this paradoxical promise of life through Christ's broken body and outpoured love in a meal of bread and wine. We begin this week that stands at the center of the church year, anticipating the completion of God's astounding work.

#### **Prayer of the Day**

Everlasting God, in your endless love for the human race you sent our Lord Jesus Christ to take on our nature and to suffer death on the cross. In your mercy enable us to share in his obedience to your will and in the glorious victory of his resurrection, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**Readings and Psalm** Isaiah 50:4-9a The servant of the Lord submits to suffering Psalm 31:9-16 Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit. (Ps. 31:5) Philippians 2:5-11 Humbled to the point of death on a cross Matthew 26:14—27:66 The passion of the Lord Matthew 27:11-54 (alternate) The passion of the Lord

<b>March 2026</b>						
<b>Sun</b>	<b>Mon</b>	<b>Tue</b>	<b>Wed</b>	<b>Thu</b>	<b>Fri</b>	<b>Sat</b>
1 <b>2nd Sunday of Lent</b> 9:30 am Worship (in-person and online) 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Christian Education	2 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm Grief Support	3 5:00 pm Catechism 7:00 pm Committee Meetings	4 12:00 pm Midweek Eucharist (in-person and online) 5:30 pm Youth Group 6:00 pm Soup Supper 7:00 pm Lenten Service	5 6:15 pm Joy Bells 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	6 7:00 pm Euchre and Dominoes	7
8 <b>3rd Sunday of Lent</b> 9:30 am Worship (in-person and online) 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Christian Education	9	10 5:00 pm Catechism 7:00 pm Church Council	11 12:00 pm Midweek Eucharist (in-person and online) 5:30 pm Youth Group 6:00 pm Soup Supper 7:00 pm Lenten Service	12 6:15 pm Joy Bells 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	13 12:00 pm Deborah's	14
15 <b>4th Sunday of Lent</b> 9:30 am Worship (in-person and online) 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Christian Education <b>Newsletter Items Due</b>	16 6:00 pm Girl Scouts 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm Grief Support	17 5:00 pm Catechism 7:00 pm Healing Event	18 12:00 pm Midweek Eucharist (in-person and online) 5:30 pm Youth Group 6:00 pm Soup Supper 7:00 pm Lenten Service	19 6:15 pm Joy Bells 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	20	21 8:30 am Men's Breakfast
22 <b>5th Sunday in lent</b> 9:30 am Worship (in-person and online) 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Christian Education	23	24 5:00 pm Catechism 5:00 PM Community Dinner	25 12:00 pm Midweek Eucharist (in-person and online) 5:30 pm Youth Group 6:00 pm Soup Supper 7:00 pm Lenten Service	26 6:15 pm Joy Bells 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	27 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm Apostle Build Fundraiser	28
29 <b>Palm Sunday</b> 9:30 am Worship (in-person and online) 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Christian Education	30 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm Grief Support	31 5:00 pm Catechism	Holy Week: Maundy Thursday: 10:30 AM and 7:00 PM Good Friday: 7:00 PM Easter Sunday: 9:30 AM			<b>Bible Study will pause during Lent, starting on February 18th and return after Easter.</b>

## FELLOWSHIP EVENTS

### FELLOWSHIP

Coffee Hour Hosts for February

Mar. 1 -

Mar. 8 -

Mar. 15 -

Mar. 22 -

Mar. 29- Greg and Cathy Brookes

The Wednesday evening soup suppers and Lenten Services are now under way. Supper is served at 6:00 p.m. followed by the service at 7:00 p.m. There are sign-up sheets available, if you would like to donate a dessert or make soup for one of the evenings. Thank you in advance, if you choose to do so.

### MID-WEEK EUCHARIST

Join us for a time of prayer, word and Holy Communion. The service begins at noon and lasts about twenty-five minutes.

### EUCHRE AND DOMINOS

Euchre, Friday, March 6, at 7:00 PM and will continue on the first Friday of each month thereafter.

### JOIN US ON FRIDAY, MARCH 27, FROM 4:00-7:00 P.M. FOR A LENTEN FISH FRY!

Enjoy delicious walleye caught on Lake Erie by Jim and Austin Mehl, served with hash brown potato casserole, coleslaw, green beans, applesauce, roll, dessert and beverage. This dinner is a benefit to support St. Paul's donation to the Habitat for Humanity Apostle Build Project. A freewill offering will be received. The dinner is open to St. Paul's members and their guests. Advance sign-up is required, and attendance is limited to the first 150 people. The sign up sheet will be available in Garnes Hall beginning March 1. To go orders will be accepted if you are on the sign up sheet. There will also be a sign up sheet to volunteer to donate a dessert. We look forward to sharing this special evening of fellowship and support with you!

### YOUTH GROUP

Youth meets every Wednesday at 5:30 PM. We have a meal, fellowship, lesson and games. All youth of the church 1st grade and up are invited to join. Contact Pastor Muse, Diana Cullen or Jill Mehl.

### ADULT EDUCATION

Bible Study Wednesday at 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM.  
**Bible study will pause during Lent and will continue after Easter.**

### DEBORAH CIRCLE

The Deborah's will meet Friday, March 13 at 12:00 PM.

### MEN'S BREAKFAST

Men's breakfast is Saturday, March 21st at 8:30 AM. All men of the church are welcome to join this time of fellowship and growth. We conclude at 10:00AM.

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

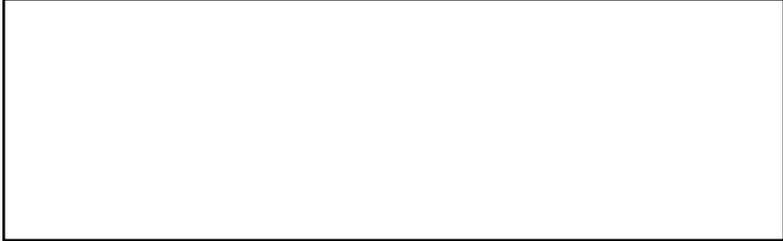
For the months of March and April, our mission will be gathering BABY DIAPERS to be distributed at the Alliance Community Pantry. They are always in need of diapers, as the supplemental cards available to use will not cover this need. I was told their greatest need is for sizes 4,5,6,7 and 8, also 4/5 size pull-ups. However, any size will be appreciated. Also, if you are not able to shop yourself, please know cash donations are always welcome, as are coupons. You can mail your donations to the church, just indicate that the amount is to be used for the "Diaper" mission or see Karen Wolfe and give her your donation directly. Many ways to help out. The Community Dinners continue on the 4th Tuesday of each month. In January we had some new volunteers show up to help and we thank them for choosing to do so. Hopefully they will be able to come again. We all have a good time and the folks that come in for a meal are always appreciative. It gives you a good feeling that you helped out.

**ST. PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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Alliance, OH 44601

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*Our purpose is to  
be the living body  
of Jesus Christ!*



Email: [st.paulsalliance@outlook.com](mailto:st.paulsalliance@outlook.com)  
Phone: 330-823-2285  
Fax: 330-823-8399

Find us online!  
[www.livingbody.org](http://www.livingbody.org)  
[www.facebook.com/St.Pauls.Alliance](https://www.facebook.com/St.Pauls.Alliance)  
[www.twitter.com/PaulLutheran](https://www.twitter.com/PaulLutheran)  
[www.instagram.com/St.PaulsAlliance](https://www.instagram.com/St.PaulsAlliance)

Stay informed and sign up for *The Weekly Messenger* email on our website, Facebook page, or text 4STPAULS to 22828.

The Reverend Timothy H. Muse - Lead Pastor  
Rhonda Ferrall - Secretary  
Kathy Sloan - Organist  
Gina M. Falconer - Director of Music  
Gayle B. Fiegenschuh - Communion Minister and Visitation

**Last Day to Order: March 16, 2026**

**All flowers are \$11.00 per pot.**



***Tulips and  
Daffodils***

How Many Lilies \_\_\_\_\_ How Many Pastel-Colored Tulips \_\_\_\_\_

How many Daffodils \_\_\_\_\_ Total No. of Flowers (\$11.00/pot) \_\_\_\_\_

**Cost of Total Order: \$** \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory Of \_\_\_\_\_

Thankoffering For \_\_\_\_\_

By Whom \_\_\_\_\_

*Flowers may be taken home after the 9:30 am worship service Easter Sunday.*

By Mail: You can fill in the above form, and along with your check, place in an envelope and mail to St. Paul's Church, 3295 S. Union, Alliance, OH 44601.

At the Church: Forms are available in Garnes Hall. Place your order and/or money/check in the box provided.

Website: You may also access the order form on the church website and mail or bring to the church.  
[www.livingbody.org](http://www.livingbody.org)