



The Epistle

Against All Odds and Obstacles



The Church never should have survived.

There was so much opposition to the early Church that by all probability, logic, and reason, it should have died out.

But it didn't.

The Jewish leaders were against the Church and the spread of the Gospel. They tried to persecute the Apostles and Deacons. They stoned Deacon Stephen to death. They

tried to spread doubt among the crowds so that they wouldn't believe Jesus had risen from the tomb. The Roman officials were against the Church. They imprisoned, crucified, and exiled the Apostles. There were many believers who were martyred throughout the reign of the Roman Empire. The Early Church was made up of Jews and Greeks, slaves and free, wealthy and poor—people of many backgrounds, cultures, and political ideals—a mix which should have and

(Continued on page 2)



IN THIS ISSUE

College Grads.....	2
Stewardship.....	3
Council Elections..	3
Synod Assembly ...	6
Celebrations	6
Confirmations.....	7
Prayers	12
Schedule	13

Against All Odds and Obstacles

(Continued from page 1)

did make conflict steady among them. They were imperfect people who sinned and failed to preach the glory of God. They should have given up and separated. But they didn't.

Against all odds and obstacles, the Church survived, grew, and spread

throughout the world because of the Holy Spirit.

The same Holy Spirit is at work in our church. Read this newsletter to discover ways this month that we are celebrating the Holy Spirit among us .

In Christ,
Pastor Emily Beckering

Celebrating Our College Graduates

LEANDRA HAWKINS AND MAGGIE MCDOWELL

Graduation is a milestone that calls for recognition and celebration. Two of St. Paul's lifetime members, Maggie McDowell and Leandra Hawkins, graduate from college this spring.

Maggie graduated from a five-year Mechanical Engineering Technology Program at the University of Cincinnati, completing work co-ops with manufacturing companies where she used her computer drawing and programming skills to organize and fabricate machine parts, tools and manuals. During her college career, Maggie also cultivated and sustained many friendships, grew as a person, and further developed her core values.

Leandra graduated from Northwestern University with a degree in Latin and Biology. Active in Lutheran Campus Ministries on campus, she served as Director of Outreach for two years. Joining Chi Omega, she served as Director of Programming and was on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Board. Having completed undergraduate research in Classics and Neuroscience, Leandra plans to work in clinical research.

Join us as we bless Leandra and Maggie during worship on Sunday, June 23, and as we celebrate their achievements and new beginnings at a reception following worship. Don't miss this opportunity to express your pride and joy in Maggie and Leandra's accomplishments.

What is Stewardship? God's Work, Our Hands

Have you ever wondered what Stewardship means? Over the next few months, in the Epistle, a member of the congregation will share a story, by a written interview, of how he/she has seen God at work at St. Paul. In May, Steve Headley will share a story on God's work at St. Paul.

How have you seen God at work in our congregation and/or community?

I've seen God at work in our congregation through the old and the young. When I attend service and see many who

overcome age and illness to attend I know God is at work and I should be there. I see God at work in the young like Matthew and Maci who would've been lost without St. Paul's.

How did this affect you?

For me, the services and activities at St. Paul's serve as a counter-balance to all the bad news. It seems to me, since the COVID pandemic, we have become a

(Continued on page 8)

Council Elections May 26

The Holy Spirit is among us to call and equip leaders for the Church. Council elections are Sunday, May 26th after worship.

This year, elections will be by paper ballot only. Constitutionally, members can vote by absentee ballot if they cannot be present for the election. If you cannot be present in person on May 26th, then you can cut out and mail in the ballot at right—ballots must arrive to the church office before Sunday the 26th.

Please see candidate biographies on page 4-5 of this issue.

Council Absentee Ballot

Vote for four candidates:

- Kathy Crosby
- Linda Miller
- Matthew Mueller
- Carole Replogle
- Write-in candidate:

Please write either your name or your offering envelope number for voter validation:

Council Candidate Biographies



Left to right: Kathy Crosby, Linda Miller, Matthew Mueller, Carole Replogle

Kathy Crosby

My family has a long history with St. Paul Lutheran Church in Reading, Ohio. My parents were married at St. Paul's, I believe my grandparents may have been married at St. Paul's, and my great-grandfather's name appears on one of the bells in the bell tower. I also have a presentation cane given to my great-grandfather in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of St. Paul's (1853-1903).

I was baptized at St. Paul's, although officially I have been a member for roughly 8 years. Yes, like many members of St. Paul's, there is a lot of family history. This history is why I continue to belong and to serve St. Paul's.

I'm currently finishing my sixth year on church council. I've decided to run for another two-year term out of concern for the future of our church. There could be some challenges and difficult decisions. I want to be in on those decisions.

Aside from the family history and my concerns for the future of St. Paul's, I love the first name basis that our members have with each other and their concern for their fellow members.

I have served as council liaison for the Evangelism Committee and currently serve as liaison for Social Concerns. This year I have been a substitute Sunday school teacher but have been needed only one time. I also serve as a reader.

Linda Miller

St. Paul's has been an important part of my life for the past 30 years. I cannot imagine being without our church family. I look forward to the fellowship we share when we are together. I also know that it takes many volunteers to maintain day to day operations and I am happy to do my part. I never considered myself a financial whiz, but the role of Treasurer is the best fit for the skills I do have – or-

(Continued on page 5)

Council Candidate Biographies

(Continued from page 4)

ganization and management. The toughest part of the job is the use of software programs to track and report information. Fortunately, I know a guy who knows how to do that. Together, we make a good team and do our best to keep things on track. I appreciate fellow council members for their leadership, and I also appreciate all those who work behind the scenes to fulfill the mission of our church. Thank you to all!!!

Matthew Mueller

Jesus Christ is my Lord and savior. I am 56 years old. I am a recovering alcoholic. I was brought up in Kenwood in a wonderful Christian home with two brothers and a sister, and we attended weekly services as a Methodist. I love the dress code here at St. Paul and that we have Communion every week! I consider myself a broken Christian, who needs Jesus on a daily and hourly basis. I have three years of college and attended UNLV. I am a sports fanatic. I am willing to serve on Council to grow in faith and following Jesus and to help out in any way I can.

Pax (peace),
Matthew Mueller

Carole Replogle

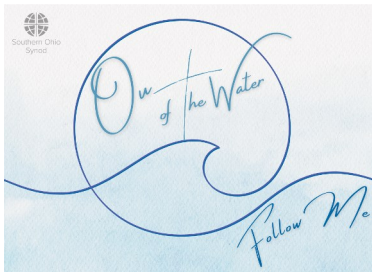
I joined St. Paul because of its loving, friendly, & caring congregation which it continues to be today. St. Paul's congregation has always risen to meet any challenge, no matter what the challenge may be; this may be financial, volunteering, helping those in need through various charities.

Ways I have served at St. Paul:

- Church Council 7 years
- Worship and Music Committee: 13 years
- Stewardship Committee: 20 years; currently the chairperson and Council liaison for this committee
- Lesson Reader for Worship
- Communion Set-up
- Communion Assistant
- Vacation Bible School
- "Feed the Kids of Reading" - a community project to feed lunch to youngsters in the Reading Area

Church Council is a unique opportunity to serve the church and provides insight on how the church operates – how committees and various groups work together to keep the church functioning along with maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Synod Assembly June 1, 2024



The Holy Spirit is alive in our Synod! The Synod will gather for business and

worship on Saturday, June 1. In addition to Pastor, St. Paul's can also send one male and one female representative as a voting member. If you would like to attend the assembly, then please contact Pastor Emily Beckering or Nancy Erbeck.

Celebrations in May



2 Kris & Rhonda Kreiner

4 Marie Calhoun,
Jane Erbeck,
Barry Prince

9 Kennedy Keith

11 Addy Kruse

13 Annie Lohmeier,
Grant Lohmeier,
Cindy Sieckman

15 Kevin Harbaugh

18 Jean Winkle

21 Amanda Harbaugh

**22 Kristopher Keith and
Kate Wollenburg**

23 Jack Baumiller

25 Chloe Cameron

26 Kayla Kreiner

29 Michael Coulehan

Support St. Paul at Kroger!

Did you know that St. Paul benefits from the Kroger Community Rewards Program? Just follow the directions below to increase your church offering at no cost to yourself!

One-time step: Link your Kroger Plus Card to St. Paul.

- Visit [kroger.com/account/communityrewards](https://www.kroger.com/account/communityrewards) and log in with your Kroger account. (Kroger customer service can help with this.)
- Search for "St. Paul Lutheran Church" or organization number TG880.
- Click the ENROLL button under St. Paul's name & address.
- After this, each purchase with your Plus card will generate donations to St. Paul!

Confirmation on Pentecost: May 19



The Holy Spirit is alive in our young people! We will celebrate the Confirmation of Matthew Lawson and Katie Sturgill on Sunday, May 19th, during worship. This is Pentecost Sunday which enables us to celebrate that the same Holy Spirit that birthed the Church gives faith to young people today! We will pray for Katie and Matthew, they will publicly affirm their faith, and they will share their statements of faith which they have written. Plan to stay after worship for a reception in honor of Matthew and Katie.

Gather Cincinnati Young Adults Group: May Events



Gather Cincinnati

a group for young adults
May 2024

Upcoming Events

Book Club
Pastrix, Chapters 10-14
May 1 at 6 pm
Northern Row Brewery

Mulberry Picking
May 23rd, 6:30-7:30
Meet at the end of John St
Covington, Ky
Bring your own container



Save the Dates

Summer Worship
July 14th, 5:30-7:30
Hope Lutheran Church
on Blue Rock

National Young Adult Gathering
July 16-20
New Orleans

If you are interested and available to attend,
Gather can help with registration or travel
expenses.

Connect with Us



tinyurl.com/GatherCincinnati

What is Stewardship? God's Work, Our Hands

(Continued from page 3)

“work from home, pray from home” society. When I'm at St. Paul's, I see God at work.

Did the experience provide you with an idea of how to be more generous in sharing your time, talents, and money with St. Paul Lutheran Church? Why?

The social activities at St. Paul's have played such an important part of myself, Linda Lawson, Matthew, & Maci. It was an ice cream social that originally intro-

duced us to St. Paul's. These activities have always given us a chance to spend time with others.

Are there any Outreach Ministries that you would like St. Paul to add?

The future of local churches is directly related to young people. As older church members pass on and young people become increasingly unaffiliated, a fine line is being created that threatens churches in the future. Outreach should always be directed at the young.

Steve Headley

Council Corner

God who is ever faithful, has blessed St. Paul with another fruitful month. With a stable checking account balance, increases in interest on our Money Market fund and an increase in stock market assets, we were able to have operating income that exceeded our expenses by \$1722.38 and an increase in our cash assets by \$62,000 from December 31, 2023, to March 31, 2024. Thank you to each of you for your generosity and for God's provision and goodness.

The Finance Committee met on April 18 in preparation for the first quarter congregational meeting. They continue to investigate and compare insurance coverages with other congregations of similar building/

congregation size to determine if what we are paying is equitable. Changes made to the church building heating and air conditioning temperature settings have shown a positive effect in proven cost reduction. A review of cashflow from 2017-2023 showed that giving has remained relatively consistent, despite changes in attendance. The committee is scheduled to meet again in July.

Council continues a monthly agenda topic of “Thinking Ahead” and each month has an open dialogue offering innovative ideas to decrease expenses and/or increase revenue. This month Nick Huitger shared that Cincinnati Music Theater (CMT) is looking for re-

(Continued on page 9)

Council Corner

(Continued from page 8)

hearsal space and is willing to pay rent. This group has used St. Paul's space in the past for their rehearsals, but it is uncertain if they would be interested in doing so again. If this is pursued, Council will make certain that a contract is drafted to ensure that the arrangement is mutually agreeable, that the rent will sufficiently cover the cost of utilities, and that the space used is properly cared for and returned to its original state.

St. Paul successfully hosted the 2024 Cincinnati Conference Southern Ohio Synod WELCA (Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) Spring Gathering on Saturday, April 13. A delicious brunch was prepared and served by the ladies of St. Paul, much to the delight of all who attended. Elva Hurst, a nationally known chalk artist (<https://elvaschalkart.com>), graced us with her many talents of music, singing, devotion and topped it off with her amazing chalk renderings under the theme of "Then Comes Spring." Elva's drawing was gifted to the members of St. Paul in gratitude for their hospitality. We were also delighted to receive a refund of \$207.25, due to an overabundance of funds that had been collected during Elva's visits to six area congregations. This gift will be used to help us preserve Elva's drawing and to purchase a frame to protect her wonderful creation. Thank you to all who prepped the church, set-up, prepared food, ran the sound and video, and cleaned up after this event!

Kathy Crosby, Chair of the Nominating Committee reported that they have one candidate, Matthew Mueller, who is willing to run for Council. In addition to Matthew, current Council members Kathy Crosby, Linda Miller and Carole Replogle will also be on the ballot running for re-election. Other members who were asked to run have either replied that they were not interested, at this time, or have not replied. Chet Laine will follow-up with one of those members to confirm. If you still have a burning desire to run for Council and have not previously been asked, please contact Kathy Crosby, Janet King, Nelson Langefeld, Nancy Erbeck, or Pastor Emily.

The Safety Committee continues to search for an individual who would be willing to serve as Chairperson for this important committee. If interested, please contact Joy Niefield or Nancy Erbeck.

Continue to watch for more information regarding the West Side Cincy Chautauqua/ Ecumenical Conference regarding Christian - Jewish Relations and the Israel-Palestine Conflict. The dates are July 19 – 21, 2024.

No committee or individual has come forward to chair/organize the quarterly community lunches which were previously discussed. Council decided that we are already inadvertently holding quarterly events through the Easter Breakfast, Church Picnic, Reformation Sunday, and Christmas Lunch. If someone, however, would like to lead addi-

(Continued on page 10)

Our Life Together

(Continued from page 9)

tional lunches or events and/or has ideas for such events, please let us know.

We were blessed in April to hear from members of each of our six committees who shared their personal stories/experiences of “Why I Serve.” These talks were well received, and we look forward to providing further information at our Committee Fair which will be held on Sunday, April 28, immediately following the worship service. Word on the street is that there will be some sweet treats and beverages, as well as a drawing for a special gift for all who attend and turn in a completed Passport, showing that you visited each Committee’s booth.

The 2024 Southern Ohio Synod Assembly will take place on May 31, 2024, and June 1, 2024, at Peace Lutheran Church (3530 Dayton Xenia Rd, Beavercreek, OH 45432). Everyone is welcome to attend free workshops on Friday evening, May 31, 2024, with Session 1 running from 4:30 -5:30 p.m. and Session 2 running from 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. (Please see the available workshops included within this Epistle). The business meeting will take place on Saturday, June 1, 2024, with one male and one female voting member from St. Paul being the only individuals allowed to attend this portion of the assembly. If you are interested in attending as a voting member, please contact Pastor Emily or Nancy Erbeck, Council President.

St. Paul’s First Quarter Congregational meeting took place, following worship, on Sunday, April 21, 2024.

Council Elections will take place following worship on Sunday, May 26, 2024. Please note that Council Elections are the only elections for which an Absentee Ballot can be requested and completed. If you will not be able to attend the meeting on May 26th to elect Council members and wish to have your voice heard, please contact the church office, and request an Absentee Ballot. Voting will only be permitted via paper ballot, so make sure you request your ballot early and mail it back to the church office prior to May 26, 2024.

Thank you to Nick Huitger for his service to the Council and for serving as liaison for the Worship & Music Committee for the past two years; your service and dedication has been much appreciated, Nick! And finally, thank you to each of you in the congregation for your continued faith and support of those of us who are currently serving and will soon be serving on your Church Council. Should you have any questions or suggestions, at any time, please feel free to reach out to any of us and we will be happy to listen and provide you with answers.

To God Be the Glory,
St. Paul Church Council: Kathy Crosby,
Nancy Erbeck, Nick Huitger, Chelsea King,
Chet Laine, Linda Miller, Joy Niefield,
Carole Replogle, Pastor Emily Beckering

St. Paul Lutheran Church

LOCATION KEY
 S = sanctuary
 N = narthex
 L = library
 FH = fellowship hall
 US = upstairs
 O = outside
 Z = Zoom

Mission Statement

Growing a Christian community where each is valued, accepted, and loved.

513-821-0987 | mail@stpaulreading.org

May 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
April 28 5 Easter 9 am Sunday School (ages 3-18) (US) 9 am Adult Forum (N) 10:30 am Worship (S) After Worship: Committee Fair (N)	April 29	April 30	May 1 2:30 pm Bible Study (N/Z)	2	3	4
5 Ascension 9 am Sunday School (ages 3-18) (US) 9 am Adult Forum (N) 10:30 am Worship (S) After Worship: Evangelism Committee (L)	6	7	8 2:30 pm Bible Study (N/Z)	9	10	11
12 7 Easter 9 am Intergenerational Sunday School (N) 10:30 am Worship (S)	13	14	15 2:30 pm Bible Study (N/Z)	16	17	18
19 Day of Pentecost / Confirmations / Thanksgiving for Christian Ed Leaders 9 am Sunday School (ages 3-18) (US) 9 am Adult Forum (N) 10:30 am Worship (S) After worship: Reception	20 7 pm Council Meeting (L) **Epistle Articles Due **	21	22 2:30 pm Bible Study (N/Z)	23	24	25
26 Holy Trinity 10:30 am Worship (S) After worship: Council Elections	27 Reading Memorial Day Parade	28	29 2:30 pm Bible Study (N/Z)	30	31	June 1

Our Life Together

To reach Pastor directly, please call the pastoral line at 513-760-5884.

If you have requests for the Prayer Chain, or to remove a person from the list, please contact the office at 513-821-0987 or mail@stpaulreading.org.

We pray for **Samantha Asbrock** (Marie Calhoun's friend); **Berkeley** (Carol Curless's great-grandson); **Jeannie Allen** (Faith Eckerle's friend); **Teresa Bell** (former member); **Stephen Black** (Kim Coulehan's nephew); **Nancy Boone** (Gary Gries' sister); **Brett** (Kings' step-nephew); **Pat Buck** (Hirts' friend); **Natalie Burroughs; Jack & Maria Busch** (Fords' friends); **Jodie Calhoun; Andre Carnavale** (Hirts' friend); Casey (Cindy Sieckman's niece); **John Cathcart; Christy** (Terri DeAngelis' daughter); **Jeff Coldiron; Pat Coldiron; Sandy Cordes; Jen Crosby** (Kathy's daughter); **Kathy Curless; David** (Cindy Sieckman's cousin); **Christopher Davis** (Anne Rolfes's son); **Rebecka DeLeon** (daughter of Holly Ford's co-worker); **Katie Demopoulos** (Diana Hawkins's niece); **Jane Erbeck; Nancy Erbeck; Larry Faulkner** (Freda's son); **Justin Feldman** (Bess Sturgill's father); **Cindy Flege; Lee Frank** (Barbara Moorhouse's niece's husband); **Darrell Frasure** (St. Paul neighbor); **Jeanne Fuller; Clara Garcia** (Cindy Mayhugh's sister); **Larry Getz** (Barbara Moorhouse's cousin); **Lena Gibson** (Pirrmanns' stepsister); **Nathaniel Gibson** (Les Eckerle's step-nephew); **Janie Grandy** (in-law of DeAngelis-

Willet family); **Don Grau Jr.; Jim Hammerling** (Portmanns' son-in-law); **Ron Harbaugh; Chrissy Harris; Sandy Hatcher** (Linda Holt's sister); **Headley/Lawson family; Elain Heskamp; Ed Hirt; Andrew Horton; Penny and Larry Huber; Ellen Hunter** (Jeni Cathcart's grandmother); **Kate** (granddaughter of Dennis King's friend); **Mike Keefe** (Millers' neighbor); **Ken and Kathy Keith** (Kris Keith's dad and step-mom); **Chelsea King; Dennis King; Jackie King; Janet King; Earl (Buddy) King** (Dennis's brother); **Marilyn Kline** (Cindy Sieckman's neighbor); **Loretta Kombrink** (Marilyn Portmann's aunt); **Tom and Mike Koze and family** (friends of Faith Eckerle); **Kelsee Lainhart** (friend of Kings); **Nelson Langefeld; Yvonne Lowery** (St. Paul Players); **Brad Majewski; Carroll Mayhugh Sr.** (Carroll Mayhugh's father); **Cindy Mayhugh; Jessica Mayhugh & family** (Mayhughs' niece-in-law); **Samantha Mersch** (Mayhughs' daughter, Sarah Papin's sister); **Linda Miller; Mary Mills** (St. Paul Players); **Jessica Mink** (Donald Harris's cousin); **Barbara Moorhouse; Charlie Myers** (Coulehans' family friend); **Ann Ohr** (Barbara Moorhouse's cousin); **Eric Papin; LaCartha Pate** (Jeanne Wagner's friend); **Linda Perin** (Moorhouses' cousin); **Nick Pirrmann; Bob Price** (Kings' friend); **Barry Prince; Everett Prudhomme** (Beckerings' nephew); **Rod Puckett** (Holly Ford's colleague); **Denise Rankin; Cynthia Reed; Dick Replogle**

Our Life Together

(Linda Miller's brother); **Christopher Rolfes** (Anne's son); **Mike and Judy Ryan** (friends of the Kings); **Sara and Evan** (Barbara Moorhouse's cousins); **Scott Schadel** (friend of McDowells); **Shawn Schnetzer** (Sturgills' cousin); **Shannon and Dane** (friends of Riddle family); **Knox Shepherd** (grandson of Pr. Vicki Garber); **Kate Sheridan** (Kings' family friend); **Cindy Sieckman; Kim Sieckman; Joe Snavely** (Bethany School chaplain); **Dave Speed** (Hirts' friend); **Crosley Spelman** (Spelmans' grandson); **Joyce Spelman; Kathy Spelman and family** (Joyce's sister-in-law); **Michael Steele** (Mayhughs' nephew); **Frank Sturgill** (Jim's dad); **Geri Toland** (Carole Replogle's neighbor); **Sharon Touchton** (Portmanns' friend); **Lish Trasser** (friend of DeAngelis-Willet family); **Treasure** (Les Eckerle's cousin); **Ralph Turner** (friend of Dennis King); **Jeanne Wagner; Melinda Wakefield** (Sherry Bronner's friend); **Pr. George Wilch; Leslie Willet; Kate Wollenburg and family; Judy Young**

(Janet King's sister); **Mike Zecchini** (Betschs' brother-in-law); **Barb Zeh** (Jeni Cathcart's mom).

We pray for those with ongoing health concerns who are unable to come to church every week: **Shirley Lathrop, Barbara Moorhouse.**

We pray for our armed forces members: **Graham Barton** (Fords' neighbor); **Paul Cordes** (Elinor Schieman's grandson); **Victoria Derry** (Elinor Schieman's great-granddaughter); **Jared Forst** (Loretta's grandson); **Beau Glenn** (Karen Koehl's son-in-law); **Kylie Hahn** (Gretta Hahn's granddaughter); **Donald Hosea** (Karen Koehl's son); **Samuel McLoughlin** (friend of Cindy Sieckman); **Scott Minton** (Becky Betsch's brother); **Jobeth Ramirez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Joshua Rodriguez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Trent Schwegman** (cousin to the Erbecks and Fords); **Dustin Silvey; Alex Wisecup** (son of Nadine and Barry Wisecup).

May Ministry Schedule

Date	Feast / Fast	Assisting Minister	Lesson Reader	Livestreamer
May 5	Ascension	Addy Kruse	Chet Laine	Becky Betsch
May 12	7 Easter	Nancy Erbeck	Carroll Mayhugh	Chet Laine
May 19	Day of Pentecost	Addy Kruse	Edward Bardes	Carroll Mayhugh
May 26	Holy Trinity	Carroll Mayhugh	Kathy Hirt	Becky Betsch

**St. Paul
Lutheran Church**

***Mission
Statement:***

Growing a Christian
community where
each is valued, ac-
cepted, and loved.

**V
O
T
E**



COUNCIL ELECTIONS

May 26 After Worship

See p. 4 and 5 for candidate bios

**St. Paul
Lutheran Church**

106 Maple St.
Reading, OH 45215

Phone: 513-821-0987

E-mail:

mail@stpaulreading.org

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

