

St. Paul Lutheran Church

The Church on the Highway

Loving others into the Love of Christ

May 2026 Edition

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

TOPIC	Page
A Message from our Senior Pastor	1
A Message from our DCE Josh McNamara	2
Potluck Lunch Continuation of DCE Message	3
Prayer List 2nd Weds. Worship & Lunch	4
Servants for the Month	5
LWML News 70th Anniversary Cookbook Cyber Safety Workshop	6
2026 Graduate Request Quilting Group Update Mother's Day	7
Classes for All Ages	8
Children & Youth Activities	9
VBS - June 14-17 Registration is OPEN	Back Cover



A Message From Our Senior Pastor

Rev. Dr. Brian Hesse

Email: pastorhesse@splcwaco.com

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! This month we will close out our Easter celebrations. We will recognize graduates. Of course, the Month of May always kicks off with the special recognition of the Rite of Confirmation for our young catechism students.

Perhaps you are feeling the pressure that comes with the end of another school year. Perhaps you are realizing that summer vacations are right around the corner. Perhaps you are preparing for other events that are happening on your calendar. This time of year, our calendars are not just about confirmations and graduations. It is easy to get caught up in the busy calendars and lose sight of how God is working in these events.

King David reminds us in Psalm 31:15-16, **“My times are in Your hand; rescue me from the hand of my enemies and from my persecutors! Make your face shine on your servant; save me in Your steadfast love.”**

When time seems the enemy, when the calendar seems full... we should treasure those days, the events and full calendars. These are opportunities to discover how God saves and keeps us in His steadfast love daily. It is also an opportunity to share that love with others. Teaching others and sharing with others was a strong theme in this year's confirmation class. They have learned much. Congratulations and blessings to our 2026 Confirmation Class!

While Confirmation Sunday is just one event. We have many other important matters of God's grace to share. So don't forget to share! It is time to share with the church office your graduation information. It is always time to share your faith. It's always a good time share the love of Jesus as we continue to love others into the love of Christ at the Church on the Highway.

Pastor Hesse



Sunday Worship
8am & 10:30am

Online: www.splcwaco.com

Bible Class/Sunday School
9:15am



A Message From Our Youth & Family Director

Josh McNamara, D.C.E.

Email: FamilyMinistry@splcwaco.com

Gearing Up For The Rainforest: An Invitation to Grow, Lead and Learn

There are moments in the life of a church when an opportunity comes along that feels both simple and deeply significant at the same time. Vacation Bible School is one of those moments.

On the surface, VBS might seem like a few days filled with songs, games, Bible stories, and laughter. It will also have colorful decorations, high energy, and maybe just a little bit of controlled chaos. But beneath all of that is something far more powerful—something eternal.

VBS is one of the tangible ways we as a church get to share the Good News of Jesus with the children and families in our community.

This summer, we're inviting kids to trek with us as we step into Rainforest Falls where we will be Exploring the Nature of God. Together, we'll journey through a vibrant, living picture of God's creation—as we discover who He is through His Word. We'll explore His creation, His power, His faithfulness, and most importantly, His love for us in Christ.

Every journey needs guides along the way, to help encourage us and to help lead us along the path. **This is where you get to come in!** You can help play an active role in the faith journey of these families and the children we will be blessed to witness to for the sake of the gospel.



Every smiling face that greets a child, every hand that helps with a game, every voice that sings a song or tells a Bible story—these and so many more, are the ways God works through His people during VBS. **You don't have to be a Bible expert. You don't have to have all the answers. You just have to be willing.** Willing to be part of something God is already doing here at St. Paul. Willing to say "yes" to God's call of service.

For some kids, VBS might be the first time they hear that they are created by and deeply loved by God. For others, it might be a moment where something finally "clicks." And for families, it can be a doorway into a deeper connection with Christ and an invitation for them to continue growing in their faith alongside us here at St. Paul.

That's the kind of impact we're talking about. One that's meaningful, one that's eternal and one that will help you to grow in your relationship with Jesus, as you help lead children into a deeper knowledge of the nature of God.

So here's the invitation: would you consider being part of it?

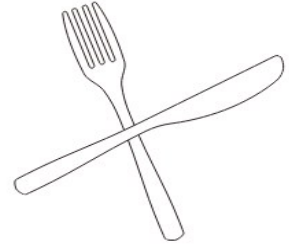
No matter how you feel led to serve, I want you to know that you are helping share God's love letter, the Bible, with the children and families of our Bellmead community.

Let's step into the rainforest together this summer. Not just for the fun (though there will be plenty of that), but for the mission.

article continues on page 3

POTLUCK LUNCH

MAY 31, 2026



Everyone is invited to join us in the Family Center on Sunday, May 31, for a Congregational Potluck after the 10:30 a.m. worship service.

Everyone please bring your favorite dish, casserole, salad, and/or dessert to share and stay after worship to enjoy fellowship with our church family!



Continuation From Our Youth & Family Director

Because when we love others into the loving arms of Jesus through our VBS program, we are participating in something that has an impact that lasts far beyond the single week of Vacation Bible School.

If you're interested in volunteering or want to learn more, we would love to connect with you! There's a sign-up sheet located in the foyer, if you're feeling led to sign-up for a specific aspect of our VBS program.

If you're looking for more info regarding how you can serve, feel free and contact Josh McNamara or Angel Breton regarding how God can use you, just as you are, to help make an eternal difference through our Rainforest Falls VBS program.

I'm excited to see what kind of wild adventures God has in store for us, as we prepare to help share His love with the families of our community, here in the coming weeks! May God continue to bless you and your family as you prayerfully consider serving in this unique and powerful way.

In Christ,

Josh McNamara
Director of Youth and Family Ministry
St. Paul Lutheran Church





Please Remember these in your Prayers..

- † We pray for continued healing for all those who have suffered physical problems in the last month: (a complete list is available in the church office). We pray the Lord lay His healing hand upon them.
- † We pray for all who are undergoing cancer diagnosis/treatment: (a complete list is available in the church office). We pray the Lord keep His healing hand upon them.
- † We pray for all who struggle with ongoing health concerns: (a complete list is available in the church office). We pray the Lord keep His healing hand upon them.
- † We pray for all who are home-bound: (a complete list is available in the church office). We pray the Lord give them comfort and peace with their living situation.
- † We pray for all those in nursing care or assisted/independent living facilities: (a complete list is available in the church office). We pray the Lord will give them comfort and peace with their living situation.
- † We pray for those who have lost loved ones in the past month. May the Lord provide these families comfort and peace during their time of grief.
- † We pray for those serving in our Armed Forces: (a complete list is available in the church office). We pray the Lord keep them safe in their stead as they defend our freedom and safety.

Prayer requests for illnesses, hospitalizations and recovery are listed for 4 weeks. If you wish to remain on the prayer list, please provide the office with an update by calling (254.799.3211) or send an email to: wecare@splcwaco.com. Without an update, we will remove that person from the prayer list hopeful that all is well. We are always willing to take new or renewed requests at any time.

SECOND WEDNESDAY WORSHIP & FELLOWSHIP

All are invited to join us for Worship
with Holy Communion on
Wednesday, May 13, at 11:00 a.m.
with a Fellowship Luncheon following.

***Desserts are appreciated for the
luncheon, but not required.***

If you have any questions, please call the
church office (254.799.3211).





Those who are scheduled to Serve at SPLC for May 2025

All those serving are listed below by first initial and last name
in an effort to protect their identity online.

ELDER OF THE MONTH:

B Holobaugh

ALTAR FLOWERS:

5/3 2026 Confirmation Class
5/10 L & B Woodward
5/17 J & J Petrich
5/24 **OPEN**
5/31 **OPEN**

ACOLYTES:

5/3 Elder on Duty (8:00am)
Bl Petrich - Acolyte (10:30am, **Conf. Sunday**)
L Gonzalez - Crucifer
5/10 W Hatfield (8:00am)
E Tindle (10:30am)
5/17 C Gonzalez (8:00am)
Bl Petrich (10:30am)
5/24 E Williams (8:00am)
L Gonzalez (10:30am)
5/31 W Hatfield (8:00am)
Br Petrich (10:30am)

LAY READERS

5/3 J Lamar (8:00am)
LDLT Student (10:30am)
5/10 J Nawara (8:00am)
M Weaver (10:30am)
5/17 M Borchardt (8:00am)
N West (10:30am)
5/24 L Woodward (8:00am)
D Bracciale (10:30am)
5/31 C Morgan (8:00am)
J Uptmore (10:30am)

USHERS FOR WORSHIP

8:00am Worship: Group 3

L Payne, E King, M Lynch, B Leftwich,
D Schwarz, R Faulknor

10:30am Worship: Group 4

G Hurta, J Kersten, B Hand, B Kubitzka,
D Prikryl, R Finstad

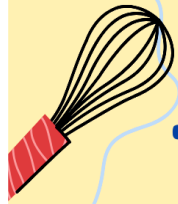
SUNDAY MORNING GREETERS:

5/3 L Turnbough (8:00am)
D Bracciale (10:30am)
5/10 J & K Lamar (8:00am)
S Clark (10:30am)
5/17 E Gambardella/J Haverkamp (8:00am)
D & V Savage (10:30am)
5/24 M & C Borchardt (8:00am)
C & C Watkins (10:30am)
5/31 C & J Morgan (8:00am)
J & B Schlemmer (10:30am)

NURSERY VOLUNTEERS

5/3 K McCullough (9:15am)
P Price (10:30am)
5/10 K Kubitzka (9:15am)
S Cone (10:30am)
5/17 A Bush (9:15am)
A Gilchrest (10:30am)
5/24 J Lassetter (9:15am)
P Price (10:30am)
5/31 M & C Borchardt (9:15am)
S Cone (10:30am)





The LWML is preparing a 70th Anniversary Cookbook



St. Paul LWML is excited to announce that we are creating a Keepsake Cookbook to honor the 70th anniversary of our beloved church. We hope you will help us by submitting your wonderful recipes. Since this is a keepsake, and we want to preserve our St. Paul heritage, we encourage you to add a little extra information along with the recipe(s) you submit. For example: are you a charter member, a child or a grandchild of a charter member, were you married, confirmed or baptized at St. Paul?

All typed or handwritten recipes must be received by May 17.

They can be dropped off in Jacqueline Uptmore's church mailbox.

If you have any questions, please reach out to her.



CYBER SAFETY WORKSHOP

Sunday, June 28, 2026
Albers Family Life Center



Save the date and plan to join us on Sunday, June 28, immediately following the 10:30 a.m. worship service, for an engaging cyber-safety workshop focused on helping you stay safe and confident online. We'll show you how to:

- How to recognize common scams (such as suspicious emails, text messages/calls)
- What to do if something doesn't feel right in a message or call
- You'll learn simple tips for creating strong, memorable passphrases
- Safer ways to use the internet for banking and shopping
- How to adjust social media settings to keep personal information private.



We will also explain new scams that use artificial intelligence, such as fake voices or videos, so you can protect yourself and your loved ones with confidence.



Watch for more information coming soon.
If you have any questions, please contact Jeremy Lange.



CLASS OF 2026

Calling all 2026 St. Paul Graduates!

We realize the coming weeks and months will be very hectic for you and your family. There are many tasks to complete, tests to pass, and lots of memories to make with family and friends.

Therefore, we wanted to give you plenty of notice to submit graduate information you would like published in the **JUNE 2026 Newsletter**. Please include: school of graduation, degree received, participation in any clubs, groups, sports, etc.; as well as any special awards, accolades, or scholarships received.
Please keep information as short as possible.

All information should be delivered to the church office no later than Monday, May 18, 2026.

If you have any questions, please contact the church office.



The Ol' Sew 'n' Sow Quilters were very busy in 2025...and 2026 is going strong! Last year they blessed our church and community with:

- 221 Runners & Quilts
- 125 Adult items (bibs, phone bags, etc.)
- 88 Baby items (bibs, quilts, etc.)
- Over 500 Prayer Quilts

These items blessed our church members, friends, family members, veterans at the VA and Veteran's One Stop, and CareNet Pregnancy Center.

If you have any interest in learning more or joining them, please contact Renelle Gray or come by on a Monday... No sewing experience necessary! They meet on Mondays at church from 9am until 3pm; with a devotion, and time of sharing during their 'sack' lunch at noon.

*Give her the rewards
she has earned
and let her works bring
her praise at the city gate.*
Proverbs 31:31



Happy Mother's Day
May 10, 2026

Classes for All Ages

Please join us for Sunday School and Bible Classes at 9:15 a.m.

Adult Bible Study (Albers Family Life Center)

Join us for a study examining the selected readings from the Book of Acts for the Easter season (through mid-May). A new study topic will be announced soon.

ASK PASTOR HESSE: Outside Pastor Hesse's office you will find a box to place any questions that you would like Pastor Hesse to answer during the Adult Bible Study class on Sunday mornings.

Men's Bible Class (classroom behind the Parish Hall)

This class will begin a new study on Sunday, May 3; *Great Characters of the Bible*, written by Dr. Alan B. Stringfellow. We will learn how God used ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary tasks.

Ladies Bible Class (Conference Room)

This class is going through the study, *Strong and Courageous*, by Donna Snow. Life is full of conflict, daunting tasks, and roadblocks. Few people experience this as viscerally as Joshua did as he was called to lead God's people Israel into the Promised Land. Join us for this verse-by-verse Bible study looking at the life of Joshua and see how you, too, can be strong and courageous amidst any challenges you face.

Grades Nursery - Kindergarten: Simply Loved (classrooms)

This class teaches children to love Jesus and each other, created with the truth found in 1 John 4:7 in mind which says, 'Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God.'

Grades 1-4: Bible Basics (classroom)

This class is learning how to use the Holy Bible and where to find their favorite Bible stories and characters.

Grade 5: Catechesis Training (classroom)

This class undergoes instruction in the Catechism and how to apply it to their daily lives.

Grades 6-8: Select Devotions (classroom)

This class is learning from a devotion study in preparation for new curriculum.

High School Students (Youth Room)

High school students meet in the Youth Room every Sunday for Bible Class! This will be a great time of study, building relationships, fellowship and fun! *Breakfast is usually served.*

College Students (classroom behind the Parish Hall)

After joining breakfast in the Youth Room, college students move to their classroom to study the Sunday Scripture readings used in worship.

Other Bible Study Opportunities:

College Student Evening Bible Study/Fellowship (LDLT - Lutherans Doing Life Together)

The LDLT group will resume their weekly Bible study and fellowship meal in the Fall semester. If you have any questions, please contact Karen Shelton or Pastor Hesse.

Youth Confirmation/Catechesis Training and Music (grades 6-8)

Our Wednesday evening classes will resume in the Fall for grades 6-8. Watch for more details.

Confirmation for our 8th grade students will take place on Sunday, May 3, during our 10:30 a.m. worship service.

There's a place for EVERYONE to be immersed in God's Word and fellowship with other Christians!

Children & Youth Activities



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY:

- ⇒ **May 31** - We will be having our **VBS Volunteer Training** on Sunday, May 31st. Feel free to grab yourself a plate of food during our congregational potluck meal and then to head down to the Parish Hall, where we will share the details about our exciting Rainforest Falls VBS program and what your role will be for it.

YOUTH MINISTRY:

- ⇒ **May 17** - We will be having our High School Youth Night on Sunday, May 17th in the Youth Room from 5-7pm. Students in grades 9th-12th grade and their friends are invited to join us as we spend time growing in our faith and growing closer to one another in Christian fellowship.
- ⇒ **May 24-** We are planning to have our off-site joint-Youth event at the Waco Rage Room on Sunday, May 24th, as we explore the words of Jesus in John 8:36. **Students will need to register in advance with Josh McNamara, if they plan to attend this off-site joint-Youth event.** Stay tuned for more info and details regarding this amazing, upcoming event!



VBS Registration is OPEN!
June 14-17, 2026

We kindly ask **all participating students and adults** who are planning to attend the evening Bible Study to register by scanning the QR code on the back cover of this newsletter, or by visiting the church website (www.splcwaco.com). This will allow us to plan materials and meals accordingly. If you have any questions, please call the church office (254) 799-3211.

You don't want to miss the fun exploring the Nature of God at VBS this summer!

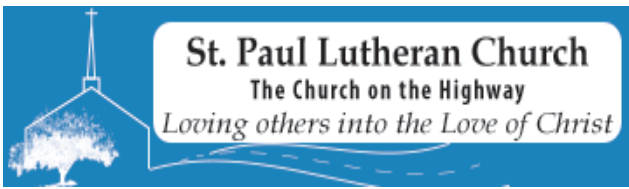


Vacation Bible School takes lots of hearts, hands, and feet to share the love of Jesus with the children!!

If you would like to help, please see the sign-up sheet in the foyer or contact Josh or Angel for information.

There are LOTS of areas to serve! We will also need groups to provide the meal each night.





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PLACE POSTAGE
HERE

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



May 2026 Edition



www.splcwaco.com

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Vacation Bible School

June 14-17, 2026



Registration is OPEN!

Scan to Register



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