

St. Paul's Ambassador

*A newsletter making Christ Jesus known, looking
forward to February 2026*

"So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us." 2 Corinthians 5:20

Agape Love

One of my favorite things about this time of year is helping our grandkids pick out valentines for their friends at school. They're still very young (6 and 7 ½), so valentines for them are just for fun and are given to every classmate. Valentine's Day is a chance for young kids to express themselves with homemade cards, or store-bought ones that reflect their interests: dinosaurs, art, Hello Kitty. Every grocery store and pharmacy has hundreds of options.

But the real Valentine - the person for whom the day is named - was a priest and physician in Rome. Legend has it Valentine was imprisoned for marrying Christian couples and giving aid to Christians being persecuted by the Emperor Claudius II in Rome. Some stories also say that he healed a young girl, the daughter of his jailer, of her blindness. Along with other courageous followers of Christ, Valentine comforted the imprisoned and those sentenced to death. Eventually, Valentine was condemned to death for his actions and his faith, and was martyred on Feb. 14, AD 270.

St. Valentine is the patron saint of couples in love. But the kind of love that Valentine himself showed to his community was an even richer and more fundamental kind: Agape love. Love given for the sake of the world being a better place, irrespective of the worthiness of the recipient. Valentine loved like Jesus does. He didn't comfort just those fellow prisoners who were "good people," he reached out to anyone who was cold, hungry, or scared. I'm sure that Valentine didn't just reach out to fellow Christians but had compassion for every fellow prisoner.

Valentine is considered a saint for showing courage and compassion even when he knew he would probably be killed for doing so. But in a sense, he was also simply doing what we human beings were created to do: pass on the love of God. Paul calls human beings clay vessels. We are created to have space in our selves for the love and Spirit of God (2 Corinthians 4:7). If we don't pass that love on, but just receive and receive without giving, we are not fulfilling the purpose for which we were made. We are created to receive love so that we can give love, and in the giving we have room again to receive.

A metaphor I like to use is that of a riverbed. The purpose of a riverbed is to allow fresh running water to enter and fill it, then release the water to flow onward downstream. We are fulfilling the purpose for which we were created when we make time and space in our lives to receive God's love, and then allow that love to flow through us to others. We don't have to create that love, and we don't have to do anything to it. All we have to do is pass on what we receive. I think this is what Jesus means when he says, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:30).

This Valentine season, find time and space in your lives to receive the love of God. Do what you love with a prayerful heart, and God's love will come to you. Or sit quietly and wait for God to allow that love to flow into your mind and soul. And then, as God places people in your life who need love, you will have it to give. Rejoice that you are being exactly the person you were created to be.

Peace be with you,
Pastor Ingrid

Gathering news

Help needed!

Reach out to Eileen Fisher to help with St. Paul's 200th anniversary celebration in 2027.

Pastor Melissa May Installation

Pastor Melissa May will be installed at Rader Lutheran Church in Timberville, Sunday, February 8 at 3 pm.

Altar flowers

Altar flowers for February are given to the glory of God and in memory of Bob Pence and Wilmer and Ollie Miller by Phyllis Lytton.

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Leah, Conrad, and Evelynn Boyle on the December 31 arrival of Everett Wayne Boyle!

Christian sympathy

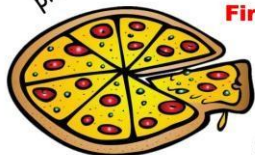
Christian sympathy is extended to the family of PJ Christoph, who died on January 2.

Christian sympathy is extended to the family of Larry May, who died on January 20.

Address changes

Please inform St. Paul's if your address changes. Newsletters that are unable to be delivered due to address changes are returned to St. Paul's with additional postage due. Thank you for your help.

Dinner provided



Young Families'

Chat-n-Chew

First Monday of each month

6:00 - 7:00 pm

Everyone welcome!
Kids enjoy a Bible-lesson & activities while parents unwind

At St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Jerome

4109 Jerome Rd., Edinburg VA 22824
Questions? Call or text Matt Booher at 540-325-7503



St. Paul's Ambassador

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Jerome Parish

Pastor Ingrid Chenoweth

4109 Jerome Road, Edinburg, VA 22824

Office 540-856-2639

Email: stpjerom@shentel.net

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/stpauljeromeva>

Our mission is to be a living example of God's love.

Musicians:

Steve Stratton

Miriam Stratton

Dara Booher

Congregation Council

Jeff Dellinger, President

Anna Barb

Joe Belan

Matt Booher

Donald Bowers

Eileen Fisher

Kaitlyn Funkhouser

Miranda Hawkins

Becky Jenkins

Orville Smoot

Miriam Stratton

Articles for the St. Paul's Ambassador are welcomed from members and friends of the congregation. Please submit your articles to Gail Dawson

at: gdawson22824@yahoo.com

Attendance and Offerings				
Date 2025	Worship Attend	Worship Offering	Sun Sch Attend	Sun Sch Offering
12/7	49	\$1986.00	N/A	N/A
12/14	52	\$1316.00	N/A	N/A
12/21	65	\$3111.00	N/A	N/A
12/24	75	\$200.00	Christmas Eve	
12/28	29	\$1310.00	N/A	N/A

Thank you for your contributions to the ministry of this church!

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

c/o Denise Dellinger, Treasurer

77 Landis Lane, Edinburg, VA 22824

Join us for Worship and Study

Learning and Youth Needs

We are in need of people to help lead our learning and youth programs. Prayerfully consider how God is calling you to serve in these specific ministries, or in any area of our church life.

Observing Lent at St. Paul's

Join us for a Shrove Tuesday pancake dinner on February 17, 4 – 6 pm. Pancakes, sausage, gravy, apples, and puddins will be served. Free will offering.

Ash Wednesday service will be held at 7 pm on February 18. Pastor Ingrid will be preaching.

Lenten services are scheduled for these Saturdays at 4 pm: February 28, March 7, March 14, and March 21. A light meal will be served with Holden Evening Prayer following.

Women of Church & Community: "Let's Do Lunch!"

Join us on Tuesday, February 24 at 11:30 am at Cracker Barrel. We are getting together for a Girls Day Out! Let Denise Dellinger know if you can come or if you need a ride. Text or call Denise at 540-624-9055.



Preparing for Lent

If January is the time for making New Year's resolutions, what is February associated with?



Gardeners plan spring gardens, browsing seed catalogs and starting plants indoors. Baseball spring training officially begins. And after weeks of staying inside to avoid the cold, we all start looking forward to a good spring cleaning.

Lent can be compared to these ordinary acts of preparation. For the early church, the 40 days of Lent was a time for new Christians to engage in a period of learning and preparation for baptism, which took place at the Easter vigil, the evening before Easter day. Today, Christians recall that period of preparation with Lenten services and reflecting on Bible passages appropriate to the season. Some understand Lent to be a time of spiritual training, and will choose to practice traditional Lenten disciplines of fasting from certain foods, prayer, and giving charity. And others will take stock of their relationship to God, and start removing old habits and distractions from their lives. As author Kathleen Norris has said, "The purpose of Lent is not to make you feel bad about yourself, but to focus on more important things rather than silly distractions."

Remember in prayer

Please remember in prayer members and friends who are experiencing illness, in hospitals or nursing homes, those who serve in the military, and families who are grieving the loss of a loved one.

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



Welcome to St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Jerome, Virginia

Feb 1:	Worship, 10:30 am in person and via Zoom
Feb 2:	(Monday) Chat-n-Chew, 6 - 7 pm
Feb 8:	Worship, 10:30 am in person and via Zoom
Feb 9:	(Monday) Council meeting, 6 pm
Feb 15:	Worship, 10:30 am in person and via Zoom
Feb 17:	(Tuesday) Shrove Tuesday pancake supper, 4 - 6 pm
Feb 18:	(Wednesday) Ash Wednesday service, 7 pm
Feb 22:	Worship, 10:30 am in person and via Zoom
Feb 24:	(Tuesday) Let's Do Lunch, 11:30 am at Cracker Barrel in Woodstock
Feb 28:	(Saturday) Lenten service, 4 pm. Light meal followed by Holden Evening Prayer