

Welcome Home!

# Saint Paul's Lutheran Church

April 2026 Newsletter



## Holy Week Journey

Join us as we journey through Holy Week! Maundy Thursday's potluck Seder Supper is April 2 at 6 PM in the gym. Bring a dish to share! The Seder meal is where we remember and honor the Last Supper Jesus had with his disciples. We will also celebrate First Communion with students and their families. We will end this holy night in the sanctuary with the stripping of

the altar, leading us into the darkness that is Good Friday.

Good Friday Tenebrae is April 3 at 12 & 7 PM in the sanctuary. These services are where we honor the final moments in Jesus' life with the gradual dimming of lights & the symbolic sound of the earthquake at Christ's death and the rolling of the stone. Our 7 PM worship

service will also be shared on [www.facebook.com/stpaulserie](https://www.facebook.com/stpaulserie) & [www.youtube.com/user/stpaulslutheranerie](https://www.youtube.com/user/stpaulslutheranerie).

Funeral for Jesus is on Saturday, April 4 at 5 PM in the sanctuary. This service is where we honor Jesus' life and prepare for the resurrection.



## Easter Sunday Worship



Celebrate with us on Easter Sunday, April 5 at 9 & 11 AM in the sanctuary. 9 AM worship service will also be livestreamed at [www.facebook.com/stpaulserie](https://www.facebook.com/stpaulserie) & available at [www.youtube.com/user/stpaulslutheranerie](https://www.youtube.com/user/stpaulslutheranerie).

There is no Children's Church on Easter Sunday; children will be in worship with their families.

Easter is the oldest Christian holiday and the most important day of the church year because the events of the death and resurrection of Jesus are the basis for Christianity. Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

## St. Paul's Lutheran Church

3108 Sterrettania Road

Erie, PA 16506-2658

[www.stpaulserie.org](http://www.stpaulserie.org)

**Saturday Worship Service, 5 PM**

**Sunday Worship Service, 9 AM**

All Sunday worship videos are livestreamed at

[www.facebook.com/stpaulserie](http://www.facebook.com/stpaulserie)

and available at

[www.youtube.com/user/stpaulslutheranerie](http://www.youtube.com/user/stpaulslutheranerie).

**Wednesday Scripture Study, 9 AM**



**Office Hours:**

**Mon-Thu 9 AM-3 PM**

814-833-1761

[office@stpaulserie.org](mailto:office@stpaulserie.org)



**Pastor Erik**

**Pastor Erik Young**

814-833-1761

[Pastor@stpaulserie.org](mailto:Pastor@stpaulserie.org)

Pastor's Office Hours: Mon-Wed 9 AM-1 PM

### About Worship: The Altar

The word "altar" appears in the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible 378 times in 321 different verses. It would then seem appropriate to assume that this is an important word for us to know, hence the discussion on the altar in our "About Worship" column this month.

What is the purpose of an altar? Quite simply it is the focal point. Most religions utilize an altar of some sort. We as humans need something to serve as a place of focus in the same way that we have the genetic need to worship. It is very hard for people to worship that which they cannot see. With that in mind, people who worship a god they cannot see will make a representation or symbol of that god. Many religions will make idols for themselves. Others will focus their worship toward a symbol, such as a cross or an iconic picture. Still others focus their worship toward an altar. It is important to note that there is a significant difference between worshipping a god and focusing one's worship on an idol, symbol or altar. We, like most religions, do not worship a cross or an altar, but because our God is one unseen, we focus our worship away from all else that distracts onto something that reminds us of God.

In the early days of the altar, it was a focal point used for sacrifice. It was a table where living things were sacrificed for the sake of and in the place of the person offering the sacrifice. This sacrifice was done in the hope of sparing oneself what was deserved by that person onto another being. This is where the term "sacrificial lamb" was coined. As humans, we attribute each sin a penalty amount – the greater the sin, the greater the penalty. I stole a pack of gum: one dove. I had an affair with my neighbor: one lamb. I murdered someone: a pair of oxen. (FYI: in God's eyes, a sin is a sin. No sin is greater than another, as they are all equally what separates us from God. See Romans 3:23.) We would then take the appropriate offering to the altar to pay for the wrong we had done. The sacrifice would be made and blood would be spilled so that ours wouldn't have to be.

Since we as Christians no longer need to offer these bloody sacrifices because of God's sacrifice on our behalf (see Romans 3:23-24), the use of the altar has shifted. We still use the altar for ecclesiastical purposes and we still use it as a focal point for our worship, but there is no longer an animal carcass at which to stare. (Imagine Altar Care Team having to clean up that mess every Sunday!) We now refer to the altar as "the table." The reason being is because it is no longer a place of death, but a place of life. We now come to that focal point to share in a meal of bread and wine. We gather around it to focus on Jesus. He died once for all (Hebrews 7:27) but didn't stay dead -- God brought him back to life. Because of this, we remember this last sacrifice when eat the bread, drink the wine, and say "The body and blood of Christ given for you."

An altar is very much a focal point for our worship. It is where we look to remember that we no longer need to make sacrifices, but that God made a sacrifice so that we wouldn't have to. More importantly, the altar is no longer a place of death, but a place of life – a table.

*-Pastor Erik Young*

### Word of the Month

**ecclesiastical** (eck-klee-zee-as-tickle): "Relating to a church, especially as an institution." This word is directly taken from the Greek word *ekklesia*, which means "a church."

## Community Care Ministries

### Food Pantry

From July 2025 through February 2026, our Food Pantry served 47 households. Of those households, we served 129 individuals. If you know of anyone in our neighborhood (zip code 16506) that needs some help, please send them our way. Our pantry is well-stocked right now. If you wish to donate, we could use cereal, facial tissue (single boxes), & paper towels (single rolls).

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, contact us at [FoodPantry@stpaulserie.org](mailto:FoodPantry@stpaulserie.org). Thanks for all your support!!

### Patchwork of Love Quilting & Knitting Ministry

Join our Patchwork of Love team of quilters & knitters! We meet on Tuesdays from 9-11 AM in Clare-Wolfe Lounge.

### Sock Drive

This past month, another 240 pairs of socks were shared with St. Patrick's Haven in Erie, courtesy of St. Paul's Sock Drive! That's a new record total of 715 pairs of socks that have been donated & shared this season!!

### World Hunger Campaign

Throughout the year, we have different opportunities for the congregation to contribute to World Hunger: Good Gifts Ornaments, Good Gifts Valentines, Easter Eggs, & our Lenten coin boxes. We will be collecting the coin boxes on Easter Sunday.



## April Food Pantry Wish List

- Cereal
- Facial tissue (single boxes)
- Paper towels (single rolls)

Drop off all items in the entryway of St. Paul's.

@stpaulserie



## Let's take a look at your kindness.

This past winter, you donated

**715** Pairs of **NEW MEN'S SOCKS**

Thank you!

## Welcome, New Members!

We welcomed the following new members on February 22, 2026:

**Jeff, Julie, and Kate Ambrose** are from Erie, PA and felt welcomed at St. Paul's from the first day they came. Jeff is a retired Navy Seabee, Julie is a caregiver and stay-at-home mom, & Katherine loves dance and gymnastics. They are looking forward to growing in their faith!

**Alex DiLuzio** was baptized & joined with his partner, **Leah Laska**. Leah also reaffirmed her faith, along with her mom, **Sue Laska**. Alex is from Erie, PA & enjoys skateboarding, snowboarding, drawing, fishing, & outdoors. He desires to become the best version of himself, to live more peacefully, & continue to grow in his faith. Leah enjoys line dancing, yoga, & in the summer, working pony parties. Leah feels like she is a part of another family when at St. Paul's.

**Erin Harper, Ron and Denise King, & EJ and Jessika Owen** were also welcomed into the family at St. Paul's.

**Sandy Smith** lives in Millcreek with her husband Paul & joined us from Our Lady of Peace. Sandy & Paul enjoy walking on the beach & going out to eat together. They have been married for 55 years, have 3 children and 9 grandchildren! They appreciate the warm welcome & love the quilting group.



New Member Installation- 2/22/2026

# Congregational Care Ministries

## Congregational Sympathy

Congregational sympathy is shared with the family & friends of **Ron Laue**, father of Sara Beilharz, who passed away February 9, 2026.

Sympathy is also shared with the family & friends of **Ruth Church**, mother of Linda Swab, who passed away February 22, 2026.

## Congregational Prayers

Please keep our siblings in Christ in your daily prayers: **Kris Balinski, Vanessa Baran, Liz & Ted Davis, Dan DeCoursey, Betty Farver, Vicki Fischer, Charlotte Haggerty, Rick Hetrick, Christa & Ron Kaffka, Ron King, Judy Matthews, Becke Moniot, Terry Moyer, Michael Wright, & Gary.** Pray for those who are dealing with cancer, financial hardships, & facing illness or surgery.

Continue to pray for those who are homebound or in nursing homes: **Ann Anderson, Vince Balinski, Debi Firment, Noni Gardner, Dottie Johnson, & Sandy Pamin.** Wrap your hearts around those who are alone, broken-hearted, grieving, or anxious.

We continue to pray for those who are close to us who serve in the military, including their families: **Dylan Green**, as well as friends of St. Paul's— **Samuel Arthur, Luke Goodwin, Brennan Madara, Natalie Ramish-Long, Benjamin Sperring, Brody Swab, Jordan Swab, Christopher Tinsman, Allison Ward, & Zachary Zehner.**

We keep our college students in prayer as they study and prepare for their future vocations: **Corinne Bechtold, Megan Bechtold, Sophie Beilharz, Stella Beilharz, Andrew Collins, Jacob Gross, Sebastien Jones, Xavier Jones, Drew Kwiatkowski, Ethan Leopold, Ellie Schau, & Hannah Schmidt.**

## Anniversaries

Apr 10– Bob & Jeannie Curtis

Apr 19– Joe & Jennifer Douglas

Apr 21– Liz Gould & Jim Scott

Apr 22– Brandon & Erika Nornhold

## Birthdays

Apr 1– Kristen Burillo, Lori Buzzard

Apr 2– Liz Gould, Kathy Maries

Apr 5– Danielle Jones-Miglicio

Apr 6– Vince Kernick

Apr 8– Jeff Ambrose

Apr 9– Lisa Crncic, Mark Fischer

Apr 10– Noni Gardner

Apr 11– John Cooper

Apr 12– Baylen Laufer, Brandon Nornhold

Apr 17– Dan Hannah, Jenn Randolph

Apr 18– Tyler Bliley, Tom Madara

Apr 19– Kris Balinski

Apr 21– Joe Ulrich

Apr 22– Nancy Madara

Apr 23– Sara Beilharz

Apr 24– Kameron Perrin

Apr 25– Nancy Price, Sue Ellen Wojciechowski

Apr 26– Marit Bakken Barber, Asher Wakley

Apr 28– Julie Ambrose

Apr 29– Sawyer Scheuering, Hannah Schmidt

## Baptism

We welcomed **Alex John DiLuzio** into the body of Christ on February 22, 2026.

We also welcomed **Sophia Elizabeth,**

daughter of Rachel Hughes, into the body of Christ on March 28, 2026.



## Congregational Congratulations

Congratulations to **Katherine Ambrose** who will receive her First Communion on Maundy Thursday, April 2, 2026.

## Congregational Thank You Notes

12-19-25

*Dear Nair Family (CDC Assistant Director & Children's Ministry Director, Bridget's family),*

*Thank you so much for the SWEET (in more ways than one!) Christmas gifts! It was such a thoughtful surprise and made my day! Wishing you all a warm, happy, restful Christmas holiday!*

*- Libby Courteau*

*The cookies you gave and card meant a lot to my family. We were going through a lot and your love helped us during that time.*

*Keep up the good work and may God continue to bless you, in Jesus name.*

*Dan Wilbur and Family*

## Community Event: Habitat Fundraiser

Greater Erie Area Habitat for Humanity and Rebich Investments present

# A Round to Remember

Golf Tournament

36th Annual

Monday, June 1 | 12 p.m. | Lawrence Park Golf Club



**Lunch / Dinner Sponsors - \$2,000**

- 4 golfer spots and post-round dinner
- Recognition as Lunch Sponsor in all messaging
- Name and logo recognition in pre-event social media and email messaging to GEAHFH partners
- Recognition and announcement at post-round dinner

**Cart Sponsor - \$2,000**

- 4 golfer spots and post-round dinner
- Recognition as Cart Sponsor in all messaging
- Name and logo recognition in pre-event social media and email messaging to GEAHFH partners
- Recognition and announcement at post-round dinner

**Hole in One Sponsor - \$1,000**

- 2 golfer spots and post-round dinner
- Recognition as Hole in One Sponsor in all messaging
- Name and logo recognition in pre-event social media and email messaging to GEAHFH partners
- Recognition and announcement at post-round dinner

**Green Sponsor - \$500**

- Name and logo recognition in pre-event social media and email messaging to GEAHFH partners
- Recognition and announcement at post-round dinner

**Putting Contest Sponsor - \$350**

- Name and logo recognition in pre-event social media and email messaging to GEAHFH partners

**Pin sponsor - \$250**

- Name and logo recognition in pre-event social media and email messaging to GEAHFH partners

**Tea sponsor - \$100**

- Name and logo recognition in pre-event social media and email messaging to GEAHFH partners

**Foursome - \$700**

- Post-round dinner

**Single - \$200**

- Post-round dinner



SPONSOR INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsorship Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: Greater Erie Area Habitat for Humanity - 4922 Pittsburgh Avenue, Erie, PA 16509  
Credit Card Payments: www.habitaterie.org

## Congregational Fellowship

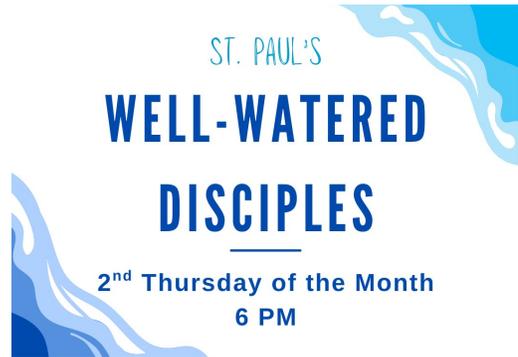
### Breakfast Group

Breakfast Group meets on Monday, April 6 at 8:30 AM at Perkins at 4403 Peach St. in Erie. All are welcome & responsible for their own meals.



### Well-Watered Disciples Men's Fellowship Group

Well-Watered Disciples now meets on the second Thursday of each month at 6 PM. They will meet on April 9 at a location to be announced.



## Church Council Highlights

### From the March 2026 meeting:

The membership rolls were changed as follows:

- Candy Blaszczyk moved from our congregational rolls to the rolls of the Church Triumphant.
- Rowan Clay Hiatt added to the rolls of Baptized Membership per his baptism on January 18.
- Katherine Ambrose added to the rolls of Baptized Membership per her parents joining as new members on February 22; then being moved to Communing Baptized Membership following her First Communion during Holy Week.
- Alex John DiLuzio moved to the rolls of Confirmed Voting Membership per adult baptism on February 22.
- Jessika and EJ Owen, Sandy Smith, Denise and Ron King, Julie and Jeff Ambrose added to the rolls of Confirmed Voting Membership via their public Affirmation of Baptism on February 22.
- Erin Harper added to the rolls as an Associate Member via her public Affirmation of Baptism on February 22.

Property Team is completing their list.

Christian Education Surveys are being conducted so that we have solid data to analyze and make recommendations for Christian Education that will meet the needs of the congregation.

Next meeting: Tuesday, April 21 at 6:15 PM in Clare-Wolfe Lounge.

## Attendance & Finances

By The Numbers:	February 2026
Avg. Saturday Attendance	23 in-person
Avg. Sunday Attendance	78 in-person 18 online views
February Income	\$27,163
February Expenses	\$30,756
February Difference	<b>-\$3,593</b>
February Budget Income	\$25,810
February Budget Expenses	\$30,692
February Budget Difference	<b>-\$4,882</b>
Year-to-Date Income	\$60,375
Year-to-Date Expenses	\$64,435
Year-to-Date Difference	<b>-\$4,060</b>
Year-to-Date Budget Income	\$56,193
Year-to-Date Budget Expenses	\$63,596
Year-to-Date Budget Difference	<b>-\$7,403</b>
2026 Total Budget Income	\$358,152
2026 Total Budget Expenses	\$376,316
2026 Total Budget Difference	<b>-\$18,164</b>

## Child Development Center (CDC) Ministries

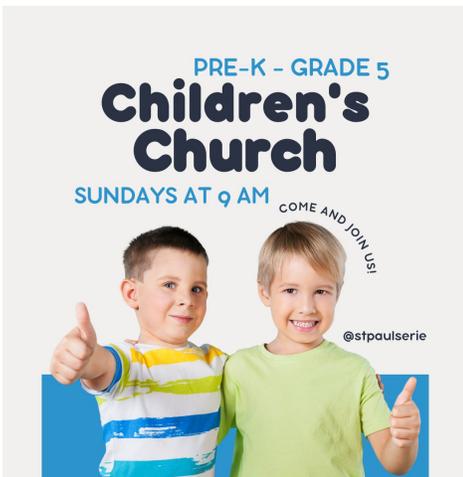
CDC had a wonderful St. Patrick's Day party for our school-aged students, complete with pancakes & green juice! We will be closed for Good Friday, but open Easter Monday. And we are excited for warmer weather so that we can get back outside on the playground.

Hard to believe, but we are beginning to hire for our summer program! If you know of anyone who might be interested in joining our team of fantastic teachers, please have them reach out to Nancy or Bridget. Contact us at [CDCDirector@stpaulserie.org](mailto:CDCDirector@stpaulserie.org) or 814-833-1761, ext. 1004.



## Faith Formation Ministries

### Children's Ministry with Bridget



Children's Church is open to all children in pre-K through grade 5.

Questions? Contact Bridget at [CDCAssistant@stpaulserie.org](mailto:CDCAssistant@stpaulserie.org).

### Confirmation Youth Group with Pastor Erik

Join us every Monday in the gym & youth room from 6-7:30 PM for youth group!

We will gather for fun & games, Bible & faith studies, & solid hang out time.



### Youth Ministry Fundraiser

Our Rummage Sale is on Saturday, April 11 from 8 AM-noon in the gym. All proceeds to benefit our Youth Ministry.

We are accepting almost anything to sell other than computer equipment and TVs (unless good working flat screen models). Youth will be there Friday, April 10 from 6-9 PM to help you unload.

Questions? Contact Pastor Erik at [Pastor@stpaulserie.org](mailto:Pastor@stpaulserie.org).

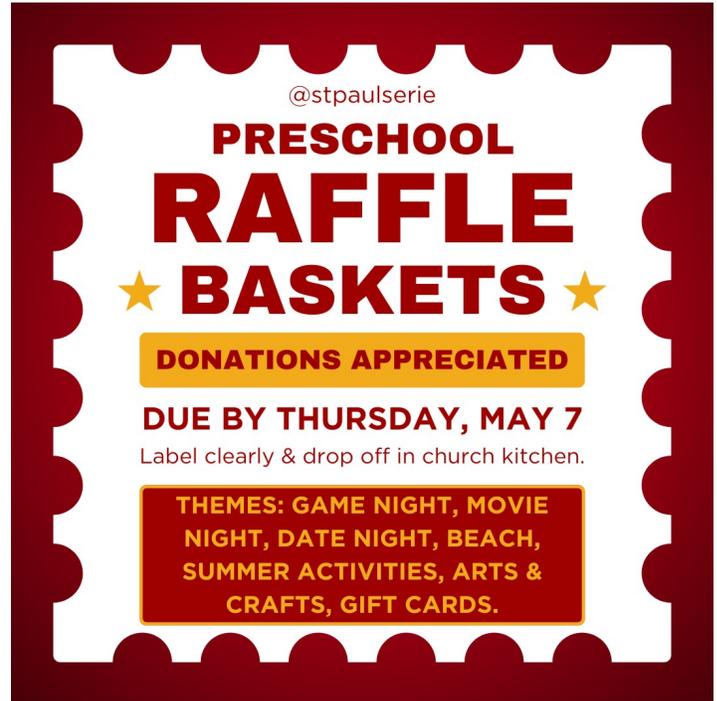


## Preschool Ministries

This month, we are learning about weather and the environment. We are also talking about Easter and learning songs Pastor Erik sings during chapel.

Monday, May 11 from 6:30-7:30 PM, Preschool is having an art show and raffle baskets (to help defray the cost of our end-of-year family picnic). We are hoping for donations of cookies and items for our raffle baskets. Our basket themes are game night, indoor/outdoor, movie night, date night, beach, summer activities, arts and crafts, and gift cards. Any donations would be greatly appreciated and can be dropped off in the church kitchen by Thursday, May 7. Thank you for your continued support.

Questions? Contact Melissa Collins at [PSDirector@stpaulserie.org](mailto:PSDirector@stpaulserie.org) or 814-833-1761, ext. 1002.



## Worship Ministries

### The Easter Triduum

The Triduum marks the end of the Lenten Season. Highlighting the journey from darkness and death to the light of new life. The most sacred days in the liturgical year begin at sundown on Maundy Thursday and end at sundown on Easter Sunday. The three-part service traces Jesus' journey from the Last Supper to the Resurrection. Rich with symbolism, these liturgies are intended to flow seamlessly in one continuous celebration.

Maundy Thursday commemorates the final night of Jesus' life. Holy Communion was instituted and the command to "love one another as I have loved you" (John 13:34) given to his apostles. Christian living was exemplified by the humble service of Jesus washing his disciples' feet. In preparation for Good Friday, the altar is stripped symbolizing the abandonment of Jesus.

Good Friday focuses on the passion and death of Jesus Christ. The gospel reading is the longest of the liturgical year encompassing his arrest, trials, suffering, crucifixion, death and burial. Traditions include the Veneration of the cross, Tenebrae (dimming lights/extinguishing candles) and the Strepitus (a loud noise representing the earthquake at the moment of Christ's death and the closing of the tomb). The Strepitus symbolizes the finality of death. Good Friday turns the brightness of Maundy Thursday into stark darkness.

Just as God rested on the seventh day, Jesus rested on the seventh day of Holy Week. Holy Saturday is a day to remember the empty space present for the disciples after Jesus' death. The disciples did not expect the resurrection. They were afraid and grieving. Starting with the Easter Vigil (Saturday night/Sunday morning), these three days lead us into the celebration of Easter. A story of faith moving from the darkness of the tomb to the light of the resurrection.

-Submitted by Amy Nupp.

## Triduum



# April Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<b>1</b> <i>Preschool Closed</i> 9:00am Scripture Study 8:00pm Basketball	<b>2</b> <b>Maundy Thursday</b> 6:00pm Seder Supper	<b>3</b> <i>Child Development Center Closed</i> <b>Good Friday</b> <i>Preschool Closed</i> 12:00pm Good Friday Worship 7:00pm Alcoholics Anonymous Marble Group 7:00pm Good Friday Worship	<b>4</b> 5:00pm Worship (Funeral for Jesus)
<b>5</b> <b>Easter Sunday</b> 8:15am Choir Rehearsal 9:00am Easter Worship 11:00am Easter Worship	<b>6</b> <i>Church Office Closed</i> <i>Preschool Closed</i> 8:30am Breakfast Group 6:30pm Property Team Meeting	<b>7</b> 9:00am Patchwork of Love Quilting Ministry 6:15pm Girl Scout Troop Meeting	<b>8</b> 9:00am Scripture Study 10:00am Staff Meeting 8:00pm Basketball	<b>9</b> 6:00pm Well-Watered Disciples Men's Fellowship Group	<b>10</b> 6:00pm Rummage Sale Setup 7:00pm Alcoholics Anonymous Marble Group	<b>11</b> 8:00am Rummage Sale 5:00pm Worship
<b>12</b> 8:15am Choir Rehearsal 9:00am Children's Church 9:00am Worship	<b>13</b> 9:45am Children's Chapel 1:45pm Children's Chapel 5:30pm Security Team Meeting 6:00pm Confirmation Youth Group	<b>14</b> 9:00am Patchwork of Love Quilting Ministry 5:30pm Faith Formation Team Meeting 6:15pm Girl Scout Troop Meeting 6:30pm Worship Team Meeting	<b>15</b> <i>Newsletter Articles Due</i> 9:00am Scripture Study 8:00pm Basketball	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 7:00pm Alcoholics Anonymous Marble Group	<b>18</b> 5:00pm Worship
<b>19</b> 8:15am Choir Rehearsal 9:00am Children's Church 9:00am Worship	<b>20</b> 9:45am Children's Chapel 6:00pm Confirmation Youth Group	<b>21</b> 9:00am Patchwork of Love Quilting Ministry 6:15pm Church Council Meeting 6:15pm Girl Scout Troop Meeting	<b>22</b> <b>Administrative Professionals Day</b> <b>Earth Day</b> 9:00am Scripture Study 8:00pm Basketball	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 7:00pm Alcoholics Anonymous Marble Group	<b>25</b> 5:00pm Worship
<b>26</b> 8:15am Choir Rehearsal 9:00am Children's Church 9:00am Worship	<b>27</b> 9:45am Children's Chapel 1:45pm Children's Chapel 6:00pm Confirmation Youth Group	<b>28</b> 9:00am Patchwork of Love Quilting Ministry 6:00pm ECE Board Meeting 6:15pm Girl Scout Troop Meeting	<b>29</b> 9:00am Scripture Study 8:00pm Basketball	<b>30</b> 4:00pm Food Pantry Distribution		

## Worship Assistants

Date	Event	Ushers	Assist Minister/ Reader
Apr 5	Easter 9 AM	Zech/Chiapa Team	TBA
	Easter 11 AM	Wright Team	
Apr 12	2 Easter	Curtis Team	
Apr 19	3 Easter	Gardner/Marzka Team	
Apr 26	4 Easter	Wright Team	