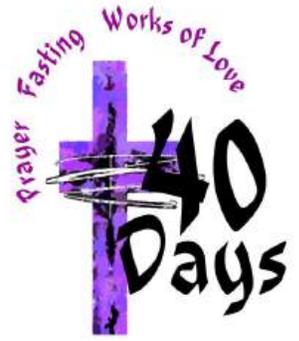




The Steeple

A Publication of St. Paul United Methodist Church
of Rosewood Heights, Illinois

MARCH 2026



To the People of St. Paul United Methodist Church,



John 16:33

³³ "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Grace and Love to all followers of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Honestly, time has been passing us by so quickly that we are now in the 3rd month of 2026. I hope and pray that you have been receiving God's outpouring mercy and abundance. You know, when it comes to such blessings, faith must be real and alive in your heart. You and I must always give thanks and praise. In good or bad, we must fully trust our Lord.

By this time, we are in the spirit of Lent. This season is the commemoration and worship by all believers to remember the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The Worldwide Christian community has been encouraged by Priests, Pastors, Bishops, and lay Ministers from all churches and denominations to get into the mode of reflection, contemplating through prayer, and fasting. Now, prayer is a usual practice of every follower of Christ. But somehow, fasting has been set aside because, like prayer, fasting needs faith and focus. To "Fast" in the context of religious practices involves physical and mental deprivation of any kind depending on one's goal and priority. But just to give you an idea, here is the dictionary's definition of Fasting.

"The true meaning of fasting goes beyond abstaining from food; it's a spiritual discipline to create space for deeper connection with the divine, shifting focus from physical needs to spiritual hunger, fostering self-control, humility, and empathy, and clarifying one's purpose, ultimately changing the individual rather than God. It's about replacing the hunger for food with a hunger for God, aligning actions with spiritual goals, and turning attention to spiritual nourishment and divine will, not just a performance."

So, you can see how fasting would make a difference with regard to a believer's spiritual journey with the Lord. Jesus himself prayed and fasted 40 days and 40 nights before starting his 3-year ministry. Prophets of the Old and Apostles of the New fasted as well. The reason? To honor God, prepare for service, and the Spiritual and physical battles ahead. You may wonder if Jesus ever stopped praying and fasting... Well, all throughout his life here on earth, Jesus was faithful to the end. And so, in the life of every God-fearing, Christ-loving, Holy Spirit-filled individual, I believe prayer and fasting need to be revisited and given importance. From the things that are happening around the globe... social problems and issues are being resolved from the World's perspective. And it has caused tremendous divisions amongst people of color, race, or creed. And yes, even Christians are getting pulled into the quicksand. So, nothing gets truly resolved. The result?... Chaos and disorder. It is obvious, while he may be allowing it, this is not of God. What then should we do? This Lenten season, let us be mindful of how Jesus handled his daily struggles and circumstances. Through his constant praying and devoted fasting, he prevailed and pleased God. That in turn won him the battle against wickedness and evil.

As we go through this season of prayer and fasting until Easter Sunday (Resurrection Day), let us be one with heart, body, and spirit. To be God's instruments of peace, we must show kindness and goodness, offer grace, and share the love of Jesus with others. Let us invite people to have a personal relationship with Jesus and always give thanks to God. Let us hear the voice of God calling, *"Here is my beloved son, come listen and follow him."* Jesus has been right all along. So, let us take heart; HE has overcome the world.



**Blessings to all and until the next issue, to God be the Glory--
In Christ Alone, Edward Granadosin
Pastor of East Alton 1st UMC and St. Paul UMC**



OUR CHURCH FAMILY & THANK YOU'S!

• **Our deepest sympathy** goes out to each family that has recently lost a loved one. This includes the family & friends of **Evanthia “Eva” Phillips (98)**, mother/mother-in-law of Rev. Bob (Rev. Christy) Phillips former pastor at Alton Main Street UMC; **Bruce Parrish (73)**, classmate of Ruth Bell, friend of Ruth Bell and Lois Mitchell; and **Rev. Rose Booker-Jones (73)**, former Mississippi River District Superintendent and UMC pastor. **May everyone who is touched by loss know God’s peace through it all.**

THANK YOU! We are so very grateful for your donation. Your support helps us to continue serving our community! Blessings, **-Christy Schult, Development Director at the Community Hope Center**

THANK YOU! To our St. Paul church family – Thank you so very much for your cards, calls, emails, and especially prayers during my recent journey with cancer. It has been challenging and we really appreciate the support you showed us. I have finished treatments and am thankfully on the road to recovery. **-Tammy and Duane Atchley**



**Tuesday
March
17th...**

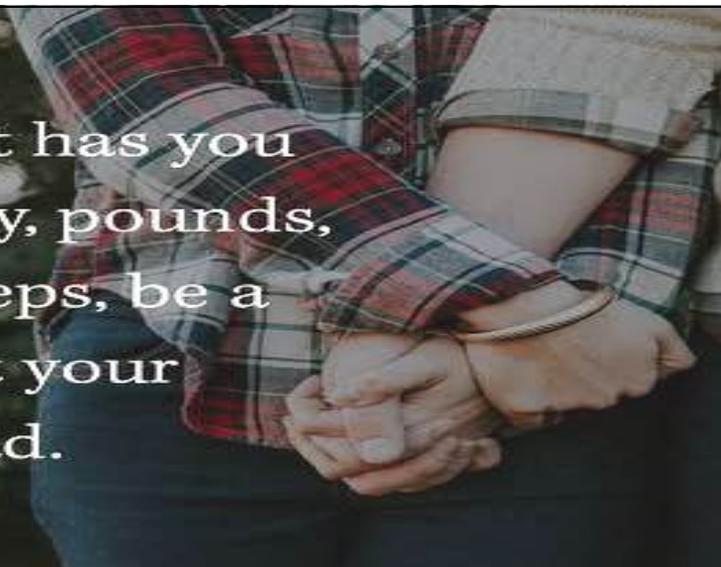
**Happy St.
Patrick’s Day!**

**SUNDAY,
MARCH 8TH**
Set your clock
ahead
one hour!



In a society that has you counting money, pounds, calories, and steps, be a rebel and count your blessings instead.

LISA HECKMAN





EASTER BASKETS! The ladies will be assembling Easter Baskets on **MARCH 24th.** Between now and then we are asking **only for monetary donations** as we will buy whatever we need! **Designate funds for: WOW Easter Baskets OR Make a separate check out to: St. Paul UMC Women and designate in memo for "Easter Baskets."** Thank you all so very much!!

IF YOU WANT GOD TO CLOSE AND OPEN DOORS, LET GO OF THE DOOR KNOB.



FOR YOUR INFORMATION

If bad weather requires the cancellation of the worship service, we will:

- ✦ **ACTIVATE "OTTO" OUR PHONE TREE CALLING SYSTEM!**
- ✦ contact TV Channel 5 to list it!
- ✦ post a notice on our Facebook page (**St. Paul United Methodist-East Alton IL**)
- ✦ contact those on the e-mail prayer chain (if possible)

Lent IS A TIME TO
GROW CLOSER TO **W** JESUS



St. Paul Sunday Service in **MARCH** 8:45 a.m.

St. Paul UMC is part of a two-point charge with East Alton First UMC. Each congregation has one service on Sundays and Pastor Ed serves as the pastor in both places. The service at St. Paul UMC begins at **8:45 a.m.** The St. Paul UMC service is **LIVESTREAMED** online! You are able to go to our **Facebook Page** and click on a link to watch it as it happens. You will also be able to watch it on **Youtube.com** starting with a search for **St Paul UMC 1167**. You are also welcome to attend the service at **East Alton First UMC** which begins at **10:15 a.m.** if you cannot get here at the earlier time. Please, keep both congregations in your prayers as we work together to serve the Lord. Thank you!

1st: Second Sunday of Lent! Communion Today.

Scriptures: *Genesis 12:1-4a; Psalm 121; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17*



8th: Third Sunday of Lent!

Scriptures: *Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95; Romans 5:1-11; John 4:5-42*

15th: Fourth Sunday of Lent!

Scriptures: *1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41*

22nd: Fifth Sunday of Lent!

Scriptures: *Ezekiel 37:1-14; Ps 130; Romans 8:6-11; John 11:1-45*



29th: Palm Sunday!

Scriptures: *Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16 or 118:1-2, 19-29; Matthew 21:1-11 or 26:14-27 or 27:11-54; Philippians 2:5-11*

April 2nd: COMBINED MAUNDY / HOLY THURSDAY SERVICE, 6:30p.m.

Scriptures: *Exodus 12:1-14; Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-17, 31b-35*

The Combined Service will be held at East Alton First United Methodist Church and we pray the you will be able to join us there as we prepare for Easter!



Children's Church begins at the start of our 8:45a.m. Worship Service. Into the beginning of the service we have a **Children's Moment**. A variety of activities are then held in the Children's Church room after the Children's Moment...See you on Sundays!
This is currently for children 5-10 years old.

WE HOPE YOU ARE AS EXCITED AS WE ARE!!



CONTINUOUS FOOD DRIVE:

The Outreach Ministry Team will keep a “Food Drive” going. If you can, whenever you shop, get a few extra non-perishables to bring to church for us to give to the food pantries! (**Suggestions:** Mayonnaise, Can Opener, Oil, Powdered Milk, Milk/Oat Milk/Almond Milk/Coconut Milk – kind that is non-refrigerated until opened, Coffee, Peanut Butter, Crackers, Tea Bags, Salt & Pepper, Spaghetti Sauce in a Can or Plastic Jar, Pasta, Canned Vegetables or Meats, Ketchup & Mustard, Spices, Sugar, Cereal, Tuna Fish, Rice, Flour, Dish Detergent, Hand Lotion, Rolls of Paper Towel, Boxes of Facial Tissues, etc.)
You are awesome! Thank you!!

2026 ALTAR FLOWER INFORMATION:

- Mar 1: by **Becky Tuchalski** in celebration of **her sister, Barbara’s Birthday.**
- Mar 8: by **Rayford & Martha Raby** in celebration of **their 65th Wedding Anniversary on 3/18!**
- Mar 15: by **Tom & Karen Martin** in memory of **Jean Tappy.**
- Mar 22: by **Mike & Linda Scroggins** in celebration of **their 56th Wedding Anniversary!**
- Mar 29: by **Susan Voorhees Chapman and Tom Voorhees** in memory of **Tom’s Parents.**

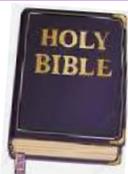


**THE 2026 FLOWER CHART HAS BEEN POSTED!
KEEP FILLING IN THE DATES!**

Adult Sunday Classes

- ⇒ **Wesley Sunday School Class**
After the Service in the Parlor!
- ⇒ **Adult Bible Study Sunday School Class**
After the Service in the Main Hall Classroom!

**WE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE YOU
JOIN A CLASS!!**



BIBLE STUDY!
Bible Study is every Tuesday,
at 11a.m. in the Parlor!
Join us! ~Pastor Ed~



PECANS

Regular 1lb. bag = \$12



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

“Before you were born, I set you apart for a special work!”

- 01-Mar Lisa Betts
- 01-Mar Ava Toner
- 02-Mar Kristin Baker
- 02-Mar Robert Brown
- 02-Mar Ricci Voorhees
- 03-Mar Ted Toner
- 04-Mar Iola Ballard
- 04-Mar Allan Napp
- 04-Mar Brent Springer
- 05-Mar Alexis Plummer
- 05-Mar Ava Sandbach
- 07-Mar Mark Mayer
- 09-Mar Corey Bell
- 09-Mar Landon Clark
- 09-Mar Meg Fansler
- 09-Mar Claudia Herndon
- 10-Mar Micki Emerick
- 10-Mar Donna Hamilton
- 11-Mar Kasey Diveley
- 11-Mar Ashley Laws
- 11-Mar Jill Oertle
- 12-Mar Brooke Toner
- 13-Mar Hunter Bonds
- 13-Mar John Huddleston
- 13-Mar Stephanie Schroedter

- 13-Mar Codey Terry
- 16-Mar Clark Cranmer
- 17-Mar Sophia Henderson
- 17-Mar Jean Kainz
- 17-Mar Rachel Schiber
- 17-Mar Carol Uppe
- 18-Mar Harvey Birmingham
- 19-Mar Rick Huddleston
- 19-Mar Joe Tillery
- 19-Mar Gerry Ward
- 19-Mar Tim Witthoft
- 20-Mar Katie Clark
- 20-Mar Matt Gwaltney
- 21-Mar Krista Bishop
- 21-Mar Phyllis Hill
- 22-Mar Randy Brueggeman
- 22-Mar Lucas Gebhardt
- 22-Mar Lori Kamp
- 22-Mar Kyle Napp

- 22-Mar Matt Toner
- 23-Mar Justin Sandbach
- 24-Mar Lucy Grizzle
- 24-Mar Logan Oertle
- 24-Mar Audrey White
- 25-Mar Anita Dawson
- 25-Mar Tonya LaTempt
- 26-Mar Jayden Bell
- 26-Mar Toby McCammon
- 27-Mar David Laufersweiler
- 28-Mar Tyler Watt
- 29-Mar Tracy Bentley
- 29-Mar Mark Hamlin
- 30-Mar Chris Eyster
- 30-Mar Amy Wells
- 31-Mar Betsy Blacklock



MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

- 02-Mar Norris & Mary Lou Dorsey
- 03-Mar David & Cherie Buatte
- 07-Mar Andrew & Jennifer Garrison
- 07-Mar Nathan & Samantha Shewmake
- 09-Mar Brent & Jessie Springer
- 11-Mar Brian & Jennifer Roberts
- 19-Mar Jim & Jane Herndon
- 20-Mar Jeff & Laura Mae White
- 21-Mar Doug & Joy Pascoe
- 21-Mar Mike & Linda Scroggins



WE NEED UPDATES FOR THE CHURCH DIRECTORY!

Please contact the church office if you (OR A FAMILY MEMBER) have had a **change of address, phone number, or email address since the last printing!** We will soon begin the process of completing a new Church Directory! **Please, check the Workbook in the Entryway once it shows up!** Thank you for your help!



FEBRUARY Stewardship

Budget Offering:	2/1/2026 thru 2/28/2026	\$16,468.00
Designated Giving:	2/1/2026 thru 2/28/2026	14325.57
	Capital Improvements	360.00
	Loose Change	52.57
	Flowers	455.00
	Helping Hands	75.00
	Operation Blessing	50.00
	Parking Lot Work	230.00
	Upper Room Donations	10.00
	Offering Envelopes	18.00
	Oasis Women Center	100.00
	Postage	30.00
	UM Student Offering	2.00
	Pastor's VIMI Trip	50.00
	Online Giving	351.50
Total:		\$18,252.07



Every year, churches face moments when giving and ministry don't perfectly align, but the good news is that God always provides through faithful people like you.

Your contributions, no matter the size, help to close the gap and open new possibilities for mission and ministry in this year.

John Wesley taught that generosity is both a means of grace and a fruit of faith. When we give, we participate in God's work of transforming lives — including our own.

An important reminder... there are several ways to send your tithes & offerings if you cannot be here on a Sunday. You can send through the **U.S. Mail**, through **Bill Pay** with your bank or Credit Union, through our website's **Online Giving (VANCO)**, or by **bringing it to the church** during the week.

Thank you so much!

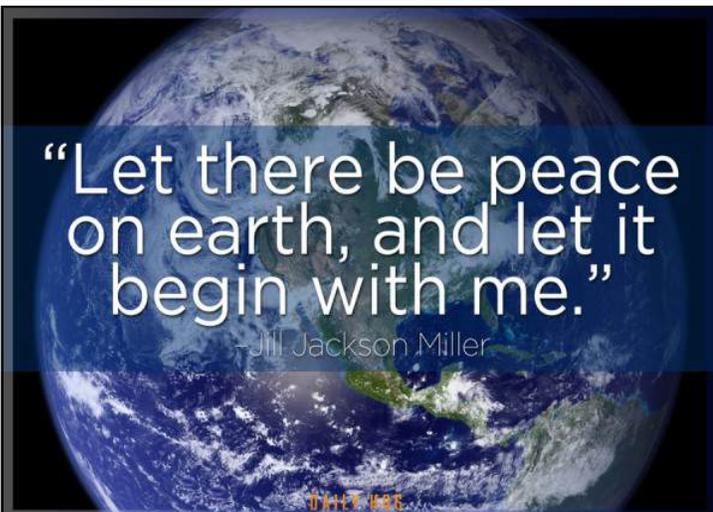
**DEADLINE FOR
APRIL 2026
STEEPLE,
Thursday, MARCH
19th!**



MONTHLY LOOSE CHANGE PROJECT

March's Loose Change Project is McKendree University.

This university was established as a private Methodist College. The university needs financial support for scholarships, building funds, and the many other needs always present in maintaining an ongoing educational institution. May God bless and multiply your gifts!





The **Annual Women of Worship Rummage Sale** will be coming your way in **APRIL** this year! So, don't wait ... start looking and sorting through your things **NOW** to see what we can help you find a new home for!

Remember: Items for sale will be accepted beginning **Thursday, March 12th and ending Sunday, April 12th** (not on Wednesdays please).



We appreciate all of the great regularly donated items that are brought. There is time to collect your **clean, working, sellable items** to bring to the church. **PLEASE, NO** lotions, perfumes, etc. that have been opened. **NO** computer monitors, printers, VCRs, TVs that are not flat screen, or other electronics. **They do not sell and we have no way to dispose of them.** Make sure any clothes or bedding items are **clean, stain free, and in good condition**...Do not bring if they are not! Please, **NO** sharp knives or child car seats. **Books, puzzles, magazines, kitchen & household items, etc.** are good selling items. **NO** large pieces of furniture. **Small** kitchen appliances are okay as long as they work.

The sale is on April 23-25!

**LOOKING FORWARD TO ANOTHER GREAT SALE -
REMEMBER ALL OF THE PROFITS GO TO UNITED
METHODIST AND LOCAL GROUPS NEEDING FINANCIAL
ASSISTANCE... THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**



MARCH OFFICE HOURS (may be subject to change):

(ALSO, IT IS POSTED ON THE CHURCH OFFICE DOOR)

March 2-3,9-10,16-17,23-24,30-31 = 9:00a.m. to 3:00p.m.

March 4,11,18,25 = Office Closed for regular Wednesday weekday off

March 5-6,12-13,19-20,26-27 = 10:00a.m. to 2 or 3:00p.m.

→ **ON March 12 OUT FROM 11:15a.m. to 1:00p.m. FOR LUNCH MEETING AWAY.**

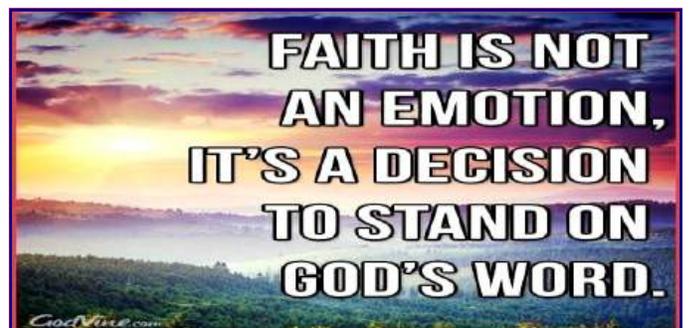
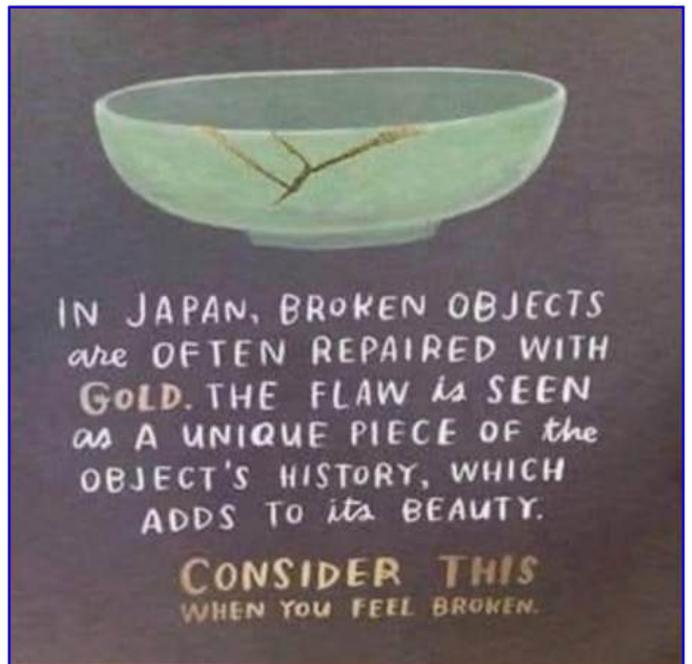
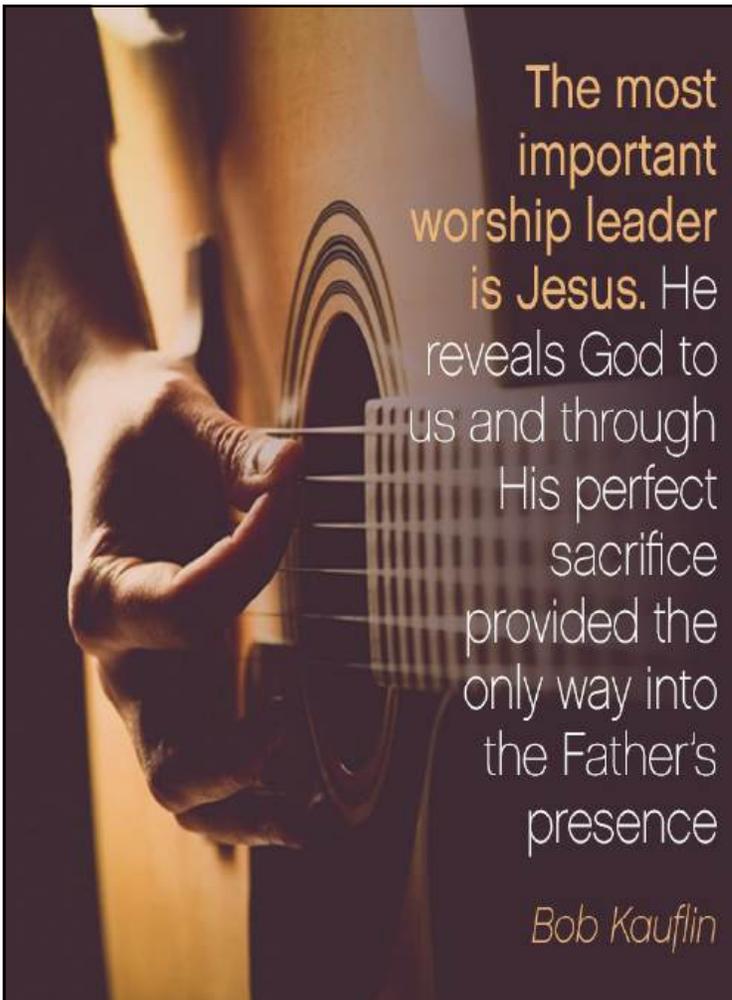
Nightly Prayer Time On Youtube.com

Join in by going to youtube.com and searching for "East Alton First United Methodist Church."

(You can also find it through our Facebook Page.)

Livestream begins at 4:45p.m. - Live program at 5p.m.

NOTE: Check dates and check "live" for live worship. Held on Monday thru Thursday evenings most weeks!





Hickerson Scholarship 2026



The tragic skiing accident of January 15, 1995, that claimed the life of Meghan Hickerson of Hartford, IL, will never be forgotten.

God has a way of healing hurt and turning tragedy into triumph. Meghan's death immediately gave life to several people, known collectively as "organ donor recipients." Her legacy of faith and service lives on through the "Meghan Hickerson Christian Teen Leader Memorial Scholarship" that is made available through St. Paul UMC.

Meghan was a student leader who set a standard of excellence within the public school system. She also set an example of faith and dedication by spreading God's love through her church and her academic life, to all she encountered. Our goal each year is to reward one or two

deserving college-bound, graduating seniors who set for him or herself the same standards of outstanding scholastic achievement and faith reflected in their everyday life.

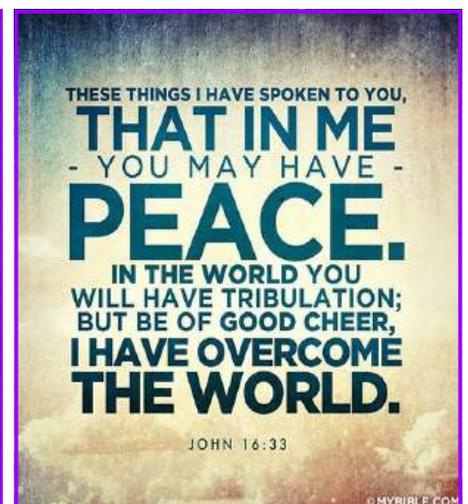
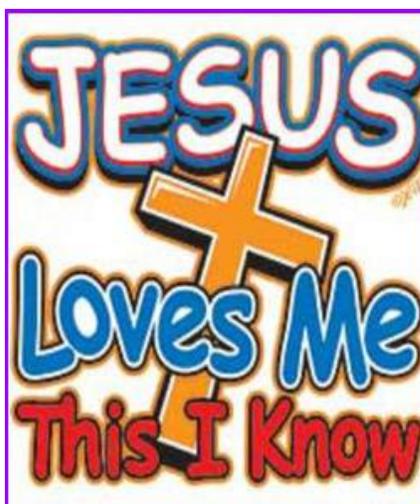
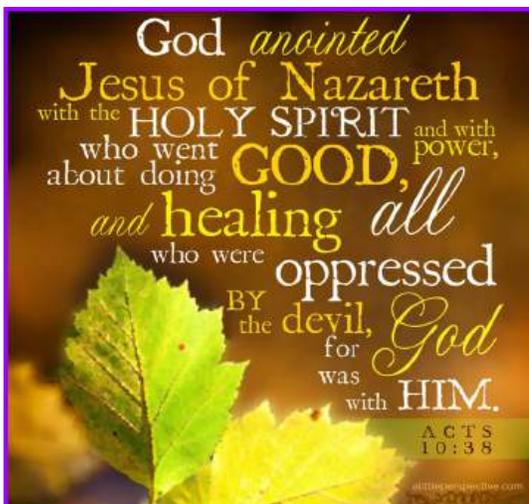
Graduating seniors from the three area high schools (East Alton-Wood River, Roxana, and Civic Memorial) or any who are a member of St. Paul UMC may apply for the **\$500.00 scholarship**.

We encourage members to notify any student that may qualify and have them complete the application process. Application materials are available through the counselors at the above mentioned schools or directly from the church office.

DEADLINE for completed application materials is:

Thursday, April 3, 2026

If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 618-259-5210.



March 20th!





John Hendricks' workshop was busy the first of February building a higher hand rail for the choir loft to meet current code. John and other trustees did the work!

—Jim Herndon, Board of Trustees

IMPORTANT: A lot of work will need to be done on our parking lot in the year or so ahead! A large chunk of it needs to be replaced. If you would like to donate to this work, **designate any amount (small or large) to: PARKING LOT WORK** and it will be held to pay for the work as it happens... Thank you for any extra you want to give!

The Trustees-

2026 Wednesday Community Lenten Services
Sponsored by the Alton Area Church Women United
(full list on bulletin boards)

The Lenten Services start at 12:00 Noon and last 30 minutes. A free-will offering will be collected and split between Crisis Food Center and Oasis Women Center. Lunch will also be served; it costs \$5.00 and you will get soup, a sandwich, dessert, and a drink.

March & April Services are:

WEDNESDAY - MARCH 4th:

Tabernacle MBC,
2621 Amelia St., Alton

WEDNESDAY - MARCH 11th:

Greater St. James MBC,
2016 Belle St., Alton

WEDNESDAY - MARCH 18th:

Open Door Fellowship,
929 Milnor St., Alton

WEDNESDAY - MARCH 25th:

First Presbyterian Church,
4th & Alby Sts., Alton

WEDNESDAY - APRIL 1st:

Morning Star MBC,
1 East 6th St., Alton

GOOD FRIDAY - APRIL 3rd:

Deliverance Temple COGIC,
1125 East 6th St., Alton