

The Visitor

Rev. Karl J. Koeppen,
Senior Pastor

Rev. Roger A. Drinnon,
Associate Pastor

Mr. Brian P. Porter,
Principal

Rev. David Baker,
Missionary to Mongolia

Rev. Ross Engel,
Adopt-A-Chaplain

June/July 2026



ST. PAUL'S
LUTHERAN
CHURCH & SCHOOL

#changinglives

Worship & Bible Study Opportunities

Traditional Worship:

Saturday 5:00 pm @ the Downtown Church
located at 348 E. Merchant St., Kankakee, IL

Sunday 8:30 am @ the School
located at 1780 Career Center Road, Bourbonnais, IL

Contemporary Worship:

Sunday 11:05 am @ the School

Adult Bible Class:

Sunday 9:45 am @ the School

Children's Sunday School & Youth Bible Class

On hiatus until after Labor Day

Church & School Office: 815-932-0312
Church Website: www.stpaulslutheran.net



Next Newsletter Deadline July 15th

SPECIAL DATES

D-Day - June 6

Flag Day - June 14

Father's Day - June 21

First Day of Summer - June 21

Independence Day - July 4



Summer Office Hours

starting June 1st
Monday - Friday
9:00 am - 3:30 pm

2026 Confirmation Class



VBS 2026

All children entering 4-year-old preschool through 6th grade are invited to spend a week with us at Vacation Bible School **Monday, June 15th through Friday, June 19th!**

Rainforest Falls promises a week of wonder as kids explore the powerful nature of God! Through life-changing Bible stories, the coolest animal buddies, and joyful worship, they'll discover who God is and how to stay rooted in His love. Scan the QR code or go to vbspro.events/p/2ebc01 to register your kids!



Reasons to Sit in a Different Seat at Church This Weekend

This came to me through an email and it made me think . . .

The title is certainly catching, isn't it? OR is it unsettling?

Let's look at this article and I'll have some thoughts afterwards.



I know some readers won't like this post. Most of us have a habit of sitting in the same place in church on Sunday, and I realize that nobody else is calling for changing this pattern. **Nevertheless, I press on with my reasons that you and I should sit in a different place at church this weekend.**

1. Most of us get too comfortable at church in general.

We develop all kinds of habits, like parking in the same area, going in the same door, following the same route to our small group room, sitting in the same place, and often going to the same restaurants after the service. Nothing changes – including, frankly, the depth of our walk with God. We also don't expect God to do anything different when we gather, and we then get what we expected.



2. You'll get to know different people.

You might already know everybody in your church, but sitting among different people will give you opportunity to get to know somebody more deeply. If you don't know everybody, moving your seat will allow you to know somebody new. You'll appreciate better the Body of Christ.

3. You'll see and hear the service differently.

It's strange, actually, how changing your seat alters your perspective on the service. You look at the preacher from a different vantage point. You hear the music and the singing differently. You notice things about the building you had never seen before. You'll often even listen to the sermon differently, simply because everything feels new (and, if you think I'm nuts here, at least try it . . .).

4. Somebody else might need your current seat.

For example, too many people sit toward the back of the church, thus forcing latecomers and guests to walk to the front. That's not the most loving or wise way to welcome these folks to the service. Why don't you sit toward the front this week and free up space for others?

5. You'll learn to be more comfortable with change in general.

Here's my crazy suggestion: sit in a different place every week. Don't let yourself get stagnant in your approach to church, beginning with the simple decision of where you sit. Change your place each week, and you'll likely be more open to change as your church moves forward in the future.

I could add another one: **You will throw the pastor off because you aren't in your regular seat!**

We are creatures of habit. But there are times when it is good to do something different and that can start by simply sitting in a different chair/pew at church. The author does bring up some good points. Especially the points of being around new people and seeing/hearing the service and sermon from a different location in the church.

Why not try it this summer? Sit in a different location in church (or better yet, go to a different service!!) Visit with the people in the new location. Notice what is different - The music? The preaching? The service?

Yes, it will throw the pastors for a loop when you sit in a different location. But that's okay. That makes us look around even more to see where you may have ended up! I look forward to seeing you in church (wherever you sit)

Blessings in Him! Pastor Karl Koeppen

Time With God This Summer

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28

Summer is a busy time. We have family gatherings throughout the summer, family reunions, as well as other opportunities to get together. These are wonderful times and we also know what it's like when members of the family can't make it to these gatherings. You know what it's like when a beloved family member doesn't show up for the family gathering and meal at Christmas, Thanksgiving, or Easter: There's a hole, a gap, a pain that everyone feels. We miss that person in our midst. Their absence diminishes the joy of the whole family.



The same is true of God's children. Every Sunday is a gathering of the family: The family of God. We gather to hear the Word of our Heavenly Father and to join together in eating our family meal - the Sacrament of Holy Communion when it is offered.

When you choose to pass on weekend worship, when you don't come together with your church family to join in offering the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving and to receive the gifts your Lord has for you; it's not just you who misses out. Your extended family, the church, misses out. All of us are diminished by your decision to take a summer break from church. The singing is that much quieter. The “amens” are that much softer. The spot where you usually sit and stand reminds us all of your absence.

I read a comment recently from a church leader who said, ***“Christian discipleship should begin with a very simple commitment that any given Lord's day will find you in the assembly of God's people, singing His praise, offering your prayers, receiving His gifts.”***

It's simply what it means to be a Christian. It's who we are and what we do as God's people. As a pastor, it grieves me, as well as the rest of God's family, to see people missing from worship.

We have entered that time of the year when the things that compete for our time and attention are even greater. When people decide that camping, four wheeling, baseball, or whatever else are more important than gathering together with their brothers and sisters in Christ.

We miss seeing many of you throughout the summer. I know many are traveling on vacations and family reunions which keeps you from joining us in worship. But all too often, I see posts online about someone keeping busy on a Saturday or Sunday only to realize that I did not see you in church.

We miss you. Don't forget to join us for worship if you are in town.

If you are out of town and traveling, don't forget to find somewhere to go for worship! ***Here are few things you can do to make your vacation spiritually uplifting (and pleasing to God):***

1. Determine the location of an LCMS congregation nearest your vacation destination. To find it, go to <https://locator.lcms.org/church>, put in the town and/or the zip code and search, or you can talk to me. Visiting a church while away can create fond memories and connect you with the larger body of believers.
2. If there are no congregations near you, consider having your own personal worship service. You can join our livestream worship during the 8:30am worship service at <https://stpaulslutheran.net/live-stream-services/>.
3. Don't forget to support the Lord's work while you're on vacation. Whether you're giving your gift to the church you're visiting, or you're saving up your offering envelopes to put in the basket when you return, or giving online, remember that the need for God's gifts to us don't stop when we're on vacation. Therefore, neither should our gifts to Him.

It is my prayer that as we enter the summer months, and all the months of the year, that you will not neglect your need for spiritual rest. You have the privilege of gathering together with the rest of your family to have the burden of your sin lifted off from you and to be refreshed and strengthened in your faith in Jesus Christ. I hope that you will take advantage of that privilege each and every weekend.

Blessings in Jesus!!!
Pastor Koeppen



ELECTRONIC GIVING

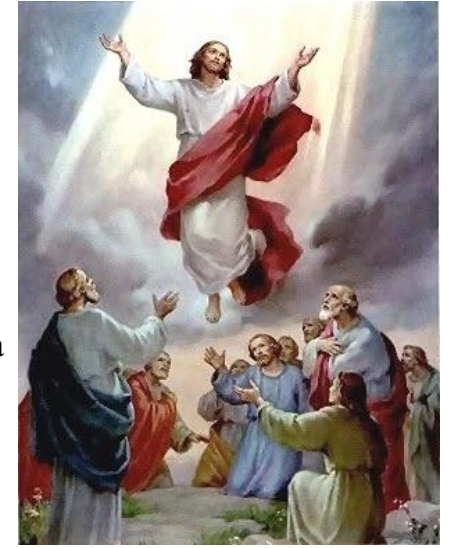


Have you considered signing up to give to St. Paul's using our electronic giving? Contributions can now be debited automatically from your account. Our electronic giving program offers convenience for you and much-needed donation consistency for our congregation. If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes. And, when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, this program will allow your weekly offerings to continue on an uninterrupted basis. To sign up click on the "Online Giving" tab on the church website www.stpaulslutheran.net or scan the QR code here.

Ascension: The Forgotten Festival Day

Forty days after Easter, the Church celebrates one of the great festival days of the Christian year: the Ascension of our Lord. And yet, for many Christians, Ascension Day quietly passes by almost unnoticed. Christmas fills our homes with lights and songs. Easter fills our churches with lilies and alleluias. But Ascension often slips quietly into the background of a random Thursday.

That is unfortunate, because the Ascension is not the epilogue to Jesus' ministry. It is His coronation.



In Acts 1:6–11, the disciples stand watching as Jesus is taken up into heaven. St. Luke writes:

“And when He had said these things, as they were looking on, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him out of their sight.” (Acts 1:9)

This is not Jesus “going away” in defeat or absence. Scripture teaches that Christ ascends to reign. The same Jesus who was crucified and risen now sits at the right hand of the Father, ruling over all things for the sake of His Church.

The Ascension means that Christ is not absent from the world. He is actively governing it.

This is a tremendous comfort for Christians living in uncertain times. Nations rage. Economies shake. Wars erupt. Governments fail. Our own lives are often marked by suffering, illness, grief, and uncertainty. Yet, the Ascension reminds us that history is not spiraling out of control. Jesus reigns now.

Not someday. Not only after some future earthly kingdom arrives. Now.

The ascended Christ reigns over the nations, gathers His Church through Word and

Sacrament, restrains evil, and intercedes for His people. As St. Paul declares in Ephesians 1, the Father “put all things under His feet and gave Him as head over all things to the church.”

The Ascension also serves as a direct rebuke to dispensational theology, which often places Christ’s true reign primarily into the future, as though Jesus is waiting for an earthly throne before His kingdom truly begins. But the New Testament speaks differently. Christ is already enthroned. His kingdom is already breaking into this world through the preaching of the Gospel and the work of the Holy Spirit.

When the disciples ask in Acts 1:6, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” they are still expecting an earthly political restoration shaped by Zionist hopes. Jesus redirects them away from earthly speculation and toward the mission of the Church: “You will be My witnesses.” As Luther explains in the Second Petition of the Lord’s Prayer, “The kingdom of God certainly comes by itself without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may come to us also.” Christ’s kingdom is not built through earthly power or political restoration, but through the Gospel, as the Holy Spirit brings people to faith and keeps them in Christ Jesus.

The kingdom of Christ is not absent because it is heavenly. Rather, His heavenly reign is precisely what gives the Church confidence and hope here on earth.

And because Christ reigns, His Church need not fear. The angels’ words at the Ascension contain both promise and hope: “This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:11)

The ascended Lord is also the returning Lord. The One who reigns now will come again visibly in glory to judge the living and the dead. Until that day, the Church lives not in panic, but in confidence. Christ rules. Christ intercedes. Christ reigns.

The Ascension is not the forgotten ending of Easter. It is the declaration that the crucified and risen Jesus is King now and forever.

In Christ, Pastor Drinnon

NEW WINDOWS BRING NEW BLESSINGS!

The St. Paul's Mission and Ministry Center, home of the Phil’s Friends Kankakee Hope Center, has received an exciting upgrade with the installation of brand-new classroom windows! This wonderful improvement was made possible through the generosity of district grants, memorial gifts, and faithful personal donors who believe in the ministry and mission of the Hope Center.

We are deeply thankful to everyone who contributed to this project. These new windows are not only beautiful, but they will also greatly improve the energy efficiency of the building and help keep the space more comfortable during the warm summer months as we will be using portable air conditioners to cool the spaces.

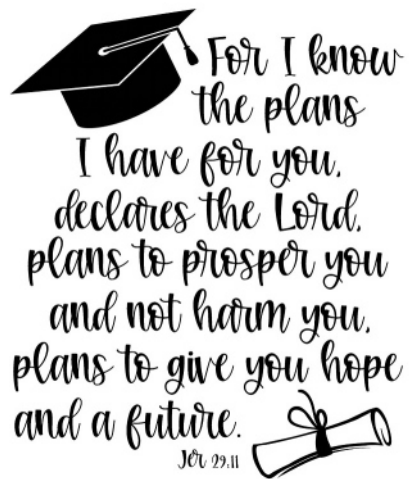
Every improvement to the Mission and Ministry Center and thus the Hope Center helps us create a welcoming and encouraging place for volunteers to come be the hands and feet of Christ to those facing cancer. Thank you for helping make this important update possible!





CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2026!!

We pray God’s blessings on all of our 8th grade graduates as they say goodbye to St. Paul’s and embark on their new adventures! A special congratulations to Brody Brinkmann (Class Valedictorian and recipient of the Rotary Club Four-Way Test Award), Olivia Reardanz (Salutatorian and recipient of the Kiwanis Student Achievement Award), and Layna Rahn (recipient of the Rotary Club Four-Way Test Award)!

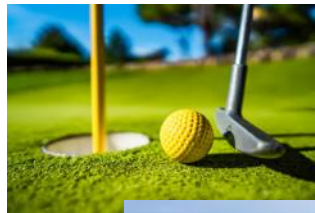


YOUTH MINISTRY SUMMER FUN!

Students entering 7th - 12th grade and their families are invited to join us for two fun summer fellowship activities! Please RSVP to katrinadrinnon@gmail.com if you plan to attend.

~ Mini Golf @ Adventure Commons - **Wednesday, June 10th at 6:30pm** - Bring \$9 cash for 18 holes of golf

~ Swim Party @ Splash Valley Aquatic Park - **Wednesday, July 22nd 4-8pm** - Bring \$12 cash for entrance + money for snacks. (Rain date: July 29th)



MEN'S BIBLE BREAKFAST

Please join Pastor Koeppen on **Saturday, June 27th & July 25th at 7:30 am** in the Riverside cafeteria to study God’s Word over coffee and breakfast.

BE THE CHURCH 2026

MISSION: BEST VBS EVER!

This year for our *Be the Church* local mission project, we will be working together as a congregation to support the St. Paul’s Vacation Bible School program, *Rainforest Falls*. VBS is far more than just a week in June. Lots of work goes into preparing for the week. To sign up to help, scan the QR code or go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0B44AFAC28A0FECE9-62976668-bethechurch>.

VBS Giving Tree - As a way for the congregation to support our VBS mission, we will be setting up a giving tree with leaves each containing an item needed for VBS.

Be a VBS Prayer Buddy & Sponsor a Book of Psalms for a student! - This year’s VBS curriculum includes a Book of Psalms for students to mark our Sticky Scripture messages throughout the week and take home to share with their family. Prayer Buddies will help cover the cost of the books (\$3.99 each), write a message in the book to the student they sponsor, and pray for that student during VBS week and beyond.

Family Fun Movie & Service Day:

Friday, June 5th - 2-8pm - Youth and adults of all ages, join us at the Bourbonnais School campus for a fun day of watching movies and creating our rainforest leaves, vines, flowers, and more! Come when you can and leave when you must. Pizza will be available at 5:30pm.

Join the decorating crew! - Help us transform the school into a rainforest adventure

Saturday, June 6th, time TBD - Decorate entryway & lobby

Sunday, June 7th, 1-3pm - Decorate hallways

Sunday, June 14th, 2-4pm - Set-up gym & classrooms

Saturday, June 20th, 9-noon - Post-VBS clean-up



CALLING ALL VBS VOLUNTEERS!

VBS is not possible without our dedicated team of volunteers. Whether you serve as a crew leader or helper, lead a station, help with registration, photograph the fun, or help behind the scenes, we need you! Please prayerfully consider getting involved. All volunteers are asked to complete the VBS Volunteer Application by scanning the QR code below. Please also mark the following dates on your calendar and plan to attend:

Volunteer Training: (Plan to attend one)

* Sunday May 31st 9:45-10:45 am

* Sunday June 7th 9:45-10:45 am

Volunteer Orientation:

Sunday June 14th 12:30-2pm (lunch included) & 2-4pm set-up

VBS Week: Monday June 15th through Friday June 19th, 5:30-8:00pm (VBS Staff devotions will begin at 4:45pm.)

If you have questions about becoming a VBS volunteer or need assistance with the volunteer application, please contact Liz Lesch at 815-263-0537.



FELLOWSHIP DINNER

Leave the cooking and cleaning to someone else! Everyone is invited to our monthly fellowship dinners. Each month, we visit a different restaurant and share a great couple of hours eating and getting to know each other better. No special commitment is expected and these evenings are very casual – just come as you are when you are able. Anyone who has come will tell you how much fun we have! Our next fellowship dinner will be on **Friday, June 19th at 6pm at Oliver's (West Kankakee)**. There will be no Fellowship Dinner in July.

INSTALLATION WEEKEND

All new Board Members and Directors will be installed on **Saturday, June 6th and Sunday, June 7th** at the worship service they attend. Present officers and board members will be rededicated.

SPECIAL VOTERS MEETING

Please mark your calendars for **June 28th**. We will be having a special voters meeting at **12:30 pm** in the school gym to finish the discussions started at the regular voters meeting on May 17th, including the approval of a budget and the election of an Executive Director.



LWML SERVANT EVENT

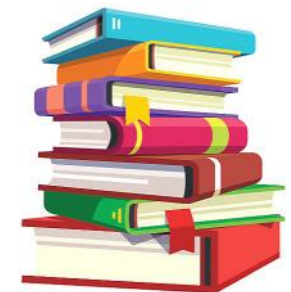
LWML will once again be collecting used eyeglasses, sunglasses and eyeglass cases for MOST Ministries. The glasses will be cleaned, sorted and used at vision clinics on various mission trips. Please bring your contributions to the school site and drop them in the box marked "LWML Donations". There will also be a box by the elevator at the church outside the sanctuary. Glasses will be collected from June 1st - June 30th. Thank you for your generosity and your willingness to "Serve the Lord with Gladness"!



PRAIRIEVIEW FALL FESTIVAL

St. Paul's will once again be doing a used book booth at Prairieview's Fall Festival on **September 11th & 12th** and ***we are in need of books***. We take hard covers, paperbacks, children's, fiction and nonfiction. Please, no textbooks. There are collection bins at both locations. At the school, you may leave your books in the labeled red donation box. At the church, there are labeled containers just inside the alley doors. If you have any questions, would like to arrange a time to drop off, or need to schedule a pick-up, please call Jeanne Vilt at 815-932-9855, call or text her at 815-216-0240, or call or text Nancy Campbell at 815-592-4273.

There will be sign-up sheets at both sites later in the summer to volunteer to work at the book booth, help set up, and help pack up at the end. We will also need homemade pies.



THE SERVING CHRIST:
GOSPEL OF MARK

Where: Fellowship Hall

When: Every Tuesday 9:45 a.m.

Taught by: Roy W. Cordes

Studying the Gospel of Mark verse-by-verse and applying it to our Christian walk, class will continue through a part of the summer. We are presently on Chapter 12 and will finish in Chapter 16 in a few weeks. The last 8 chapters of Mark give us the events of Holy Week through the Resurrection. This gives us the opportunity to study and discuss the Passion History after experiencing it a few weeks ago in our worship life.

It is never too late to join the class of 12-15 since each lesson is independent of the other. There is an opportunity to sit and listen, do some reading or ask questions about various topics that Mark writes about as Jesus prepares His disciples (and us) to spread the Gospel as He ascends into heaven until His Second Coming.

When this class ends in June or July, we will take a summer break and resume classes after Labor Day, on Tuesday, September 8th. The class will resume with the biblical study of "Is The Devil Real?" Join us to grow in the Word of God!

SUMMER TRIP ORDERING

What is TRIP (Tuition Reduction Incentive Program)?

* Raise money by using gift cards to pay for everyday purchases. Choose from 750+ retailers, like Bass Pro, Dick's, Disney, DQ, Starbucks, Groupon, Royal Caribbean, Carnival, hotels, airlines, gas stations & more!

* Pay face value for gift cards. A portion of what you spend will go to St. Paul's and a portion will be applied to your school account for tuition, lunch or extended care. If you do not have children that attend St. Paul's, you may donate your share to a school family or to St. Paul's.

How do I order?

* Contact Julie Salzman at 815-530-7320 or juliesalzman@stpaulslutheran.net. She will place orders weekly. Submit your request to her by Thursday for delivery no later than the following Friday.

* Install the RaiseRight app to order your gift cards or use it to download e-cards while you're waiting in line at your favorite stores. Call Julie for the code.



A UNIQUE PRAYER OPPORTUNITY

The worship services at St. Paul's used to offer a prayer individual who would pray after worship with anyone attending that day. That program is no longer in operation due to a lack of volunteers willing to make themselves available after services and health issues with some of the volunteers. We still offer placing your requests on our prayer chain by sharing that information on the attendance cards.

After using a new method of prayer for the National Day of Prayer which had 24 individuals who came to the church in a 12-hour period to pray, a "program" using wristbands was offered. In one basket there were wristbands with specific prayer requests which participants could attach to their wrist or use as a bookmark in their Bible to remind them to pray for a specific person or situation every day for at least a week. There were also wristbands available to write a short prayer request and place it in another basket for others to use during the week.

This "PRAYER CENTER" was set up in the coffee hour location and available before and after services on Sundays at the

Bourbonnais worship site. To encourage participation the center used the passage from I Thessalonians 5:16 -18.

"Always be joyful. Never stop praying (pray without ceasing). Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus."

Plans are to experiment with this for 6-weeks and eventually also set up this opportunity in Fellowship Hall for Saturday night services if there is enough participation.

Roy W. Cordes, retired principal, set up on Sunday, May 17, to give it a try and his first "customer" was Isaac, a second grader, who said he needed to pray for his teacher. I gave him a wristband that said, pray for your teachers and attached it to his wrist. He said, "I need to pray for my teacher, Mrs. Martin, she has cancer." So I removed the first wristband and wrote "Mrs. Martin's Cancer" on the wristband and put it around his right wrist. Before he said thanks and walked away he said, "Maybe I could use another one to use as a bookmark for my Bible." The faith of a child is so innocent and pure. Thank you Isaac for helping me grow closer to God Sunday morning.

BOOK SIGNING COMING SOON



Christian Publishing Company has been contracted to publish a book written by St. Paul's retired principal, Roy W. Cordes. *Prime*

Time Walking & Talking With God will be published as an e-book and a medium sized paperback and is due out sometime in August. Using humorous, spiritual signs posted by churches Mr. Cordes uses life experiences to lead readers into a deeper personal relationship with Jesus. For those of you who are part of his stories, some of the names have been changed to protect the privacy of the innocent (and the guilty!)

Using chapters like "If God Had A Refrigerator Your Picture Would Be On It" or "Knowing the Scripture is One Thing, But Knowing the Author is Another," or "Seven Days Without Prayer, Makes One Weak," or "Jesus Built a Bridge to Heaven, With Two Boards and Three Nails," the book has 41 chapters (dedicated to his sister who passed away from an epileptic seizure at the age of 41). Each chapter has 3-5 pages that could be used to walk and talk with God every day.

The book signing will take place on consecutive Sundays from 9:30 – 11 am in the coffee hour area. Books will be available at the signing or could be purchased through Amazon or other sources that will be announced. Mr. Cordes has agreed to donate 20% of his receipts to the Tuition Assistance Fund for our school. Dates will be announced in the near future.

PHIL'S FRIENDS

Phil's Friends Kankakee Hope Center will continue to have service opportunities all summer long. The space will be air conditioned. We hope you will add volunteering at Phil's Friends to your summer to do list. See the insert for the June and July dates. More hours, including daytime hours, may be starting soon so please keep your eyes open for more information.

WILDFLOWER PICKING OUTING

Lutheran Women in Mission is hosting a Wildflower Picking Outing in mid to late July (we are waiting to set the date until we know the flowers are ready to pick). Watch for more details so you can join the fun as we head north to a wildflower farm to pick our own bouquets.

APRIL MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

Baptized.	1805
Communicant	1331
Communing.	411
Attendance Avg. Weekend Worship (as of the end of the month):	
Month*	258
Year-to-date.	267

* Excludes Easter

FISCAL YEAR-TO-DATE

FINANCES

(through 4/27/26)

Thankofferings

Receipts: (Envelopes, Plate, Sunday School + Electronic) \$684,490.56
Needed To Date: \$688,826.89
% of Need To Date: 99.37%

Building Fund

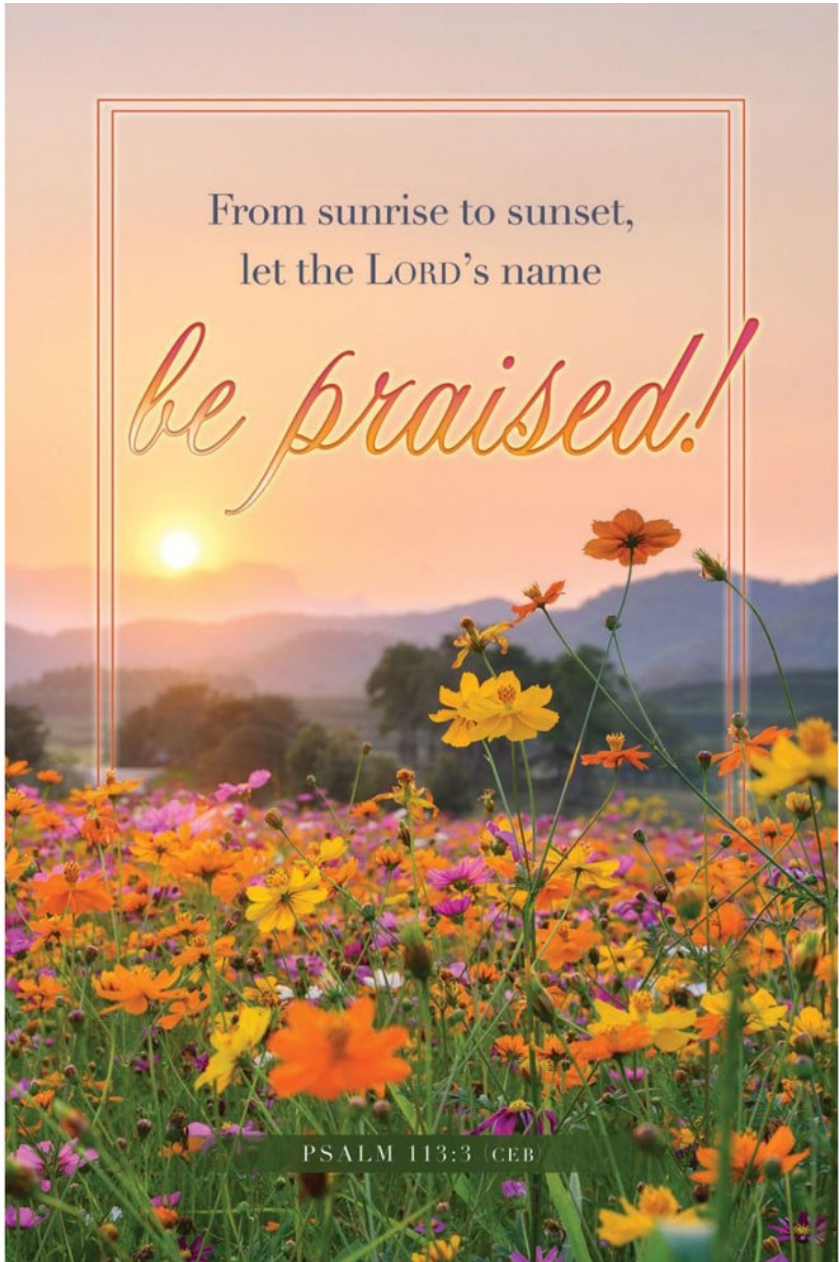
Receipts:(Envelopes+Electronic)
\$113,207.97
Needed To Date: \$142,112.97
% of Need To Date: 78.52%

BAKER BULLETIN

The latest Baker Bulletin is enclosed and posted in the entryway at the school. Rev. David Baker and his family are doing missionary work across the globe and love to share their stories. Please note that because of the nature of their ministry, we cannot post the bulletin online.

NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL?

If you would rather receive St. Paul's bi-monthly newsletter via e-mail, please provide your e-mail address to Christie at crahn@stpaulslutheran.net or call the church office at 932-0312. The newsletter is also posted on St. Paul's website at stpaulslutheran.net.



St. Paul's Lutheran Church & School
1780 Career Center Road
Bourbonnais, IL 60914

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED





















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WORSHIP SCHEDULE



Traditional SAT 5:00 pm - Downtown Campus (D)
 Traditional SUN 8:30 am - Bourbonnais Campus (B)
 Contemporary SUN 11:05 am - Bourbonnais Campus (B)






















Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday		
	1 7:00pm Lay Ministry Meeting (B) 	2 9:4am <i>The Serving Christ</i> Bible Study (D) 	3	4 6:00pm Phil's Friends Walk-In (D) 	5 2:00pm VBS Family Movie & Service Day (B) 	6 5:00pm Worship (D) 		
7 8:30am Worship (B) 9:50am Adult Bible Study (B) 11:05am Worship (B) 1:00pm VBS Decorating (B) 	8	9 9:4am <i>The Serving Christ</i> Bible Study (D) 6:30pm School Board Meeting (B) 	10 6:30pm Youth Mini Golf (Adventure Commons) 	11 6:00pm Phil's Friends Walk-In (D) 	12	13 9:00am Phil's Friends Work Day (D) 5:00pm Worship (D) 		
14 8:30am Worship (B) 9:50am Adult Bible Study (B) 11:05am Worship (B) 2:00pm VBS Decorating (B) 	15 7:00pm Church Council Meeting (B) 	16 9:4am <i>The Serving Christ</i> Bible Study (D) 	17 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm (B)			18 6:00pm Phil's Friends Walk-In (D) 	19 6:00pm Fellowship Dinner (Oliver's, West Kank)	20 9:00am VBS Clean-Up (B) 5:00pm Worship (D)
21 8:30am Worship (B) 9:50am Adult Bible Study (B) 11:05am Worship (B)	22	23 9:4am <i>The Serving Christ</i> Bible Study (D) 	24	25 6:00pm Phil's Friends Walk-In (D) 	26	27 7:30am Men's Bible Breakfast (Riverside) 9:30am Phil's Friends Pack Party (D) 5:00pm Worship (D)		
28 8:30am Worship (B) 9:50am Adult Bible Study (B) 11:05am Worship (B) 12:30pm Special Voters Meeting (B) 	29	30 9:4am <i>The Serving Christ</i> Bible Study (D) 			Communion is celebrated the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays of the month 			



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Traditional SAT 5:00 pm - Downtown Site (C)
 Traditional SUN 8:30 am - School Site (S)
 Contemporary SUN 11:05 am - School Site (S)



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Communion is celebrated the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays of the month 			1	2 6:00pm Phil's Friends Walk-In (D) 	3 Church Office CLOSED in observance of Independence Day	4 5:00pm Worship (D) 
5 8:30am Worship (B) 9:45am Adult Bible Study (B) 11:05am Worship (B) 	6 7:00pm Lay Ministry Meeting (B) 	7 9:45am <i>The Serving Christ</i> Bible Study (D) 	8	9 6:00pm Phil's Friends Walk-In (D) 	10	11 9:00am Phil's Friends Work Day (D) 5:00pm Worship (D) 
12 8:30am Worship (B) 9:45am Adult Bible Study (B) 11:05am Worship (B) 	13	14 9:45am <i>The Serving Christ</i> Bible Study (D) 6:30pm School Board Meeting (B) 	15 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	16 6:00pm Phil's Friends Walk-In (D) 	17	18 5:00pm Worship (D) 
19 8:30am Worship (B) 9:45am Adult Bible Study (B) 11:05am Worship (B) 	20 7:00pm Church Council Meeting (B) 	21 9:45am <i>The Serving Christ</i> Bible Study (D) 	22 5:00pm Youth Swim Party (Splash Valley)	23 6:00pm Phil's Friends Walk-In (D) 	24	25 7:30am Men's Bible Breakfast (Riverside) 9:30am Phil's Friends Park Party (D) 5:00pm Worship (D) 
26 8:30am Worship (B) 9:45am Adult Bible Study (B) 11:05am Worship (B) 	27	28 9:45am <i>The Serving Christ</i> Bible Study (D) 	29	30 6:00pm Phil's Friends Walk-In (D) 	31	



Serving our Lord in June

ACOLYTE SCHEDULE

Sun., June 7	8:30 am 11:05 am	Lana McHugh, Grace West Norah Callan, Claire Wilson
Sun., June 14	8:30 am 11:05 am	Lucas Porter, Zachary Porter Emma Davis, Luke Stirnaman
Sun., June 21	8:30 am 11:05 am	J.P. Woods, Max West MacKenzie Norton, Annie Schneider
Sun., June 28	8:30 am 11:05 am	Mo Macari, George Morocho Loja Layna Rahn, Ryleigh Reiniche

LAY READERS SCHEDULE

Sat., June 6 Sun., June 7	5:00 pm 8:30 am 11:05 am	Dennis Hess Lauren Lundmark Mellody McDonald	Sat., June 13 Sun., June 14	5:00 pm 8:30 am 11:05 am	Georgia Hess JoAnn Hess Sharla Ronchetto
Sat., June 20 Sun., June 21	5:00 pm 8:30 am 11:05 am	Ken Ebert John Veers Deb Turrell	Sat., June 27 Sun., June 28	5:00 pm 8:30 am 11:05 am	Rich Nordmeyer Sam Bottorff Karen Beatty

TRUSTEE SCHEDULES

Sat. & Sun., June 6 & 7 5:00 pm - Jeff Johnson 8:30 am - Mike Regas 11:05 am - Greg Wheeler	Sat. & Sun., June 13 & 14 5:00 pm - Terry Treece 8:30 am - Tom Stirnaman 11:05 am - Jim Trudeau
Sat. & Sun., June 20 & 21 5:00 pm - Rob Wood 8:30 am - Tom Stirnaman 11:05 am - Mike Callan	Sat. & Sun., June 27 & 28 5:00 pm - Jeff Johnson 8:30 am - Mike Regas 11:05 am - Greg Wheeler



Serving our Lord in July

ACOLYTE SCHEDULE

Sun., July 5	8:30 am 11:05 am	Nolan Freitas, Nolan LaVoie Jacob Kubal, Dylan Nordmeyer
Sun., July 12	8:30 am 11:05 am	Brody Brinkmann, Micah Lundmark Ty Luhman, Kaden McDonald
Sun., July 19	8:30 am 11:05 am	Maddie Billingsley, Quinn Styck Dain & Dylan Blair
Sun., July 26	8:30 am 11:05 am	Layna Rahn, Olivia Reardanz Hudson Bade, Lucas Porter

LAY READERS SCHEDULE

Sat., July 4 Sun., July 5	5:00 pm 8:30 am 11:05 am	Loree Yoakum Bill Balgeman Karen Beatty	Sat., July 11 Sun., July 12	5:00 pm 8:30 am 11:05 am	Rich Nordmeyer Roy Cordes Melody Trudeau
Sat., July 18 Sun., July 19	5:00 pm 8:30 am 11:05 am	Ken Ebert Dee Cordes Sharla Ronchetto	Sat., July 25 Sun., July 26	5:00 pm 8:30 am 11:05 am	Diane Barber Sam Bottorff Melody McDonald

TRUSTEE SCHEDULE

Sat. & Sun., July 4 & 5 5:00 pm - Rob Wood 8:30 am - Barry Gadbois 11:05 am - Jim Trudeau	Sat. & Sun., July 11 & 12 5:00 pm - Terry Treece 8:30 am - Mike Regas 11:05 am - Greg Wheeler
Sat. & Sun., July 18 & 19 5:00 pm - Mike Callan 8:30 am - Tom Stirnaman 11:05 am - Jim Trudeau	Sat. & Sun., July 25 & 26 5:00 pm - Jeff Johnson 8:30 am - Mike Regas 11:05 am - Greg Wheeler

MAY VOTERS MEETING SUMMARY

The Voters Assembly met on Sunday, May 17, 2026, with 32 voters in attendance the following actions were taken:

- **Treasurer's Report** accepted - (as of 4/30/2026)
Budgeted Income to date: \$1,876,829.21
Budgeted Expenses to date: \$1,972,059.33
Deficit: (\$95,230.12)

Agenda actions items as follows:

- **Income report** - *Over the past five years, our country has experienced a great deal of inflation (25% to 29%) which reaches into all aspects of our lives. Our congregation has also experienced the reality and effects of inflation, however, our income through weekly giving has remained steady over these many years. This difference has been helped by the "matching funds" giving as well as other external income opportunities. But those are one-time situations and we need a longer term solution. (See "Stewardship Challenges" later in this summary)*
- **Lay Ministry Member changes** were approved (Confirmation students and New members were accepted and those being released from membership and transferring to another church).
- **Elections** - All nominated Board Members, Directors, and Church Officers were elected to their positions. We thank all of these people for their service to St. Paul's. **We currently do not have any new people to serve as Executive Director. While individuals are considering serving in this role, Brent Eden will serve as Assistant Executive Director until those decisions are made.**
- **Endowment Fund Appointments** - Chris Curtis and Elizabeth Kubal were re-appointed to serve a two-year term on the Endowment Fund Committee. Marianne Stevenson and Sheila Rennewanz are also serving on the committee. The Treasurer, Scott Styck is also part of this committee.
- **Endowment Fund Distribution** - Endowment Fund earnings distribution approved for 2026-2027. \$82,944.00 was allocated to various ministry requests.
- **Budget** - Much of the discussion at the meeting centered around the proposed budget for next fiscal year (2026-2027). At this time, the budget is still not ready to be considered. Based on what we believe we need to perform all the ministry we have here at St. Paul's, we will fall short by over \$300,000.00. This is partly due to the previous note concerning inflation and our static giving over the last number of years. More work is to be done to help refine these numbers and we are planning a special Voter's meeting to approve the 2026-2027 budget on **Sunday, June 28, 2026 at 12:30 pm** in the School Gym. (**PLEASE read the insert prepared by our Treasurer to explain our challenges**)
- **Stewardship Challenges** - The work of guiding our congregation to see the importance of faithful stewardship was helped slightly with our last Stewardship campaign on tithing. We are extremely grateful to our members that made and have faithfully continued their commitments. But there is still more work to do. Another stewardship emphasis is scheduled for this fall. But in the mean time, one suggestion was to ask everyone who gives to prayerfully consider increasing their current weekly contribution by 30%. (ex. If you are giving \$10.00 per week, to give \$13.00. If you give \$50.00 per week, to give \$65.00.) However, if that is too difficult, please consider increasing your weekly giving by 20% or even 10%. As we have learned in our stewardship campaigns over the years, we give, because of all that God has given to us. We give in response to HIS gifts. We give in joyful response to God's goodness and mercy. In Christ, our giving becomes intentional, regular, cheerful, and proportionate.

There were many more discussions during the meeting than cannot be covered in this brief summary. This would be an encouragement for all members to participate in the three meetings each year to hear of the joys and struggles of our leadership as we lead our church and school. A reminder that the next Voter's Meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, June 28, 2026 at 12:30 pm** in the School Gym. If you have any questions, you can talk to one of the pastors or church leaders.

Ministry Minute – Presented by the Board of Stewardship on May 23 & 24, 2026

Last Sunday, May 17th was our May Voter's meeting. Much of the discussion at the meeting centered around the proposed budget for next fiscal year (July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027). Based on the funding we believe we need to perform all the ministry we have at St. Paul's; we will fall short by over \$300,000. This is due to a combination of factors. One of the main factors is inflation. Over the past five years our country has experienced a great deal of inflation (25% - 29%). However, our income through weekly giving has remained steady over this same period. The difference has been covered by various one-time external income sources, some related to Covid funding. This past year we had a successful "matching funds" challenge due to the generosity of a donor. But those were one-time solutions. We need a long-term solution.

Some budget solutions discussed at the meeting:

- One, Cutting Costs = Cutting Ministries
- Another, increase school enrollment to increase income – The School Board is working on this. Also, each one of us as members of the congregation can and should promote our school in the community.
- A third, increase General Fund Giving – This is Stewardship's and the Congregation's challenge.

The increased giving option is the option I want to discuss.

Stewardship's role of guiding our congregation to see the importance of faithful stewardship was helped slightly with our last Stewardship campaign. Last fall, we challenged the congregation to Tithe for 10 weeks. Several individuals and families stepped out in faith and for 10 weeks they increased their giving. Some went above tithing, some began tithing, others began proportionate giving. To date it appears those that accepted the challenge have continued to give at the increased levels. Unfortunately, it was only a small portion of the congregation that committed to tithing.

As giving trends were further examined, other items stood out.

Some giving units appear to only give when they attend church. If that sounds familiar, consider signing up for on-line giving, to insure consistent giving.

A significant number of giving units give a flat dollar amount. \$5, \$10, \$15, \$25 or \$50 are common amounts. That equates to annual giving of \$260, \$520, \$780, \$1,300 & \$2,600. If tithing, that would equate to annual household incomes of \$2,600, \$5,200, \$7,800, \$13,000 & \$26,000. I ask that we each examine our individual finances to see if we are giving as we have been blessed.

Also noted was weekly dollar giving that does not change from year to year. If that sounds familiar, commit to giving a percentage of your income. Giving then changes as income changes.

A couple of alternate giving ideas. One, if you are over the age of 70, consider making Qualified Charitable Donations from retirement accounts. The donation goes directly to St Paul's and is generally excluded from your taxable income. Or, consider donating Stocks or Mutual funds, that have significant untaxed appreciation. I am not a tax advisor, so consult your tax professional if you consider either of these options.

One suggestion made at the voter's meeting was to ask everyone who gives to prayerfully consider increasing their current weekly contribution by 30%. (Example, if you are giving \$10.00 per week, to give \$13.00. If you give \$50.00 per week, to give \$65.00.) If 30% seems like too big of a stretch, consider increasing your weekly giving by 20% or even 10%.

As Director of the Board of Stewardship, I welcome the congregation's input in finding solutions to meet our budget challenges.

As we have learned in our stewardship campaigns over the years, we give, because of all that God has given to us. We give, in response to HIS gifts. We give, in joyful response to God's goodness and mercy.

The St Paul's congregation has been richly blessed, 165 years as a church and 160 years of providing Christian education in our community. The Stewardship Board and Church leadership ask that we prayerfully examine our commitment to intentional, regular, cheerful and proportionate giving, that we would have a long-term solution to our budget.

Thank You.

Bill Kronos, Board of Stewardship Director

St. Paul's Lutheran Church 2026-2027 Budget 5/17/2026

I apologize for not being able to attend today, but I am out of town.

While we have a goal to present and approve a budget at the May Voter's Meeting, we are not ready to do so at this point. Our current budget for the 2026-2027 fiscal year shows a negative balance over \$300,000. As we review our situation over the following month, please let me know if you have any ideas, suggestions, thoughts by emailing me at treasurer@stpaulslutheran.net.

Below is a summary of the five-year financial performance of St. Paul's Lutheran Church (2022–2026). I have identified some financial struggles and operational deficiencies currently impacting our financial struggles. Based on the Statement of Income & Expense, this memorandum identifies the core problems and outlines the strategic requirements necessary to achieve long-term financial stability and growth.

Analysis of Financial Struggles and Identified Problems

A review of the five-year trend reveals several critical areas of concern regarding the church's financial health and operational sustainability:

- **Structural Deficit Masked by Extraordinary Inflows:** On the surface, the church reported a surplus of \$67,805 in 2026. However, this figure is heavily skewed by non-recurring revenue. Specifically, "Matching Proceeds" of \$226,792 and "Brinkmann Fund" income of \$48,690 were recorded in 2026. Excluding these one-time items, the church would have experienced an operational deficit exceeding \$200,000. This follows a substantial net loss of \$178,889 in 2025, indicating a persistent gap between recurring revenue and operational expenses.
- **Stagnation of Core Congregational Giving:** Total "Offering - Envelopes" have seen minimal growth, rising from \$663,346 in 2022 to \$688,968 in 2026. Given the inflationary environment over this period, the real value of these contributions has effectively decreased. Furthermore, "Building Fund Envelopes" decreased from \$126,263 in 2022 to \$116,589 in 2026, suggesting that congregational support for this need is weakening.
- **Dissipation of Supplemental Income Streams:** Several significant revenue sources for the Day School and general operations have been exhausted or eliminated. "Tuition Assistance" income fell from \$40,907 in 2022 to \$0 in 2026. Additionally, the "Empower" program, which contributed \$79,938 in 2023, has provided no income for the last two fiscal years. The loss of these third-party or restricted funds has significantly increased the burden on general tuition and offerings.
- **Rapidly Increasing Maintenance and Infrastructure Costs:** Expenses related to "Maintenance - Building" have escalated dramatically, from \$23,694 in 2022 to \$120,497 in 2026. While potentially representing necessary repairs or the addressing of deferred maintenance, such a steep increase indicates that the aging facility is becoming a significant financial liability.

- **New Debt Service Obligations:** The introduction of the "Solar Loan Payment" in 2026 added a new fixed expense of \$88,012. While this investment yields utility savings, debt service is naturalizing those savings. The tax credit has been filed and we are awaiting funds to pay off half this debt.

Strategic Requirements for Financial Growth

To mitigate these risks and foster financial growth, the following strategic actions are recommended:

- **Re-evaluation of the Day School Financial Model:** With the loss of supplemental funding like "Empower" and "Tuition Assistance," the church must conduct a comprehensive review of the Day School's tuition structure. Salaries and benefits have increased consistently, and tuition must be adjusted to ensure the school remains self-sustaining.
- **Targeted Stewardship and Capital Campaigns:** The church must bridge the gap between flat envelope giving and rising costs. A revitalized stewardship program is necessary to convert the momentum seen in the 2026 "Matching Proceeds" into sustainable, increased weekly or monthly commitments.
- **Operational Expense Containment:** Significant spikes in administrative and utility-related costs—such as "IT Service/Support" and "Telephone"—require immediate attention. Management should seek to renegotiate vendor contracts and implement more stringent controls on discretionary spending.
- **Facility and Energy Efficiency Audit:** While the solar investment is a positive step, electricity costs remained high until 2026. A comprehensive audit of the facility's energy usage and a formalized maintenance schedule could help stabilize the "Maintenance - Building" line item and maximize the return on the solar investment.

Conclusion

The five-year financial trend for St. Paul's Lutheran Church highlights a concerning reliance on non-recurring income to mask a structural operational deficit. While 2026 technically shows us in a surplus, the underlying trend is characterized by stagnant core giving, disappearing supplemental revenue streams, and escalating maintenance costs. Financial growth and sustainability will require a rigorous approach to expense management, a modernized tuition model for the Day School, and a renewed commitment to congregational stewardship. Without these structural adjustments, the church remains vulnerable to significant deficits once extraordinary funding sources are exhausted.

Scott Styck, Treasurer



KANKAKEE HOPE CENTER



JUNE - JULY



Phil's Friends is a non-profit organization that distributes **FREE** care packages and monthly Cards of Hope to cancer patients of all ages across the country. We deliver up to **300 Care Packages per week** and mail **over 9,000 Cards of Hope each month**.

As diagnoses increase and awareness of the Phil's Friends mission grows, we anticipate a continued rise in demand. The **Kankakee Hope Center** is a crucial part of this mission.

Join us in spreading hope by creating boxes, cards, and blankets or join us for a Pack Party where we assemble care packages.

The Kankakee Hope Center has **Volunteer Walk-in Hours** happen **every Thursday from 6pm to 8pm** and **one Saturday a month**, called a Work Day.

One Saturday a month is the **Pack Party** where a large number of care packages are prepared and shipped.

See the calendar for dates and times.

Kankakee Hope Center
 240 S Dearborn Ave., Kankakee, IL 60901
 Use the **blue door** under the Phil's Friends sign

For more information contact Sarah Cherry
 sarahc@philfriends.org (815) 651-6864

THURS, JUNE 11

Walk-in Opportunity - 6pm to 8pm

SAT, JUNE 13

Saturday Work Day - 9am to Noon

THURS, JUNE 18

Walk-in Opportunity - 6pm to 8pm

THURS, JUNE 25

Walk-in Opportunity - 6pm to 8pm

SAT, JUNE 27

JUNE PACK PARTY - 9:30 to 11 am

THURS, JULY 2

Walk-in Opportunity - 6pm to 8pm

THURS, JULY 9

Walk-in Opportunity - 6pm to 8pm

SAT, JULY 11

Saturday Work Day - 9am to Noon

THURS, JULY 16

Walk-in Opportunity - 6pm to 8pm

THURS, JULY 23

Walk-in Opportunity - 6pm to 8pm

SAT, JULY 25

JULY PACK PARTY - 9:30 to 11am

THURS, JULY 30

Walk-in Opportunity - 6pm to 8pm

THURS, AUG 6

Walk-in Opportunity - 6pm to 8pm



phil's friends

cancer is strong. **hope is stronger.**

As diagnoses increase and awareness of the Phil's Friends mission grows, we anticipate a continued rise in demand.

Please help so no one is turned away!

Gather items or order from our **Amazon Wishlist**. Collect items on your own, with your neighborhood, church, or business organization and bring them to one of our Hope Centers or ship to our **Crown Point location**.

CARE PACKAGE NEEDS

BLANKETS

Throw blankets, crocheted, or fleece tied



HATS

Knitted & Crocheted



FUZZY SOCKS

Women's Only



TISSUES



LIP BALMS

JOURNALS



PUZZLE BOOKS



LOTIONS



Fragrance-free; 16oz. or smaller

MOUTH RINSE



Alcohol-free 4-8oz. or smaller

TOOTHBRUSH & Travel size TOOTHPASTE



PLAYING CARDS

No Casino Decks



GIFT CARDS *

\$20 value or higher



MONETARY GIFTS



SCAN QR CODES AMAZON LIST PF WEBSITE



Please note: all items need to be new and unused because our friends with cancer have compromised immune systems. ** Gift Cards are used to purchase needed items. We do not put them in the care packages

DROP OFF LOCATIONS

CALL OR EMAIL FOR HOURS

julied@philsfriends.org 224-653-8315

Crown Point, IN
1249 Arrowhead Ct.
Crown Point, IN 46307

Wheaton, IL
213 W. Wesley St.
Wheaton, IL 60187-5135

Addison, IL
1150 N. Swift Rd.
Addison, IL 60101-1452