St. Paul Lutheran Church Announces Twenty $1,000 Emergency Grants for Federal Employees Affected by DHS Funding Shutdown

VALLEY CITY, OHIO – St. Paul Lutheran Church of Valley City, in partnership with the LCMS Ohio District, is pleased to announce the launch of a targeted emergency relief fund to support federal employees impacted by the 2026 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) funding shutdown. Beginning today, eligible individuals can apply for a one-time grant of **$1,000.00** to help offset financial hardships caused by the ongoing lapse in federal appropriations. Twenty grants are available and will be distributed in order of completed applications. Applications will be accepted until May 7, 2026 or until all grants are awarded (whichever comes first).

Congregations and Schools should share this information with those they believe have been impacted. Applicants do not need to be members of Ohio District congregations.

Rev. Philip Zielinski, Pastor of St. Paul said of the grants, “Our own community has been impacted by the current shutdown. Our SMP Vicar, Chris Streeper, formerly served in the Coast Guard as did his wife, Vauna, who continues to serve as a civilian employee. His heart for these workers and desire to help got the ball rolling. We’re pleased to be able to work with the Ohio District to provide tangible and transformative relief for these workers."

How to Apply
Applications are being accepted immediately. Impacted employees can access the digital application at **www.spvc.org**

Eligibility & Application Requirements
The grant is available to individual federal employees who are currently serving without pay due to the 2026 DHS funding lapse. To ensure funds are distributed to those in direct need, applicants must provide:

- A completed grant application form.
- A letter from their immediate supervisor verifying current employment and confirming that the applicant has not been paid during the 2026 shutdown.

About St. Paul Lutheran Church
St. Paul Lutheran Church has been a cornerstone of the Valley City community for over 175 years. A member of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), St. Paul is dedicated to sharing the Gospel and serving the local community through outreach, education, and compassionate care. Visit www.spvc.org

About the LCMS Ohio District
The Ohio District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod assists its congregations to fulfill the Great Commission in ways that are faithful to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions through: Healthy congregations functioning as mission outposts, that are led by: Healthy professional church workers, who are developing: Healthy partnerships among congregations, District, and Synod. Visit www.oh.lcms.org