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### St. Paul's Lutheran Church

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#### Church Office 717-843-8155

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**WELCOME** Thank you for being with us.

**COVID-19 Up-Date** We will resume wearing masks for all indoor services due to the surge of cases in our county and in compliance with CDC guidelines. Our COVID-19 Task Force has been meeting for more than a year and a half tracking data and reviewing information provided through a variety of sources. While resuming masking for indoor worship may seem like a step backward it can be viewed as a step forward as we continue to make a way for the congregation to gather as safely as possible to offer prayer, praise and thanksgiving to God. Our desire to have children and youth, who are not eligible to receive vaccines, take an active part in the faith community added to the decision by Congregation Council at their August 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. Thank you for respecting their decision.

#### Guidelines for Worship during the time of COVID-19

#### Entering and Leaving the Church:

*Please wear a mask while in worship and take your service bulletin with you and dispose of it properly.* 

#### Offerings:

Monetary offerings may be placed in the basins provided at the entrances to the nave prior to the service or immediately following the service. You may also donate via our website at www.stpaulsyork.org

#### While in the Nave:

Please sit in designated pews only. You may sit together as a family. We ask that you practice social distancing from one family to the next within the pew. Occasionally an usher may seat a guest in the red zone.

#### **Communion Procedure:**

- Ushers will direct you. The pulpit side (left) of the nave communes first followed by the font side (right).
- Come to the chancel step taking your place at one of the five positions marked on the chancel floor with a green cross.
- Your entire household may gather at a position marked by the green cross.
- Extend your arms and cup your hands together to receive the host. Return to your pew by the closest side aisle. There is no need to hurry.
- We are receiving communion in one kind only (bread/host).

**Our COVID-19 task force** is assisting us as we remain open. Please thank Dr. Jessica Ericson, Sheridan Palmer, Deacon Harold Sargeant, Norma Shue, and Dr. Martha Thomas for their dedication and service.

We are a Christian church within the Lutheran tradition (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) and we welcome people of all Christian traditions as well as people of other faiths and people of little or no faith. Christian worship has been offered to God in this congregation for 185 years. By worshipping with us today, you become part of that living tradition.

**Restrooms** are available in the Good Shepherd Room (Springettsbury lobby) and the narthex. Baby changing stations are provided in these restrooms.

## Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost Sunday, August 22, 2021 Holy Communion 10:30 AM

#### PRELUDE

Panis Angelicus

Cesar Franck

#### Stand turning towards the font. CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The assembly stands. The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

#### Amen.

Let us pray. Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

#### Amen.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Most merciful God,

we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen

Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

#### Amen



#### **APOSTOLIC GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. And also with you.

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

God of all creation, you reach out to call people of all nations to your kingdom. As you gather disciples from near and far, count us also among those who boldly confess your Son Jesus Christ as Lord. **Amen** 

#### Sit

READING	Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18	(back cover)
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PSALM Psalm 34:15-22 Spoken responsively by half verse.
<sup>15</sup> The eyes of the LORD are up- | on the righteous,\* and his ears are open | to their cry.
<sup>16</sup> The face of the LORD is against those | who do evil,\* to root out the remembrance of them | from the earth.
<sup>17</sup> The righteous cry, and | the LORD hears them\* and delivers them from | all their troubles.
<sup>18</sup> The LORD is near to the | brokenhearted\* and will save those whose spir- | its are crushed.
<sup>19</sup> Many are the troubles | of the righteous,\* but the LORD will deliver him out | of them all.

Continued on next page...

<sup>20</sup> He will keep safe | all his bones;\*

not one of them | shall be broken.

<sup>21</sup> Evil shall | slay the wicked,\*

and those who hate the righteous | will be punished.

<sup>22</sup> The LORD ransoms the life | of his servants,\*

and none will be punished who | trust in him.

#### Stand

VERSE



Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of e-ter-nal life.

#### HOLY GOSPEL

John 6:56-69 *(back cover)* 

Glory to you, O Lord.

The Holy Gospel according to St. John. At the conclusion of the Gospel. The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

#### Sit

SERMON

Pastor Stan Reep

#### Stand

APOSTLE'S CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit

and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.\* On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,

the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

#### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Rooted in Christ and sustained by the Spirit, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

#### A brief silence.

God of courage, bless church leaders. Make them proclaim the gospel of peace and strengthen them to preach your loving word. Lord, in your mercy,

#### hear our prayer.

God of creation, bless fields and orchards. Protect the land from drought and bring lifegiving rain to support growth. Lord, in your mercy,

#### hear our prayer.

God of community, bless all who seek justice between nations and peoples. Give guidance to heal divisions and inspire cooperation in times of crisis, disaster, and war. Lord, in your mercy,

#### hear our prayer.

God of compassion, bless all who are in any need. Accompany all who are lonely and feeling abandoned and remind them of your abiding presence. Lord, in your mercy,

#### hear our prayer.

God of strength, bless our transitions. Guide all who are embarking on new stages in life; job, school, or community (*especially*). Sustain enduring friendships and kindle new relationships. Lord, in your mercy,

#### hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God of comfort, bless all who mourn. We give you thanks for the saints who have gone before us (*especially*). Renew our confidence in your promise of resurrection and life in the world to come. Lord, in your mercy,

#### hear our prayer.

Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

#### Amen.

#### PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. And also with you. *The ministers and congregation greet one another in the name of the Lord.* 

#### **OFFERTORY** As the pastor prepares the altar the people sing. **Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;**

praise God, from whom all blessings flow praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heav'nly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. **GREAT THANKSGIVING** 



#### PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS



Continued on next page...



#### THANKSGIVING

Holy God, our Bread of life, our Table, and our Food, you created a world in which all might be satisfied by your abundance.

You dined with Abraham and Sarah, promising them life, and fed your people Israel with manna from heaven.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for and for all people for the forgiveness of sins. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his life given for us and his rising from the grave, we await his coming again to share with us the everlasting feast.

By your Spirit nurture and sustain us with this meal: strengthen us to serve all in hunger and want, and by this bread and cup make of us the body of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church both now and forever. Amen.

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray...

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

FRACTION RITE The bread is broken. A brief silence is kept.

**AGNUS DEI** 



*Sit* The pastor cleanses hands and prepares for the distribution of Holy Communion.

#### **COMMUNION OF THE FAITHFUL**

Instructions for receiving the sacrament are on the inside front cover of the bulletin.

#### Stand

#### **POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. Amen

#### **POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen** 

#### BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Bless you now and forever. Amen



#### DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

#### *Sit* POSTLUDE

Adagio from Symphony V

Charles Marie Widor

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Please...be respectful of distancing and personal space as you leave. ...feel free to gather outside for conversation.

...take your service bulletin with you and dispose of it properly.



The altar flowers are presented to the Glory of God.

# This Week at St. Paul's August 22-August 29

Church office open 7:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Mon-Thurs

Sunday, Au	ugust 22	Tuesday, A	August 24
8:00 AM 9:00 AM	Holy Eucharist—Outside Pantry Volunteers	9:30 AM 6:00 PM	Pantry Property Committee
10:30 AM 6:30 PM <b>Monday, A</b> 97:00 PM	Holy Eucharist - live streamed. AA meeting Community Rm august 23 ZOOM Boy Scout Meeting	6:30 PM <b>Sunday, A</b> u 8:00 AM 10:30 AM 6:30 PM	Christian Ed—Teacher's Meeting ugust 29 Holy Eucharist—Outside Holy Eucharist - live streamed. AA meeting Community Rm

In our prayers we remember...

Helen Missising, Nancy O'Connor, Brian Hoover, Luna Lambert, Richard Griffin, Jerry Briggs, Tina Llorente, Rick Lloyd, The Hawkins Family, Deirdre McManama, Nancy Smith, Jim Gilbert, Roland Craig, Julie Stephan, Elaine Mummert, Orven Cook, Martha Spillman, Ron Stiffler, Ann DeMille, Terry Kaczor, Barbara Ruppert, Chuck Oelsner, Morgan Lanzalotti, Courtney Snell, Jessica Armold, Betty Mehring, Drew Herdson, Kristine Gross, Porter Stacey.

Serving the Lord with Gladness

DATE	TIME	Prayers	Lector	Ushers		Outside Set- up Crew	Altar Set-up Communion Both	Altar Clean-up Com- munion 10:30AM
8/22	Early Outside	Jessica Ericson		Larry Becker Denise Rider		Needed	Ann & Axel Ulrich	
	Late	Janet Fitch			Palmer Family			Pat Rudacille Gerry Briggs

#### Let us welcome two new staff members!

Leah McComas has accepted the position of Bell Choirs Director and Cody Messersmith has accepted the position of Children's Music Director. You can reach them at the emails listed under Staff. Our September newsletter will have more information about these two stellar educators and their plans for enriching our Music Ministry. Welcome!

STAFF		
Pastor	Rev. Stanley Reep	prreep.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
Youth Director	Kelly Moore-Spencer	kmoorespencer.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
Organist, Choir Director	Victor Fields	vfields.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
Children's Music Director	Cody Messersmith	cmessersmith.stpaulsyork@gmail.com
Bell Choirs Director	Leah McComas	Imccomas.stpaulsyork@gmail.com
Secretary	Patee Pizzirusso	st.paulsyork@comcast.net
Sexton	Ted Weikert	st.paulsyork@comcast.net
Preschool Director	Deb Becker	director@stpaulspreschoolyork.com

Proper 16 B, 2021

The day was exceptional for a road trip with my son. Warm enough to have the roof open, low humidity, light traffic on the "avoid toll roads" route. For a while we listened to his play list, songs mostly from the eighties, classic rock. But along the way, the music stopped playing through the sound system and I realized that my road trip companion had settled into the passenger seat, reclined the seat back, headphones lowered over his ears. I no longer shared the tune. The ride was quiet except for the wind occasionally whistling through the open roof and windows. My passenger was exceptionally quiet. Listening to a different set of tunes maybe? Maybe he dozed off from the hum of the engine, tires, and wind. Maybe he was already tired of me? My traveling companion remained silent as we sped along the open road of the New York highway on our way to Vermont.

The disciples have been exceptionally quite as we have sped along through this sixth chapter of John. We pulled into a rest stop last week and celebrated the Blessed Mother and her place as archetype for the Christian life. But this morning we are back on the road with the gospel writer John. Usually Jesus' traveling companions speak up, share an insight, offer defense for peculiar statements, they are known to ask a question or two, or challenge the wisdom of one thing or another. But for the most part they have more in common with my traveling companion along the New York highway; they have settled into their place, it is as though their headphones are lowered over their ears. They may be listening to Jesus but they have fallen into silence through these nearly seventy verses of scripture, except of course for Peter; Peter who is willing to reply to Jesus' question which is at the heart of the journey.

#### "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life." "We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God."

At this point in the narrative many of Jesus' disciples, a number greater than the twelve, turned back and no longer went about with him. They, for some reason or other found it too challenging, too frustrating, too unpredictable, and too demanding. Perhaps they had grown tired of him already; too tired of his ways to continue on the journey with Jesus, and so in the language of the text, they "turned back."

Turned back is a phrase indicating a return to what is known, believed to be reliable, a retreat to safety. The phrase "turned back" as used by the gospel writer John gives insight into the tensions that have mounted for Jesus' disciples. Their foundations of faith have been battered. Their understandings about who is "in" and who is "out" have been challenged. The demands to grasp new teachings and process what they mean for daily life and living are perplexing. And so we find the followers of Jesus; his disciples, a group greater or other than the designated twelve, turned back. This change in direction is noticeable. It isn't a subtle shift in the direction they are heading, it is obvious to Jesus that the momentum, the energy, the signs that they had witnessed, have stretched them beyond comfort. This teaching of Jesus as bread of life, this teaching of eating his flesh and drinking his blood promising life forever, eternal life, that was the point where they turned back. Jesus asks the twelve straight out "do you also wish to go away?" It's Peter who speaks up and responds to the Lord's question. It's Peter who becomes spokesperson for the disciples. "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

Our liturgical formula places these words on our lips nearly every week. Most of the time these words are introduced with "alleluias" and concluded with the same; and while this verse is important to our lives of faith, it is the concluding sentence that is the goal of the gospel writer for readers, listeners, followers, disciples, "*we have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.*" It is **in** this powerful affirmation, **through** this powerful affirmation, **with** this powerful affirmation, that **we continue to press ahead** on the journey.

It was Joshua who put a similar question to God's people shortly after they had arrived in the Promised Land. When those who had followed Moses for the forty year journey through the wilderness, when they arrived in the new land, some turned back to ancestral worship, some sought out polytheism, and some were all about embracing a new found modern culture that left little, if any, room for the Lord God. For some reason or other the teachings of the Holy One who had brought them to this new place, led them into new opportunities, provided safety and established them in a new land was not being embraced.

Joshua was perplexed that they had turned back. We hear his classic address in the Old Testament reading "Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me (Joshua says) and my household, we will serve the Lord." This pushed the people into a confession not so different from Peter with the affirmation that they have no one else to turn to for life. They proclaim "we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God."

As followers of Jesus we too are on a journey. It began in baptism and through the work of the Holy Spirit has brought us together into this community of faith. We are gathered here now to hear the Word and receive the Sacrament. Our forbearers embarked on a journey following Jesus believing that worshipers should hear the good news of the Gospel message of Jesus and his love in the English language (at the time they were offering their prayer, praise and thanksgiving to God in the German language). In 1836 they chartered this congregation believing that worship should be in the same language that they spoke with neighbors, conducted business transactions, and interacted with family members. They made financial sacrifices necessary to purchase land, build a building, and begin a ministry that has continued for 185 years. Through the years there were struggles; economic downturns, a Civil War, a flu pandemic, two world wars, multiple buildings, organs, pianos, Sunday school, arson, merger, rebuilding and most recently a massive renovation to make the facility accessible in new ways (not only by removing physically barriers but imagine right now through this live stream). These things continue to bring the faith community together committed to the mission "to teach the world that God is love."

And now we are journeying through another time of pandemic. This time has left many who went around with us silent, some turning back, some going another way, some perplexed, and some seeking other communities. Turning back did not strengthen the faith community in Joshua's day. Turning back did not strengthen the twelve disciples as they continued following Jesus toward the cross and resurrection. Turning back is; a normal instinct when we are challenged, frustrated, overwhelmed with the unpredictable, or when we find the demands untenable (as referenced in both the Old Testament and the Gospel readings this morning). Compelled by the mission, Joshua and Peter are bold in their statements of faith; from the One whom they will serve, to the One in whom they believe.

As the miles on the highway passed, and from the silence a sense of loneliness set in, I was able to awaken my quiet companion with the invitation to stop for lunch. Food for the journey revived him, our conversation, and the joy in being together in one another's company.

Joshua manages to persuade the people to follow the Holy One, the One who led them out of slavery and toward a new way of life in a land flowing with mild and honey. He is persuasive. Peter answers Jesus with a question *"Lord to whom can we go"* knowing that it is only Jesus who provides living bread, words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that Jesus is the Holy One of God. Peter is persuasive.

This morning I stand before you proclaiming a love that will not let you go, a forgiveness that allows for reconciliation, and a future that is alive with hope, all because of Christ Jesus, who has never turned his back on us. Rather, he comes to our aid, our defense, our salvation, giving us his own body and blood, true food and true drink, reviving us so that we have life, eternal life. Some will still find this teaching difficult. Some will respond to his invitation to the meal. Others will seek another way. Some will in fear turn back. But for those who have come to believe and know that Jesus is the Holy One of God, the future is hope filled and the best days for mission and ministry remain ahead of us as we journey together "teaching the world that God is love." Amen.

# First Reading: Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18

Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. <sup>2a</sup>And Joshua said to all the people,

<sup>14</sup>"Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. <sup>15</sup>Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

<sup>16</sup>Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; <sup>17</sup>for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; <sup>18</sup>and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God."

#### Psalm 34:15-22

Second Reading: Ephesians 6:10-20 [not printed]

#### Gospel: John 6:56-69

[Jesus said,] "Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. <sup>57</sup>Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. <sup>58</sup>This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever." <sup>59</sup>He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

<sup>60</sup>When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?" <sup>61</sup>But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, "Does this offend you? <sup>62</sup>Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? <sup>63</sup>It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. <sup>64</sup>But among you there are some who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. <sup>65</sup>And he said, "For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father."

<sup>66</sup>Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. <sup>67</sup>So Jesus asked the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?" <sup>68</sup>Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. <sup>69</sup>We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

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Next Sunday's Readings: Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9; Psalm 15; James 1:17-27; Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23.