

From the Pastor's Desk

On August 15 following our outdoor/drive-in worship, we held a Special Congregational Meeting. The meeting was called to vote on one item – “To immediately and fully reopen St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Church for all ministry services, meetings and activities; and to trust and allow each individual member and visitor to make their own health assessment and take their own individual precautions in regards to any potential illnesses.”

The Re-opening committee offered a report based on the work they have been doing for the past 17 months and their recommendations for re-opening. The Congregational Council offered their report in agreement with the committee.

There was passionate discussion offered from both sides of the issue. Some comments were difficult to hear from our brothers and sisters in Christ. After a lengthy discussion, the vote was called. The final results were Agree- 29 votes (38%) Opposed 48 (62%).

The Re-opening committee will continue to meet regularly to assess the positivity rates and vaccination rates in our community. They will update the congregation on their progress as they hope to gather in our sanctuary. We will continue to meet for worship outdoors/drive-in style for the month of September and offer weekly on-line worship services.

As we continue to move forward as the Body of Christ at St. Paul, I pray that healing can begin from this challenging congregational meeting. The people of God at St. Paul are very resilient. You have been through struggles and conflict in the past and have come through stronger. We place our hope and trust in a merciful God who loves all God’s children.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Bonnie

Our Daily Bread Devotionals

The September/October/November edition of “Our Daily Bread Devotions” has arrived. We have placed a stack of them in the Neighborhood Box outside the office door. It is located next to our Prayer Box. Please feel free to stop by and pick up a copy. Large print editions are also available in the Neighborhood Box.

New Secretary Hired!

We are very pleased to announce we have hired a new part-time secretary. Her name is Cyndi Beerbower and she comes to St. Paul with lots of experience working in a church. We are working out her schedule so please watch for it in the next newsletter. As we transition together, please be patient as she learns new responsibilities and new faces/names at St. Paul.

Anti-racism Discussion

We finished the book *Growing Up Black in White* by Kevin Hoffman in August. We had the pleasure of meeting the author on Zoom for some wonderful conversation and discussion. We will be meeting on Zoom on September 15 at 3:00 to watch and discuss a new episode of “Seed of Liberation” produced by two pastors in our synod. All are welcome to join in the discussion – even if you haven’t participated before.



As of the printing of this newsletter, we have harvested over 3,000 pounds of produce from our community garden. All the produce is donated to Mid-City Nutrition for the Soup Kitchen. We give thanks for all the volunteers that help each week. If you would like to join the crew, please contact Don Strauss for the next harvesting day and time.

The family of Eloise Ferrol "Nana" Warwick wish to thank the St Paul congregation for their prayers of comfort and love during her transition into eternal life with our Father God.

Our dear Nana is at peace and rest with her husband Amos and sons Gary Sr. and Terry. She will be deeply missed yet forever In our hearts.

Grateful grace of thanks,

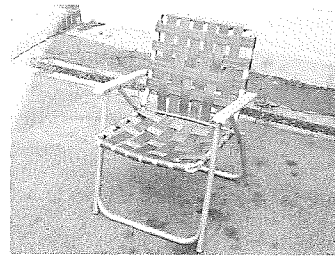
Carol Warwick
Gary Jr. and Shelley
Chad
Karley and Krista

Send us your email address-

We are working to stay connected with more folks in a variety of ways. We are sending out weekly emails with what is happening the coming week, devotions, birthdays and prayer concerns. Your email address will NOT be sold to a third party. Currently, we have 113 email addresses. It is our goal to reach everyone who uses email (even if you only check it once a week). Please send the church office (stpaulww@comcast.net) your email address so you can receive the latest news and updates!

2021 Church Council

Rich Cochrill, Council President
Marilyn Knak, President Elect
Marcia Conard, Council Secretary
Julie Lusk, Treasurer
Susan Koglin, Financial Secretary
Jane Dennis, Asst. Financial Secretary
Karen Lee, Financial Representative
Leanne Fortushniak, Evangelism Rep
Danielle Golubinski, Parish Ed Rep
Marcus Middleton, Properties Rep
Ann Preimesberger, Stewardship Rep
Sue Wilson, Worship Rep
Lucy Fabick, Youth Rep
Cathy Stuewer, Youth Team Rep



Save the Dates:
Drive-In/Outdoor
Worship
September 12 & 26
@ 8:00 & 10:30

Bathrooms will be open!

Blessing or Curse?

This unwelcome aggressive Covid reality can be, and is, viewed from differing perspectives. It can be experienced as loss, deprivation, infringement on our freedom of choice. It certainly is all of these things. I assert, however, that, since we are stuck here, it is to be seen and experienced as a Blessing and an Opportunity to re-evaluate how to **be** The Church, how to **do** church. We know that we do not have to be gathering in any one particular place to gather, to worship, to pray, to sing, to become better disciples and students of God. Let's take this opportunity to re-evaluate our apostleship...our sent-outness if you will...for the sake of the Good News that is Jesus, his life, and his ministry for us. For the sake of this gospel and the unity of all, I urge all of us to resist the temptation to get back to business as usual whether we are in the building or not. Instead, let's draft a resolution, a map, a plan for how to follow Jesus out of the building to the people and places where he went.

Let us pray:

Spirit, move us from thinking of ourselves as individuals, private and separate from one another, to each one's place in the context of the body of Christ and God's love for all of humanity. We pray that you send us to the poor, the aged, the powerless. We pray that you send us to the sick, the dying and those hospitalized with this virus or any other illness of body or mind. We pray for your will to be worked in each of us so that we are strengthened to work for reconciliation within your body which is The Church and St. Paul. Even if we cannot sincerely pray for you to send us, we pray to want to follow you to these same people and places where your son walked and worked and grieved and died. All this we pray for the sake of your glory and our salvation. May it be so, amen.

Marilyn Knak – President Elect



Nomination Time

We are asking you to keep the Nominating Committee in your prayers as we work to develop a ballot of officers and committee representatives with spiritual skills to build our faith community.

God calls us to respond to his grace in action, to be his voice, ears, arms and legs. Each of us must identify the skills with which he has blessed us with and use them to share the Gospel message.

If you feel God's call to serve in one of the following positions, please submit your name to the Nominating Committee for consideration:

President Elect (2 years)

Treasurer (2 years)

Parish Education (2 years)

Stewardship (2 years)

Nominating Committee (1 year)

Audit Committee (3 years)

Mutual Ministry (3 years)

At the same time, the Nominating Committee is prayerfully seeking candidates to fill these same positions. If you are contacted, please pray for guidance in considering the request, and respond as God directs you.

Names may be submitted to the Nominating Committee during the month of August. Job descriptions are available through the committee members. Those elected at the November Voters' meeting will begin serving January 1, 2022.

Your 2021 Nominating Committee,

Linda Barker, John Lusk, Cathy Stuewer, Joan Vercnocke, Pastor Bonnie.

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

August 9, 2021

Star Word - *Loving*

Staff Reviews - Reviews were completed at the end of July.

Technology Update - The equipment that was purchased has arrived. Work on training and learning the use of the equipment has begun.

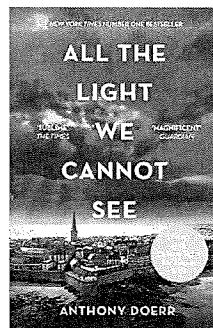
Reopening Committee - It has been recommended that the plans for outdoor worship continue to be followed.

Secretary Position - Many applications have been received and interviews for a likely candidate are taking place.

Food Truck - The August food truck is scheduled to take place on August 19. Thank you to all who help serve our community.

Budget Committee - The Budget Committee has begun work on next year's budget which will be presented at the November Voter's meeting.

Policy - The policy for building keys was approved by the council.



Beyond the Bible-

We have chosen our new book "All the Light We Cannot See" by Anthony Doerr. Our first meeting to discuss the book will be Sunday, August 29 at noon. We have been meeting outside the church in the shade. Please bring a sack lunch and your lawn chair.

We are scheduled to have an outdoor/drive-in worship that day. Please read Section One for our discussion. ALL are welcome to join us as we begin a new book! Please contact Lisa Schleicher for the next date in September, if you are unable to join us August 29.



We're excited to share that we've launched online giving at **St. Paul Lutheran Church** through Tithe.ly, a safe and secure giving platform that

allows you to give one-time or recurring gifts! To make an online contribution go to our website, stpaulutheranph.com, and click on the green "Give" button in the middle of the page, select where your contribution will go (current expenses, GWIP, memorial, etc.) and whether you want it to be recurring or one time. You can use a credit card or bank account. Please consider "Cover Fees" when making your contribution. This covers the nominal fee for processing your contribution. Thank you for supporting our ministry!

Sunday School for Fall 2021

Martin Luther believed that teaching faith is a parent's responsibility. When we bring our children to the font to be baptized, we make promises to teach them the Lord's Prayer, the creed and the ten commandments. The church's responsibility is to support parents in their efforts to teach these components of faith. Last school year our Sunday School teachers created packets of lessons, crafts and more for their students. They mailed them or dropped them off at families' homes. As we look to this school year, there is concern about the safety of meeting in person. Our teachers would again like to provide these packets for our children ages 4 through grade 6 to help parents facilitate teaching their children. If you would like to receive packets approximately once a month, please contact the office at 810-982-9853 or email stpaulww@comcast.net with your child's name and age/grade in school.

Kroger Community Rewards Program. St. Paul will receive rewards from your purchases at Kroger. To use the rewards program you can register online at krogercommunityrewards.com. All **current participants** in the Kroger Community Rewards Program **do not** need to re-enroll this year in order to earn funds for St. Paul. The rewards program runs from May 2020 to May 2021. Our NPO number is RK460. **Registration is online only.** Last quarter 35 households earned \$83.82 rewards for St. Paul.

Newsletter: The newsletter deadline for the October Ray is Sunday, September 19, 2021. Articles may be submitted via e-mail (stpaulww@comcast.net), on a flash drive or in writing.



**Remember
Our Members
In The Military**

COL. THAD MIDDLETON
400 Larkway
O'Fallon, IL 62269



Melba Bartley
Connie Ganger
Lavina Kodet
MaryAnn Meyer



If you would like to add someone to our church prayer list, please email Pastor Bonnie at pastorbonniek@gmail.com. Request received by 9 a.m. on Fridays will be included in worship that Sunday. Those received after that time will be added to Pastor Bonnie's personal list and offered the following Sunday.



**Join us for Outdoor/Drive-In Worship
September 12 & 26
@ 8 & 10:30 a.m.**

On-line worship opportunities

While we are not able to be face to face in worship in our sanctuary there are still opportunities to gather to hear God's word, to pray, to sing and to be encouraged. Each Sunday at 9:30am on our Facebook page worship is posted for us to gather in our homes at the same time to view worship.

The service is also posted on our website stpaul.lutheranph.com under the "Worship services" tab. We also gather on Zoom each Sunday at 10:30 for a virtual social hour. Here is the link to join us on Zoom – <https://zoom.us/j/8109829853> or see the article about join us without a computer.