



Baptism

"Baptism is not a work that we do but ... a treasure that God gives us and faith grasps. ... In baptism, therefore, every Christian has enough to study and practice all his or her life. ... Thus, we must regard baptism and put it to use in such a way that we may draw strength and comfort from it when our sins or conscience oppress us, and say: 'But I am baptized! And if I have been baptized, I have the promise that I shall be saved and have eternal life, both in soul and body'

Martin Luther, Large Catechism

Sometimes, it feels like the world is against us. Maybe it feels like we can never catch a break. What happens next? Will everything ever be okay? It is situations like this, we can boldly say to whatever stands before us "I am Baptized" and trust that God is right there with us.

Martin Luther, one of the reformers in the 16th Century, wrestled constantly with fear, feelings of unworthiness, and stress from his work. How much was enough? What more must he do? Was he going to get captured tomorrow?

But it was in his baptism that he drew comfort and the strength to move forward.

This gift from God assured him that he could face whatever was in his way. Even if he died, things would be okay because he had the promise of eternal life.

Friends, in our world today. We have this gift from God in our baptism. We may not have everything figured out. We may fall down. We may struggle. But we are also claimed. We are claimed as beloved children of God in our baptism. That means we will be okay. In our

baptism we receive the promise of God and God keeps the promises.

So fear not, friends, move forward. And in times of fear, cling to the words "I am Baptized."

Pastor Branden Hunt

In addition to considerations of COVID, **return to in-person communion** is dependent on additional volunteers for the Altar Guild which prepares, sets up and cleans up communion. At the moment Judy Halamka is handling this for the disposable communion cups, but full communion, as we have historically taken it, requires more work and, therefore, more volunteers. Please speak with Pr. Branden, Judy or any member of council if you can serve the church this way.



You can Teach!

Sunday School Help needed:

Are you interested in helping out with Sunday School beginning in September? We are in need of **teachers, substitute teachers, friends** to help with singing and music at the beginning of our Sunday morning sessions. **Sunday School Rally Day is September 18th.** We will have an initial planning meeting for anyone interested in helping with Sunday School this year on **August 30th at 6:30.** Questions: Contact Leann Smith, #810-488-5829 or leann57@iwarp.net

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS
August 8, 2022
GATHER, GRACE, GROW, GO

Consistent with the mandates of our constitution and bylaws, the council reviewed the attendance and giving records for 2022 to update the **roster of voting members** of St. Paul. Remember, you may be a member and yet still not be a voting member if you have not contributed to and attended worship at St. Paul in the calendar year. The annual meeting will be held on Sunday, November 6, 2022, so there is still time to “upgrade” your status from baptized member, confirmed member, associate member, or seasonal member to voting member before then!

Financial: Monthly giving was slightly up for July, but our projected giving for the year is down 8%. Your council and budget team will have to make some difficult decisions in the next few months. Don't let the short-term forecast get you down, we are **in the game** and **on God's team**, so let's be faithful stewards of our financial blessings!

Property: In the kitchen, one **stove** is inoperable and one burner on the other is not working. Repair vs replacement is being evaluated. Also, quite a number of small appliances and kitchen utensils are missing. If you have borrowed such an item, now is the time to return it with prayers of thanksgiving for its use in the kingdom of God. There is only one **air conditioning** unit working in the sanctuary. Please do not adjust the thermostat without contacting a property committee member.

Stewardship: Workshops (with snacks!) to learn the ins and outs of the volunteer positions are now scheduled for:

August 14 – Lector
August 21 – Ushers and Acolytes
Early September – Altar Guild

Donations to Mutual Aid have been put on temporary hold. The loose offering on July 31 totaled **\$250** and is being slated for Sunday School. Sign up sheets are still available in the narthex for council positions. Lots of opportunities to learn more about the **how, who, and what of being the**

Church! A stewardship drive is being planned for fall.

Parish Education: **VBS was a great success** with 15 children and 10 adults for Bible study and 50 diners! Come to the **Sunday School meeting on August 30; Rally Day is September 18th**. New curriculum material has been selected and ordered thanks, in part, to the loose offering in July. There will be a meeting on August 30th for interested members who wish to help with Sunday School this year. The library is shaping up nicely...thank you Kathy Strauss and Lisa Schleicher.

Evangelism: Our next **Friendship Sunday** is set for September 25th.

Offering of Letters: We are writing letters to our members of Congress all month long, culminating on Sunday, August 28. The letters can be “mailed” in the mailbox in the narthex. Use your own home address as the return address and St. Paul will affix the postage. Every citizen has three members of Congress who need to hear from YOU, two representatives and one senator.

Antiracism workshop: This is sponsored by Conference 2 and will be held at St. John, Romeo on Saturday, November 5th.

Gift and Endowment Fund policies and procedures are still being thought through and fine-tuned. The position of council representative for our Youth Ministry remains open. If you have a heart for kids of all ages and the energy to keep up with them, speak with Pr. Branden or Lucy Fabick!

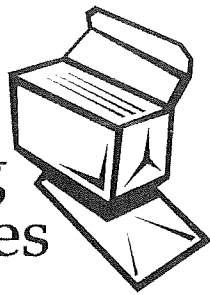
Don't forget the **three-church picnic**. Set your watches and calendars for Saturday, August 27 at 12:30. It is being hosted by St. Martin members, **Cathy and Buck Rose, 1155 Watson Drive, Fort Gratiot. Bring a dish to pass. The pool will be open and yard games are available.**

Next council meeting is September 12, at 6:30. All are welcome; please join us!

Marilyn Knak, President

*We have been made **more than conquerors** through
Him
who loves us. Romans 8.37*

Offering Envelopes



Church Envelope Update

The offerings received weekly support the ministry, outreach, benevolence, staff salaries, mortgage reduction, & the cost of operating the church building.

Offering envelopes are available to all worshippers and are mailed to the home address monthly. If you are not receiving envelopes and wish to have them, contact the church office.

For a small fee you can also donate on line using Tithe.ly by having the funds transferred from your checking account.

Cash donations also support the ministry but you will not receive a quarterly statement of donations.

The current list of envelopes was recently reviewed and envelopes not being used were deleted to reduce costs.



Nomination Time is near. Our annual voting day is Sunday, November 6. The Nominating committee is looking for volunteers for council members, officers and committee representatives to lead us forward in our faith.

Please consider these positions. We ask that you yourself be open to consideration, that you volunteer or suggest others who might be willing to fill these positions.

The following are elected every year:

- Council President Elect
- Assistant Financial secretary
- Youth Representative (student)
- Audit Committee representative (3 year term)
- Mutual Ministry Representative (3 year term, every third year the representative is appointed by council executive and Pastor)
- Nominating Committee (four: two outgoing council members and two from general congregation)
- Archives Committee Representative
- Synod Assembly Representatives (two)

Terms for the following positions begin in an odd-numbered year (2023)

- Council/Voters Meeting Secretary
- Evangelical Chairperson
- Financial Representative
- Worship and Music Chairperson
- Youth Ministry Chairperson (adult)

ALTAR FLOWERS



If you wish to sponsor altar flowers, there are signup sheets on the bulletin board in the Narthex.

There are still Sundays available.

Cost of the flowers is \$25 per Sunday sponsored. Please include your payment with your regular offering with the amount listed under the "other" line and "flowers" written on the line. If you don't have offering envelopes, put payment in an envelope indicating your name and date you would like to sponsor and that the payment is for altar flowers.



HEART WORKS

We meet the first Tuesday of every month, unless it is a holiday, from 10 until noon. Please come join us as we

knit, crochet, or loom items to share with those who are in need. You will find us in the activity room. Mark your calendar, and join us on September 6th. Any questions please call Kathy Strauss, 810-985-5361.

OUR DAILY BREAD

The September/ October/November edition of "Our Daily Bread Devotion" is available for you to pick up. They are in the slots under the mailboxes located in the church office hallway. Please feel free to stop by and pick up a copy. There are also some available in the Neighborhood Box.



Our Church congregation's success depends as much on members' sharing of their time and talents as it does on their tithing. That said, as we continue to transition back to in-sanctuary worship services, we are looking for members to share in the duties and tasks associated with worship services, specifically serving as ushers and lectors at this time. The Stewardship Committee will be placing sign-ups on the Church bulletin board for volunteers for these duties, or you can call or e-mail the Church office, Diane Welsh (Stewardship Committee Chair) or Karen Lee (who representing Church Council has been leading this initial return to in-sanctuary worship.

As we build this list of volunteers, we plan to work toward having a calendar reflecting an assigned rotation of those duties, similar to how it was handled pre-pandemic. Those of us who have been handling the tasks will share notes and work with you on what duties are involved...Like the saying goes, "Many hands make for lighter work" so thanks in advance for sharing your time, talents to help our Church be successful!

2022 Church Council

Marilyn Knak, Council President
Marcus Middleton, President Elect
Marcia Conard, Council Secretary
Julie Lusk, Treasurer
Jane Dennis, Financial Secretary
Kathy Strauss, Asst. Financial Secretary
Karen Lee, Financial Representative
Leanne Fortushniak, Evangelism Rep
Leann Smith, Parish Ed Rep
Ivan Smith, Properties Rep
Diane Welsh, Stewardship Rep
Sue Wilson, Worship Rep

Just a reminder 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, stpaul Lutheranph.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!

God's light was shining Bright!

VBS 2022 was a huge success!

The children went away happy, energetic, and can't wait to come back next year. **Thank you St. Paul Members** for your part in this amazing mission. We had 13 students, 10 adults and fed approximately 50 people per night. Your support did not go unnoticed and is definitely what made it a success. Perhaps you went to four dollar stores to find the plastic boats we needed for a game, donated baked goods, or a salad, or macaroni and cheese, maybe you showed up in the evening and said, "Where do you need me?" Perhaps you prayed daily for this mission. There were too many volunteers to name, but I hope you feel appreciated for your help. All of it is what made this mission a success and helped "Grow God's Church"

Thank you and praise God!