

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

P. O. Box 267, 201 Veterans Dr., Columbus, TX 78934

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E-mail: admin@splctx.org www.splctx.com **Pastor:** pastor.akethan@gmail.com

June 24 & 25, 2023

Fourth Sunday of Pentecost

Senior Pastor	Alan Kethan	<u>Home:</u> (979)-942-9060	<u>Cell:</u> (830)-708-1200
Deacon of Word and Service			Sandye Fletcher
Youth & Family Specialist			Stephanie Polasek
Congregational Chair			Donna Maas
St. Paul Christian Learning Academy Director			Briana Bedford
Secretary			Elena Holub
Custodian			Tomasa Rosales
Parish Nurse Program Coordinator			DyAnn Lauzon
Organist			Joan Hunsicker

MISSION STATEMENT: Love God, Love Neighbor (*Luke 10:27*)

VISION STATEMENT: We will work to strengthen and grow closer in relationship to God and to one another.

- *As we enter into a sacred time and space, a friendly reminder to please set your cell phone to vibrate.*
- ***We want to welcome all of our guests today and thank you for worshiping with us. If you have any questions or would like more information regarding our services, programs, day care, or preschool programs at St. Paul, please visit our Welcome Center in the narthex immediately following our service, and an attendant will be more than happy to assist you. If this is your first time at St. Paul, we hope you will take a gift along with you. We also have a gift bag for children.***
- *Hearing Assist devices are available for those who need assistance in hearing worship service better. Please see a person in the Sound Room (Usher Room) to request the use of a device during worship.*

* This symbol indicates that the congregation is invited to stand physically or in spirit.

INTRODUCTION

God does not promise that the path of the disciple will be easy. Jeremiah feels the pain of rejection from those who do not want to hear what he has to say. Jesus declares that his words may bring stark division. Even so, we need not be afraid for God accounts for each hair on our heads. Though we may experience rejection, frustration, division, and death, God’s grace and

love make us a new creation each day. Marked with the cross and filled with holy food, we are sent from worship to witness to Christ in the world.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SIGNING OF ATTENDANCE PADS

(Ushers will be handing out Attendance Pads during the announcements. Please be sure to sign your name and contact information.)

60 SECONDS OF STEWARDSHIP – Outreach Team

* **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who greets us in this and every season, whose word never fails, whose promise is sure.

C **Amen.**

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of our neighbors, first privately then together publicly.

Silence for reflection and private confession of personal sins, then join in with combined voices this printed confession.

P Most merciful God,

C **we confess that we are captive 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.**

P In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God 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.

C **Amen.**

* **HYMN ELW - #796 “How Firm a Foundation”**

1. **How firm a foundation, O saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in Christ Jesus, the Word! What more can he say than to you he has said who unto the Savior for refuge have fled?**

2. “Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dismayed,
for I am your God and will still give you aid;
I'll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand,
upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.”

3. “When through fi'ry trials your pathway shall lie,
my grace, all-sufficient, shall be your supply.
The flames shall not hurt you; I only design
your dross to consume and your gold to refine.”

4. “Throughout all their lifetime my people shall prove
my sov'reign, eternal, unchangeable love;
and then, when gray hairs shall their temples adorn,
like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne.”

Text: John Rippon, *A Selection of Hymns*, 1878, alt. Music: Early American Melody
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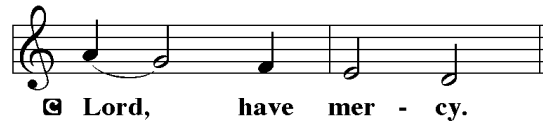
* **GREETING**

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

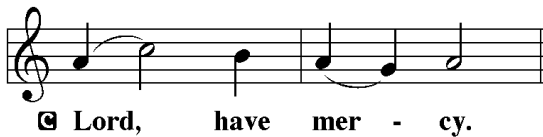
C **And also with you.**

* **KYRIE** *(Responses Sung)*

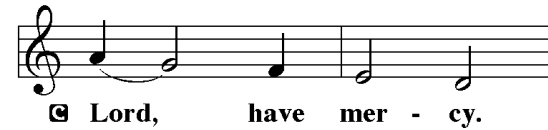
P In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



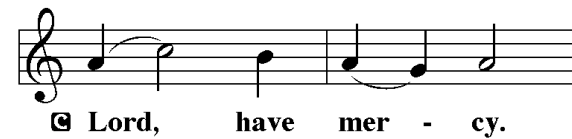
P For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



P For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of
all, let us pray to the Lord.



P For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the
Lord.



P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



* **HYMN OF PRAISE:**

P This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.



1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo - ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless - ing and glo - ry are his.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

Final refrain



This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

* **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P Teach us, good Lord God, to serve you as you deserve, to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, except that of knowing that we do your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 20:7-13

A Our first reading is from Jeremiah, chapter 20, verses 7-13.

Jeremiah accuses God of forcing him into a ministry that brings him only contempt and persecution. Yet Jeremiah is confident that God will be a strong protector against his enemies and commits his life into God's hands.

The reading begins:

⁷O LORD, you have enticed me, and I was enticed; you have overpowered me, and you have prevailed. I have become a laughingstock all day long; everyone mocks me. ⁸For whenever I speak, I must cry out, I must shout, "Violence and destruction!" For the word of the LORD has become for me a reproach and derision all day long. ⁹If I say, "I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name," then within me there is something like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot. ¹⁰For I hear many whispering: "Terror is all around! Denounce him! Let us denounce him!" All my close friends are watching for me to stumble. "Perhaps he can be enticed, and we can prevail against him, and take our revenge on him."

¹¹But the LORD is with me like a dread warrior; therefore my persecutors will stumble, and they will not prevail. They will be greatly shamed, for they will not succeed. Their eternal dishonor will never be forgotten. ¹²O LORD of hosts, you test the righteous, you see the heart and the mind; let me see your retribution upon them, for to you I have committed my cause. ¹³Sing to the LORD; praise the LORD! For he has delivered the life of the needy from the hands of evildoers.

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 69:7-10 [11-15] 16-18

A The Psalm today is from Psalm 69, verses 7-18. We will read the Psalm responsively. The congregation will please respond by reading the words in bold print.

⁷Surely, for your sake I have suffered reproach, and shame has covered my face.

⁸**I have become a stranger to my own kindred, an alien to my mother's children.**

⁹Zeal for your house has eaten me up; the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen upon me.

¹⁰**I humbled myself with fasting, but that was turned to my reproach.**

[¹¹] put on sackcloth also, and became a byword among them.

¹²**Those who sit at the gate murmur against me, and the drunkards make songs about me.**

¹³But as for me, this is my prayer to you, at the time you have set, O LORD: "In your great mercy, O God, answer me with your unfailing help.

¹⁴**Save me from the mire; do not let me sink; let me be rescued from those who hate me and out of the deep waters.**

¹⁵Let not the torrent of waters wash over me, neither let the deep swallow me up; do not let the pit shut its mouth upon me.]

¹⁶Answer me, O LORD, for your love is kind; in your great compassion, turn to me.

¹⁷Hide not your face from your servant; be swift and answer me, for I am in distress.

¹⁸Draw near to me and redeem me; because of my enemies deliver me.

SECOND READING: Romans 6:1b-11

A Our second reading is from Romans, chapter 6, verses 1b-11.

In baptism we were incorporated into the reality of Christ's death and resurrection. We have been made new in Christ through his death and resurrection to live freed from sin.

The reading begins:

^{1b}Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? ²By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? ³Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷For whoever has died is freed from sin. ⁸But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

A The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

A Please stand as you are comfortable for the gospel.

* **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:** (Sung)



* **GOSPEL:** Matthew 10:24-39

Jesus warns his disciples that their ministry in his name will meet with opposition. However, he assures them that they need not fear for the truth will come to light. Life is found in Christ.

P The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, chapter 10, verses 24-39.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the twelve:] ²⁴A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; ²⁵it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household! ²⁶So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. ²⁷What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. ³⁰And even the hairs of your head are all counted. ³¹So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. ³²Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; ³³but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven. ³⁴Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; ³⁶and one's foes will be members of one's own household. ³⁷Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; ³⁸and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it."

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

* **HYMN ELW - #798 "Will You Come and Follow Me"**

1. "Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?"
2. "Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare, should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer pray'r in you and you in me?"

3. **“Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?
Will you set the pris'ners free and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean, and do such as this unseen,
and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?”**
4. **“Will you love the you you hide if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?”**
5. **Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.**

CCLI Song #4668756 Words: John L. Bell Music: Scottish traditional
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* **APOSTLES' CREED**

A With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

- C I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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.**

(The congregation may be seated during the prayers.)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A Trusting in God's abundant mercy, let us offer our prayers for a world in need.

A brief silence.

- A Our world is enduring violence and destruction. Rescue your people in nations experiencing conflict or crisis, especially in Ukraine and Sudan. Thwart the efforts of those who sow chaos and terror, and guide those working to bring about peace and reconciliation. God, in your mercy,
- C hear our prayer.**
- A We pray, O God, for the family and friends of Curtis Berger who passed away this past week. Be with them and comfort them during this difficult time. God, in your mercy,
- C hear our prayer.**

- A We pray, O God, for Brian Lighthill and Elsa Wylie who were united in marriage this weekend. Bless them as they begin a new life together as husband and wife. God, in your mercy,
- C hear our prayer.**

- A We pray, O God, for all those in need of healing and whose needs are diverse and known to you including:
Dwain Dungen; Jo Looney; Cherie Moore; Joseph Fitzgerald; Jane Brugh; Gwen Reichardt; Alma Fletcher; those on our Prayer Team's list; and those we name in our hearts before you
(Pause). God, in your mercy,
- C hear our prayer.**

- A We pray, O God, for all those battling cancer that they may know comfort and strength.
(Pause for those we are praying for.) God, in your mercy,
Debbie Herzik; Randy Wendt; Susan Chandler; Heather Deviney; Jaime Sawyer; Kim Moerbe Welneck; Misti Retzer; Zelda Lanford; Michelle Thraen; Pauline Gosnell; Nina Naumann; GayLynn Willms Burk; Carl Norton; Laura Harris; Todd Foster; Cindy Tanner; Joe Reck; Melinda Rodiek; Melda Coleman; Donna Culton; Nancy Hartmann; Lydia Rojas; Larry Stolar; Vivian Fortenberry; Rick Davis; Darryl Stancik; Jerry Ordner; Michael Yancey; Al Gene Canik; Jane Venghaus Taylor; George Wright; Sandy Mosley; Charlene Tesch; Karen Bailiff; Julian Divin; Nancy Biers; Pam Potter; Charlie Hammock; Brad Bryson; Lynette Frnka; Riana Jamison; Jenna Escamilla; Margaret Ortiz; Keith Korth; Jodi Sebesta; Cathy Siglow; Paul Casinger; DeQuincy Lister; Lily Presswood; Denise Lange; Doug Mason; Dr. Tom Hancher; Joe Berry; Gracie Brune; Margaret Rogers; Leonard Kahlden; Curtis Wallin; Megan Burch; Lisa Grazier; Phyllis Behrend; Jessica Mauchlen; Donna Tiner; Libby Divin; Diane Brooks; Bob Loy; Stanley King; Monty Gillett; Dawn Foster; Edward Halcolm; Amber Smith Kutach; Louis Camacho; Melvin Schobel; Janet Greene; Sabrina Galindo; Debbie Grimes; Horst Traub; Margie Fisk; Preston Carter; Penny Miller; Carl Hahn; Megan Cain; Amanda Fuchs; Cyndi Wallace; Karen Broussard; Donna Young; Sharon Heimann; and Brenda Baker.
- C hear our prayer.**

- A We pray, O God, for all expectant mothers, and especially for:
Montana Appelt; Dina Anton de Espinoza; Olivia Leyendecker; Daya Latiolais; Cassidy Zajicek Parks; Courtney Busselman; and Nancy Gorman that they have healthy terms and deliveries, and if not, may they find comfort and peace. God, in your mercy,
- C hear our prayer.**

A We pray, O God, for all those who reside in care facilities and the homebound and especially for:

Dr. Cecil Marburger; Joey Denby; Edwin Oevermann; Paul Minar, Sr.; Adrian Fritsch; Doug Hill; Robert Saunders; Coy Dell Schindler; Barbara McMath; Madeline Menke; Doris Horndt; Helen Perrard; Jane Booker; Pat Brasher; Dolores Hoelscher; Jesse Grabow; Ronnie Rogers; Joyce Dehmer; Donna Dehmer; and Rita Noska that they receive your caring and compassion. God, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A We pray, O God, for all law enforcement officers, fire fighters, first responders, healthcare workers, 9-1-1 dispatchers, and active duty military personnel that they are protected and kept safe. *(Pause for those we are praying for.)* God, in your mercy,

Law enforcement officers: Joseph Smith; Todd Jacobs; Troy Neisner; Jacob Gorman; Nancy Gorman; Johnny Kovar; Abigail Weido; Dustin Lattimore; Bruno Flores; Zane Weido; Josh Jones; as well as Donnie Templeton and Jason Templeton who are also fire fighters. For all fire fighters, first responders, healthcare workers and 9-1-1 dispatchers, especially Brent Gorman, Sr.; Brent Gorman, Jr.; Reid Brasher; Dusty Dittmar; John Maertz; Ron Luedke; Pastor Alan Kethan; Kristi Weyand; Eric Weyand; Bradley Berger; Jon Berger; James Chollett; Edward Thraen, Jr.; Garrett Flores; Kyle Burris; Dylan Walcik; Randy Wendt; Travis Neuendorff; Brenda Henkes; Jan Willette and Terri Neuendorff, as well as those active duty military members including Brian Anderson; Michael Graham; Bryan Kubena; Brad Bergfeld; Cody Jowers; Kyle Appelt; Montana Appelt; Douglas Neuendorff; Scott Cherniss; Kameron Page; Ryan Neisner; Anthony D'Angelo; Dalton Kapel; Kindra Dawson; William Phillips; Kevin Gonzalez; and Cody Goolsby.

C hear our prayer.

A We pray, O God, for the church throughout the world. May we all proclaim the good news of your love effectively. We ask, especially, that you would bless the ministry of our sister congregations Cristo Rey and Iglesia Cristiana Camino de Santidad in Peru, all Missionaries, especially St. Paul's supported missionary, Dina Anton de Espinoza, and our companion synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Central African Republic. God, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

A All who have died with Christ also live with him. We give thanks for all the saints whose faithful confession inspired our own discipleship, and raise us, with them, to eternal life. God, in your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Receive our prayers and answer us, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

* **PEACE**

P The peace of the risen Lord be with you always.

C And also with you. *(Share the "Peace of the Lord" with your neighbors.)*

(We will be collecting offerings before and after worship each week. This includes Power of One dollars.)

OFFERING and POWER OF ONE

"Power of One" is a ministry sponsored by your Stewardship Team. We are asking each and every one of our members to give \$1.00 above what your normal giving would be. We are asking each member to place this \$1.00 bill or change in the offering plate each week. The team is also inviting all children to participate to develop the habit of giving as part of their worship experience. Parents, a penny, nickel, dime, quarter, or dollar bill, any of these will do to help your children develop a habit of giving. These "Power of One" dollars will be used to support local ministries and ministries abroad. The purpose of this ministry is to demonstrate that something as small as one dollar can be used to make a difference in the lives of others.

* **OFFERTORY** *(Sung)*



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bles-sing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be



fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u -



nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your



pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

* **OFFERING PRAYER**

P God of field and forest, sea and sky, you are the giver of all good things. Sustain us with these gifts of your creation, and multiply your graciousness in us and the gifts you gave us to share, that the world may be fed with your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**

* **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

* **LORD'S PRAYER**

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

C **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.**

* **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P All people are called to Christ's table. Come, eat, drink and find new life.

C **Amen.**

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION (Continuous with Individual Cups)

{Distribution will be continuous. All are welcome for communion. Please come down the center aisle starting from the front. Follow directions of the ushers, coming up one side at a time. Pastor will hand you the bread. If you wish to have a gluten-free wafer, please tell Pastor "Gluten-free, please." Afterward, you will choose either wine or white grape juice from the individual cups in the tray – white grape juice in the center with wine surrounding. Place the empty cups in the baskets located off to the side. Although communion is continuous, you are welcome to kneel at the rail in prayer after receiving communion. Please return to your seat by the side aisles.}

* **BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION**

P Now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C **Amen.**

* **POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE** (Sung)



☞ Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev-'ry-one what he has done.



Let ev-'ry-one who seeks the Lord re-joice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re-calls his prom-is-es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy



with shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

* **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P We thank you, generous God, for the refreshment we have received at your banquet table. Send us now to spread your generosity into all the world, through the one who is our dearest treasure, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**

* **BLESSING**

P May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you. May the Lord look upon you with His favor and grant you His peace. In the name of the Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

* **HYMN ELW - #504 "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"**

1. **A mighty fortress is our God, a sword and shield victorious;
he breaks the cruel oppressor's rod and wins salvation glorious.
The old satanic foe has sworn to work us woe!
With craft and dreadful might he arms himself to fight.
On earth he has no equal.**

2. **No strength of ours can match his might! We would be lost, rejected.
But now a champion comes to fight, whom God himself elected.
You ask who this may be? The Lord of hosts is he!
Christ Jesus, mighty Lord. God's only Son, adored.
He holds the field victorious.**

3. **Though hordes of devils fill the land all threat'ning to devour us,
we tremble not, unmoved we stand; they cannot overpower us.
Let this world's tyrant rage; in battle we'll engage!
His might is doomed to fail; God's judgment must prevail!
One little word subdues him.**

4. **God's Word forever shall abide, no thanks to foes, who fear it;
for God himself fights by our side with weapons of the Spirit.
Were they to take our house, goods, honor, child, or spouse,
though life be wrenched away, they cannot win the day.
The kingdom's ours forever!**

Text: Martin Luther; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship* *Music:* Martin Luther
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

* **DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace known and loved by God.

C Thanks be to God, and we will.

POSTLUDE

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USHERS: SAT: JoAnn Venghaus; Emily Frank; Sammy Cox

SUN: Terrel & Robin Maertz; Ruth Bedford

LAY READERS: SAT: Rhanda Lattimore

SUN: Curtiss Schonenberg

ACOLYTE:

SUN: Tucker Stancik

STREAMING:

SUN: Janel Barten

SOUND:

SUN: Todd Jacobs

ALTAR GUILD: Carol Ripper and Emily Brod

WELCOME: Welcome to worship and Christian fellowship this summer weekend! May we learn what Jesus truly means by calling us to “take up the cross and follow [him]” (Matthew 10:38, NRSV).

ALTAR WALL FLOWERS are placed by Sandy & Randy Neuendorff in honor of daughter Traci's 24th birthday on June 24 and grandson Colin Kunschick's 4th birthday on June 25.

We extend our Christian sympathy to the family and friends of Curtis Berger who passed away Sunday, June 18, 2023. May God comfort them during their time of loss.

Congratulations and best wishes to Brian Lighthill and Elsa Wylie who were united in Holy Matrimony Saturday, June 24, 2023 in Lorena, Texas. May God bless them as they begin a new life together as husband and wife!

COLLECTION OF OFFERING: Offering for the worship services is collected before and after worship. Offering bowls are placed in the back entrance and inside the side sanctuary door for you to place your offering in. This includes “Power of One” dollars.

Amount needed for average weekly budgeted expenses: \$8,405.00

Attendance: June 17 & 18, 2023 – 149

Contributions: June 17 & 18 – \$5,345.91

Power of One: June 17 & 18, 2023 – \$42.00

Building Fund: June 17 & 18 – \$298.23

Thank you to those who contributed to last week's offerings. Loving God/Loving Neighbor.

ATTENTION: *Names on the prayer list in the bulletin will be printed for 2 weeks. After 2 weeks, the names will be removed from the bulletin unless the church office has been notified to keep them.*

► **Children's Activity Bags** are available for use by our young members and guests! You can find them on the coat hooks in the coat area of the narthex. After worship, **please place the used activity bags and their contents in the receptacle in the narthex.**

Thank you! 😊

**** ATTENTION!!!** Due to Mr. Berger's funeral reception, there will be **no VBS decorating this Monday, June 26, 2023.** If you have any questions, please contact Wendy Page at 979-732-1756. ******

Attention Graduating Seniors and Current College Students: This is a reminder that if you are planning to or are currently pursuing a degree in education *or* nursing, you are encouraged to apply for the Frank & Ann Derr Scholarship here at St. Paul. For an application, please see Ms. Stephanie or stop by the church office. Complete your application and return it to the church office as soon as possible.

NOTICE!! Summer office hours for Stephanie Polasek are Monday-Thursday 9:00 AM-1:00 PM. Please make note of this change for the summer when scheduling any office appointments.

◆ **LANDSCAPING:** St. Paul is in the process of forming a landscaping team with the purpose of making our campus more attractive and welcoming by planting an assortment of trees and

shrubs in various locations. If you have knowledge of what trees and shrubs to recommend that would survive in our environment, we would welcome your expertise. If interested, there is a sign-up sheet in the narthex (foyer). If you have any questions, please contact John Brasher at 979-253-1448.

**** Colorado County Senior Connections ** –**

A place for Seniors, 65 years and older, to socialize with others.

The group meets at the Stafford Opera House – Columbus in the Buddy Rau Room from **10:00 AM-1:00 PM** the **1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month**. Lunch will be provided. Various activities will include: Card games/board games; Bingo; Movies; Educational Speakers; Field trips; and Social gathering time!



God's Gals will meet **Sunday, June 25, 2023** at **Hound Song Brewing Company** in Columbus at **6:00 PM**. All women of St. Paul are invited for food, fellowship and laughter! Guests are always welcome!! Contact Terri Brasher at 979-732-1127 for more details.

► **Escape Room Trip:** St. Paul youth entering grades **6, 7 & 8** are invited to test their skills as a group at Armadillo Escape Room Adventures in Katy on **Monday, July 3, 2023**. We will **leave the church at 10:00 AM**. After our Escape Room experience we will have lunch and devotion before returning home. Come join us in learning how, even though we are different, we all have gifts and are a part of one body, the Body of Christ. **Cost per student is \$25. RSVP by Monday, June 26, 2023 by contacting Stephanie at 979-732-1858.**



Senior Explorers are going on a cruise! We will **depart from St. Paul at 7:30 AM** on Thursday, July 6. We will board the ship before 10:00 AM for a 90-minute Sam Houston Boat Tour. It will be a narrated, educational ride along the Houston Ship Channel. There is an outside deck and inside air conditioned area. Free tour and ride. One free beverage provided mid-cruise. Walkers are OK. **PHOTO ID REQUIRED.** You may bring water, but you cannot bring any other food or drink on board. We will stop for lunch on the way home and expect to be home about 3:00 PM. **We currently have 24 spots reserved. Please sign up in the narthex (foyer) by Sunday, July 2, 2023.** Please call Kevin Page at 979-732-0845 with any questions.

★ **VBS Decorating Work Days:** *Decorating for Vacation Bible School is quite a task and takes quite a bit of time. To make things easier, we are having a **work day the first Monday in July (July 3) from 9:00 AM-1:00 PM.** We will be working **in the Lighthouse.** Please feel free to come and go. **Sunday, July 2, 2023** we will decorate in the sanctuary from 1:00-5:00 PM following the 11:05 service. Any touch-ups and last-minute details will be done on **Wednesday, July 5, 2023.** Questions? Please contact Wendy Page at 979-732-1756. Your help would be greatly appreciated! ☺*

Stellar VBS!! Mark your calendars for “Stellar” VBS! Join us at Vacation Bible School **July 10-14, 2023** as kids go on a cosmic quest and have a blast shining Jesus' light to the world! A meal will be served 5:30-6:00 PM, and VBS will be held 6:00-8:30 PM. VBS is open to children in preschool up to students who have completed 5th grade. Registration is free, however, t-shirts will be available to purchase for \$8 each. *Space is limited so register early!* Parents may register their students online by visiting vbspro.events/p/spfu2023. If you have any questions, please contact Stephanie at 979-732-1858 or by email at stephaniepolasek@yahoo.com.

Be a Vacation Bible School Volunteer!! VBS is a wonderful way to connect with the youth and to share how God has worked in your life. Sharing your love for Christ with the younger generation can be a humbling and rewarding experience and can impact the youth in so many ways. Last year we hit our capacity of 100 students! This year we have increased our capacity to 125 students, but, in order to accomplish this, more volunteers are needed. We all have gifts to give no matter what age, and we invite you to join our team. You may register online by visiting vbspro.events/p/spfu2023. If you have any questions, please contact Stephanie at 979-732-1858 or by email at stephaniepolasek@yahoo.com.

● **VBS FOOD DONATIONS:** To help defray the cost, we are asking for donations to help with the meals served each evening before Vacation Bible School. We served about 200 kids and volunteers *each night* of VBS last year. If you would like to help, you can either give a **monetary donation or donate specific food items.** For monetary donations, an envelope will be on the table in the narthex (foyer) that can be placed in the offering bowl. If you wish to donate specific food items, just pull a slip off the board and return it with the donation on the date specified to the St. Paul Lighthouse. If you have any questions, please contact Loraine Gast at 979-732-1296. Each donation is and will be greatly appreciated. Thank you!



Newman's Castle for 2nd & 3rd Graders! St. Paul students entering 2nd and 3rd grade this fall are invited to experience Newman's Castle in Bellville, Texas. On **Tuesday, July 25, 2023** we will leave the church parking lot at **9:30 AM and return by 2:30 PM.** After exploring the castle and catapult, students will be served lunch and hear the story of Queen Esther. Please RSVP to Stephanie by Monday, July 17, 2023 at 979-732-1858.

♣ **Day Camp at Lutherhill!** Youth completing K-5th grade are invited to experience a week at camp without the over-night stay during the week of **July 30-August 4, 2023.** Camp starts each day at 8:00 AM and will end at 5:15 PM. Stephanie Polasek will shuttle youth each day to and from camp. We will leave the church at 7:20 AM and will return at 5:50 PM. **Cost is \$195 for the week.** Register online at lutherhill.org and then contact Stephanie at 979-732-1858 for transportation. It's always a great time for the kiddos!

♥ **Grief Support Group:** Are you experiencing grief from the loss of a loved one, loss of a job, loss of friend who has moved? The Grief Support Group is a place to share and discuss these issues with other individuals. The group meets the **third Thursday of each month from 5:30-6:30 PM in the church library.** For questions or more information, contact Peggy Geisler at 979-732-0350.

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:

Today (June 25) – 6:00 PM – God's Gals to Hound Song Brewing Co., Columbus
Mon., June 26 – 6:00 PM – Women of JOY Bible Study (Hackfeld Family Room)
Tues., June 27 – 9:00 AM-12:00 PM – Quilters (Lighthouse)
12:00 PM – Noon Bible Study (library)
6:00 PM – CLA Board
Wed., June 28 – 9:00 AM – CLA Chapel
10:00 AM – Deacon Sandye to Columbus Oaks
2:00 PM – Deacon Sandye to The Oaks
Thurs., June 29 – 1:00-2:30 PM – Summer Craft Camp (Lighthouse)
Sat., July 1 – 7:00 AM – Men In Mission (Lighthouse)
7:00 PM – Holy Communion Worship
Next Sun., July 2 – 9:00 AM – Holy Communion Worship
10:00 AM – Adult Sunday School
11:05 AM – Holy Communion Contemporary Worship

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Sunday, June 25, 2023 Presentation of the Augsburg Confession, 1530

On this day in 1530 the German and Latin editions of the Augsburg Confession were presented to the Emperor Charles of the Holy Roman Empire. The Augsburg Confession was written by Philipp Melanchthon and endorsed by Martin Luther, and consists of a brief summary of points in which the reformers saw their teaching as either agreeing with or differing from that of the Roman Catholic Church of the time.

Sunday, June 25, 2023 Philipp Melanchthon, renewer of the church, died 1560

Though he died on April 19, Philipp Melanchthon is commemorated today because of his connection with the Augsburg Confession. Colleague and co-reformer with Martin Luther, Melanchthon was a brilliant scholar, known as "the teacher of Germany."

Tuesday, June 27, 2023 Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, died 444

Cyril defended the orthodox teachings about the person of Christ. After a conflict involving all of the major Christian leaders of the time, it was decided that Cyril's interpretation, that Christ's person included both divine and human natures, was correct.

Wednesday, June 28, 2023 Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, died around 202

This important early church leader tried very hard to hold to the faith handed down by the apostles. An opponent of the movement known as gnosticism, Irenaeus was one of the first to speak of the church as catholic, or linked together.

Thursday, June 29, 2023 Peter and Paul, Apostles

These two strong-willed apostles are the pillars of the church in the first generation after Christ. Peter was one of the Twelve, one who both offered a glorious confession of faith and later denied knowing Jesus. Paul once led the persecution of Christians, then was converted and helped bring the faith to non-Jewish people.

Saturday, July 1, 2023 Catherine Winkworth, died 1878; John Mason Neale, died 1866; hymn translators

Neale was an English priest who specialized in the translation of Latin and Greek hymns into English. Winkworth lived in Manchester, England, and devoted herself to translating German hymns. Almost all English-speaking hymnals include many of their translations.

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SERVICE OVERVIEW: GOD COMES FIRST

God is, the theologians say, transcendent - beyond us, always exceeding our easy grasp. Recognizing God's awesome transcendence brings a reevaluation of other values. The God of vertigo-inspiring infinitude is also the God who know the hairs of our head. Trusting this God, fear is diminished and faith becomes a sort of courage. We live in faithful relationship to the hair-counting God as we joyfully "acknowledge" the one who acknowledges us. And as we do so, reveling in the intimacy of God's loving regard for us, other relationships, even familial ones, take on a different cast. God comes first. Before the God who is at once gracious and transcendent, we "lose" our lives and discover the true life in following the way of Jesus the crucified Son.

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION:

Today, the stereotypical idea that religious people enjoy the good life is challenged by all three readings. Jesus says several surprising things that may be difficult to consider: he has come to bring, not peace, but a sword; and that followers must love him more than they love their own family members. Welcome to worship! Listen. Meditate on what these sayings might mean. At the table, be strengthened to live the surprising life of the Christian.

This week's texts tackle some intense human experiences of vulnerability: derision, exhaustion, estrangement from family and friends, loss of privilege and status, and mortality. These words run counter to so much of what our culture teaches about being held in esteem, being liked, being successful, and creating the lives we want. What are the fatalistic and harmful ways we avoid vulnerability? How can we embrace this vulnerability in order to live more fully? Where we are most exposed and raw, God brings about real, true, resurrected life.

While it seems like the world is falling apart around us, and humanity has lost its sense of direction, like Jeremiah we express both anguish and confidence in God. We hold this tension –

expressing lament while resting in the promise that God's goodness, love, and mercy always prevail. The call to serve God and to live the gospel can run contrary to the comforts of the world. Remember that God is still present in your discomfort. A church that doesn't provoke any challenge, a gospel that doesn't unsettle, a word of God that doesn't get under anyone's skin or doesn't touch the society in which it is being proclaimed - what gospel is that?"

Last week, Jesus's students/disciples "graduated" and became apostles - those who are sent on a mission. They must be prepared for the hard things that may and will happen along the way. Be aware of the two promises spoken boldly to us all: first, God is always with you through the good times and the hard times, through the joy and the tears. Second, second, you are enough. Jesus reminds those he is sending out that God is with them and that God cares for them deeply. In encountering the world, each of us needs to be reminded that God is with us and that we are enough as we meet the vocations set before us.

KID STUDY:

How many hairs do *YOU* have on your head? The average person has about 100,000 hairs. Today Jesus tells us that God knows us so well, even the hairs of our heads are all counted! What does this mean for you? It means that God created you, loves you, and knows everything about you. There may be times in our lives when we feel alone. There may be times when we feel like nobody knows what we are feeling. However, God's love is always reaching out to us.

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION:

There is a heavenly power, a power greater than ourselves, a divine spirit from God that does for us what we can't do for ourselves. Perfect love casts out fear. Fear is the one thing that would for sure get in the way of hearing what God has to say. Fear is the one thing that has to be dispelled in order for us humans to not completely freak out when things get hard or when our path changes and we are no longer in control. - Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber

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Next Week's Theme (July 1 & 2): What does it mean to receive someone and the rewards?

Next Week's Scriptures (July 1 & 2):

First Reading: Jeremiah 28:5-9

"The test of a true prophet."

Psalm: Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18

"Your love, O LORD, forever will I sing." (Ps. 89:1)

Second Reading: Romans 6:12-23

"No longer under law but under grace."

Gospel: Matthew 10:40-42

"Welcome Christ in those he sends."