

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

PH# (979) 732-2423 Fax (979) 733-0489

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

June 25, 2023 Contemporary 11:05 AM

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

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.

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 We believe that the Bible contains instruction for us as followers of Jesus Christ to do what he asked of us. He taught the first disciples to help others to confess their sins and to proclaim to them the promise of forgiveness afterwards. So let us take a few brief moments in silence to open our hearts and minds to Jesus, to confess the things that weigh heavy on our hearts and the things we need help with so we might be more in line with what Jesus commands.

(Silence for private confession.)

P If you are truly sorry and asking God for help, here is the promise he commanded the leaders in his church to proclaim, “You are forgiven.” May this forgiveness free you and help you to live; to live in Jesus' name.

C Amen.

GOSPEL SONG: RESCUE

You are not hid-den. There's never been a moment you were for-got-ten. You are not hopeless, though you have been broken, your innocence stolen. I hear you whisper underneath your breath. . . I hear your SOS, your SOS.

I will send out an army to find you. In the mid-dle of the dark-est night, it's true. I will rescue you.

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.

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

[Jesus said to the twelve:] ²⁴“A 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! ²⁶“So 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. ³²“Everyone 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. ³⁴“Do 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.”

GOSPEL SONG: RESCUE

**There is no distance that cannot be covered
over and over. You're not defenseless.
I'll be your shelter, I'll be your armor.
I hear you whisper underneath your breath. . .
I hear your SOS, your SOS.**

**I will never stop marching to reach you.
In the middle of the hardest fight, it's true. I will res-cue you.**

**I hear the whisper underneath your breath.
I hear you whisper you have nothing left.**

**I will send out an army to find you.
In the middle of the darkest night, it's true. I will rescue you.
I will never stop marching to reach you.
In the middle of the hardest fight, it's true. I will res-cue you.
I will rescue you. I will rescue you.**

CCLI Song #7117256 Words and Music by Jason Ingram, Lauren Daigel, and Paul Mabury
©2018 CentricSongs | See You At The Pub | Fellow Ships Music | ICM Crescendo Royalty Publishing |
So Essential Tunes CCLI License #1729377

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

*** SERMON SONG: NEW CREATION**

**Oh, oh oh. . . Oh, oh oh. . .
Oh, oh oh. . . Oh, oh. . .**

**I thought I knew what I was talkin' about when I testified of Your great love.
Well I was a soul on fire, there was no doubt.
Bible-believin', saved, and washed in the blood.
But it wasn't 'til I stumbled, and made my mistakes
That I could know in my soul how amazing is grace!**

CHORUS:

***You brought me blessings out of a tragedy.
You turned my old song into a symphony.
And with Your spirit living inside of me,
I'm a new creation! I'm a new creation!***

**And now I know what You were talkin' about.
Went from my head into my heart.
When I was broken at the bottom I found,
You're my Healer and Redeemer, Jesus, that's who You are! **CHORUS****

**Oh, oh oh. . . Oh, oh oh. . .
Oh, oh oh. . . Oh, oh. . .
Well it wasn't 'til I stumbled, and made my mistakes
That I could know in my soul how amazing is grace!**

LAST CHORUS:

***You brought me blessings out of a tragedy.
You turned my old song into a symphony.
And with Your spirit living inside of me,
I'm a new creation! Oh, oh oh oh. . .***

***You brought me blessings out of a tragedy.
You turned my old song into a sym-phony.
And with Your spirit living inside of me,
I'm a new creation! I'm a new creation!***

**Oh, oh oh. . . Oh, oh oh. . .
Oh, oh oh. . . Oh, oh. . .**

**And with Your spi-rit living inside of me,
I'm a new creation! I'm a new creation!**

CCLI Song #7181900 Words and Music by Hank Bentley, Jeff Pardo, and Mac Powell ©2021 BrentHood Music (Admin. by
Capitol CMG Publishing) | Capitol CMG Genesis (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing) | Capitol CMG Paragon (Admin. by

* **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

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.

A brief silence.

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.

A brief silence.

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.

A brief silence.

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.

A brief silence.

A We pray, O God, for all those battling cancer that they may know comfort and strength.
(Pause for those we are praying for.)
Debbie Herzik; Randy Wendt; Susan Chandler; Heather Deviney; Jaime Sawyer; Kim Moerbe Weltnack; Misti Retzer; Zeldia 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.

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.

A brief silence.

A We pray, O God, for all those who reside in care facilities and the homebound that they receive your caring and compassion. *(Pause for those we are praying 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.

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.)*
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.

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.

A brief silence.

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.

A brief silence.

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

C Amen.

* **PEACE**

P As Jesus shared peace, let us also share His peace with one another. (*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.

* **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.

* **REMEMBERING JESUS' WORDS, PROMISES, AND COMMANDS**

* **LORD'S PRAYER**

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

**C Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins**

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. 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.}

* **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.

* **CLOSING SONG: NOBODY**

Why You ever chose me has always been a mystery.

All my life I've been told I belong at the end of the line.

With all the other "Not-Quites," With all the "Never-Get-It-Rights."

But it turns out they're the ones You were lookin' for all this time.

CHORUS:

'Cause I'm just a nobody, tryin' to tell everybody, all about Somebody

Who saved my soul. Ever since You rescued me, You gave My heart

A song to sing. I'm livin' for the world to see – nobody but Jesus.

I'm livin' for the world to see – nobody but Jesus.

Moses had stage fright. And David brought a rock to a sword fight.
You picked twelve outsiders nobody would've chosen and you changed the world.
Well the moral of the story is, ev-erybody's got a purpose.
So when I hear that devil start talkin' to me sayin' "Who DO you think you are?"

CHORUS:

*I say, "I'm just a nobody, tryin' to tell everybody, all about Somebody
Who saved my soul. Ever since You rescued me, You gave My heart
A song to sing. I'm livin' for the world to see – nobody but Jesus.
I'm livin' for the world to see – nobody but Jesus."*

BRIDGE (sing twice)

So let me go down, down, down in history.
As another blood-bought, faithful member of the family.
And if they all forget my name, well, that's fine with me.
I'm livin' for the world to see no-body but Je-sus.

CHORUS:

*'Cause I'm just a nobody, tryin' to tell everybody, all about Somebody
Who saved my soul. Ever since You rescued me, You gave My heart
A song to sing. I'm livin' for the world to see – nobody but Jesus.
I'm livin' for the world to see – nobody but Jesus.*

CCLI Song #7121827 Words and Music by Bernie Herms, Mark Hall, and Matthew West ©2018 My Refuge Music (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing) | Be Essential Songs (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC) | Highly Combustible Music (Admin. by One77 Songs c/o Kobalt Songs Music Publishing (ASAP)) | House of Story Music Publishing (Admin. by One77 Songs c/o Kobalt Songs Music Publishing (ASCAP)) | One77 Songs (Admin. by One77 Songs c/o Kobalt Songs Music Publishing (ASCAP)) | Remaining portion is unaffiliated. CCLI License #1729377

*** DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace known and loved by God.

C Thanks be to God, and we will.

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2023 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.
Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS006327.
New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.
Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress.
Used by permission.

USHERS: Bethany Guthmann; Sandy Cherniss; Fay & Thomas Ulbricht

LAY READER: Sandy Cherniss

STREAMING: Chase Brasher

SOUND: Todd Jacobs

ACOLYTE: Hudson Muir

POWER POINT: Peggy Geisler

ALTAR GUILD: Loraine Gast

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 **today** 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.

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2023 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS006327.

OTHER READINGS: Jeremiah 20:7-13

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.

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

⁷Surely, for your sake I have suffered reproach, and shame has covered my face. ⁸I 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. ¹⁰I humbled myself with

fasting, but that was turned to my reproach. [11] put on sackcloth also, and became a byword among them. 12Those 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. 14Save 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.

OTHER READINGS: Romans 6:1b-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:

1bShould 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.

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

+++++

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."