



The Monthly Epistle

of St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Volume 69, Issue 6 • June 2023

Our Church Council is working on a list of members to send the first of three constitutionally required, annual letters to those who have failed to commune of record *and* make an offering of record in the previous calendar year. I fear there will be a lot of letters sent, warning of imminent removal of names from our membership, unless folks come back to worship at St. Paul's.

Average Sunday morning worship attendance since Easter is 212 (194 for 2023). That is pretty good for Lutheran churches in our area who are still struggling to rebound from Covid.

It may not sound like it, but we too are still struggling. Our baptized membership numbers 545. Even with more than 40 new members since 2021, you can see there are many who just have not yet come back to church. Of course, some of them have moved out of the area, or just plain moved on. But many have gotten "comfortable" at home, watching the Livestream of the service, or worse, simply taking it easy.

In the third article of the Apostles Creed, we profess that we believe in "the communion of saints." That communion, or sacred community, includes the whole people of God throughout time, but it also means those who are gathered with the Lord at St. Paul's. So, at this juncture, unless you are homebound or have moved on to another church (which we would appreciate hearing about so we may remove your name from the register), you need to be in worship, backing up what you have professed to believe in the Creed.

Of course, there are better reasons to come to Christian worship in the company of God's people, so...

See you in church!

Pastor Mark

June 4, breakfast will be available in the fellowship hall at 8:30am. Please come and enjoy breakfast and fellowship before Sunday School, which begins at 9:30am.

The Extension/Community Association will meet Tuesday, June 6th, at 1pm in the conference room.

Sundays in June

- Sunday School each week at 9:30am
- Worship Service each week at 10:30am
- Men's Choir practice each Sunday at 3pm
- Vespers at the parsonage—finger foods at 6pm; Vespers at 6:30pm are also live-streamed on our Facebook page.
- June 4 – Breakfast before Sunday School, 8:30am
- June 4 – Christian Education Committee, 2pm
- June 4 – Kathy Ketchie Circle, 5pm
- June 11 – Scott Licht will visit and be guest preacher.
- June 18 – Father's Day
- June 25 – VBS 10:30am–3pm
- June 25 – VBS wrap-up, 3-4pm

Mondays

- June 5– Hama Lingle Circle, 7pm
- June 19 – Council meets, 6:30pm
- June 19 – Newsletter articles due this week
- June 26 – Lutheran Men, 6:30pm

Tuesdays

- Adult confirmation class is on break for the summer months.
- June 6 – Extension Club, conference room, 1pm
- June 6 – Grace Ridenhour, 6:30pm
- June 13 – Bonnie Bost Circle, 7pm
- June 13 – Executive Committee, 7pm
- June 20 – Friendship Club, 10:30am
- June 20 – Staff meeting, 5pm

Wednesdays

- Adult Choir practice each week, 6:30pm
- June 7 – Ellen Bumgarner Circle, 10am

Thursdays

- Bible Study Class, each week at 10am and 6pm

Fridays

- June 23 – First day of VBS, 5:30–8pm

Saturdays

- June 3 – Stephen Minister's luncheon, fellowship hall, 11am
- June 24 – VBS, 9:30am–3pm

Lutheran Women Circle Meetings

- Kathy Ketchie – Sunday, June 4, 5pm
 - Hama Lingle – Monday, June 5, 6pm (earlier time)
 - Grace Ridenhour – Tuesday, June 6, 6:30pm
 - Ellen Bumgarner – Wednesday, June 7, 10am
 - Bonnie Bost – Tuesday, June 13, 7pm
 - Melissa Lura – No meeting in June or July
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The **St. Paul's Friendship Club** will meet **June 20th at 10:30am in the Fellowship Hall**. Pastor Ryman will present the program, "History of the English Bible." There will be a covered dish meal following the presentation. Everyone is invited. Please come and enjoy good food and fellowship.

A Foundation Is Laid

Find the 28 **bold** words from Ezra 3:11–13.

J X A T U G N O I S E S U L D
B O P H A N V T Y L K D N A E
J E Y E S I X X O N U P F I T
W L E A R S I V A O R A A D U
L O R D F I E H L I W D I M O
T V X Q A A T C E A T V L Q H
R E J R R R M S Y O X H I S S
O E M H B P T Q T R Y T N A Q
F J V P Q S A I H S U W G W E
E G S E L W E R G O N N O E E
X H N Q R E R M H O J O D E Z
H D I A Z O G S K E O V N P S
D R L O S T F H V U A D E I U
X X I O S E T I V E L R M N N
F O U N D A T I O N N A D G P

And they **sang, praising** and giving **thanks** to the **LORD**: “For he is **good**; for his **unfailing love** toward **Israel** is **forever**.” And all the people shouted with a **great shout** when they praised the LORD, because the **foundation** of the **temple** of the LORD was **laid**. But many of the **priests** and **Levites** and heads of fathers’ houses—the **old men** who had seen the first temple—**wept** with a loud voice when the foundation of this temple was being laid before their **eyes**. And many shouted aloud for **joy**, so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the **weeping** of the people—for the people **shouted** with a **loud** shout, and the **noise** was **heard far away**.

May 8th, Blood Drive

Thanks to all who registered to donate blood at our May blood drive. Forty-four persons registered, and seven were deferred for various problems. Two persons gave “double rbc” which gave a total collected of 39 units. Some of you may have received e-mails that gave a forty-unit total, but one of the donors could not complete a whole unit, therefore, that unit did not count. More donors are needed to keep our goal between 35-40 units since at each drive, 15% – 20% of those who register are deferred.

Only nineteen donors were from our church family, so it is wonderful that our community has “carried the load” to make St. Paul’s the best collection site for One Blood in Rowan County. A major problem continues to be those who are scheduled and do not show up or call to cancel appointments. Fortunately, at this drive we had ten “walk-ins” who filled in for those “no-shows.” There were six new donors who will hopefully return for our future drives.

Please consider being a donor at our next blood drive on Monday, August 14th from 1:30pm – 6:00pm in the Fellowship Hall. Each donation can help up to three people in need of transfusions. If you would like to donate, contact Alice Davis (704-855-4930 or pherford1@yahoo.com).

Housekeeping Reminder

Refrigerators and countertops—If you use the refrigerator in the kitchen, please remove all your items before you leave from your event, as well as removing any items from the countertops, so that the next group in will have room.

If your items need to be stored for later pickup, you may use the refrigerator in the shelter, or the flower cooler near the chapel—but, please arrange for items to be picked up within a day or two. Remember, this time of year, the picnic shelter is being used as well, so that refrigerator needs to be kept clean too.

Please be considerate. Clean up after your group event, and provide room for others. *(If you need to use any church facility, contact the church office to schedule.)*

Community Concert Update

The Community Concert held on May 19th, featuring Matthew Weaver and Clay Lunsford was a success. We collected over 211 pounds of food and \$136 in donations for Rowan Helping Ministries. There were about 90 people who attended, many of whom were visitors.

Thanks to the Outreach Committee and friends for making hundreds of cookies. There were a lot of cookies left over, but who minds having cookies left over?

Hopefully we can do this again. RHM was very appreciative of the donations, as their shelves are almost bare.

Disaster Relief Help

The shelves are empty at the NALC Disaster Response Sites. The St. Paul's Women have made Hygiene Kits in the past and the Men have done Flood Buckets. The Outreach Committee would like for the **congregation to collect items for Flood Buckets** in the month of June. The Outreach Committee will supply the buckets and pack them. We will have tubs in the narthex and near the conference room to collect cleaning items.

If you don't want to donate all the bucket items, just put individual items in the tubs when you come to church and we will make sure the buckets are complete. The following items are needed to make up a bucket:

- 1/2 gallon or smaller jug of bleach
- 2 Large Trash Bags (Contractor – 3 mil)
- 1 roll of paper towels
- 2 rags
- Comet or scouring cleanser
- Pine Sol or liquid cleaner
- Scrub brush
- Gloves – 1 pair of each; Large size preferred: cotton, rubber (reusable, i.e., dishwashing type), and leather

Rebuilding Renewed

*Find the 29 **bold** words from Ezra 6:7–10.*

R D T J E E G K E D G X D S R
A E C F T N I H F L N O W N O
M C B T U I K R O W P E D O N
S R B U B W G N I K J M S S R
V E R L I S E S N E P X E B E
U E U Q R L E V B R T K P T V
Q K U R T E D R A U S L N Y O
T A E H W L A Y U O L R A L G
L D J E L D E R S S U L A S L
O F F E R I N G S B A M S I H
R F O F R R P J M Z B E O C E
P E U P R I E S T S D K R J A
I L F M E L A S U R E J R T V
L J Z F S A C R I F I C E S E
G T Y T O K X P H C P S M S N

Let the **work** of this **temple** of God alone; let the **governor** of the Jews and the **elders** of the **Jews rebuild** this temple of God on its place. Moreover, I make a **decree** of what you shall do for these elders of the Jews for the rebuilding of this temple of God. **Full expenses** are to be given to these men immediately from the king's **treasure**, the **tribute** from beyond the River. Whatever they need for **burnt offerings** to the God of heaven—young **bulls, rams, lambs**, also **wheat, salt, wine, and oil**, according to the word of the **priests** who are at **Jerusalem**—let it be given to them day by day without fail, that they may **offer sacrifices** to the **God of heaven**, and **pray** for the life of the **king** and his **sons**.

Thank you for your gifts totaling \$663.26 given to the Lutheran Disaster Assistance Fund during the months of February, March, and April 2023. *The Lutheran Disaster Assistance Fund* was established in 2013 to assist churches during times of natural disasters. Your church is such a faithful generous supporter of our mission. We are grateful to you for your help. May God bless you for your concern for others.

Pam Koranda, Financial Assistant

Hello from your friends at *Focus on the Family*, and thanks for your \$205.77 donation to our outreach. Your friendship and support mean more to us than we can put into words.

Sincerely,

Jim Daly, President

Thank you for your continued support of *Meals on Wheels Rowan* through your dedicated volunteer team and your generous monthly contributions. We could not serve homebound seniors without charitable donors and volunteers such as yourselves.

In 2022, we served over 600 seniors across all of our programs, providing over 97,000 meals. Your yearly donations provide approximately 235 meals for seniors in need.

Thank you again for your constant aid. You are making a difference and we appreciate you.

Sincerely,

Katie Menees

Thank you for your gift [of \$395.26] to the ministry of Samaritan's Purse. Your gifts and prayers empower us to train hundreds of thousands of local teachers annually to disciple these shoebox recipients. In addition, we are responding to numerous crises at home and abroad in Jesus' name. Your support equips us to follow the Lord's command to "make disciples of all the nations...teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19-20) God bless you.

Sincerely,

Franklin Graham, President

We are truly blessed by your continued support each month to *Naomi's Heart Mission*. We thank God for this church and the love and desire to walk beside us as we serve a great and mighty God. I will be returning to the mission on May 15th. Please keep me in your prayers. Again, what a blessing St. Paul's is to this ministry. We are so grateful.

Blessings,
Kristie Ward
Founder of Naomi's Heart Mission

We thank you for your partnership. Because of you, we can continue to reach spiritual orphans in former communist countries with the hope of the Gospel. Your gift of \$190 is a great blessing to those who do not yet know that they have a Father in heaven who loves them, or that they have brothers and sisters in Christ throughout the world who want to see them adopted into the family of Christ. SON engages people in the Word of God, helping them to reclaim their identity as children of God and walks alongside them as they are transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. Thank you for your support and being a part of the generation of faith helping to connect spiritual orphans to the global family of Christ.

Sincerely yours,
Pr. David R. Breidenbach
SON Executive Director

On behalf of the Staff and Board of *Sola Publishing*, thank you for your gifts of \$108.04, and \$109.48. You have blessed our hearts with your support of our ministry to provide solid, biblical resources for use in preaching and teaching God's Word. Because of your gifts, we are able to keep the cost of our materials low for those churches struggling to keep their ministries viable.

We are deeply thankful for your gracious gift.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Steve King
Managing Editor

The 2023 SON mission season will soon be underway. Thanks be to God, we have full teams. 53 total team members will be serving in Latvia, Albania, and Slovakia, where we will also be joined by Germans, Estonians, and Ukrainians.

Each summer, SON offers two very different camp experiences. This year, our English Bible Camps for younger students will study the life of Joseph and learn how he had faith in God, even when he was in danger, when life was unfair, and when he was tempted.

The second camp experience is for older students. We call these Life and Adventure Camps. These camps are generally held in a retreat setting where students are immersed in scripture based around a central theme that addresses the challenges young people all over the world struggle with. This year, our theme is *Unbroken—How God Uses Broken People to Fulfill His Plan*.

We are asking for each congregation to pray for the teams. Each year, we encounter spiritual warfare, and prayer is crucial to the physical and spiritual health of our teams.

We thank you for your recent gift of \$1,940.00, that allows us to connect *Spiritual Orphans* to the Global Family of Christ.

In His Service,
Pastor David Breidenbach
SON Executive Director



Income and Expenses for April, 2023

Income: \$46,433 • Expenses: \$30,516

Income > Expense for April: +\$15,917

Capital Building Fund, April 30, 2023: \$248,443

May income/expense report will be in the July Newsletter.

Online Giving is accessible at StPaulsLutheran.Church/give. There is a minimal fee for each transaction—about 2.9% for using cards, or about 1.3% for bank draft (routing/account number.)

The Hand of God

Find the 28 **bold** words from Ezra 8:21–23.

D E R E W S N A U M T L F W S
K S A C H I L D R E N Q A A R
E H Z N Y E A E X D F K S G E
E F U H E N X T U F O H T H I
S D A B N E P S D A A O U L D
P V K S R M O A G M S M G A L
A R T L U Y S F E N B S Y I O
G E O S O G S D J L I N I O S
A Y F C J P E Y E R E K M S K
I A B C L R S H C M L Y J E T
N R V H E A S H O R S E M E N
S P A W Y O I W R A T H C D O
T N O W I U O M E K A S R O F
D P R X H B N Y E S O U G H T
L K E E S F S N K D O G Z W U

Then I **proclaimed** a **fast** there at the river Ahava, that we might **humble** ourselves before our God, to **seek** from him a **safe journey** for us and for our **women** and **children**, and for all our **possessions**. For I was **ashamed** to **ask** of the **king** a band of **soldiers** and **horsemen** to **assist** us against the **enemy** on the way, as we had spoken to the king, saying, “The **hand** of our **God** is for **good** on all who **seek** him, but his **power** and his **wrath** are **against** all who **forsake** him.” So we **fasted** and **sought** our God for this, and he **answered** our **prayer**.

Unscramble the verse:

Rou nuuiiitesq eavh siern ehrhig anth uro ahsed.

On Pentecost Sunday, May 28, 2023, St. Paul's celebrated the special events that took place during our worship service:

Baptisms

Julia Canup, Cheryl Casper, Teresa Woods

First Communion

Brady Bost

Confirmations

Alexander Canup, Hila Canup, and Sophie Hoffner

New members received

Cheryl Casper, Teresa Woods, and Robert Weed



LIVING WATER VBS

June 23–25, 2023

Activities for Pre-K (3–4 yo), Kindergarten,
Elementary, and Middle School

Learn about faith that crosses the Red Sea
and travels with God in the belly of a great fish.

Crafts, games, music, lunch and snack, lessons,
memory verses contest, and ice cream social closing

Slip and slide through the mouth of the great fish.

Slide on the water slide to your heart's content.

Scan the QR code for the registration,
get it to the church office,
and send your kiddos
to get wet at Living Water VBS.



*We offer our love and sympathy to Helen Gordon
on the death of her daughter, Harriet Suzanne Gordon Goad,
who died Saturday, May 20, 2023.
Please keep Helen and her family in prayer.*



Thank you for the calls, cards, and prayers during the surgeries and treatments over the past few months. Our St. Paul's church family is very much appreciated.

George and Gail Reese

Thank you to all those who lifted my name to the Lord and prayed for a successful surgery. Praise be to God!

Wayne Taylor

I would like to thank everyone for all the calls, food and visits. All of ya'll's kind words were so encouraging. It warms my heart that so many of ya'll care.

Thanks again,
Glen Amos

Pastor Ryman and Church Family,

Thank each of you for your prayers, visits, cards and phone calls at the time of my surgery and during recovery. It is so comforting to know that I belong to a loving and caring church family. May God's blessings be with each of you.

Helen Gordon



*Congratulations to Grace Funderburk
on the birth of a daughter, Lorelei Marie, on May 23, 2023.
Grandparents are Katie and Dan Funderburk.
Great-grandparents are Jimmy and Mary Lee Earnhardt.*

ReClaim Hymnals Given

By Lori and Perry Bernhardt, to
honor the First Communion of
Rebecca Lombard
Alyssa McCraven
Sutton Fisher

By Lori and Perry Bernhardt, in
honor of

Caroline Aldridge
Cooper Aldridge
Stanton Fisher
Carson Holland
Peyton Holland
Sawyer Holland
Grace Walker
Graham Walker

By Susan and Pastor Ryman, to
honor the baptisms of

Quinn Burnett
Julia Canup
Cheryl Casper
Ceylah Cottingham
Sawyer Holland
Alyssa McCraven
Alexandria Newsome
Jaxon Struble
Teresa Woods

By Bonnie and Wayne Hinson,
to honor

Freida Fox Harper
M. Shelton Harper, Jr.
Ginger Menius Hinson
Jillian Faith Vogel-Hinson
Mia Riley Vogel-Hinson
Todd Weldon Shields

Memorial Gifts

A gift was received in memory
of Barbara Phelps for the
Helping Hands Fund from
Crystal and Dana Bost

A gift was received in memory
of Barbara Phelps for the
Capital Building Fund from
Lori and Perry Bernhardt

A gift was received in memory
of Carrie Reavis for the General
Fund from
Johnsie and Wayne Taylor

A gift was received in memory
of Wilma Heilig for the Choir
Fund from her daughter
Delores Stanley

Study Bibles Given

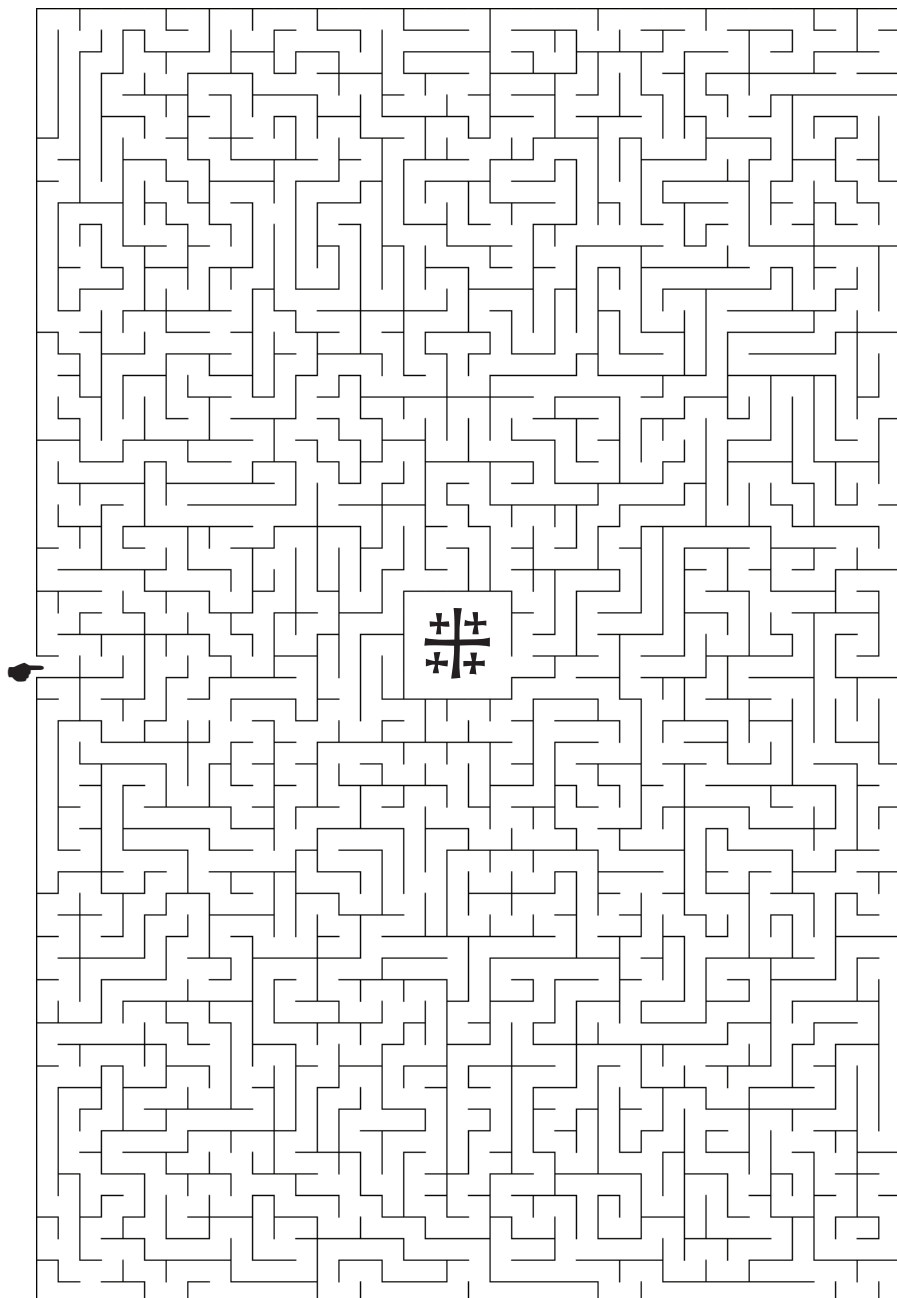
A Study Bible was presented on
May 28th, to each Confirmand.
The Bibles were given by Mary
Lee and Jimmy Earnhardt in
memory of Lola Floss.

Gifts to Honor

A gift was given in honor of
Emily Cruse's birthday for the
Handbell Fund by her mother
Delores Stanley

An anonymous gift was
received for the Helping Hands
Fund in honor of Terri Powlas.

**Help Ezra
get the exiles back to Jerusalem
so they may begin rebuilding the temple.**





St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC)

OUR MISSION

A family of faith sharing the gospel and love of Christ

Phone: 704-633-0922

Email: secretary@stpaulslutheran.church

Website: StPaulsLutheran.Church

Facebook: www.facebook.com/StPaulsLCMC

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Thursday 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Friday 8:30 a.m. – 12 Noon

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Dr. Mark Ryman, Pastor
pastor@stpaulslutheran.church

Pamela Cottingham, Secretary
secretary@stpaulslutheran.church

John Brock, Music Director
splcmusicalisbury@gmail.com

Johnsie Taylor, Organist
jtaylor783@aol.com

Judy Lowman, Treasurer
jlowman1@carolina.rr.com

Perry Bernhardt, Council President
perryhbernhardt@gmail.com

Alison Moore, Girl Scout Coordinator, 704-467-9191

St. Paul's newsletter, the "Monthly Epistle," is intended to keep everyone informed about happenings within the congregation that effect and contribute to our ministry together. In order to maximize reach and minimize cost, the preferred methods of distribution are by email, and posting on our St. Paul's website (www.StPaulsLutheran.Church). All members are encouraged to use the newsletter as a resource to help you consider how God is calling you to be involved in the life of his church. If you are unable to access the newsletter online, or would just like to have a printed copy to refer to, the most cost-effective way to receive it is to pick up a copy from the narthex or church office. We mail copies to those members whom we know don't have online access, are shut-in, or live out of town. If you want to be added to our mailing or email list, please contact the church office.