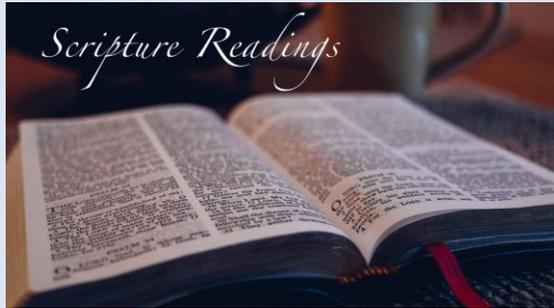


Crosstalk

July 2020



July 5

Zechariah 9:9-12
Psalm 145:8-14
Romans 7:15-25a
Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

July 12

Isaiah 55:10-13
Psalm 65:[1-8] 9-13
Romans 8:1-11
Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

July 19

Isaiah 44:6-8
Psalm 86:11-17
Romans 8:12-25
Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

July 26

1 Kings 3:5-12
Psalm 119:129-136
Romans 8:26-39
Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52



St. Paul Lutheran
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Worship Assistant:
Shawn Schneider

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John Krock 419-310-4213
Michelle Ohler 419-348-2824
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Carol Roszman 419-209-2591
Shawn Schneider 937-726-3831
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Grace, Mercy and Love from God our Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit our Advocate.

In the Lutheran Book of Worship (ELW), page #796 is written the hymn named “How Firm a Foundation”. Hear now the words from verse #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.”

Over the past 3 years we have passed through many difficult and troubled waters. We were faced with the absence of a called pastor to shepherd St. Paul and we had a series of supply pastors. While they were appreciated, it was unsettling for all of us and sometimes difficult to secure a pastor on a given Sunday. We have been blessed to have 2 stated supplies, one of whom was an ordained pastor; the other is a Synodically Authorized Minister (SAM). Both of these individuals have served our parish well and have brought to us continuity, fellowship, and the Love of Jesus. We still remain a congregation without a called pastor. To add to our woes the Covid-19 pandemic hit in early March. Your council made the decision recommended by our Synod, the Center for Disease Control (CDC), and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) to close our building. This was a difficult decision but was made out of LOVE and concern for our people. The good news here is that our worship, outreach and mission continued in the form of our radio ministry, online videos and mission support money that has been received and dispersed. Church has continued; we have worshipped the Holy Trinity together!

We now enter a new phase in our journey as the community of St. Paul, Upper Sandusky. In person worship will begin again on July 5. Yes, for now it will be different. Our Safety & Security Team has worked very hard to come up with a Plan of Return which has a goal of keeping all of us safe as we open the building for worship. As council did in the beginning of the pandemic, the Safety & Security Team has used the recommendations stated by our Synod, the CDC and the ODH to form this Plan of Return. Your council has been consulted every step of the way and voted to approve the plan unanimously on Tuesday, the 23rd. You will receive a letter written by the Safety and Security Team which outlines some requirements that have been decided to ensure the safety of all our worshippers. Please take time to read it.

I want to address several requirements. For now you are asked to make a reservation to attend worship. It has been determined that our sanctuary can seat 72 people with social distancing of 6 feet. Reservations for each Sunday will be taken from the preceding Monday until Friday at noon. I encourage you to make these reservations. Families will be seated together when entering together. You will be required to sanitize your hands several times entering and exiting and you will be **REQUIRED** to wear a mask at all times. The service itself will be different as there will be no congregational singing. There will be music supplied by some very talented musicians.

I know you will have the temptation to compare what we are requiring with other churches in our community. Try to restrain yourself. Your council and your Safety & Security Team have prayerfully and in love judiciously looked at all options and discussed liability issues with our insurance company. Foremost we want to share the LOVE of Jesus. We want to keep you safe because you are a loved and valued Child of God.

Listen and read the words again paraphrased from the hymn, Fear not I am with you. I am your God and will still give you aid. I’ll strengthen and help you and cause you to stand upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand. We have God’s promise that He will never leave us. The same God who has been faithful to the church called St. Paul, Upper Sandusky for 153 years will not abandon us now. Thanks be to God!

~ Carol



JULY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 – Izabella Culley
- 6 – Deb Baum
- 7 – Bonnie Menningen
- 9 – Colton Breidenbach
- 13 – Abbi Ault
- 13 – Tim Baum
- 13 – John Krock
- 14 – Erica Shook
- 14 – Steve Swihart
- 15 – Kolin Holloway
- 17 – Pastor Tim Schmidt
- 17 – Becky Vaughn
- 20 – Linda Rinderknecht
- 21 – Jena Baum
- 21 – Nick Clark
- 22 – Dustin Stansbery
- 23 – Jaime Schmidt
- 24 – Jill Eyestone
- 24 – Mindy Orwick
- 24 – Aaron MaGinn
- 25 – Kevin Ault
- 25 – Lisa Bricely
- 25 – Beth Collins
- 25 – Robbi Sigler
- 26 – Lauren Baker
- 26 – Sherm Stansbery
- 28 – Gage Roszman
- 29 – Barb Smith
- 30 – Paula Brown
- 30 – Marilyn Olson
- 31 – Jim Pfeifer



JULY ANNIVERSARIES

- 5 – Paul & Rose Marie Amos
- 5 – Mike & Norma Hetzel
- 21 – Pete & Connie Miller
- 28 – Jaime & Paula Brown



**We are collecting BEEF STEW & RICE for the Food Pantry this month.
Place your donations on the table in the vestibule.
Thanks for your help!**



Carol asked me to write a few words concerning how my faith impacts my handling of stress especially during the time of my recent medical procedure. I know many of you have gone or are going through a similar time. This can truly be a stressful time mainly because of the fear of the unknown: "What will the doctors find?" "Will I be able to cope with the results?" In addition, put this in the context of these already stressful times and it can all add up to much worry and anxiety.

For me, I find that following my schedule of spending time with the Lord in morning and evening devotions and even in unscheduled prayer time during the day helps me stay centered on Him. One of the scripture passages that I find myself reading and re-reading several times a day is from Psalm 62:8 to which Carol referred last month where we are encouraged to trust in God at all times and that we do not need to be shy about pouring out our fears and doubts to Him. He wants us to ask for His help and assures us of His continued presence with us. When I begin to feel that the Lord must get bored with my praying the same prayers each day, I am reminded that He wants to hear all my thoughts and fears. Another passage which I have shared with some of you before is Isaiah 41:10, "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

Also, in checking in with others by phone or text, I've learned to not be shy about asking if there is anything for which they would like prayers and to share with them prayer requests that I have. It is such a comfort to know that we are praying for each other. What a blessing our prayer chain is for all of us. I encourage you to make more use of it. What a joy to know many others are praying too and, of course, scripture assures us that even that Great Comforter, the Holy Spirit, is praying to God our Father on our behalf. Praying for others enables us to take our focus off ourselves and helps us realize that many times others' problems far surpass our own. Weekly corporate worship and Holy Communion has always been an important part of my life. Radio and online worship are a wonderful second best and I have a new appreciation for all those who make this happen; but I miss the gathering together with the hugs and words of support that go with it. I am so, so grateful for the love and caring support of my own dear family and friends.

Many of you know of my love for working outside in my yard. This is a great stress reliever. To me, time spent in the garden is time spent with the Lord communing with Him – both talking and listening. There is something about working in the dirt from which we came and to which our bodies will return and seeing the growth of flowers, vegetables and other plants which brings joy to my heart and helps me feel closer to God. As I work I think about husband Jim as well and remember that he would be mowing or helping me figure out a solution to a new project I had in mind.

I pray that you, too, have found ways to feel closer to God during these days and to know that peace within that Jesus promised for each of us despite the outside stressors in the world around us.

Your sister in Christ, Jackie Graeser

Carol asked me to write a few words this month—she thought it might be interesting to see how a mother’s and a son’s articles might look in the same publication. Mom was asked to write about how her faith impacts how she handles the stress of anticipating an upcoming medical procedure; I’ve chosen to write about how my faith impacts how I handle the stress of Mom’s upcoming medical procedure. Many of you also have had similar experiences: it can be stressful to watch a loved-one go through medical procedures, and it can be stressful to consider all of the questions that come both before and after.

When I first learned about Mom’s upcoming test, my first reaction was to get up to Ohio for a visit; should I come before the procedure, during, or after? And then a bigger reality sunk in: this is the time of Covid. What if I come in contact with Covid on the plane ride up and unknowingly bring it into Mom’s home? I had to eventually resign myself to staying put out of care and concern for her health. As some of you know, it can be even more stressful to be separated by a thousand miles during times of medical care. So how do I process all this?

Many of you know that I am an avid motorcyclist. Many of us in the riding community refer to it as “wind therapy.” Time on the bike, even as little as thirty minutes, can offer great time for reflection, meditation, and prayer. No interruptions—just warm sun and wind on the face and hopefully beautiful scenery away from interstates and their concrete. I often find myself going dozens of miles realizing I’ve forgotten to even turn up the radio—my mind gets lost in the grumble of the motor and the thoughts that have wandered in.

It should come as no surprise to you that many of my favorite spots in scripture are road stories: Paul and the Damascus Road, the stories of the Israelites wandering the wilderness of forty years, and the Parable of the Good Samaritan to name a few. One of my all-time favorites is the Road to Emmaus, one of the post-Resurrection appearances of Jesus.

As I read scripture, whenever God’s people got too comfortable—too stationary, that’s when trouble came for them. And it seemed like things became more stressful. As long as God’s people are on the move, those are times of great learning and discovery about God and about His Church.

On the Emmaus Road, I note a few things. 1) Having company on the road was important—the two disciples traveled together sharing fellowship. 2) Jesus often meets us on the road and joins us; and Jesus opens our minds to new possibilities. 3) It’s important to stop and rest and eat. That’s who are companions literally are: “pan” = bread and “com” = with; the people with whom we share bread, with whom we eat.

Tying all this together, separated by too-long of a road, I am grateful for the companions Mom has on the road with her. It is a great comfort to know she is not alone during this time. I am certain Jesus goes the road with her and will show Himself to her in so many ways, like the medical teams serving Mom that day, my sisters arranging for pre- and post-care, and her church family praying for her and checking in with her via texts and calls. I reminded of something Martin Luther said: he thought of himself as one beggar showing all the other beggars where the food is. Mom may not be interested in bread right away, but Jell-O is still food (I am told). And like those disciples at Emmaus, after some rest and some food, Mom will return to talking about Jesus and how he made himself known in the slurping of the Jell-O. Another beggar showing other beggars. As are we all.

I pray that your roads will cross paths often with Jesus, too, and with other beggars.

— Jackie’s son, Pastor Jim Graeser, Jr.



**Ruth/Naomi Circle
will meet
Wednesday, July 8th at
9:30am in
Stepping Stones Park.
Please bring a sack
lunch!**



**Congratulations to this year's recipients
of the Women of St. Paul Scholarship!
They are Katie Clark & Jodi Smalley. We
wish them God's blessings as they
continue their education!**



**Martha Circle
will meet
Thursday, July 9th at 4:30pm
in the white shelter house in
Harrison Smith Park.**



**We are resuming in-person
worship on July 5th!!!!**

**Please read the following
letter for all of the details!**

June 23, 2020

PLEASE READ THIS ENTIRE LETTER

As Bishop Elizabeth Eaton observed, *“Church has never been closed; we have found different ways to gather.”* As eager as we are to return to worship as it once was, our Bishop went on to note *“This is not Faith vs. Freedom. Being careful is a way to be faithful...and protecting others is a faithful response.”*

Greetings St. Paul Lutheran Church family! In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to provide a safe, healthy worship environment for you, your family, and your congregation, we would like to describe what future worship at our church will look like for the foreseeable future. We support the CDC and ODH guidelines and encourage all who are over 65, individuals with underlying health conditions: high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune system is compromised to continue to worship with us on the radio or on Facebook. If you have COVID-19, symptoms of COVID-19 (which may include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, and diarrhea), or have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, do not attend in-person worship at this time. Please show grace to church members and leaders whose opinions may differ from your own. Remember that your team and church leaders have spent many hours planning and prayerfully tried to make the best, careful considerations for everyone.

We realize that there are many different ideas and opinions concerning the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the science and medicine are clear that our first consideration must be the safety of our church family. All decisions have been made so that you can be safe, out of concern for each other, and to be mindful of our Lord’s commandment to love your neighbor as yourself. We will resume in-person worship when we believe that we can do so responsibly. Three words describe our approach to reopening: We desire that our return to in-person worship be **measured** - not rushed, **cooperative** - not confrontational, adhering to the guidelines of our elected officials, **joyful** - looking forward with hope-filled anticipation to the day that we can return to unrestricted in-person worship. Being dispersed has given us an even greater appreciation for being together in person to worship. We understand that people’s levels of comfort toward returning vary widely, everything from “Immediately” to “not for a long time.” Our approach in all of these needs to be “love for Neighbor” by caring for the most vulnerable, following the best medical advice, and taking no unnecessary risk. As we continually remind ourselves, we are still doing God’s work even when we are not able to gather for worship. We support your personal decision to either stay at home or return to in-person worship at St. Paul. If you choose to attend in-person worship the following changes, including increased cleaning/sanitation have been implemented:

- The maximum capacity in the St. Paul sanctuary during this time of physical distancing is 72. Reservations will be taken by calling the church office at 419-294-2831. Please call by Friday at noon to reserve your seat for the Sunday worship.
- No food or drink should be brought to church
- We ask that you do not congregate inside the building before or after worship for fellowship. Plan on arriving at 9:30 for worship to allow time for all to enter safely. Please wait in your car for entry into the building. You will be signaled when to enter.
- Greeters will be inside and outside the doors to help with opening the doors, assist with people arriving, and answering questions
- Ushers will seat and dismiss you. You probably will not be able to sit in your favorite seat. Individuals/family units will be seated in compliance with social distancing. We will do our best to provide for seating of family groups, single persons, and couples while achieving the social distancing that will contribute to the safety and well-being of us all. Family units must come to the door together in order to be seated together. Once seated, you will not be able to change seats.
- Entry and exit will only be through the south door and west door at the elevator entrance. The elevator will be available for those who need it.
- Face masks must always be worn in the building for those ages 2 and over. If you need to have a 'mask-free' space to take a break, please step outside, or the ushers will assist you to designated area. Masks must be worn properly (covering the nose and mouth). If you do not own a mask or own one that does not fit properly, one will be provided for you (thanks to our sewing

members), or medical masks will be made available. If you are unable to wear your mask properly for the entirety of the service, please continue to enjoy the St Paul service on the radio or Facebook post.

- Increased hand sanitation is required when entering and exiting, there are hand sanitizing stations available for your use. You are encouraged to bring your own personal hand sanitizer with you.
- Attendees will be asked to practice social distancing; this includes being ushered to your seat, where we respectfully request that you remain for the duration of the service. You will only have access to the sanctuary and one restroom.
- Busy bags will not be available for your children, as the church toys are packed up; please bring with you what they will need for their comfort.
- There will be no Sunday School classes, Jr. Church, and Gathering Room fellowship
- Bibles and hymnals have been removed from the pews
- We have suspended congregational singing during worship, as this has been cited as a major way the virus is spread
- We will not have communion at this time
- An offering collection box will be available at the cross walk for your envelopes. A beautifully designed wooden offering box has been made by Jim Gatchell (thank you Jim!). Those that want to continue to mail in their offering or contribute via electronic giving are welcome to do so.
- Information is posted to remind you of the things that will help keep you and your family safe, Be sure to read these important facts posted.

These changes are essential, and as such, are **required** for in-person worship at St. Paul Lutheran Church. Our return to in-person worship WILL look and feel different. Remember that we have not lost the liturgy but worshipping side by side will be different for the time being. As much as we long to be together as we worshipped previously, please respect the importance of complying with this protocol for the safety of all members. We would remind you that returning to in-person worship is a personal choice for you and your family and we would ask that you respectfully and prayerfully consider the best interests and well-being of the entire St. Paul family.

Keep in mind that these changes are not permanent at St. Paul. We are convinced that our church has special strengths that will help us through these difficult times. Your Council and Safety and Security Team will re-evaluate as we continue with weekly in-person worship as to how we can adjust in order to safely meet. We will continue to follow guidelines recommended by the CDC and ODH, in consultation with our local health department and Synod to make decisions reflecting the best manner of worship for St. Paul that is as safe and healthy as possible for all attendees. In person worship and activities will be resumed on a limited basis using a careful, gradual approach. We are grateful for the faith of our members as they worshipped at home and are grateful for the blessings that will come to us as we are able to gather for worship and activities. We look forward to seeing all of you as we return to gather together again for worship at St. Paul Lutheran Church!

You may request a copy of the St. Paul Lutheran Church Parish Plan of Return in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic by calling the office or pick up a copy in the vestibule in between the West doors. **The date of return has now been determined to be July 5th.**

In His Service,

Your Safety & Security Team

(This letter was approved by Council on June 23, 2020)

WE GOT THE GRANT!

"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?..."
-Isaiah 43:19

In recognition of the Year of Mission, the Northwestern Ohio Synod has initiated a program: **Imagining Renewal Micro Grants**. These micro grants are intended to offer support and resources to congregations with the desire to engage in an original community-based project that uniquely meets a need in their community, encourages social engagement and furthers the gospel. The grants-the Intentional Investment-will be awarded in four Categories of Care:

- Food insecurity and Poverty
- Mental Health
- Youth and Families
- Community Endurance

St. Paul Church Council submitted a proposal to purchase equipment for Wyandot County Emergency Management Agency (EMA)/Emergency Medical Service (EMS). The first item in our proposal was an ultra-violet mask sanitizer. Utilizing a borrowed mask sanitizer, the EMA/EMS currently sanitizes masks for Wyandot Memorial Hospital, the Wyandot County Sheriff's Office, Upper Sandusky Fire and Police Departments, and Wyandot County Home Health & Hospice. This has allowed for extended and more frugal use of Personal Protective Equipment for our health care workers and first responders. The second item for which we requested funding was a 70" TV for the training room in the EMS facility. Training is provided here for not only the EMT personnel but also for other county groups to accomplish CPR re-certification and hazardous material training. This training room, in the event of a natural disaster or terrorist incident, would become the Emergency Operations Center for the county. The new TV could accommodate multiple projections to facilitate communication among key personnel, thus enhancing response capability.

Council is convinced that this proposal most certainly embodies the spirit of Community Endurance.

The maximum grant awarded will be \$1750. The St. Paul proposal was submitted for \$1250: \$500 to purchase a mask sanitizer and \$750 to purchase a 70" TV for the training room at the Wyandot County EMS facility. We are very grateful to have been awarded the grant and believe that this support will help our community to endure and thrive. Plans are being made to purchase the new equipment and, when we can more freely gather again, to hold an open house to showcase these items as well as our fine community EMS facility. We are also working on ideas which will toward increase social engagement there.