



THE MESSENGER

St. Paul Lutheran Church

A Message from Pastor Mathew

Free to Serve

As you may have heard, September 12th is "God's Work. Our Hands." Sunday. This is an annual day of service where our congregation joins thousands of ELCA congregations in serving and loving our neighbors. You can read at Elca.org/dayofservice

This year we will be landscaping, packing meals, wrapping presents and more!

I am always grateful for the good work of volunteer organizations and charities which strive to make our communities a better place. Our good work as a church can be similar, but there is also something distinct about it.

As Christians, we do good work because we have been set free. Because of Jesus's life, death, and resurrection we are set free FROM the hold that sin and death had over us. We are set free FROM worrying if we are good enough or deserving of love. Because of Jesus, we can trust that we are deeply loved by God. We can have confidence that we are accepted by God because of God's great mercy which we see so clearly in Jesus.

As Ephesians 2:8-9 says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God— not the result of works, so that no one may boast."

This is good news, we are free! Now is when I picture Kevin McCallister in the Christmas classic Home Alone running all around the house screaming "I'm free!!" With his parents out of town, Kevin doesn't have any responsibilities, he can do whatever he wants! But wait just a moment, in our newfound freedom are we to do whatever we want? Does this mean we can look out for number one and forget everyone else? No, it doesn't. The Apostle Paul writes in Romans 6, "Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means!"

As Christians we are also set free FOR something. We are set free FOR the sake of others; we are set free FOR the work of caring for God's creation.

Some 500 years ago Martin Luther wrote an essay called "The Freedom of a Christian." In it Luther declares that a Christian is perfectly free and yet is a servant to everyone. We are set free to live not only for ourselves, but also for one another. Or as Galatians 6:10 puts it, "So then let us not grow weary in doing what is right... whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all."

A Christian does not serve others in order to make themselves better in God's eyes, to gain God's acceptance, or to earn bonus points. A Christian serves because that's what Jesus did and that's what God has created us to do. As that same passage from Ephesians continues, "For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life."

So, when we do our best to serve our community on "God's Work. Our Hands" Sunday, we will do so because that's what God has created us to do. Our serving, our care for our neighbor, our concern for the wellbeing of others---all this is our grateful response to the love that God has shown us in Christ Jesus. We love because God first loved us.

In Christ,

Pastor Mathew

A similar version of this reflection appeared in the Pontiac Daily Leader on August 28th, 2021.



The people of St. Paul gather to worship, reach out, and serve the Lord.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

September Birthdays

September 2 – Carrie Delheimer

September 2 – Kathy Rygh

September 7 – Marian Brown

September 12 – Melissa Rapp

September 16 – Meghan Heller

September 17 – Dylan Delheimer

September 17 – Mary Highland

September 18 – Addison Bibo

September 18 – Jake Heller

September 22 – Mason Walsberg

September 25 – John Mehlberg

September 26 – Wendy Boch

September 28 – Megan Schott

September Anniversaries

September 6 – Larry & Tracy Leach (1980)

September 12—Lucas & Addie Folkerts (2015)

September 15 – Lonny & Tonya Wilcox (2001)

Rebecca Circle

The Rebecca Circle will meet on Thursday, September 16 at 1:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall. The hostess will be Jeanne Rapp. Devotions will be given by Maurine Gentes, and the offering meditation will be given by Ginger Bauknecht. The lesson “The Gift of the Spirit: A divine wild goose chase,” will be given by Mil Girard. We will hear how the gift of the Holy Spirit is a resource for God’s people, giving us the power we need to do God’s work. All women of our congregation are invited and welcome to attend this meeting.



Flower Donations

We order fresh flowers for worship from County Market. Please sign up on the flower chart if you would like to donate for a two-week span. Please write your check for \$25 to St. Paul Lutheran and put “flowers” on the memo line. We thank you in advance for helping to make our worship space beautiful to bring honor and glory to God.

Sunday School begins September 19th

Children 3 years old and up are invited to join us from 9:15 a.m.—9:50 a.m. each Sunday during the school year. Join us for bible stories, songs, and activities that help us learn about God’s love!

Adult Sunday School

Adult Sunday School will begin on September 19 at 9a.m. We will meet in the Hospitality Room and study a scripture passage from that day’s worship service.

Children’s Chapel During Worship

Beginning September 19, children are welcome to go to Children’s Chapel during worship following the Children’s Message. After the sermon children will be brought back into the sanctuary. If your child prefers to stay in worship for the entire service, that’s great too!

Prayer Chain Requests

If you would like someone added to our prayer chain, please contact Pastor Mathew, Julie Mehlberg, or Angie in the office. Please let them know when names should be removed from the

Bible & Bagels

Bible & Bagels The Bible & Bagels group will meet on Thursday, September 9th at 9:30 a.m. at Edinger’s Filling Station. Any woman who would like to attend an informal Bible study is welcome to come to this meeting

Congregational Council

President—Doug Oliver

Vice President—Mark Mackinson

Secretary—Shelly Heller

Building & Grounds Liaison—Louis Kehinde

Building Community Liaison—Mary Leach

Lifelong Learning Liaison—Tonya Johnson-Wilcox

Finance/Stewardship Liaison—Jake Dixon

Worship and Music Liaison—Sandy Erickson

Treasurer—Denny Leach

Financial Secretary—Marian Brown

Sunday School Kick-Off

Sunday, September 26, 2021

More details to come!



God's work. Our hands.

Mark your calendar!
SEPTEMBER 21, 2021

10:00 Worship with lunch and
service projects to follow!

Since 2013, thousands of ELCA congregations have participated in this opportunity and dedicated one day a year to serve communities in ways that share the love of God with all people. This is St. Paul's ninth year to participate in this special day of service. Many service activities are in the works and we need your help! We are one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. Join us!

Here are your opportunities to serve!

- Donate items and assemble Lutheran World Relief health kits
- Donate Christmas wrapping paper and wrap gifts for the local school district to distribute during the Christmas season
- Help with a landscape cleanup project at the Boys and Girls Club
- Prepare a sack lunch meal for residents of Mosaic
- Donate and assemble cookie bags for residents of The Pointe and Evenglow Inn

**Look for donation boxes and signup sheets
in the narthex.**

Come share your gifts and talents on September 12!

Items Needed for LWR Health Kits

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|----------------------|--------------|
| 1 dark bath towel | 1 comb |
| 2 bars soap | 1 toothbrush |
| 1 metal nail clipper | |



Roadside Cleanup—August 21



Blessing of the Backpacks—August 22