

THE CHURCH ON THE HIGHWAY

Where Life and Jesus Intersect

St. Paul Lutheran Church

July 2020 Edition

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From Our Senior Pastor

Rev. Larry Krueger

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Back to Normal

I keep hearing people say they can't wait for things to get back to normal. My question, however, is this; "What is normal?" What does that look like? The best I can figure is people want the normal routines they previously experienced in their lives to be restored. Even then, the normal for some people is very different from the norm of another.

Admittedly, there are certain normal routines that are a part of my life. At the end of a normal day, I tend to end up at my home. However, the events of one day versus the events of the next day are generally anything but normal. While I may have a plan on my calendar for the day, one phone call or text message can change everything in an instant. If I consider that for a moment, I would suppose that is my normal...anything but normal.

That is true in much of life. One can begin a new day with one expectation when suddenly an event occurs that changes everything. Deaths, accidents, illnesses, pandemics are but a few of the many things that can change the course of our normal in an instant. Predictability can change to unpredictability in an unpredictable moment.

Over these past few weeks, I have tried to forecast the startup of certain ministry activities at the church. Just when I think I have things figured out, the COVID-19 numbers begin to climb in McLennan County and strictures are renewed. What I was expecting in the future suddenly changes and makes everything topsy-turvy again. Why can't things just be normal!?

But, wait! The things that really matter are normal. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8, ESV) Jesus hasn't changed. His promises are still the same. "For he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5b, ESV). His grace remains. "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8, ESV). He is still "Immanuel" (which means, "God with us").

I really appreciate the expression of these truths from the hymn, "Great is Thy Faithfulness," which reads, "Thou changest not; Thy compassions they fail not; As Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be." In the instability and uncertainty of our ever-changing world, take heart. God is normal! He is the answer to the question, "What is normal!" Even more, He blesses us every day with His normal grace, mercy, peace and love in Jesus! Thank God we are back to normal!

Love God and love your neighbor,
Pastor Krueger



Sunday Worship
Streamed online at
10:30 a.m. at
www.splcwaco.com
or the church
[Facebook page](#).



A Message From Our Associate Pastor

Rev. Matthew Hardaway

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Jesus In The Psalms - Psalm 23 (ESV)

Psalm 23:1–6 (ESV)

¹The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. ²He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. ³He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. ⁴Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. ⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. ⁶Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

The Lord is my shepherd - even at times when I am not sure He really wants to be! He is also my shepherd when it doesn't feel or look like it in my life. Bad things happen, there are specific things that I don't just want, I absolutely need to have for health and survival. It is especially in those times where I have to cling to His Word!

Martin Luther speaks to this in his commentary on the Psalm, which will serve for the rest of the devotion this month:

“‘Yes,’ you may say, ‘but how shall I know that the Lord is my Shepherd? I have not experienced that He is as friendly toward me as the psalm says; in fact, I have experienced the opposite. David was a holy prophet and a man dear and precious to God; so it was easy for him to speak of the matter and to believe what he spoke. But I cannot emulate him, for I am a poor sinner.’ Answer: I have shown above that in itself a sheep has chiefly this good attribute and fine virtue, that it knows the voice of its shepherd well and is guided more by its ears than its eyes. The same virtue Christ also praises in His sheep, when He says (John 10:4): ‘My sheep know My voice.’ His voice, however, speaks thus (John 10:14,15, 28): ‘I am the Good Shepherd...and lay down my life for the sheep...And I give them eternal life. And they shall never perish, and no man shall snatch them out of My hand.’ Give careful attention to this voice and be guided by it.”

“At times [David, the author of this Psalm,] wanted much, almost too much. He would feel neither justice nor God's comfort and help, but only sin, God's wrath, terror, doubt, and the fear of hell, as he laments in many psalms. Nevertheless he abandons his feelings and holds God to His promise of a coming Messiah and thinks: ‘Be it with me as it may. This is still the comfort of my heart, that I have a gracious and merciful Lord, who is my Shepherd, whose Word and promise strengthen and comfort me. Therefore I shall not want.’ For this reason also he wrote this psalm and others, that we might be sure that in real temptation we can find counsel and comfort nowhere else, and that this alone is the golden art: to cling to God's Word and promise, to make judgments on the basis of this Word and not on the basis of the feelings of the heart. Then help and comfort will surely follow, and absolutely nothing will be wanting” (Luther's Works, 12:158, 159).

Soli Deo Gloria

COVID UPDATE/MASKS REQUIRED, as of June 24, 2020

In response to the recent spike in COVID cases in McLennan County, the City of Waco Mayor and City Council feel it is important to issue this order now in order to have the greatest possible effect on reducing the spread of COVID-19 WITHOUT another shelter-in-place order, which none of us want. While churches and places of worship are not considered commercial businesses, we are asking everyone to please follow this new directive to protect yourselves and others from the spread of the virus.

Key measures include:

- Businesses are to comply by June 26th.
- All employees or visitors to the business or other facilities must wear face coverings when in an area or performing an activity which involves close contact or proximity to co-workers or the public where six feet of separation is not feasible.
- Face coverings may include homemade masks, scarfs, bandanas, or a handkerchief.
- Employees, visitors, and all residents of the City of Waco should continue physical distancing of at least six feet while outside your home.
- City employees are also required to wear face coverings under the same circumstances as the public.
- Encourage the public to work to protect our neighbors, friends, and family members by adhering to this order.

Face coverings do not need to be worn in the following circumstances:

- When exercising outside or engaging in physical activity outside.
- While driving alone or with passengers who are part of the same household as the driver.
- When doing so poses a greater mental or physical health, safety, or security risk.
- While operating outdoor equipment or pumping.
- While in a building or participating in an activity that requires security surveillance, screening, or identification, for example, banks. When consuming food or drink.

To view complete details and COVID updates, please visit www.covidwaco.com.

As the state of Texas continues to phase in operations at various institutions across the state in these days of COVID-19, we continue to monitor changes as those are relevant for churches and houses of worship. The latest phase in segment did little to change church operations. In fact an additional precaution was added, namely the encouraged use of hand sanitizer in the sanctuary. Other guidelines remain in place, such as recommending that those over 65 or in health risk situations still remain home and that churches continue to provide live stream services as the preferred option for Sunday morning worship. This means that for now we will maintain what we established beginning May 10 for phasing in on-site worship, with the addition of 8 more family unit spaces for worship for a total of 28 per service.

ST. PAUL WORSHIP REGISTRATION:

Sunday, July 5 & 19, 2020 – On-site worship with limited attendance to accommodate Safe Distancing in accord with current Safe Distancing Guidelines. *Holy Communion will be offered on these Sundays.*

- ◆ 8:00 am – On-site worship with Holy Communion with **28** family units in attendance. **Families will need to register on the Web site.** When **28** family units have registered, registration will be closed. Seating may be assigned to ensure safe distancing, as necessary.
- ◆ 9:15 am – Clean sanctuary and restrooms to prepare for 10:30 worship service.
- ◆ 10:30 am – Live stream online worship AND On-site worship with Holy Communion with **28** family units in attendance. **Families will need to register on the Web site.** When **28** family units have registered, registration will be closed. Seating may be assigned to ensure safe distancing, as necessary.
- ◆ 11:30 am (after 10:30 am worship) until 12:30 pm – Drive Thru Communion on the church parking lot for those who do not attend onsite worship

Wednesday, July 8, 2020 – SENIOR ADULTS ONLY Service of the Sacrament

- ◆ 11:00 am – Senior adults only special service of the Sacrament (Holy Communion) with **28** family units at a time. If more than **28** family units come, the service will be repeated to accommodate all who come. This will be an abbreviated service (with no sermon) for the purpose of Holy Communion. **No registration is required for this service.**

Sunday, July 12 & 26, 2020 – On-site worship with limited attendance to accommodate Safe Distancing in accord with current Safe Distancing Guidelines. *No Holy Communion will be offered on these Sundays.*

- ◆ 8:00 am – On-site worship with **28** family units in attendance. **Families will need to register on the Web site.** When **28** family units have registered, registration will be closed. Seating may be assigned to ensure safe distancing, as necessary.
- ◆ 9:15 am – Clean sanctuary and restrooms to prepare for 10:30 worship service.
- ◆ 10:30 am – Live stream online worship AND On-site worship with **28** family units in attendance. **Families will need to register on the Web site.** When **28** family units have registered, registration will be closed. Seating may be assigned to ensure safe distancing, as necessary.



**“The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them;
He delivers them from all their troubles.” Psalm 34:17**

Lord, Hear Our Prayers:

- † We pray for continued healing for all those who have suffered physical problems in the last month, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord lay His healing hand upon them.
- † We pray for all who struggle with ongoing health concerns, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord keep His healing hand upon them.
- † We pray for all who are home-bound, in nursing care or assisted living facilities, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord give them comfort and peace with their living situation.
- † We pray for those who have lost loved ones in the last month; including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord give them comfort in their time of sorrow.
- † We pray for all nations as the battle to combat Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues. We pray for world leaders, healthcare workers, public service workers, and all those who have been affected by this disease. We pray for healing, patience, and calmness during this time of uncertainty.
- † We pray for those serving in our Armed Forces (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord keep them safe in their stead as they defend our freedom and safety.
- † We pray for those serving in the mission field ... may God continue to bless and keep them safe as they minister to the world as an extended outreach of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Waco, Texas.

Please contact the church office if you, someone in your family, or a family friend is in need of prayer. Please keep the church office advised of the status of those you add to the prayer list, so that our list remains up-to-date. If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 254.799.3211 or by email to: wecare@splcwaco.com.

How can we Pray for you?

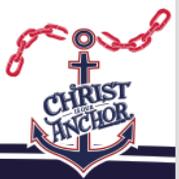
LWML Holds Historic First Virtual Convention

On Saturday, June 20, 2020, the LWML Texas District held its first virtual convention. With over 1700 hits and hundreds staying connected from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. this was a well attended convention. All the components that make a LWML convention wonderful (worship, singing, inspiring speakers, and the selection of mission grants) were present. The mission grants were announced for the next biennium and the amount to be funded is **\$200,000**. There was an abundance of funds from the last biennium that will also go to support mission grants bringing the total available to \$210,327. WOW!

With your help, the St. Paul group raised \$2,427.15 toward this endeavor during the last biennium. Thank you for this outstanding response to fund our mission! Please continue to save your spare change for us. Although our formal Mite Box Sunday's have not been happening due to COVID-19, your support is still vital. Details about Mite Box Sunday will be coming so stay tuned.

Frances Molitor of Anderson, Texas was elected as our new president. The mission grants selected are pictured below. More information about the convention can be found on the website lwmltxdist.org. To God be the Glory!

Scholarships for Seminarians — Texas District LCMS	\$40,000
Mercy Meals — Orphan Grain Train	\$5,000
DCE Scholarships — Concordia University Texas	\$24,000
Blessings and Bibles — Lutheran Disaster Care	\$15,000
Lutheran Student Center Improvements — Lubbock	\$20,000
Urban Base Camp Outreach — Camp Lone Star	\$15,000
Creating a Network of Hope — Driving Hope of Texas	\$20,000
Let the Little Children Come — St. Paul, Dallas	\$20,000
E-Kids After-School Program — Expansion Ministries, Inc.	\$20,000
Laundry Love — St. Paul, San Antonio	\$12,000
Reaching Immigrants and Refugees — Multi-Ethnic Ministry of North Texas	\$10,084
Translating LWML Bible Studies — WORDrus	\$9,243
TOTAL	\$210,327

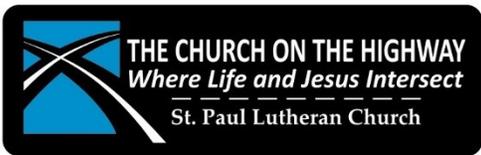


41st Biennial Convention - LWML Texas District

CAMP LONE STAR

LUTHERAN OUTDOORS MINISTRY OF TEXAS

Summer is coming and our thoughts are turning again to enjoying the outdoors and especially the opportunities given us as Lutherans at Camp Lone Star at La Grange. There have been many good memories made at camp! We have installed bulletin boards at St. Paul that will highlight schedules for the upcoming events at Camp Lone Star and provide information as to its ministry and outdoor offerings. We also thought it would be a great idea to use these bulletin boards to display recent photos that our members have taken there, especially of our children, to get across the essence of why we have outdoor ministry - Its fun, and brings us into close contact together in God's natural world. So if you have some photos you would like to submit for posting please drop-off in the church office mailbox or email to: wecare@splcwaco.com.



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www.splcwaco.com

NON-PROFIT ORG.
PLACE POSTAGE
HERE

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



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**The Church Office
will be closed on
Friday, July 3.**

**Live-stream Worship on Sunday
mornings at 10:30 a.m.
at www.splcwaco.com or
on Facebook ([StPaulWaco](https://www.facebook.com/StPaulWaco)).**

(Archived copies of Sunday morning worship
are available on the web site.)