

THE CHURCH ON THE HIGHWAY

Where Life and Jesus Intersect

St. Paul Lutheran Church

September 2020 Edition



From Our Senior Pastor

Rev. Larry Krueger

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Back to School

I was writing this article the week that many were headed back to school for the fall. There is a lot of uncertainty regarding how the education process will unfold in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic. The balance between online and in classroom education is tedious. But, the fact that students, teachers and staff are headed back to school is an indication of the generally accepted importance of education in our society. Thus, the decisions have been made, it is time to go back to school.

As we have been dealing with the experience of life during this pandemic, it strikes me that God may also be taking us back to school. He has been taking us back to His Word to determine what is really important in our lives. He is causing us to reevaluate what is truly essential when it comes to the day-to-day activities of what we generally call normal. When we are not allowed to conduct life as normal, what truly comes to the forefront of what is essential?

While the pandemic has raised this awareness more generally across the board, this kind of evaluation happens to many people every day when their norms are interrupted in life. These kinds of evaluations occur at times of accidents and tragedies, major illnesses and deaths, in times of strife and struggle, etc. I believe you know what I mean. It is those times when the world seems to stop around you because something drastic has happened to make all else seem irrelevant, at least for the moment.

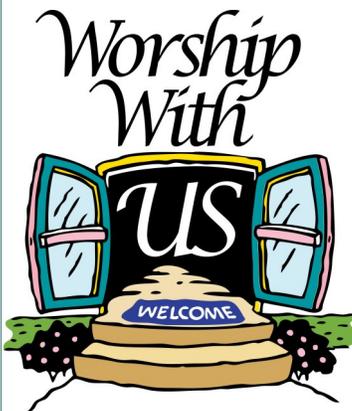
In those times, my observation has been that we get taken back to school to ponder and consider what is truly essential in this life. The importance of our relationship with God rises to the top as we call upon Him in earnest in prayer and meditation. The importance of family relationships take a step forward. Matters of health become more important.

When God takes us back to school in these times, the two great commandments of "love God" and "love your neighbor as yourself" become two great essentials in life. That is probably why Jesus, the Great Teacher, taught these, as such, in the following context of Matthew 22:35-40.

[35] And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. [36] "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" [37] And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. [38] This is the great and first commandment. [39] And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. [40] On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets." (ESV)

These are definitely the essentials. These are the commandments Jesus kept perfectly for our sake, that through His death and resurrection we may also gain the one thing needful...Jesus himself as our Savior and Lord. These are good back to school lessons. May God continue to teach us these throughout our lives...even unto the life everlasting.

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

Email: pastorhardaway@splcwaco.com

Jesus In The Psalms - Psalm 25

¹To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. ²O my God, in you I trust; let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies exult over me. ³Indeed, none who wait for you shall be put to shame; they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous. ⁴Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. ⁵Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long. ⁶Remember your mercy, O Lord, and your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. ⁷Remember not the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, O Lord! ⁸Good and upright is the Lord; therefore he instructs sinners in the way. ⁹He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way. ¹⁰All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant and his testimonies. ¹¹For your name's sake, O Lord, pardon my guilt, for it is great. ¹²Who is the man who fears the Lord? Him will he instruct in the way that he should choose. ¹³His soul shall abide in well-being, and his offspring shall inherit the land. ¹⁴The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him, and he makes known to them his covenant. ¹⁵My eyes are ever toward the Lord, for he will pluck my feet out of the net. ¹⁶Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. ¹⁷The troubles of my heart are enlarged; bring me out of my distresses. ¹⁸Consider my affliction and my trouble, and forgive all my sins. ¹⁹Consider how many are my foes, and with what violent hatred they hate me. ²⁰Oh, guard my soul, and deliver me! Let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you. ²¹May integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for you. ²²Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

Memory can be funny thing sometimes. I can vividly remember with great detail certain events in my life like they happened yesterday, and yet I cannot remember if I made sure to talk about an upcoming event with my wife. I can somehow remember the words to tens of thousands of songs, but I cannot remember all of the "What Does This Mean" sections out of Luther's Small Catechism.

I have learned that when the stresses in life increase it also becomes harder to remember things. In the middle of an illness, be it as simple as a cold or much more serious we struggle to keep up. The same can be found during times of transition as well. In the midst of great change, keeping up with the details of life is much more challenging. As we find ourselves in the middle of an ongoing pandemic I have seen many people say how they have struggled just to remember what day of the week it was!

Psalm 25 was written acrostically using the Hebrew alphabet. Typically when something is written that way it is to aid in being able to remember what is being said. David knew full well what stress looked like in life. Through it all - the good stress, the bad stress, the times when he stumbled into sin and the times he was attacked by sinful human beings - David wanted to remember God and so he asks God in prayer, "make me, teach me, lead me."

When this crazy life is happening and we are inundated with some many things to keep track of, it is so simple to forget to abide in Christ and His Word. Yet that is where we find the truth of who He is, who we are, and who we are to Him.

Jesus says in John 8:31, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." If we abide, we will know that we are sinners saved by Christ, who has set us free from sin.

In response we pray, "make me, teach me, lead me Jesus!"

Soli Deo Gloria

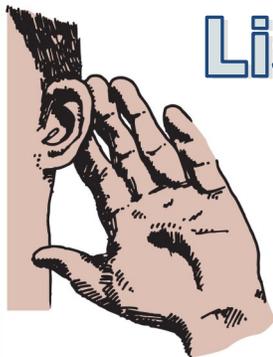
On-site Worship:

We continue to hold on-site worship at St. Paul Lutheran Church. We do so with the safety of attendees in mind, especially our seniors and others in the high risk category. The current practice is to wear masks while entering and exiting the sanctuary and to practice safe self-distancing while seated in the sanctuary. Masks are optional while seated. We ask that everyone please continue to register on-line for on-site worship attendance. This registration process serves several purposes. It assures that we can accommodate on-site worship attendees. It helps us plan for ample worship folders for the services. And, finally, if we were to have a case of COVID-19 reported by one of our on-site worshippers, the registrations will help us contact all attendees at that service in an expedient manner. Thanks again to all of you for your patience in this process. Our goal remains to maintain a safe worship environment for those attending on-site worship. Admittedly, we have been overly cautious, not wanting to find ourselves in a situation as has been reported with other churches who did not establish safe practices and suddenly had large numbers of coronavirus outbreaks among their ranks. As we all know, dealing with a pandemic is uncharted territory. Please know we are trying to do the best we can to provide a safe on-site worship environment each step of the way. Also, please continue to pray that the Lord will bring this COVID-19 pandemic to an end sooner rather than later.

ST. PAUL WORSHIP REGISTRATION:

On-site worship available 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.

- ◇ **Sunday, Sept. 6 & 20, 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.* Drive Thru Communion will also be available on the church parking lot from 11:30 am (after 10:30 am worship) until 12:30 pm for those who do not attend onsite worship.
- ◇ **Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2020** – **SENIOR ADULTS ONLY Service of the Sacrament & Fellowship Luncheon**
 - ◇ 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.**
 - ◇ **We are returning to our monthly fellowship lunch following the September Senior Adults service.** A prepared sandwich box lunch will be served in the Family Center following the 11:00 a.m. worship with safe social distancing. **We ask those planning to attend to please call (254.799.3211) or email (wecare@splcwaco.com) the church office by 12:00 p.m. on September 8** to allow for preparation and seating planning. We are currently discouraging sharing any home-made desserts for this meal and will instead provide a small dessert with the sandwich box lunch.
- ◇ **Sunday, Sept. 13 & 27 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.*



Listening Devices are available!

We have sound amplifying devices available for those who have trouble hearing during our on-site worship. If you would like more information, please see an elder or usher prior to worship. For your safety and peace of mind, this equipment is sanitized following each use.



**“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 the patience and health of teachers, staff and students as they return to campus with new education and safety guidelines amid Coronavirus (COVID-19).
- † 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.

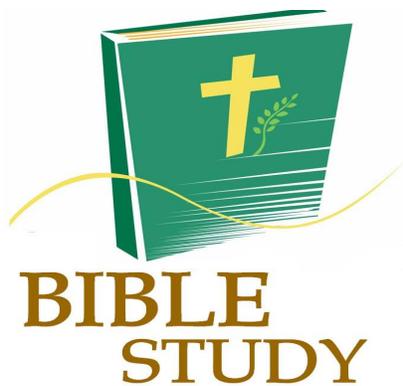
How can we Pray for you?

2020-2021 Confirmation Updates

All parents and students in grades 7-8, please plan to attend the Parent Meeting & Student Orientation on Wednesday, September 9, at 6:30 p.m., in the Family Center. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please contact Pastor Krueger by email: pastorkrueger@splcwaco.com

As we continue to maneuver through the maze of life presented by COVID-19, the decision has been made at this time to temporarily suspend the 5th & 6th Grade Midweek Classes that normally meet on Wednesday evenings during the school year. As regular school classrooms reopen, we will continue to monitor how that process unfolds and evaluate when to restart the onsite meeting of these Midweek classes. At the present time, the classroom in which this class normally meets is not deemed large enough to meet recommended social distance guidelines accepted for meeting groups. So, for the safety of students and teachers, this class will remain suspended until further notice.

At the same time, we want to afford the opportunity for continued Bible education and believe that this can also happen effectively in the home. The purpose of the Midweek classes is to provide the students with Bible background knowledge as they prepare for entry into 7th & 8th Grade Confirmation Classes. So, in the next few weeks these students will be receiving a book titled, **"One Hundred Bible Stories,"** that we encourage parents to read with your child. Each lesson contains the reading of a Bible story and some questions for reflection on the story. We ask that you read at least one or more of these stories with your child each week to continue to increase their knowledge of the Bible and their Christian faith. Knowing these stories will greatly enhance their learning experience for Confirmation classes and beyond for life in general.

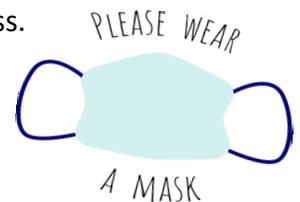


Sunday morning Adult Bible Study in the Family Center will resume at 9:15 a.m. on Sunday, September 13. At this time Sunday School classes will remain suspended until further notice, following time to observe how public schools progress upon the resumption of onsite education. At the present time, the goal is to resume Sunday evening Bible studies in October, with the change of gathering at church rather than in members homes to allow for current social distancing guidelines.

High School Bible Class to begin Sunday, September 13, 2020.

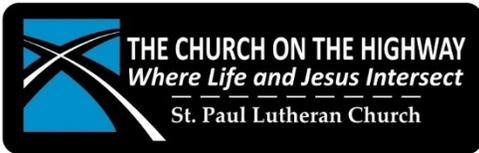
The Sunday morning High School Bible class will resume meeting in the Youth Room at 9:15 am on Sunday, Sept. 13. Masks and social distancing will be practiced for this class.

So, students please wear a mask to the class.



Sunday School for younger grades will remain suspended until further notice.

Thank you for your continued patience as we continue to manage the resumption of events at the church during this time of this pandemic.



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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.)