ST PAUL LUTHERAN NEWSLETTER

October 2023 Volume 77 No.9

Reformation: What Does This Mean?

Pastor Christopher P. Vossler

"Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people" (Revelation 14:6)

Five hundred and six years ago this month, a monk and theology professor nailed a placard to the door of his church, enumerating a list of theses for debate on the longstanding practice of selling indulgences. This single action would, over the next couple decades, prove to be the focal point for a seismic shift in the medieval Catholic Church, of which we are still feeling the aftershocks today. That monk, Dr. Martin Luther, ignited something in the Church that had been allowed to lie dormant for so long, barely kept alive through the spiritual darkness of the Middle Ages: the fire of the Holy Spirit, the pure doctrine of the Gospel.

As Lutherans, we owe so much to the Reformation. The Confessions on which our Church is built were written by Luther and his students. Our emphasis on the Gospel – that we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, found in Scripture alone, to God's glory alone – is inherited directly from the Reformation. The fact that we have God's Word in our own language, that we hear it read and proclaimed in our language every week from our lectern and pulpit, came about because of Luther's burning desire to place God's Word in the hands of the common people.

Even the simple fact that we know that we are saved, by Christ's work on our behalf, is part of our Reformation inheritance.

And yet, the Reformation is not a one-and-done moment in time. Luther did not nail his Ninety-Five Theses to the door of the Castle Church on October 31, 1517, and suddenly change everything overnight. No, the Reformation took a long time; it wasn't even finished thirty years later when Luther fell asleep in Christ. The message was still being proclaimed to all the world. The truth of the Gospel was still being clarified. In a very real sense, we are still in the midst of the Reformation today! We have the truth of the Gospel! We know God's message for the world! But so many people still have yet to hear that message. So many still have yet to be gathered together into the Church, to receive God's Word in their own language and experience the joy of God's grace.

That is the Church's mission – and it is also the Church's privilege: to continue the work of so many generations before us, in proclaiming God's love and grace "to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people." And even to those in our own community who have yet to hear.

St. Paul Stephen Ministry Corner

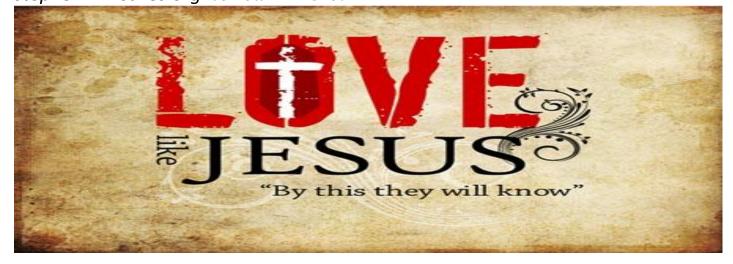
"Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2, NRSV)



Stephen Ministries is in training. Please check with Michelle for information. Michelle

DeCoe has completed the training for the leadership role for Stephen Ministry. There needs to be at least two people in the leadership role. Marilyn Bowen has graciously accepted the position for the second leader. She began training for position in July. After completion of the leadership program, Michelle and Marilyn will be

offering classes for other members of the congregation to become knowledgeable and supported components of the team. The classes will be teaching members how to support others through difficult times. This includes everything from death, divorce, medical crisis, moving, life changes and so much more. The struggles of life are ever changing as we evolve through life. We in Stephen Ministry would like to promote a supportive church environment that nurtures our members in need. You are the CHURCH; and we would appreciate support and evolvement by the congregation. We never know what is in store for us as we navigate through this world. We are hoping to develop preparedness in our church for the call. Will you love your neighbors as yourself? Will you be the Good Samaritan that stopped to help another in time of need? This ministry is centered around God being the main healer. The caregiver is a vessel for healing to begin. We are not looking for people to fix others. We are looking for people to be open to hearing each other in a supportive way. There are skills that need to be learned so you are prepared and not overwhelmed. Once you have completed the courses, you may be paired with someone in the congregation that needs emotional support, while going through a rough time. This would take approximately one hour a week, until they are feeling more secure regarding their matter in question. Confidentiality is one of the main foundations of this work and is stressed throughout Stephen Ministry. If you are interested in becoming a part of this ministry, please contact Michelle DeCoe 989-513-1736. I am taking down names of interested parties. I would like to know what would work for class times in the future; evening, day, weekend or retreat style....also, be sure to visit stephenministries.org to learn more.



"[Jesus] will care for you until you stand before His throne. Trust Him. Seek Him. Serve Him. Love Him. He's your King. He suffered and died for you. He rose for you. He only has words of love and promise to speak to you. So, when all is equal for you on your deathbed, you can rejoice and say, 'Come quickly, my King,' because He has given you the promise, 'You will be with me in paradise.'" Rev. Peter Sulzle, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Redwood Falls, Minnesota – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org

Hurting from abortion? Word of Hope can help. Word-of-hope.org; 888-217-8679

How Does God Apply Grace In Our Lives??

Our world is a sinful, broken mess. Yet God uses people and things around us to deliver His grace. Is it weird that God uses lowly parts of His creation for His perfect purposes? Christian hip hop artist FLAME explains how God uses physical elements to deliver His good gifts. The following has been adapted from FLAME's book, *Extra Nos: Discovering Grace outside Myself*.

Visible and Invisible Realities

The world consists of visible and invisible realities. We are multifaceted beings meant to interact with the diversity of life. This is a challenge for the contemporary Christian person. We believe we must first understand a thing before we can accept it as true. The truth or reality of a thing is not based on whether you can understand it. Nor how well you can process it, wrap your

mind around it, systematically categorize it, and explain it. Here, Luther's famous advice is helpful. We use logic and reason the way God intended, as a servant. Not a master.

It is crucial to what it means to be a Christian to posture our hearts to embrace what God has revealed. We should ask God to work humility in our minds so that we may not be ruled by human reason but be rightly oriented and use logic as a servant. This is, indeed, the primary reason many struggle to receive the

grace Jesus established and designed for us in the <u>Lord's Supper</u>. We have a fundamental problem with God using "stuff" from the material world to save. Yet in the person Jesus

Himself is God's attachment to the physical to accomplish His salvific ends. The eternal Son of God, who has always existed, took on human flesh.

The human person <u>Jesus is both fully God and fully man</u>. Wholly and truly God and wholly and truly man. One person with two natures. God the eternal Son Himself took on a physical nature and forever will remain the God-man, both humanity and divinity in the person of the Christ, Jesus.

Does God Use Physical Means to Apply Grace?

If God is okay binding Himself to the physical to save, then we should be okay with it too. We should be okay with Him using physical things in other manners to apply grace. If He wants to save, heal, or forgive using earthly means, we should recognize that as something God desires to do and has deemed right and good.

Imagine there was a blind man. Could Jesus cure his blindness simply by thinking it in His mind? Yes! But what if Jesus *wanted* to use means to restore the man's sight? Using something as earthly as spit, dirt, mud, and a washing in the water at the pool of Siloam (see John 9:6–7)? Is Jesus now less glorified for using means? Does He *not* get all the glory because He chose to use earthly elements to accomplish His ends? **Better yet, does this have to lead to idolatry and worship of spit, dirt, mud, and water? Not at all.**

The blind man did right to not question Jesus or call Him to task over His insistence upon using earthly means to do what otherwise could have been done by Him simply thinking it. The blind man did right to merely receive God's good gift by means. He trusted Jesus. Faith clings to the promise of God. He did not accuse the Lord of being ridiculous for suggesting such lowly things as a part of the healing. He did *not* get into an intellectual skirmish with the Christ over whether it was possible to cure blindness using such simple and meager means. He simply trusted Jesus' word.

The Sacraments and God's Visible Word

So it is with the Sacraments. They are God's visible Word whereby He delivers His good gifts to us in a multiplicity of ways, all rooted in Jesus' earthly ministry (incarnation, sinless life, crucifixion, and resurrection). There's no competition or contradiction with faith alone. If God says, "Do this and receive sight," this is how you receive God's gifts. God uses earthly things to deliver, or hand over, the benefits of what Jesus accomplished on the cross.

These earthly things include the following:

• The death of the God-man on a real, physical, earthly tree

- The womb of a virgin woman to encapsulate the God of the universe
- Human preachers to preach His Word
- Human saliva, tongues, and vocal cords to do that preaching
- Physical sound waves that strike the eardrums of humans, who then believe the truth conveyed in physical traveling sound waves
- A physical book written by humans (though inspired by the Holy Spirit)
- Water to deliver life and cure spiritual blindness (Baptism)
- Bread and wine to "house" (in, with, and under) Himself to grant forgiveness (the Lord's Supper)
- A new earth that will join the new heaven

The Holy Spirit uses the aforementioned things to save.

The devil fights in abundance to block and rob faith.

God gives in abundance to create and preserve faith.

Blog post adapted from *Extra Nos: Discovering Grace outside Myself* © 2023 Marcus "FLAME" Gray, published by Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved.

Important Dates for upcoming Ladies Aid activities. We will request volunteers and provide details closer to the dates.

Oct 6, 2023 Harvest Dinner

Oct 10, 2023 First Day of the Peanut Brittle Season

Nov 4, 2023 Craft Show

Dec 16, 2023 Holiday Cookie & Gingerbread Decorating



7hank you to Carolyn Sutton for the Autumn Decorations around the Church. ©

Thank you to Randy Engblade, Mike Schweigert, Don Retzloff for the craftsmanship of the 3 crosses that will go on display 2/11/24.

Thank you to Ladies Aid for the new tables in the Fellowship Hall. @

Thank you to Julie VanKuiken for all her work in the hosta garden

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media and Website-In a continuing effort to keep our church website current and interesting, we are going to begin posting pictures of our members engaged in the various activities held at the Church and elsewhere on google and Facebook. Children will require special permission. If you would prefer not to have any pictures of you posted, please let Linda Mitchell know.

MIDLAND COUNTY NEWSLETTER ONLINE - Subscribe here (very informative):

https://www.co.midland.mi.us and search Midland County Newsletter.

MICHIGAN MINUTE: Weekly E-news & Events of the Michigan District, LCMS

http://www.michigandistrict.org/connect/publications/michiganminute

SMART PHONE USERS: There are two free apps available for your devices that pertain to your Lutheran Beliefs? LCMS app is free and provides great information including a Daily Devotion. The other is Luther's Small Catechism app which is also free. If you have questions or would like to check it out and need assistance please contact the church office.

<u>The Lutheran Witness</u> is now a free digital app. Once subscribers download the free <u>Lutheran Witness</u> magazine app, each new issue automatically will be sent to their newsstands for convenient viewing. Note: While the app itself is free, you will need a paid subscription to the magazine in order to receive it via the app. If you have any questions or would like to see whether the magazine is available for your device, visit <u>www.cph.org/witness</u> to learn more or to download the app. You may also call Concordia Publishing House at 800-325-3040.

<u>Lutheran Service Book</u> - EBook Edition at enews@cph.org OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA:

<u>www.facebook.com/thelcms</u> <u>www.twitter.com/thelcms</u> www.youtube.com/thelcms www.lcms.org/socialmedia

KITCHEN GARBAGE Bags: ALL garbage bags removed from the Kitchen **MUST** be placed in dumpster and **NOT** left outside the back kitchen door. **RECYCLING:** A large bin for recycling only has been placed outside the back kitchen door ... THIS IS FOR RECYCLING ONLY! We also have smaller recycling receptacles around the church which are marked with a recycling symbol.



LADIES AID

The third Wednesday of every month is set aside for our monthly meetings at 9:00am

Ladies Aid Board

Christy Martin-President / Carolyn Sutton-Vice President Pam Kastl-Secretary / Vicki Barnard-Treasurer

Questions may be directed to: Christy Martin 817.757.9577 email CKM57@me.com or Carolyn Sutton 989.631-3953.

BULLETIN / NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

If you have information you would like placed into any upcoming bulletins or newsletters, please submit to the church office via email at stpaullutheran@tds.net, calling 687-2824 or by placing it in the church office mailbox located between the restrooms downstairs. Don't forget to state the date(s) you'd like your information to run.

DEADLINES

Newsletters 20th (monthly)

Bulletins Wednesday's by

Noon

HARVEST DINNER

St. Paul Lutheran Church 2045 Lynn Street - Sanford Friday, October 6, 2023 4-7pm

Sponsored by Ladies Aid
Turkey Dinner with Fixings@

Men's Breakfast: 2nd Saturday of the

month

Ladies' Bible Study: 4th Saturday of the

Month

Euchre Night: 3rd Saturday of Month 7pm

LifeLight Bible Study: Tuesdays @ 7pm

and Wednesday @ 1pm

Confirmation Classes: on Tuesday Nights

5-6:30pm.

We are forming a **Youth Ministry Board** that will focus on the planning of education/activities designed for our congregation's youth. **Next meeting is October 26th** @ 6pm. Please let Gerianne or Pastor know if you can help.

Youth Movie Night-Saturday, October 14th at 6pm "Coraline"
Pizza|Popcoru|Campfire Smores for movie discussion. ©



For more information about youth group,



Sunday School, youth bible study and events, please use the QR code to get to the form.

Council Meeting is 10/08 @ 11am.

"BECAUSE WE CARE"

Prayer Request: If you or someone you know are in need of prayers please call Edna Rottiers at 989-687-9687. **Those** with additional prayer request please complete a prayer slip and give to one of our Elders before the service or to one of the Ushers during the offering. Your prayers are important and our Lord does promise to answer.

Pastoral Care: Please contact the Pastor @ cell 973-303-8252, office 989-687-2209, or email stpaulrev@tds.net. The Church Office (989-687-2824) / cell (989 859-9300) email stpaullutheran@tds.net, or Deacon Don Barnard (989-751-7726) email: esocidnator01@gmail.com. Or stpauldeacon@tds.net if you or anyone you know are in need of a visit from the Pastor or Deacon whether it's an illness, hospitalization, nursing home or shut-in. It is important to us that we receive these communications to plan a call or visitation. May God's blessings be upon you today and every day!

Our florist is, *HANNAH'S FLOWERS*, in Midland. She will be making us a \$25 arrangement. Please continue to return the vases back to the church to help keep the price lower. All other florist prices were higher. You will continue to make your flower payment to the church. Any questions, please talk with Carolyn. Thank you,

Carolyn 631-3953

October Altar Guild representative is Shirley Rinas 989.687.2268

To our families with small children: Relax! You and your children are welcome to our worship service! Being in worship with you to observe and participate in the service will help them to learn how to behave in church – and they will learn that best by watching you worship on a regular basis! Sit anywhere in

the sanctuary that you wish. The last two rows of pews are set aside for families with small children, but you don't have to sit there. In fact, sitting close to the front so your children can see what's happening may help them to feel more involved in the service. If they need something to keep their hands occupied, please ask one of the ushers for a copy of the children's bulletins for them to color. If for any reason you need to take your children out of the sanctuary so they can calm down, feel free to bring them into the bathroom at the back of the church. In addition, at the bottom of the stairs we have a cry room to the right, as well as the fellowship hall to the left. With

> the speakers in the basement, you will be able to hear the service while your child calms

down. If your children don't want to sit still or be quiet through the whole service, there is absolutely nothing wrong with them: they are young and learning. The sound of children in worship is the sound of the Church's future.

Please be on the lookout for "phishing" emails and Texts that look like they were sent from Pastor. If you get an email or text asking for something from Pastor, read the from line at the top to see that it was sent from "stpaulrev", or the Pastor's phone #, or ask Pastor. The bad guys are searching trying to scam people.

If you are interested in private Communion

...for whatever the reason. Pastor Vossler and Deacon Barnard are willing to share the Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior in a private setting. Please contact at their listing for Pastoral care.

THRIVENT

Thrivent Action Team Dollars: St. Paul Members who belong to Thrivent Financial have a unique opportunity to provide financial help for a project here at St. Paul. Each Thrivent member is eligible to receive \$250 twice per year from Thrivent to contribute to a St. Paul project. Examples of projects include: parades, Wild Game Dinner, Easter Breakfast, Harvest Dinner and many others. If you are a Thrivent Member that would like to help us with Thrivent Action Team Dollars on future projects please contact the church office to be placed on a list. Your help is greatly appreciated!

CHOICE DOLLARS

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK EVERYONE WHO TOOK THE TIME AND MADE A PHONE CALL TO THIRVENT FOR THE CHOICE DOLLARS. I'M ASKING EVERYONE WHO HAS A THRIVENT POLICY TO CALL, EVEN IF IN DOUBT REGARDING YOUR POLICY ELIGIBILITY. CALL 1-800-847-4836 THEN PUSH 1. THIS IS A PHONE CALL, NOT A COMPUTER GENERATED VOICE. THEY EVEN SPEAK ENGLISH AS THEY ARE BASED IN APPLETON, WISC. CALL IN APRIL 2023, JULY, OCTOBER, AND THEN AGAIN IN JANUARY 2024. THESE FUNDS ARE DIRECT DEPOSITED INTO THE CHURCH'S BANK ACCOUNT, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO HANDLE THEM. THESE ARE 2022 EARNED DOLLARS BEING GIVEN IN 2023. NEXT YEAR MAY BE MORE OR LESS DEPENDING ON THE ECONOMY.

-WILLIAM P. MITCHELL

St. Paul Coffee Mugs are available for \$5.00. If interested, please see Linda Mitchell or Margie Dittmer



Mission of the Month: In October, we are receiving offerings to help support The Lutheran Women's Missionary League.
(LWML) is an official auxiliary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Since 1942, the LWML has focused on affirming each woman's relationship with Christ, encouraging and equipping women to live out their Christian lives in active mission ministries and to support global missions.

LWML Fall Rally/Servant Day-October 21st at Zion in Mt. Pleasant

LWML 2024 Michigan District Convention-June 28-30, 2024 at Amway, Grand Rapids

LWML Prayer Day/Spring Rally 2024 at St Paul, Sanford. Date to be determined. For more LWML information, Please contact Diana Kausch.

Sanford Food Pantry – Please continue your support of this very worthwhile local ministry. There are refillable canvas bags from the Midland County Emergency Food Pantry available on the food pantry table in the fellowship hall. The bags have a suggested list of items and instructions. You may take these bags home and place the purchased items in the bag and return it to the church. The bags will be delivered to the Sanford Food Pantry the last week of the month. The empty bags will be returned to the church to be used again. Thank you for all of the items and monetary

donations. Your donations are appreciated, but please note that the Food Pantry does not accept: 1) weight-loss products; nor 2) food items with an expired date. If you prefer to make a monetary

donation, please put in the Public Relations Mailbox. Thank you for your consideration in helping those less fortunate. Please make the check payable to Sanford Food Pantry

Current needs are: Cake Mixes and Canned Frosting.

Pictorial directory- Please check with Linda, Margie, Ruth or Kathy to help retrieve yours from the office. ©

Has your contact info changed? If so, please contact the church office (687-2824) or stpaullutheran@tds.net and provide us with the changed information (address, phone, email or any other information).

BlackTop Project-We are accepting donations for the parking lot work needing to be done. Please make your donation out to the church and note that the amount should be directed to parking lot.

Social Media and Website-In a continuing effort to keep our church website current and interesting, we are going to begin posting pictures of our members engaged in the various activities held at the Church and elsewhere on google and Facebook. Children will require special permission. If you would prefer not to have any pictures of you posted, please let Linda Mitchell know.

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HARVEST DINNER

St. Paul Lutheran Church 2045 Lynn Street - Sanford Friday, October 6, 2023 4-7pm

Sponsored by Ladies Aid
Turkey Dinner with Fixings☺

October Volunteer Schedule										
	1-Oct	8-Oct	15-Oct	22-Oct	29-Oct					
ACOLYTES	Bradyn & Deklan	Lucas & Jace	Madison & Sam	Garrett & Bradyn	Deklan & Lucas					
ALTAR FLOWERS	Gwen Shook	Gary & Stacy Smith	Open	Open	Carolyn Sutton					
ALTAR GUILD	Carolyn Sutton 989.631.3953									
GREETERS	John & Sharon Kress	AJ & Cindy Brock	Joan & Duane Grubaugh	Demond & Stephanie	Jan & Wade O'Dell					
FELLOWSHIP	Evelyn & Christy	Open	Open	Open	Deklan & Jeffrey Finney & Sandy Hoogerhyde					
ORGANIST	Heidi Stecker	Heidi Stecker	Sara Glynn-Dishaw	Sara Glynn-Dishaw	Sara Glynn-Dishaw					
PROCLAIMER	Pastor Christopher Vossler	Pastor Christopher Vossler	Pastor Christopher Vossler	Pastor Christopher Vossler	Deacon Barnard					
SUNDAY SCHOOL STAFF	Gerianne Barnard	Gerianne Barnard	Gerianne Barnard	Gerianne Barnard	Gerianne Barnard					
USHERS	Stacy & Gary Smithq	Edna Rottiers & Pam Kastl	Edna Rottiers & Pam Kastl	Lynn & Jace Burns	Lynn & Jace Burns					
ELDERS	Mark Sprenger, Bob Burnison, Deacon Donald Barnard, Deno O'Connor, Bill Mitchell, Larry Terbush & Mark Burns									

October Birthdays and

Hillian Comments

Anniversaries

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Worship Service with Communion 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Bible Study 11am Samuel Reith		Confirmation 5pm Lifelight Bible 7pm	Lifelight Bible 1pm Garrett Bishop	Catherine LaVack	Kurt & Laurie Bell- Anniversary Edward & Janet Landskroener- Anniversary Jason Martin	Jill & Bill Hurley- Anniversary Lisa Sanderson
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Worship Service 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Council Meeting 11am Karl Sasse	Michael Bishop	Confirmation 5pm Lifelight Bible 7pm	Lifelight Bible 1pm Gary & Stacy Smith-Anniversary	Lisa Hulbert	Zac & Kristy Brawt-Annv Wade & Jan O'Dell-Annv	Men's BreakFast 8am Duane & Joan Grubaugh-
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Worship Service with Communion 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Bible Study 11am Mark & Laura Sprenger- Anniversary Kayla Stryker	Mary Garcia Ashley Gettel Bryson Gowing	Confirmation 5pm Lifelight Bible 7pm	Lifelight Bible 1pm	Trustee Meeting 6pm		Euchre Night 7pm Laura Juengel Dennis Laplow
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Worship Service 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Bible Study 11am		Confirmation 5pm Lifelight Bible 7pm	Lifelight Bible 1pm Gary Jones	Youth Board Meeting 6pm		Ladies' Bible Study 9am
29	30	31				
Reformation Sunday Worship Service 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Bible Study 11am Nathan Noel Christopher & Tiffany Smith- Anniversary	Stephanie Cuyler	Confirmation 5pm Lifelight Bible 7pm				