

June 27, 2024

St. Paul  
EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

Missouri  
Synod

Rev. Matthew D. Troester  
PASTOR  
troester@stpaulsonline.org

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

Diane's bike accident and the injury to her leg has taught us a lot. This life on this earth is prone with many effects of sin—accidents being just one of them. Also, the level of care we are called to give to those in need. You have all excelled in showing us that love and care with so many things you have done and are doing. Suffice it to say, it's more than you'll ever know. Finally, the "woes" of this life are to be expected and even embraced, as they show us the magnitude of God's love in sending His only Son into this "woe-full" world, to suffer the greatest on our behalf. Our woe's truly are "light and momentary," in comparison to what Christ went through for us, and in comparison to what is in store for us in heaven—God's gift to us.

**From the desk of Vicar Larry**

The next time I write to you, it will be as Pastor Larry. We have played the fun game of "what to call Larry?" over the last couple of years. It took a while, in a good way, to get used to "Vicar Larry". But what's happened over the last month or so has been special. A few of you have slipped and called me "Pastor". I am humbled and grateful that you would call me your Pastor. There's a level of trust and responsibility that come with this office that I don't take lightly. I consider it a high honor that you place that trust and responsibility with me. You have shown me that trust and responsibility since the beginning of my vicarage, almost 2 and half years ago, giving me the opportunity to serve as I learn, and to help in the process of my pastoral formation that will continue, even after my ordination. I look forward to celebrating with you on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 3:30pm, when I am ordained into the holy ministry and installed as associate pastor at St. Paul. I look forward to serving you as pastor and serving with you as we come together around word and sacrament, encouraging one another as the day of Christ's glorious return approaches. To God almighty, who created, redeemed, and renews us, be glory and honor now and always. AMEN!

**Ordination & Installation** - Vicar Larry Ruger will be ordained as Pastor Larry and installed as our **Associate Pastor on Sunday, July 7<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 pm**. Please note that we will have our regular worship at the usual time of 9 a.m., along with the special worship at 3:30 p.m. There will be a light reception to follow.

**Save the Date** of Sunday, October 6 when we will celebrate Pastor Troester's 40th year in the ministry since ordination 1984. More details to follow.

**Church Council - Dennis Pieper – Acting Congregational Chair**

On Saturday August 24, the Northern Illinois District will host, for the first time, a Lay Leadership Summit. It will be from 8:30 to 3:00pm at Walther Christian Academy in Melrose Park. The Summit is to gather lay leaders from the District to build one another up in our given roles, and share best practices to better equip you for service to our Lord in our church. We will benefit from seeing how other Lutheran churches address the needs of their members and communities. If you are interested in attending this event, please contact the church office or



6201 Vollmer Road  
Matteson, IL 60443  
CHURCH  
708-720-0880  
www.stpaulsonline.org

Dennis Pieper. If you are a volunteer now, have in the past, or are open to working with others in the congregations: you are very welcome to participate.

### **Board of Elders - Dennis Pieper – Head Elder**

Deuteronomy 28:6 God says: "*Blessed shall you be when you come in and blessed shall you be when you go out.*" Wow! What a verse, a promise, and how appropriate for this time of year when we have an Alaska Mission Team "going out" to serve. We also have families taking vacations. The St. Paul family on the move, going out and coming in. You should know however the context of this blessings verse. At the beginning of Deuteronomy 28 Moses says "If you faithfully obey the Voice of the Lord your God . . . these blessings shall come upon you." Meaning take the Lord with you as you travel. Listen to His voice and then know His blessings are with you. We pray this blessing for each of you and your loved ones.

### **Youth Director – Paul Szymanski**

Wow! The summer is flying by. We are looking forward to the fall when we will start our new high school class which will run during the Sunday School/Confirmation time. We will talk about developing a Christian worldview and how we head into our adult life with a strong foundation of faith that the world cannot sway. Also there will be a meeting for our preparation to attend the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans next July. You should receive a special invitation to save the date for this so watch your inbox for more information. We will try to squeeze in a couple of events as well this summer so watch the bulletin for updates there. Hope everyone is enjoying their summer so far. Blessings.

### **Grandparents**

Embrace your Biblical role to fight for your family. Be generous, gifting your time, presence, and encouragement. Show up for them in the good and bad times. Push through the hard times by pressing into God through prayer and His Word. Shoulder their burdens. Fight the enemy's temptations to fulfill your own selfish desires. Rather, live kingdom minded, focused on your God-given calling as an intentional Christian grandparent. See your [2024 Grandparenting Planner](#) for ideas and activity suggestions for July.

### **Men's Fellowship and Fire**

For thousands of years, men have gathered around a fire for many reasons including celebrations and supporting each other. You are invited to join other men **Thursday, July 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M.** as we come together to relax, celebrate our victories, and support each other around a fire. You only need to bring your favorite outdoor chair and your favorite campfire consumables (beverage, snacks, etc.). We will gather behind the Education Building – just look for the fire.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Focus Mission - St. Paul Scholarship Fund**

Our Scholarship Fund provides tuition assistance to members who are attending Lutheran K-12 schools and ministry preparation tracks in colleges and universities. You can support the Scholarship Fund with your contributions and prayers.

### **St Paul Scholarship Fund – Dottie Hagestad**

Even though school just ended for most students, it's time to think about the coming school year. St. Paul's has a scholarship fund that provides tuition assistance to parents of Lutheran school students--both elementary and high school--and also to those who are attending Synodical schools to become full-time church workers. **In order to apply for this assistance, parents must fill out a form (available at the church office) and submit it before August 15.** The goal of the fund is to make up the difference between the cost of tuition for St. Paul's students versus the rates offered to families who are members of the sponsoring church. Any tuition assistance awarded is sent directly to the Lutheran school. Congregation members can support the work of this Fund by prayers and also through offerings earmarked for "Scholarship Fund."

### **Help Wanted**

- Drivers are needed to shuttle Alaska Missionaries to O'Hare on Wednesday, July 24<sup>th</sup> and Friday, July 26<sup>th</sup>. Drivers are also needed to pick up the missionaries at O'Hare and bring them back to St. Paul on Sunday morning, August 4<sup>th</sup>. Please contact Scott Schulz if you can assist.
- The Technology Team is looking for volunteers to assist with the sound during the worship services, transmitting the worship services over YouTube and Facebook, and producing/projecting the order of worship on the screens in the front of the church. No experience is required. Please contact Bill Miller if you are interested in joining the team.
- There is still a place for you on the Altar Guild. Serving on Worship days or caring for the linens used on the Altar. If you are interested, see Vivian Purnell on Sunday mornings or call her at 708-748-8808.

### **Alaska Mission Trip**

There is still room for you to join us this summer, **July 24 – August 4**, as we go to Alaska for work projects. If interested in going, please contact Scott Schulz at 847-334-3500 for more information.

### **Prayer Shawl – Diane Wille & Peggy Smutny**

Prayer Shawl feels Blessed to be a Blessing to our outreach and our congregation. Since January we have given six baptismal blankets and prayer squares and seven confirmation prayer squares. We have donated 58 Prayer Shawls, 49 Baby Blankets and over 200 Prayer Squares to local and military agencies. Pastor Troester and Vicar Larry have blessed over 250 Prayer Squares and 327 blankets, hats, prayer shawls, lap blankets and scarves. We are blessed at St. Paul to supply needs outside of our congregation and also to our congregation's needs. Please continue to support us with prayer and monetary donations so we can continue providing for those needs. Prayer Squares are available on the table in the narthex and Prayer Shawls and Lap Blankets are in the stairwell area. PLEASE fill out a card when you take an item so we can pray for those individuals.

### **Happy Summer from the St. Paul Quilters!**

We continue to meet and assemble blankets twice a month even in these summer months. And remember, there are Quilt kits at the back of the church if you would like to sew a quilt top at home for us and then return it in the box under the table in the narthex. We also continue to take donations of fabric and new or used sheets (in good condition.) Anyone can join us for tying the blankets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday mornings of the month from 9 until 11 am. Enjoy these refreshing months!

### **Summer Ladies Bible Study – Thursday's at 6:30pm**

We are studying parts of the Psalms this summer and refreshing ourselves with these "old hymns" of the Bible. It's not too late if you would still like to join us. The contact person is Karen Gustafson 312-502-2490.

### **Support the Troops - Sponsored by Ladies Aid – Mallory Kelly**

On May 23<sup>rd</sup> four care packages were sent to Chaplain Neider. On June 5th, Chaplain Neider sent the following message via email to Pastor. " *Greetings in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. It was an honor to receive Care Packages yesterday from your flock....Mt unit and I arrived at Camp Hansen, Okinawa...in the last few weeks. In just the last few days a virus has confined several Marines to their rooms. It was really encouraging to be able to open the boxes and take letters and snacks directly to those who are going through a tough time. Lutherans support their chaplains like no other faith group. Thank you for living out the gospel in this way at this time. Incidentally, I think I interviewed with a call committee from St. Paul's back in 2014. We weren't the right fit. But the process helped me find my way from parish ministry to active-duty chaplaincy. Thanks again....*" Very Respectfully, Chaplain Erik Neider.

So, what we do here, collecting snacks and writing messages, offers a tangible connection between those who serve and home, providing comfort, encouragement and gratitude to our soldiers. Thank you for being the shopping and writing hands of Jesus! Keep it up as we currently have addresses for seven chaplains.

### **Food Pantry – Ruth & Rich Treichel**

The St. Paul Food Pantry continues to receive food donations from local businesses and schools from their food drives. These donations are used to supplement our deliveries from Greater Chicago Food Depository. A new contract was signed with Greater Chicago to supply the food pantry with TEFAP (The Emergency Food Assistance Program) food for an additional year following attendance at a seminar put on by Greater Chicago. Volunteers work very hard filling bags of food every Friday and distributing this food to needy families each Saturday morning from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Come and join the group if you can. Workers are always needed.

### **VBS 2024**

Another fun-filled week at VBS, learning all about how Jesus was a kid, just like us! We had a blessed week of fun, friendship, and Jesus. Thank you to everyone that helped and to everyone that let us borrow items to make our VBS a success. Reminder - Please pick up anything that you let us borrow!

### **In Closing.....**

Never underestimate the "little things" you do, which God transforms into big things in the lives of those you care for. God will give you the endurance to continue, the faith to trust in Him, and the joy of being His servant in Christ's name. Every one of the ministries illustrated in this letter are by the grace of God, empowered by the love of Jesus, and "spirited" by the Holy Spirit to God's Glory, alone!

Peace,

*Pastor T.*