

## St. Paul Lutheran Church ELCA

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# SEPTEMBER 2023



*"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." - Philippians 4:6-7*

Prayer is a major priority in Christian community. Praying helps us consciously connect to God. We are always connected to God, but we aren't always aware of it. We are like fish swimming in an ocean of God's love. Only when we notice a change in the water temperature, do we remember we are floating in the sea of grace. Prayer opens us up to the presence of God. When we pray, we trust that God is there to listen.

In our adult book study we are exploring how to pray and what words we can use. Prayer doesn't have to be ornate, carefully planned out language, like we sometimes use in a worship service. Sometimes it is a cry of despair, "Why!?" or "Don't you care?!" A Jewish teacher once told me that God is someone, some being, you can have a conversation with; someone you can yell at. In our book study we will continue to explore examples of prayer in the most vulnerable times. You are welcome to join us Wed evenings at 6pm Aug 30, Sept 6, Sept 13 and for a special gathering with the author Brian Spahr on Sept 24. More details can be found in the newsletter and announcements.

Through the month of September, we will be exploring how we can connect to God and to our St. Paul community through prayer. In worship we will be more intentional about sharing prayer requests. You are also invited to take your bulletin home and pray for those on our prayer list throughout the week. Try texting a friend and asking how you can pray for them. We are

encouraged to pray in every situation whether in praise or desperation. May we support each other to pray without ceasing.

With a prayer of thanksgiving,  
Pastor Makayla

## Join us For Worship

9:00 a.m. worship to praise God.

The Livestream can be accessed by clicking [HERE](#)



**This past month** we have prayed for the following: Shirley Graftaas, Julia Scott, Francis & Marilyn Verbout, Bob Cornelsen, Larry Wahler, Keller Arduini, JoDell Cruz, Jim Brotheridge, Lori Dewey, Sandy & Harold Julifs, Lila Edeus, Berta Beyer, and the family and friends of Rebecca Bailey. Rebecca is the sister of Berta Beyer.

**Please contact Sue in the church office if you have a prayer request for the congregational prayer list.**

## Church Announcements

### **Adult Bible Study is Back with “One church, One book”**

Tri Church Congregations and a few other congregations in our area have teamed up for “One church, One book”! Participants will all read *Don't You Care That We Are Drowning?* by Brian Spahr over six weeks with a culminating special event with the author and musician, Brian Spahr, on September 24 at 1:00 p.m. at Immanuel. You can still order a book through Amazon. **St. Paul Book Study will meet Wednesdays August September 6, & 13 at 6:00 p.m.** Bring the whole family for a pizza dinner. Kids will have activities while Adults meet.

**Our study will culminate at special event with the author and musician, Brian Spahr, on Sunday, September 24, at 1:00 p.m. at Immanuel.**

In, *Don't You Care That We Are Drowning?* Brian Spahr shares the unexpected prayers of people who cry out to God amid their struggle and suffering and loss. In this short collection of stories, Spahr (a hospital chaplain) takes readers into spaces where bumper sticker faith, pat spiritual answers, and surface-level prayers won't cut it. Brian tells stories of real loss, hurt, and suffering while still pointing to God's loving presence through it all.



BRIAN SPAHR



**Let's Feed Our Children**

**Thank you for giving and serving this program this Summer.** God is with you! A total of 34,380 individual lunches were packed and served this summer in Whiteside

County to 19 different sites. There were 650 volunteer spots that were filled for an approx. 1300 hours in total. This is United Way's 22<sup>nd</sup> year in serving the children of the county with the Let's Feed Our Children program. They are truly thankful and blessed that we were able to provide them this space again this year for this much needed service to take place.

**CLEO (Church Ladies Eating Out)**

CLEO will meet at 6:00 p.m. at a designated restaurant. They will meet next on Monday, September 25, at The Brinks in Sterling.

On October 30, they plan to go to Wagon Wheel in Sterling. If

you are unable to attend because of bad weather or personal reasons, please join us the next month. If you need a ride or have any questions, please contact Libby at 815-626-0764 or Judy Bartel at 815-751-6768. All are welcome!



Menz Group

**Menz Group will meet at St. John's Lutheran Church** in Sterling on **Monday, September 11 at 6:00 p.m.** Please RSVP to LeRoy Baer at 815-625-6182. Leave a message if no answer.

**Please keep our home visitation members and friends in your thoughts and prayers. If you would the address for anyone listed here, please contact Sue in the church office.**

Lori Dewey  
Harold & Sandy Julifs  
Cliff Miller  
Burt Severson  
Gene Strike

Katherine Janssen  
Viola Koster  
Florence Pfundstein



Home Visitation

**St. Paul Year Budget Report**

2023 Budget \$265,691(\$22,141 Monthly)

**Totals through August 29, 2023**

Budgeted Expenses \$177,128  
Offerings/Interest \$106,744  
Expenses \$161,313





## Stewardship

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS GRATITUDE SUNDAY IS October 22<sup>nd</sup>

This year our Gratitude Sunday will be in October. Our theme of Harvest Time will include sermons and scriptures of love, giving and discipleship. It is the time for us to show our Gratitude to God and bring back our “Gifts of Gratitude” reflecting our intentions for 2024. Through our generous gifts we can continue to tell the story of Christ’s love throughout the world and in our community. Please prayerfully consider how you can contribute to St. Paul’s mission and give generously with **GRATITUDE** of your Time, Talents and Treasures.

When you give, you are performing a service. Serving and giving are both essential. Each is an action of love. You can’t love without serving and giving. And here’s the best part: Your service leads to expression of thanksgiving to God. Praise God for all he has done and all he has planned to do for us. Give with a Generous and Grateful heart.

**Want to Simplify your life** – forgot to bring your envelope with your offering, are you fumbling to find your checkbook each week? Why not talk to your bank and set up automatic payments/withdrawals to St. Paul? Your bank will send the check each week or month directly to St. Paul. One more stress-free way to simplify your life.

**Take a moment to pray and express your gratitude to God.  
Give generously with a grateful heart!**

#### Scripture Readings for Worship at Home

(These devotional readings may not exactly match the readings at Sunday worship services.)

September 2023	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
September 3, 2023 Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost	<u>Exodus</u> 3:1-15	<u>Psalm 26:1-8</u>	<u>Romans 12:9-21</u>	<u>Matthew 16:21-28</u>
September 10, 2023 Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost	<u>Exodus</u> 12:1-14	<u>Psalm</u> 119:33-40	<u>Romans 13:8-14</u>	<u>Matthew 18:15-20</u>
September 17, 2023 Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost	<u>Exodus</u> 14:19-31	<u>Psalm</u> 103:(1-7), 8-13	<u>Romans 14:1-12</u>	<u>Matthew 18:21-35</u>
September 24, 2023 Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost	<u>Exodus</u> 16:2-15	<u>Psalm 145:1-8</u>	<u>Philippians</u> 1:21-30	<u>Matthew 20:1-16</u>

## Lutheran World Relief

Thank you for filling the school backpacks and for your donations of materials to be used within the quilts.

The backpacks were displayed on August 20, 2023, during the blessing of the backpacks. They will be packaged and shipped with the quilts and personal care kits at a later date. 106 backpacks were filled.

The quilts will be displayed and blessed on September 17, during our Sunday service. 135 quilts will be sent overseas. Our children's offering during the month of August went towards shipping charges.

Any monetary donations can be designated for LWR shipping charges.

Our next quilting day will be September 20 to tie and sew our quilts. Please join us in the social hall between 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. If you have questions contact Dawn Waite at 815-631-8142 or Debbie O'Brien, 815-441-0257.



**The funeral committee would like to thank** everyone who brought food, worked the funeral, or who helped in anyway at the Gladys Stern lunch. It was greatly appreciated. ~ Julie Woessner

## News from the Lutheran Outdoor Ministry Center!

### LOMC is turning 50!!!

Find out more about our Anniversary Celebration in 2024 here: <https://lomc.org/50-years/>

Stay connected and don't miss any updates or events with this contact form:

<http://eepurl.com/dFmNwj>



### October 14 Autumn Fest and Donut Fun 5K

**Join the St. Paul Team!** Run/Walk/Hike with us on Oct 14 at LOMC at 10am. Use this link to register with our "St. Paul, Sterling" team. <https://lomc.org/5k/#form>

Even if you cannot join us on the day you can still sponsor the team!

### November 17-18 LOMC Middle School Retreat

Chat with Pastor Makayla about details and registration by mid Sept.

**BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES FOR OUR CHURCH MEMBERS**

If you don't see your name on this list or there is a correction to be made,  
please let Sue know in the church office

1	Bill Duncan	<b><u>Happy 38<sup>th</sup> Anniversary</u></b>
6	Donna Kendall	September 14, 1985
10	Maddison Grell	Scott & Eileen Wolber
15	Pastor Makayla	<b><u>Happy 11<sup>th</sup> Anniversary</u></b>
16	Mary Wolber	September 15, 2012
18	Elizabeth Engstrom	Cliff & Katie Pfundstein
19	Bradyn Arians	<b><u>Happy 58<sup>th</sup> Anniversary</u></b>
21	Sharon Worley	September 15, 1965
22	Brent Eilers	Mel & Kathy Johnson
25	Samanatha Spaulding	<b><u>Happy 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary</u></b>
29	Keith Peugh	September 25, 1993
	Scot Beyer	Lyle & Liz Spaulding



# Stories & Songs with Brian Spahr on Sept. 24th at 1 p.m. at Immanuel.

(501 8<sup>th</sup> Ave., Rock Falls, IL)

**All are welcome!** A free will offering  
will be received to support Brian's ministry.



# Youth News!

## Children's Offering

Throughout September we will be receiving a special Children's Offering to support "Celebrating Families" being led by LSSI!



Celebrating Families is a successful, evidence-based 16-week curriculum that addresses the needs of children and parents in families that have serious problems with alcohol and other drugs. Each session begins with a family meal, followed by family members breaking into age groups for developmentally appropriate activities led by the group facilitators. At the end of each session, all family members re-connect in activities to learn how to apply these new skills and interact in healthy ways. Celebrating Families empowers by teaching healthy living skills like anger management, communication, healthy living and nutrition, and problem/goal setting. **Your donations will help make this life changing program possible! Thanks in advance for your generous giving!**



**Youth Service Night opportunity at St. John's.** On Wednesday September 27th from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm youth from St. John's, St. Paul, and Immanuel will be helping pack LWR School Kits. Education is one of the strongest tools a community has for breaking the cycle of poverty. Ensuring that girls attend school, especially in places where their access is deprioritized, has even stronger results. Lutheran World Relief School Kits contain essential supplies to help children — and in some cases, adults — continue learning in the face of serious obstacles. That learning leads to a better life for them, their families and their communities. Please come out to help assemble these resources that support our siblings down the street and around the world.



## Faith Formation Fall Kick-Off Sept 10

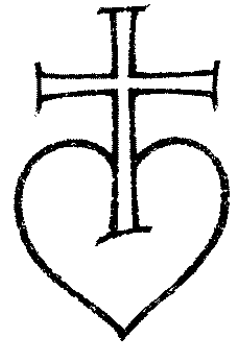


Sunday School and Confirmation lessons return Sunday Sept 10. After worship, kids PreK-teens are invited to stay for Sunday School/Teen Time. We will have stations and activities for all ages. Kids in 5th-8th grade are invited to Tri-Church Confirmation time at St. Paul from 11am-2pm with lunch, games, and faith conversations.



## **Middle School Ministry of Confirmation**

**5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Graders:** Confirmation is a multi-year opportunity to explore your faith through Bible Study, questions, service, worship, retreats and more! Immanuel, St. Paul and St. John's are teaming up for Confirmation this year through monthly Sunday gatherings from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. beginning in September that will dive into the contents of Luther's Small Catechism. Each session will include a light lunch.



We also have service and fellowship opportunities such as retreats and packing Buddy Bags, lunches for school kids to take home on the weekend. We pack right up the road at Wesley Methodist Church 2200 16th Ave. in Sterling.

### **The schedule for the year is below:**

September 10, 2023; 11am-2pm at St. Paul, exploring baptism

October 1, 2023; 11am-2pm at St. John's, exploring the Apostles Creed

October 24, 2023; 4pm Selmi's Corn Maze Fellowship

November 12, 2023; 11am-2pm at Immanuel, exploring the Apostles Creed

November 17-18 LOMC Middle School Retreat

November 29 7pm; Buddy Bags Packing at Wesley Methodist

December 3, 2023; 11am-2pm at St. Paul, exploring the Apostles Creed

January 14, 2024; 11am-2pm at St. John's, exploring the Lord's Prayer

January 26-28, 2024; Schaumburg Youth Quake Retreat

February 4, 2024; 11am-2pm at Immanuel, exploring the Commandments

Feb 28 7pm Buddy Bags Packing

March 3, 2024; 11am-2pm at St. Paul exploring the Commandments

April 14, 2024; 11am-2pm at St. John's, exploring the Commandments

April 24 7pm Buddy Bags Packing

May 5, 2024; 11am-2pm at Immanuel exploring Communion

We hope you can attend as many opportunities as you are able. Nothing is required, but now is the time to explore faith and friendship. You will get out of our time together what you put into it.

**6-8th graders: The Fall Retreat at LOMC November 17-18!** This overnight adventure involves digging into God's word and creation while sleeping in a cabin at LOMC! Cost is \$65. If you are interested in attending this retreat please let Pastor know by September 15. We will attending with a few other churches in the area and sharing chaperones among our churches. If you would like to participate and have financial need please speak with Pastor privately. Please note Hometown Holidays in Rock Falls is November 17.

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**8th-12th graders: National Youth Gathering Registration opens this Sept**



Every three years, thousands of high school youth and their adult leaders from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gather for a week of faith formation known as the ELCA National Youth Gathering (NYG). Through days spent in interactive learning, worship, Bible study, service and fellowship, young people grow in faith and are challenged and inspired to live their faith in their daily lives. The theme for the NYG & YAG is Created to Be! We are created to be brave,



authentic, free disciples who work for justice and live in God's love! Full information and projected budgets were shared at an informational meeting in August and emailed out on August 6. If you would like more details and have not yet received it, please contact Pastor. **TO REGISTER** for the NYG: Please complete your registration form and submit your \$75

deposit to your church by September 11. Registration opens September 15. We intend to register in the early registration window of the NYG in order to obtain lowest fees and priority for hotel assignment. Forms are available through the church office.

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**18-35 year olds: Young Adult Gathering**

The ELCA is thrilled to partner with ELCA Young Adult Ministries to provide the first-ever ELCA Young Adult Gathering alongside the 2024 Gathering in New Orleans! All young-adult participants will be divided into cohorts based on age and housed a different hotel. Individuals interested in attending the ELCA Young Adult Gathering will need to register apart from any congregational group attending the ELCA Youth Gathering and are able to travel with our group. Just to be clear-- the YAG is a separate event happening alongside the Youth Gathering. There will be separate programming for young adult participants and the only time young adult



participants and youth participants will be together is during the Mass Event each night. The ELCA Young Adult Gathering registration is \$260 per person from September 15-Nov. 1, which will increase to \$310 per person on Nov. 2, 2023 and then again to \$360 on Feb. 15, 2024. A nonrefundable, per-person deposit of \$150 is due at registration and must be paid within the registration rate you expect to pay. Registration will be online and open September 15. Please contact Pastor if you plan to participate and she will send you the registration link as soon as it is available!

## **Community Announcements**



**Rock Falls United Methodist Church**, 210 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, is having a Rummage Sale Friday, September 8, 8:00a-4:00p, and Saturday, September 9, 8:00a-12:00p. Books, toys, stuffed animals, kid's clothes, pictures, jewelry, yarn, carousel music horses and clowns, ping pong tables, industrial pressure cookers, holiday décor, and LOTS of miscellaneous!!

**Rock Falls Methodist Church** sponsors a program: ***Bear Necessities Personal Care Pantry***. The pantry is open the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month from 10:00 a.m. until noon. Families are eligible to receive products from the pantry by showing their current LINK card. Each family receives the following items, which are not able to be purchased with the LINK card:

laundry detergent

toilet paper

bath soap

toothpaste

Dish soap

shampoo

Additionally, the following items are available upon request:

shaving cream

deodorant

toothbrushes

feminine hygiene products.

Donations of any of the listed items, as well as monetary donations to support the pantry, may be made simply by dropping the items off at the church weekdays between 8:00 a.m. and noon.

This pantry has been open since September 21, 2003.



# Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

The history of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) is strongly rooted at its Nachusa campus, where the Nachusa Lutheran Home was first chartered in 1903. On May 12, 1904, the home received the first of many children who lived there over the years. Northern Illinois Synod congregations and individuals have been, and remain, critical to the services LSSI provides throughout the Synod.

In June, the LSSI Board of Directors approved the sale of the Nachusa campus to the Dixon School District. The campus will be used to establish a therapeutic school for the district. As part of the conditions of the sale, LSSI will rent office space on the campus for current staff in its Children's Community Services programming, including foster care and prevention services. The therapeutic school that the Dixon School District will establish at Nachusa, as well as the office LSSI will retain, continues the tradition of serving children at the campus.

This milestone in LSSI's history is a time for reflection and celebration. On Tuesday, September 12, at 2:30 p.m., Northern Illinois Synod Bishop Stacie Fidler will join with LSSI, synod pastors, and community friends for a brief service of celebration on the Nachusa campus followed by light refreshments. Congregation members are invited.

Please RSVP to [Kathy.Hall@LSSI.org](mailto:Kathy.Hall@LSSI.org) by September 6<sup>th</sup> if you plan on attending.



Nachusa Lutheran Home - 1261 Illinois Route 38, Nachusa, IL 61057

# Puzzle!

Complete this Bible passage by adding the missing vowels.

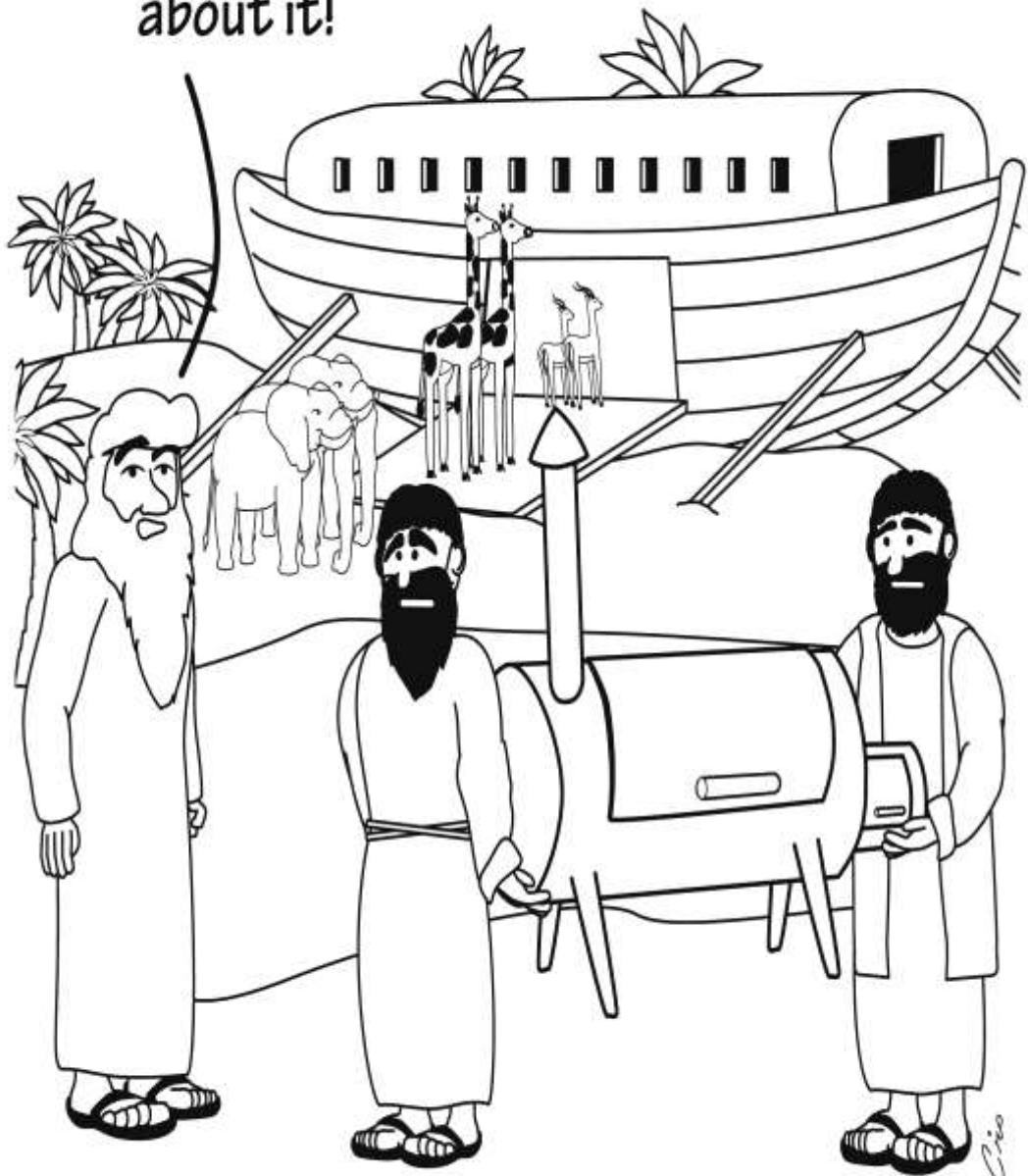


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\_ph\_s\_ \_ns 2:8-9, NRSV



Don't even think  
about it!



## TELEPHONE PRAYER SUPPORT GROUP

We welcome your prayer requests and also your praise reports:

*(Want to be a part of this? Call the church office.)*

Pastor Makayla (815) 780-9401

Janie Billings

Judy Bartel

Greg Zeigler

James 5:16 *Pray one for another.*

## DIRECTORY OF STAFF and CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

Pastor Makayla Dahleen

(815) 780-9401 – [pastormakayla@stpaulsterling.com](mailto:pastormakayla@stpaulsterling.com)

Sue Dirks, Parish Secretary

(815) 535-3574 – [sue@stpaulsterling.com](mailto:sue@stpaulsterling.com)



### **2023 Congregation Council**

President – Jim Gorman

Vice President – Greg Zeigler

Treasurer – Chrissy Zollinger

Secretary – Jennifer Pillars

### **Christian Education/Youth**

Jennifer Pillars ('24)

Stacey Avelar ('25)

### **Stewardship**

Greg Zeigler ('25)

### **Lay Ministry & Worship**

Chrissy Zollinger ('25)

Julie Woessner ('25)

### **Property & Management**

Dan Bartel ('24)

Jim Gorman ('25)

Chad Arians ('25)

### **Social Outreach**

Stacey Avelar ('25)

Jennifer Pillars ('24)

**ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
1701 Sixteenth Ave.  
STERLING, ILLINOIS 61081

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PLEASE DO NOT HOLD**



***LOVING – SERVING – SHARING***

**DIRECTORY OF STAFF**

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