



St. Paul Lutheran Church ELCA

1701 Sixteenth Avenue
Sterling, Illinois 61081-1543
Phone (815) 625-3069

Email: stpaulsterling@comcast.net
Website: www.stpaulsterling.com

JUNE 2025

"A Call to Worship"

It has been a privilege and delight to worship with you, the members and friends of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Sterling, in these past few months. In accordance with the Scriptures, this congregation's constitution and bylaws lift up the importance of worship as being central to our lives as followers - as disciples - of Jesus Christ. I pray that worship is - or becomes - central in your life as a Christian and as a member of St. Paul's.

In Luther's *Large Catechism* - within his discussion of the Third Commandment, "*Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy*" - Luther writes that it is important to "*keep holy days so that people may have time and opportunity, which otherwise might not be available, to participate in public worship, that is, that they may **assemble to hear and discuss God's Word and then praise God with song and prayer.***"

Take a closer look at the verbs of that sentence. "*Keep... participate... assemble... hear... discuss... praise.*"

I ask and invite you to examine your worship life in light of these words. And may the Lord, through this examination, strengthen you in your worship life - for the sake of you and your family, for the sake of others who need to gather with you, and for the sake of the Lord God - the Lord who calls us through the psalmist: "***Come, let us worship before the Lord our Maker!***"

Keep. Are you keeping the Sabbath Day holy by making worship a *priority* choice on Sunday morning - and not just one of many choices?



Participate. When you worship are you fully participating? Do you sing out? Do your liturgical responses (i.e. - Amen, and also with you, thanks be to God, peace be with you, etc.) come from your heart? Or is your mouth the only part of your body that is participating in these words?

Assemble. Are you conscious of the fact that you are worshipping within an assembly of *others* who are filled with thanksgiving, or pain, or worry, or joy, or doubts, or....? If we are gathered in assembly with others, then we have a responsibility to share God's love and care with others. We don't do that if we are turned in on ourselves and just our own joys or sorrows or concerns. Be aware of those in the assembly who need the Lord's touch through you.

Hear. Do you open yourself up in worship to hear God's Word - a word that may be very different from what you may have been telling yourself?

Discuss. When you hear God's Word to you, do you give yourself opportunity to discuss it - both with yourself and with others? The discussion with oneself can certainly happen during worship, but our usual way of worshipping doesn't open itself up to many discussion opportunities with others. This is certainly one area where I hope your worship life overflows into the rest of your life. Family and friend discussions about what you heard God calling you to do and to be are very important to our lives as disciples of Christ.

Praise. Luther says that we praise God through our songs and prayers. Come - disciples of Jesus Christ - come every Sunday that you can - and praise the Lord!

In ministry and worship with you,

Pastor Mark S. Luepke

Summer Worship Leadership

It has been a joy to worship with you at St. Paul's over these past few months. But I want you to know of some upcoming Sundays when I will not be with you. Thankfully, Sue is making sure that worship leadership will be provided by others on the dates I won't be with you.

I will not be with you on Sunday, June 1st - having



offered my services to my pastor in Clinton, as she will be out of town that day. (It gets confusing at home when Nancy and I talk about the congregations we are a part of, since both of them are named "St. Paul"!) I will be back in Sterling on June 8th, Pentecost Sunday.

I will then be gone the Sundays of June 15, 21, 29, and July 6. The plan is that I will be back at St. Paul's to lead worship on the Sundays of July 13, 20, August 3, 10, 17, and 24.

Worshipping the Lord with you, Pastor Mark Luepke



This past month we have prayed for the following: Sandy Julifs, Mike, Lori Dewey, Debbie Dybinski, Stacy Verdick, Dylan Wescott, Ken & Sharon Mager, Dianne Miller, Bev Julien, JoAnn Garcia, Barb Lenn, Betty Steinke, Larry Wahler, and Lila Edeus.

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

Church Announcements

CLEO (Church Ladies Eating Out)

CLEO meet monthly at 5:30 p.m. at a designated restaurant. The June outing is on Monday, June 23. They will be going to T's Timeout 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 Judy Bartel at 815-751-6768. All are welcome!



Menz Group will meet at St. John's Lutheran Church in Sterling on Monday, June 2 at 6:00 p.m.

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

Shirley Dodd	Lori Dewey	Lila Edeus
Katherine Janssen	Sandy Julifs	Viola Koster
Cliff Miller	Sandra Sweitzer	Dale Worley



Join us For Worship

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

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



St. Paul Year Budget Report

2025 Budget \$293,589 (\$24,466 Monthly)

Totals through May 28, 2025

Budgeted Expenses \$122,330

Offerings/Interest \$56,184

Expenses \$68,008

Lutheran World Relief Quilting

We will NOT quilt in the month of June. We will continue to collect the items for the personal care kits.

Thank you to all who have purchased the bath soap, adult sized toothbrush, 1 sturdy wide-toothed comb and 1 metal nail clipper. We will pack them using the towels that were donated.

We can use any clean spot-free materials to be used within the quilts. They can be left in the closet next to the kitchen.

The next quilt day will be Wednesday, July 16.

If you have questions regarding the quilting contact Dawn Waite (815-631-8142) or Debbie O'Brien (815-441-0257).



Synod Assembly

Thank you to David Carrillo and Gabby Law for volunteering to attend the assembly this year. If you see them, please thank them for the service.

Synod Assembly

Northern Illinois Synod
Augustana College Rock Island
June 13-14, 2025



NAME TAG SUNDAYS!

The first Sunday of each month we are having name tag Sundays. This will help us all! The ushers will remind us to make our own nametags as we enter the sanctuary.

Friendship Pads/Connect Cards/Prayer Request Papers

The Worship Team is streamlining our paper in the pews! Look for new connect cards where you can share all of your details. These also have a place for prayer requests. As always, if you would like to have Pastor include your prayer request in that Sunday's public prayers, please hand your connect card to an usher during the gathering hymn.



Stewardship – Give Generously

Rivers do not drink their own water; Trees do not eat their own fruit;
The sun does not shine on itself and flowers do not spread their fragrance for themselves.

Living for others is a rule of nature. We are born to help each other.

No matter how difficult it is.....Life is good when you are happy;
But much better when others are happy because of you!

Pope Francis

**No one has ever become poor by giving.
Treat your treasures as a trust; God will meet your
deepest needs. Use your talents!!
Give generously with a grateful heart!**



Tri Church: God's Work Our Hands – Cledy's House of Hope



Cledy's House of Hope was introduced in the May newsletter as a Tri Church God's Work Our Hands project. Cledy's is a sober living home for women with a current wait list of 10 women located in the former Arrowwood facility in Rock Falls and next to the former Rock Falls Rehab Nursing Home. On Sunday, June 8th, Ashley Odell, a Cledy's staff member, will give a brief temple talk on her recovery story.

How can you help? To help “furnish” this 42-bed facility, Cledy's House of Hope has a *needs list* of new items as follows: bath towels and wash cloths, twin size sheet sets and comforters, pillows and pillowcases; cups, plates and bowls – sets of 4; cooking sheets and cooking utensils; and brooms and dustpans. These items will be collected through the month of June and can be brought to the church. Cash donations (check to Sauk Valley Voices of Recovery) or Thrivent cards are also welcome. Also, volunteer help can be utilized to visit local thrift stores in search of gently used additional needs list items not mentioned above – contact Deb Keaschall at 815-718-5237 if interested.

In addition, there are still a variety of projects such as sanding and painting cabinets, tables and dressers. They are also looking for someone to help with weekly mowing of the grounds (mower is provided). While there is no designated date to help with these projects, please contact Deb Keaschall to help coordinate your availability with Cledy's staff.

**Thank you in advance for “your hands” to support
God's work in our local community.**

Deb Keaschall, Tri Church Convener



BIRTHDAYS FOR OUR CHURCH MEMBERS & FRIENDS

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	Megan Geiger	<u>Happy 18th Anniversary</u>
2	Ryan Arians	June 1, 2007
4	Debbie O'Brien	Brent & Katherine Eilers
5	Kameron Eakle	<u>Happy 37th Anniversary</u>
6	Gabe Zeigler	June 3, 1988
7	Ann Wolber	David & Donna Kendall
8	Diane Reed	<u>Happy 9th Anniversary</u>
	Justin Saathoff	June 11, 2016
9	Katherine Janssen – 98	Shawn & Ashley Platz
12	Melissa Arians	<u>Happy 39th Anniversary</u>
14	Caleb Bartel	June 14, 1986
16	Charlotte Shore	Randy & Mary Betz
17	Lisa Lobdell	<u>Happy 52nd Anniversary</u>
19	Myra Oelrichs	June 23, 1973
	Gerad VonHolten	Larry & Adele Schettler
21	Jackson Mager	<u>Happy 21st Anniversary</u>
23	Lucas Engstrom	June 24, 2004
25	JJ Shore	Mel & Dawn Arians
	Charlie Lincoln	<u>Happy 19th Anniversary</u>
26	Lila Edeus	June 24, 2006
	Gabby Law	Chad & Melissa Arians
27	Audrey Cox	<u>Happy 19th Anniversary</u>
	Jessica Woodworth	June 24, 2006
28	Ashley Platz	Tony & Kelci Eakle
		<u>Happy 19th Anniversary</u>
		June 24, 2006
		Tony & Kelci Eakle
		<u>Happy 35th Anniversary</u>
		June 30, 1990
		Brian & Lisa Lobdell



Youth News!



THANKS BE TO GOD FOR OUR GRADUATES:

This month we honor and celebrate 8th grade students, high school senior graduates and post-high school graduates. May God continue to bless you for who you are and in all that you do. On Sunday, June 1, we'll be having a special graduate blessing during worship at St. Paul.

Academic Achievements

AJ Avelar: Challand Middle School – 8th Grade Promotion

Austin Petty: Dixon Middle School – 8th Grade Promotion

Lillyanna Reyes: Rock Falls Middle School – 8th Grade Promotion

Walker Bartel: Oregon Middle School – 8th Grade Promotion

Jackson Mager: Sterling High School

Paige Reitzel: Sterling High School

Hunter Bartel: Oregon High School

Amy Zeigler: Augustana College, BA in Math and English. She will attend the University of Iowa College of Law this fall.

If we missed you or your loved one, please contact the church office.

STUDENT MUSICIANS:

This summer, the **UNITE** churches are again hosting student musicians from the Sterling/Rock Falls area. This includes any student completing 7th grade – a just graduated college student. We ask that students share a piece with St. Paul and then arrange to play that piece at other **UNITE** congregations, where you will be paid \$25/service as a guest musician. This is a chance to keep your music skills tip top over the summer, share an IMEA or audition piece you may be working on, or another special piece. Please contact Dawn Zeigler 815.275.3775 or dawn@stpaulsterling.com for all of the details! We can't wait to hear you!





Children's Offering

The children's offering for the month of June will support Cledy's House of Hope: A Legacy Women's Sober Living Home. Located in Rock Falls, IL, Cledy's House of Hope is a 42-bed recovery residence for women, designed to honor the legacy of Cledy Rumley, a devoted mother and champion of hope. This safe, structured, and supportive environment is a sanctuary for women committed to rebuilding their lives in sobriety.

Cledy's House of Hope welcomes women from all over the world who meet strict eligibility requirements. Residents must actively participate in a recovery program and demonstrate a commitment to personal growth and accountability.



Mark your Calendar!

Registration is now OPEN for **Community VBS 2025!** Join us **July 20–24** at **Immanuel Lutheran Church in Rock Falls** for True North: Trusting Jesus in a Wild World—an unforgettable week of adventure, worship, and faith-building fun for kids **entering Pre-K through 5th grade**. VBS runs from **6:00–8:00 PM each night**, with a **free dinner served at 5:30 PM**. We're also

looking for volunteers (6th grade through adult) to help lead games, crafts, music, Bible stories, and more. Whether you love being on stage or serving behind the scenes, there's a place for you! Scan the QR code to register kids or sign up to volunteer. Let's help kids discover that when life gets wild, Jesus is our True North!



CommUNITY VBS Worship is on July 27 at 9 a.m. at Grandon Civic Center. If it rains, worship service will be held at Immanuel.



Volunteer sign up.

Help Support Miss Gabby and the Children's Ministry!

As we plan for the year ahead, we are working on building a reliable list of volunteers who are willing to lend their time and talents to help care for and guide the children in our church. To make this process easy, we've created several volunteer sign-up sheets, each one describing a specific role or task within the ministry.

Please take a moment to read through each job description and sign up for any areas where you feel called to serve. Whether you can help weekly, monthly, or occasionally, your involvement makes a difference.

Miss Gabby is trying to get a sense of who is willing and able to volunteer so we can begin organizing schedules and planning well for the year ahead.

The sign-up sheets are available on the back table in the sanctuary. Thank you for prayerfully considering how you can be part of this important ministry. Your support helps create a welcoming and nurturing environment for our children to grow in faith.



Father's Day craft.

Sunday June 1st and Sunday June 8th, Miss Gabby will have a Father's Day craft ready for students. If you'd like to make a special craft for a special dad in your life, meet Miss Gabby after service. These crafts will be gifted after service on Father's day.

Splash Day

I hope you all are enjoying the start of summer! I'm planning another splash day for this year. I know a lot of you will be busy and planning vacations, so I wanted to know which weekend would be best so most families can attend. I created a doodle poll, please follow the link and vote which Sundays you would be able to attend. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out. Thank you all so much! ~ Miss Gabby [Doodle Poll Link](#)





The 40th anniversary of the Child Fair and we are excited! We invite you this year on Saturday, June 7th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Sauk Valley Community College. The theme is "Candy Land". The Child Fair is not only entertaining but also educational. The family – friendly event will be held indoors and outdoors. **Free Admission:** Miller's Petting Zoo, Bounce House, Emergency Vehicles, Interactive Booths and Exhibit Displays. For more information visit svcc.edu/childfair

Summer Splash will be held **Saturday, June 21** from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at RB&W Riverfront Park in Rock Falls. This **free family friendly fun** is for all ages. Activities throughout the day including craft and food vendors. All are welcome! To check activities and times visit www.rockfallschamber.com





ALL ARE WELCOME to join in the fun at **Touch-a-Truck**, sponsored by the Sterling Park District, on Saturday, **June 28th from 10:00 a.m. to noon at RB&W Riverfront Park in Rock Falls.** There will be all kinds of big trucks for kids and adults to see, touch, and climb inside. There are maybe some fun giveaways at each truck as well.

Summer Camp

Now is the time to sign up for Summer Camp! The theme for 2025 is Remember. Reconnect. Renew.

Camp is offered weekly from June 15-August 5. All camps enjoy a full schedule each day at the beautiful 600+ acres of LOMC. Campers experience morning devotions, natural exploration, cookouts, Bible study, archery, team building, campfires, games and so much more. Come to LOMC this summer for a unique outdoor experience! You can learn more about all the great options for LOMC Summer camp at www.lomc.org. A non-refundable deposit per camper is required to hold your space. **In addition to summer camp, LOMC has tent and trailer sites available for rent!** LOMC is also looking for volunteers to assist with mowing – please call the camp if you can help (815-732-2220).



Northern IL Synod 2025 Focus



Think about your earliest memory of worship. What did you see, hear, touch, and smell? Who was with you?

Did your earliest memory of worship leave a lasting impression on you?

The earliest occurrence of the Hebrew word for “worship” is in Genesis 22:5 in the story of Abraham’s near sacrifice of Issac. Certainly, the Bible records earlier images of one-on-one conversations with God, but the word “worship” is first used when there are two people gathered. In this instance, though the circumstance initially appears to be one of dread, it becomes one of praise and thanksgiving for what God has done.

When we speak of worship, we mean the assembly of the people of God in communal prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, guided by God’s Holy Word and Sacraments.

Read through Psalm 95:1-7

There is a clear image of the assembly at worship in this psalm. In the mind's eye, you can experience this congregation at work. There is an invitation: "Come, let's worship:"

Hear their exuberance: "Let us make a joyful noise."

See their reverence: "Let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord."

Understand their motivation: "For the Lord is our God and we are the people of God's pasture and the sheep of God's hand."

This snapshot of ancient peoples going about their liturgy could well have been one taken from a twenty-first century photo album.

In what ways does corporate worship equip you for worship, witness, and service in your daily living?



Community Announcements

Breaking Bread Together (BBT)

Please join us for BBT in June! The purpose of BBT is to share life together; connecting in God's love and welcoming God's presence in all of life. These are no host gatherings for all interested parties. **We are changing the days of the week to meet to Mondays in June.** Please **join us for BBT on Monday, June 2 at 11:30 a.m. at Froggy's Bar & Grill** (215 W. 2nd St., Rock Falls). **You are also welcome to join us for a special day in Walnut, Monday, June 16 at 11:30 a.m. at The Shed Tap N Grill** (134 S. Main St., Walnut). If you would like to carpool, we will leave from Immanuel at 11 a.m. **Following lunch on June 16th, we will be visiting with Virgil Rhodes!** If you are unable to join us for lunch, you are most welcome to join in visiting Virgil by meeting us in the bird room at Allure (302 S. 2nd St., Walnut) at 1 p.m. on June 16. Those who carpool may also stop at Avanti Foods Company Store on the way home. **Come and share life with God and each other at BBT!**

**Breaking
Bread
Together
BBT**



Caring Community Artful Party

You are invited to a paint party on Saturday, June 28th at 10:30 a.m. hosted by Linda Von Holten at St. John's (703 3rd Avenue, Sterling) in the basement. The cost is \$40 which is paid at sign-up time. The **registration deadline is Friday, June 20th**. Checks made out to St. John's. Children age 8 & up are welcome if they have an adult present with them. **Proceeds to benefit the YWCA of the Sauk Valley Domestic Violence Program. EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

Juneteenth is federal holiday in the United States commemorating the emancipation of enslaved African-Americans back in 1865, is observed on June 19. **A CELEBRATION OF JUNETEENTH** presented by the Sauk Valley Diversity Alliance and the Sauk Valley YWCA on **Saturday, June 21 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Grandon Civic Center** (304 Brinks Cr., Sterling). Come join us for a family friendly event celebrating Juneteenth! This event is free and is for people of all ages! We will have music, vendors, and games for kids! Come out and celebrate this great day in American History.



Rock River
Hospice & Home
STERLING, ILLINOIS

A Gathering in Remembrance

Join us for A Gathering in Remembrance, Rock River Hospice & Home's annual memorial service honoring the lives of those we have lost in the past year.

This heartfelt event offers a time of reflection, comfort, and community as we come together to remember our loved ones. This gathering is open to the public—all are welcome, whether or not your loved one received care from our hospice. Together, we honor their memory and the lasting impact they made in our lives.

JUNE
SUNDAY 8 2:00 PM

BETHEL REFORMED CHURCH
230 E 23RD ST.
STERLING, IL 61081

Please call 815-625-3858 or email
hospicecare@hospicerockriver.org by May 30th to have your
loved ones' names included in the readings and handouts.



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!

Saturday, June 14th | 5 PM – 9:30 PM

Westwood Fitness & Sports Center - 1900 Westwood Drive, Sterling IL

- 4:30-5PM** Event Site and Registration Open
- 5:00PM** 30th Celebration of Relay For Life of Sauk Valley IL
- 5:30PM** Opening Ceremony and Survivor Lap
- 8:00PM** Luminaria Ceremony
- 8:45PM** Closing Ceremony

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!



Johnson Oil Company

Express Lane
Gas & Food Store
In The Rock River Valley



Select Employees
Credit Union



Use the QR Code to
www.relayforlife.org/saukvalleyil
to register, donate and more details!



50 YEARS

of ELCA World Hunger



Northern Illinois Synod Giving Challenge for ELCA World Hunger

***All donations from March 16 to October 16
up to \$100,000 will be matched***

Join us now to be part of our journey to raise
not just \$100,000 ... **but \$200,000** in honor of
ELCA World Hunger's 50th Anniversary

Congregations and Individuals:

Mail a check or give online today!

Checks can be made out to Northern
Illinois Synod, please include ELCA World
Hunger in the memo.

*Just imagine, if every congregation
gave \$1,000 between now and October
16th, we would surpass our goal!*

The World Hunger Committee has
secured an anonymous donor to provide
the matching funds. We give God
thanks for this individual's generosity.
We give thanks for everyone who
contributes to help us reach this goal.



Northern Illinois Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Learn more about how your
congregation can participate at:

www.nisynod.org/hunger

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.)

Church office – 815-625-3069

Janie Billings

Judy Bartel

Greg Zeigler

James 5:16 *Pray one for another.*

DIRECTORY OF STAFF and CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

Pastor Mark Luepke

pastormark@stpaulsterling.com

Sue Dirks, Parish Secretary

(815) 535-3574 – sue@stpaulsterling.com

Gabby Law, Children Ministry

(815) 981-6470 – gabby@stpaulsterling.com

Dawn Zeigler, Music Coordinator

(815) 275-3775 – dawn@stpaulsterling.com

Julie Woessner, Children's Music Leader/Worship Song Leader

(815) 441-8084 – 4woessner@comcast.net

Shawn Andrews, Custodian

(779) 775-4530



2025 Congregation Council

President – Greg Zeigler

Vice President – Mary Ordean

Treasurer – Chrissy Zollinger

Secretary – Stacey Avelar

Christian Education/Youth

Stacey Avelar ('27)

Stewardship

Greg Zeigler ('27)

Social Outreach

Stacey Avelar ('27)

Lay Ministry & Worship

Chrissy Zollinger ('27)

Julie Woessner ('27)

Property & Management

Dan Bartel ('26)

Members-at-large

David Carrillo ('27)

Mary Ordean ('26)

Rayce Gale ('27)

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

1701 Sixteenth Ave.
STERLING, ILLINOIS 61081

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**– DATED MATERIAL –
PLEASE DO NOT HOLD**



LOVING – SERVING – SHARING

DIRECTORY

Office (815) 625-3069

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday; 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Friday – 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Pastor Mark's hours – Tuesdays – 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Email: stpaulsterling@comcast.net

Website: www.stpaulsterling.com

Facebook: St. Paul Lutheran Church – Sterling, IL

