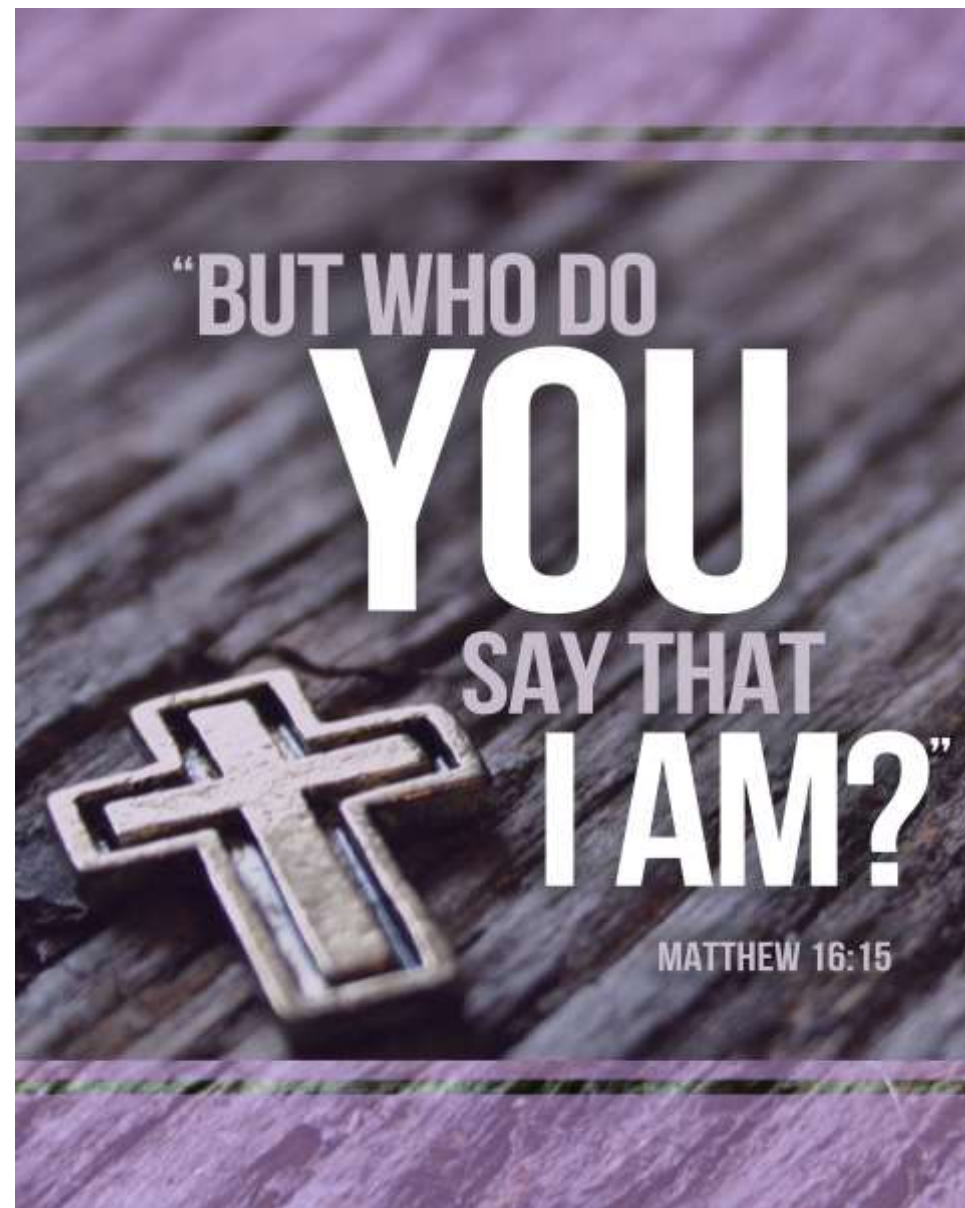




Sunday, August 23, 2026
9:00 a.m.

Welcome to St. Paul Lutheran Church

It is a joy to gather together for worship!

St. Paul Purpose Statement

Living Christ centered lives so we may love all, serve our community, and share the Word.

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:00 a.m. In-person worship with Holy Communion

10:15 a.m. In-person Sunday School – September – May

Communion

We celebrate Jesus' presence each week in Holy Communion. This is the Lord's Supper and Jesus invites us: whether you are a lifelong Lutheran, or just considering Christianity; if you are an infant or elderly; if your family has been in the United States for generations, or has only recently arrived; if you are LGBTQIA+ or straight; if you live with disabilities, chronic illness, or are able-bodied and currently healthy; if you are home-blessed or homeless; ... YOU are welcome at God's meal of grace at St. Paul.

Accessibility

Handicap parking, entrance, wheelchair, and restrooms are available. Sound amplifiers and large print bulletins are available. Please ask an usher for assistance.

Children's Offering

The August Children's offering will go to towards the shipping costs to send the Kits and Quilts for LWR.

Pastor Mark Luepke, Part-time Interim

pastormark@stpaulsterling.com

1701 16th Ave. Sterling, IL 61081

815-625-3069

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Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

In Isaiah the people are advised to look to their spiritual ancestors as the rock from which they were hewn. Jesus declares that the church will be built on the rock of Peter's bold confession of faith. God's word of reconciliation and God's mercy are keys to the church's mission. Paul urges us to not be conformed to this world but to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, using our individual gifts to build up the body of Christ. From the table we go forth to offer our spiritual worship through word and deed.

Prelude

"There is a Redeemer"

Green Offering

Welcome/Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose compassion endures forever.

All: Amen.

P: Let us bring every burden to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Compassionate God,

All: we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

P: Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." In the name of God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love.

All: Amen.

Gathering Hymn
“Making Their Way”

1 Mak-ing their way down through the a-ges, sin-ners and saints have
2 Mak-ing their way all the world o-ver, Chris-tians as-sem-ble
3 Mak-ing our way sea-son by sea-son, pil-grims, we jour-ney

heard God's call: wealth-y and poor, pow-er-ful, low-ly,
on this day, hear-ing the Word, shar-ing the Ban-quet,
till life's end, trav-el-ing light, shar-ing the rich-es,

Je-sus'dis-ci-ples, one and all. Gath-ered for wor-ship, of-fer-ing thanks,
learn-ing to walk in Je-sus' way. Mem-bers of Christ, u-nit-ed in love,
car-ing for strang-er as for friend, till in the joy of long-ing ful-filled,

the great-est with the least have come to share this feast.
they seek our God to know, and so to-gether grow.
to-gether we will come to our e-ter-nal home.

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939
Music: KOMT NU MET ZANG, A. Valerius, *Nederlandsch Gedenckclank*, 1626
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GREETING

P: The grace of our risen Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray together:

All: O God, with all your faithful followers of every age, we praise you, the rock of our life. Be our strong foundation and form us into

the body of your Son, that we may gladly minister to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 51:1-6

¹ Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness, you who seek the LORD. Look to the rock from which you were hewn and to the quarry from which you were dug.

² Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah, who bore you, for he was but one when I called him, but I blessed him and made him many.

³ For the LORD will comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places and will make her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song.

⁴ Listen to me, my people, and give heed to me, my nation, for a teaching will go out from me and my justice for a light to the peoples.

⁵ I will bring near my deliverance swiftly; my salvation has gone out, and my arms will rule the peoples; the coastlands wait for me, and for my arm they hope.

⁶ Lift up your eyes to the heavens and look at the earth beneath, for the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and those who live on it will die like gnats, but my salvation will be forever, and my deliverance will never be ended.

R: Word of God, Word of Life,

All: Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 138

R: I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with my whole heart; before the gods I will sing your praise.

All: I will bow down toward your holy temple and praise your name, because of your steadfast love and faithfulness; for you have glorified your name and your word above all things.

R: When I called, you answered me; you increased my strength within me.

All: All the rulers of the earth will praise you, O LORD, when they have heard the words of your mouth.

R: They will sing of the ways of the LORD, that great is the glory of the LORD.

All: The LORD is high, yet cares for the lowly, perceiving the haughty from afar.

R: Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you keep me safe; you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies; your right hand shall save me.

All: You will make good your purpose for me; O LORD, your steadfast love endures forever; do not abandon the works of your hands.

Second Reading: Romans 12:1-8

¹I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God's mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. ²Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

³For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

⁴For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, ⁵so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸the encourager, in encouragement; the giver, in sincerity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

R: Word of God, Word of Life,

All: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation



Gospel: Matthew 16:13-20

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 16th chapter.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹³Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴And they said, "Some say John the Baptist but others Elijah and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." ²⁰Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

P: The Gospel of the Lord,

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

Children's Message

Sermon

Pastor Tammy Anderson

Hymn of the Day

“Here On Jesus Christ I Stand”

Refrain

Here on Je - sus Christ I will stand. He's the
sol - id rock of my life. He's the sol - id rock of my
life. He's the sol - id rock of my life.

1 There's no oth - er place I can hide till the
2 It is not the work of my hands that has
3 When my days on this earth are done, and I

storm that rag - es sub - sides. My voice cries to God from the
washed a - way all my sins. I'm re - deemed, and all of my
stand at God's ho - ly throne, my heart will not have an - y

Refrain

flood, and I'm saved be - cause of his blood.
days, Je - sus Christ will be my heart's praise.
fear; in Christ's righ - teous - ness I am here.

Text: Kenyan hymn; adapt. Greg Scheer, b. 1966
Music: KWAKE YESU NASIMAMA, Kenyan melody; adapt. Greg Scheer
Text © 2007 East African Annual Conference, admin. General Board of Global Ministries, GBGMusik
English adapt. and arr. © 2007 Greg Scheer, admin. General Board of Global Ministries, GBGMusik

Apostles Creed

P: Trusting in Christ's life, death, and resurrection, let us profess our faith through the words of the Apostles' Creed:

All: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

Prayers of Intercession

P: With bold trust in God's unfailing provision, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

P: Merciful God,

All: receive our prayer.

P: Receive our prayers and answer, O God, as you have promised. All this we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

All: And also with you!

P: Let us share a sign of Christ's peace in whatever way you are comfortable.

Offering

"Lord I Want to Be a Christian"
African-American spiritual

Offering Prayer

P: Loving God, we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever.

All: Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

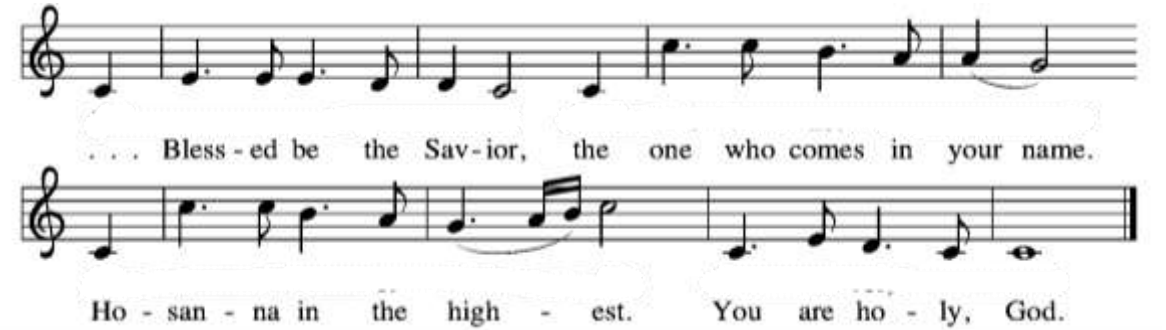
All: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

"Holy, Holy, Holy"



The Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Heaven has come near. Come, share in the feast!

Communion

“Lamb of God”



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

Communion Music

“Come, Share the Lord”

Leech

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God’s grace.

All: Amen.

P: Let us pray.

Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever.

All: Amen.

Blessing

P: Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, ☩ one God, bless, heal, and hold you today and always.

All: Amen.

Sending Song

“O Savior, Precious Savior”

ELW #820



1 O Sav - ior, pre-cious Sav - ior, whom yet un - seen we love;
2 O bring - er of sal - va - tion, who won - drous-ly hast wrought,
3 In thee all full-ness dwell - eth, all grace and pow’r di - vine;
4 Oh, grant the con-sum - ma - tion of this our song a - bove,
O name of might and fa - vor, all oth - er names a - bove:
thy - self the rev - e - la - tion of love be - yond our thought:
the glo - ry that ex - cel - leth, O Son of God, is thine.
in end - less ad - o - ra - tion and ev - er - last - ing love;
we wor - ship thee; we bless thee; to thee a - lone we sing;
we wor - ship thee; we bless thee; to thee a - lone we sing;
We wor - ship thee; we bless thee; to thee a - lone we sing;
then shall we praise and bless thee where per - fect prais-es ring,
we praise thee and con - fess thee, our ho - ly Lord and King.
we praise thee and con - fess thee, our gra - cious Lord and King.
we praise thee and con - fess thee, our glo - rious Lord and King.
and ev - er - more con - fess thee, our Sav - ior and our King!

Text: Frances R. Havergal, 1836–1879

Music: ANGEL’S STORY, Arthur H. Mann, 1850–1929

Dismissal

P: Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!

All: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“How Great the Joy”

Frykman

We Remember in Prayer; those on our Home Visitation list and those on our prayer list: Craig Green, Tricia M., Ken & Stephanie, Maggie Villafuerto, Richard J., Melinda, Callahan McCallister, Brock Woessner, Lori Dewey, the Woodworth family, Michelle Klinger, Matt Friel, Sandy Julifs, Mike, Dylan Wescott, and Phyllis Jacobson.

Worship Assistants:

Presider – Pastor Tammy Anderson

Opener/Head Usher/Closer – *Volunteer Needed*

Acolytes – Bartel family

Greeters – Dan Bartel family

Ushers – Nancy Beck, Diane Yoeckel

Reader – *Volunteer Needed*

Sound – David Carrillo

Communion Assistant – Nancy Beck

Altar Guild – Janie Billings, Susan Kuehl

Musicians:

Maureen Marrandino

Julie Woessner DeJonge

Next Week – August 30, 2026

Worship Assistants:

Rock River Valley Barbershop Chorus

Opener/Head Usher/Closer – *Volunteer Needed*

Acolytes – Arians family

Greeters – Audrey & Cathy Cox

Ushers – Diane Yoeckel, Donna Kendall

Worship Leader/Reader – Greg Zeigler

Sound – Bradyn Arians

Altar Guild – Janie Billings, Susan Kuehl

Coffee Fellowship – Nancy Eilers