



The Epistle

As the Father Has Sent Me, So I Send You



We are in the green season. Liturgically. The banners in the sanctuary, paraments on the altar, and vestments of clergy are green. Much like summer in July when things are growing, the focus of

the green season during worship is growing: growing as disciples and growing in faith.

The Gospel lessons throughout July focus on discipleship: what it looks like to follow Jesus and how we can follow him like the first disciples.

Many ask about the difference between disciples and apostles. Are they the same group or different, and what determined whether someone was an apostle or disciple?

The word disciple comes from the Greek, “mathatas,” meaning, “student, follower.” Jesus called the twelve disciples to be his students and followers. You recall his invitation, “Follow me.” The twelve disciples as well as women and

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As the Father Has Sent Me, So I Send You

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others traveled with Jesus. They literally followed him around in order to learn to follow him in spirit. They learned by watching and listening in order that they might mimic his behavior, attitudes, and beliefs.

The word apostle comes from the Greek, “apostolos,” meaning, “mission, messenger” as it includes the prefix, “apo” meaning “away from” Apostles are messengers who are sent. In John 20:21, Jesus announced, “As the Father has sent me so I am sending you.” The apostles were sent by Jesus to share the good news of life in relationship with God, forgiveness of sin, and eternal life.

The original eleven disciples (except Judas Iscariot since he died before Jesus was raised) were also apostles because Jesus sent them out to do ministry in his name. Paul was also an apostle and identifies himself as such in the introductions to his letters; he understood himself to be sent by Jesus to the Gentiles ever since he met him on the road to Damascus.

The Church is also sent out by Jesus to do ministry in his name. We, too, belong to both categories. We are disciples: stu-

dents who seek to learn from our teacher and master how to live. We are apostles: in our baptisms, God gave us His Holy Spirit and set us apart for holy living. Jesus sends us to be his messengers in our families, circle of friends, neighborhood, places of work or volunteering, virtual communities, and the whole world. Like the first disciples turned apostles, we have been called, enlightened, and sent by Jesus.

This same pattern is found in worship liturgy. We are gathered together by the Holy Spirit, study the Word of God in order to learn how to be more like our Teacher, fed by God at the Lord’s Supper so that we are nourished and strengthened in faith, and then SENT out at the end of worship to love and serve the Lord.

You might consider contemplating being an apostle and even make a ritual that whenever you leave home you pray something like, “O Father, now as I go out into the world, send me with your Holy Spirit. Guide and direct me to be your messenger and to faithfully represent Jesus. Amen.”

In Christ,
Pastor Emily Beckering

St. Paul Welcomes New Member and Our ELCA Regional Gift Planner



We welcomed Brad Majewski as a new member on June 25. Rev. Karl Biermann, our regional ELCA Gift Planner, visited to preach and host a workshop on estate planning. If you would like to set up an appointment with Pastor Biermann to review or begin your estate planning, please contact him at Karl.Biermann@elca.org.

Celebrations in July



- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Mark & Connie Lohmeier | 12 Donald Harris |
| 2 | Becky Betsch | 15 Dennis King |
| 3 | Joy Niefield | 16 Andrew Bardes |
| 6 | Donald Hosea | 17 Linda Miller |
| 7 | Leslie Willet | 19 Bradley Bronner, Elain Heskamp |
| 7 | Terry & Joyce McDowell | 23 Emma Hedges |
| 8 | Larry & Penny Huber | 27 Mark Lohmeier |
| 8 | Karen Dardeen, Evan Segar | 28 Cynthia Reed |
| 10 | David Hill | 29 Taylor & Pr. Emily Beckering |
| 11 | Lucy Sturgill | 29 Cindy Mayhugh, Betty Pack |
| | | 30 Carol Curless, Jeanne Fuller |

Focus on Social Concerns Committee

Have you ever wondered how a close-knit congregation like St. Paul has so much impact on the world outside our building? The answer is our amazing committees! Over the next few months, members of each committee will tell you about their work and what motivates them to serve in that ministry. This month the Social Concerns Committee is featured, with testimonies from Kathy Crosby and Janet King.

1. What led you to become involved in this committee?

Kathy: I got involved with Social Concerns through a happy accident. My first year on Council, (my fifth year is coming to an end), I served as the liaison between council and the Evangelism committee. Joyce McDowell was elected to Council my second term. She suggested that, since she was a member of the Evangelism Committee, I take over as liaison for the Social Concerns committee. I agreed to the switch, it made sense. The rest, as they say, is history.

Janet: I became involved with Social Concerns maybe ten years ago. At the time Social Concerns had a program meal of the month. A grocery bag was provided with a list of food items. Those bags were taken to Valley Interfaith. Over time we felt a need to change this pro-

gram to Item of the Month. These were items Valley Interfaith had difficulty fulfilling. It was during this transition I became involved.

2. How has being on this committee impacted your life?

Kathy: Being involved with the Social Concerns committee has given me the opportunity to see just how generous the wonderful people of St. Paul's are. They are truly Matthew 25:36 – 40 in action. They always respond to our requests with love and abundance. Social Concerns decided to do away with the monthly collections for Valley Interfaith but continue to support that organization through quarterly collections.

Janet: This committee has been the most rewarding for me, and I have been on several. It really connects you with the community. When a human need is met by the generosity of our congregation it strengthens your faith and proves St Paul is here to help God's people.

3. Explain to members how they can become involved with this committee.

Kathy: In the broader sense of the Social Concerns committee, all St. Paul members are involved. If they fill a shoebox for

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Focus on Social Concerns Committee

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the Christmas Child project, bring in soup for Valley Interfaith or a pair of gloves or a hat for the students of Reading Community Schools, or drop a few quarters into the Heifer Project tube they're involved and a blessing to Social Concerns and the larger community.

Janet: Social Concerns has several programs members can participate in.

- Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes
- Back to school and holiday food items for Valley Interfaith
- Food drives for mini food pantry behind Lace Bridal on Benson St.
- Medicine bottles for Matthew 25
- Pop tabs for Ronald McDonald House
- Coat drive for Reading Schools
- Hat and Mitten collection
- Good Samaritan Fund

4. How would you encourage others to join this committee?

Kathy: Every committee can always use more members. Currently, Social Concerns has six members: Penny Huber is the chairperson joined by Janet King, Kathy Hirt, Patrick Cathcart, Shirley Harbaugh, and me. Five of us have voting privileges. It's necessary for the Good Samaritan fund to have an odd number of

voters. Currently, the Good Samaritan fund is not available due to the financial constraints of our church. More members could always help with filling the little neighborhood pantry, counting donated items, wrapping shoeboxes, or delivering items to Valley Interfaith or Matthew 25. We meet every other month with some inconsistencies. Reach out to one of our wonderful committee members to find out what is coming up and when we will be meeting.

Janet: If you really want to connect with the community and see amazing results, this is the committee for you. Our committee chair, Penny Huber, is a wonderful leader and keeps this committee on point. We encourage everyone to participate in the many programs Social Concerns heads up.

From the Presiding Bishop: Who is a “real” American?



This article was originally published in the June 2023 issue of Living Lutheran magazine.

My husband and I live in Skokie, Ill., a diverse com-

munity. Our neighbors to the west are an octogenarian Taiwanese Evangelical couple who regularly order meals from Kosher to Go. Our neighbors to the east are a Ukrainian and Russian multigenerational family. Our grocery stores have both kosher and halal departments. As I drive past the elementary school on my way to work, I see moms and dads in jeans along with women in saris or hijabs and men in thobes or yarmulkes. More than 90 languages are spoken in the homes of our school district. We pay our taxes, mow our (tiny) lawns, worship, raise our children and pretty much get along in our little village of Skokie.

Late one afternoon a few years ago I was finishing up yard work. I had been weeding and trimming all day. I was tired and grass-stained. Just one more pile of

leaves needed to be swept up. I noticed a woman walking toward me so I hurried to get the sidewalk cleared. She stopped and told me that she had seen me working all day and thought I might be too tired to prepare supper. She had made a meal for me and my husband. It was during Ramadan—the month when Muslims fast from food and water during the day and engage in prayer and acts of charity. This was her act of charity and generosity. She smiled and walked away. I was stunned.

There has been an alarming rise in hate speech and violence against religious and ethnic minorities in this country. At the same time, we’ve seen an increased polarization among us, even in our dear church. There is a movement to define what it means to be a “real American.” Some would define this as white, Christian and native born. When Lutheran immigrants first came to this country in the 18th and 19th centuries, they weren’t considered real Americans. They didn’t speak English or fit in with the Deist, Calvinist religious majority. They were “other” and therefore suspect. German Lutheran immigrants weren’t considered white when they settled here. Neither

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Council Corner—June

As part of the monthly Financial Report, we reviewed our progress on the Thrive! Campaign. We are pleased to announce our participation in the Thrive! Campaign and that we only have \$1000 to go before meeting our pledges as a congregation. Our contributions have made ministry possible above and beyond regular mission support such as retreats and workshops for clergy and training for lay worship leaders. What an amazing difference our congregation has made throughout the Synod!

The primary focus of this month was to review our 2023 budget and financial status as a congregation. Committee liaisons and chairs were asked to meet with their respective committees and cut budget

line items when possible. Each chair/liaison then sent the revised budgets to the Treasurer. Council reviewed the revised budget items. The proposed revised budget will be presented to the congregation at the upcoming quarterly congregational meeting for a congregational vote. Please plan to attend the Quarterly Congregational Meeting on July 30.

Next month, Council will begin the planning process for 2024, so Committee Liaisons will be communicating with Committees and Committee Chairs to begin planning our ministry for 2024.

In Christ,
St. Paul Lutheran Church Council

Support St. Paul at Kroger!

Did you know that St. Paul benefits from the Kroger Community Rewards Program? Just follow the directions below to increase your church offering at no cost to yourself!

One-time step: Link your Kroger Plus Card to St. Paul.

- Visit [kroger.com/account/communityrewards](https://www.kroger.com/account/communityrewards) and log in with your Kroger account. (Kroger customer service can help with this.)
- Search for “St. Paul Lutheran Church” or organization number TG880.
- Click the ENROLL button under St. Paul’s name & address.
- After this, each purchase with your Plus card will generate donations to St. Paul!

From the Presiding Bishop: Who is a “real” American?

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were Irish, Italians or Poles. Catholics and Jews were considered an alien threat.

It’s ironic that the Puritans fled religious persecution and that the First Amendment states “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free expression thereof,” yet an element in our country wants to legislate that the United States is a Christian nation where Christianity should be privileged and only Christians should hold office. This is Christian Nationalism, which is neither Christian nor patriotic. There is no doubt that the Founders were Christian and that a majority of Americans identify as Christian. That is different from declaring Christianity as the established religion of the United States. And, dear church, let’s be clear, a Christian Nationalist does not define Lutherans as “Christian.”

God knows I love my country. This beautiful, fragile, yet surprisingly resilient experiment in democracy and nationhood that’s not predicated on shared ethnicity is unique among nations. My grandfather, father and uncles all served during World War I and World War II. I had the honor of placing a wreath on behalf of the ELCA at

the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery. I won’t have my patriotism questioned. Christian Nationalism is a perversion of the gospel and a threat to our democracy. It’s precisely because I love my country that I warn against it.

Who is a “real American”? I say that my Muslim neighbor walking freely down the street in a hijab to offer a meal to her Christian neighbor during Ramadan is a real American. Motivated by her Muslim faith she acted as neighbor to me. She is not less American because she is Muslim. Because she is an American, she can be her authentic self and participate in building our community and country. What binds us together is not ethnicity but shared participation in our civic life springing out of our cultural heritages and working for the common good.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton

St. Paul Lutheran Church

LOCATION KEY FH = fellowship hall

S = sanctuary

N = narthex

L = library

US = upstairs

O = outside

Mission Statement

Growing a Christian community where each is valued, accepted, and loved.

513-821-0987 | mail@stpaulreading.org

July 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><i>June 25</i> 4 Pentecost: New Member Joining 9 am Estate Planning Workshop (N) 10:30 am Worship (S) After worship: Reception of New Members 12:15 pm Estate Planning Appointments (Rev. Karl Biermann)</p>	<p><i>June 26</i></p>	<p><i>June 27</i></p>	<p><i>June 28</i> 2:30 pm Bible Study (N/Z)</p>	<p><i>June 29</i></p>	<p><i>June 30</i> 11:30 am-5:30 pm Church reserved for cleaning</p>	<p>July 1</p>
<p>2 5 Pentecost 10:30 am Worship (S) After Worship: Evangelism Committee (L)</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 <i>Independence Day</i> **HundredX fundraiser**</p>	<p>5 2:30 pm Bible Study (N/Z) 6 pm Christian Ed Committee (L)</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7 11:30 am-5:30 pm Church reserved for cleaning</p>	<p>8</p>
<p>9 6 Pentecost: Installation of New Council Members 10:30 am Worship (S) After worship: Thank-you reception for outgoing council members (N)</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12 2:30 pm Bible Study (N/Z) 7 pm Citywide ELCA youth planning session (L)</p>	<p>13 6 pm Scouts BSA (N/L)</p>	<p>14 11:30 am-5:30 pm Church reserved for cleaning</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>16 7 Pentecost 10:30 am Worship (S)</p>	<p>17 7 pm Council Meeting (FH)</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19 2:30 pm Bible Study (N/Z)</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21 11:30 am-5:30 pm Church reserved for cleaning</p>	<p>22 11 am Setup for Ice Cream Social 1 pm Community Ice Cream Social (O)</p>
<p>23 8 Pentecost 10:30 am Worship (S) After worship: Annual Picnic (O)</p>	<p>24 **Epistle Articles Due**</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26 2:30 pm Bible Study (N/Z)</p>	<p>27 6 pm Scouts BSA (N/L)</p>	<p>28 11:30 am-5:30 pm Church reserved for cleaning</p>	<p>29</p>
<p>30 9 Pentecost 10:30 am Worship (S) After worship: Quarterly Congregational Meeting (S)</p>	<p>31</p>	<p><i>August 1</i></p>	<p><i>August 2</i></p>	<p><i>August 3</i></p>	<p><i>August 4</i> 11:30 am-5:30 pm Church reserved for cleaning</p>	<p><i>August 5</i></p>

Our Life Together

To reach Pastor directly, please call the pastoral line at 513-760-5884.

If you have requests for the Prayer Chain, or to remove a person from the list, please contact the office at 513-821-0987 or mail@stpaulreading.org.

We pray for **Samantha Asbrock** (Marie Calhoun's friend); **Berkeley** (Carol Curless's great-grandson); **Jeannie Allen** (Faith Pirrmann's friend); **Teresa Bell** (former member); **Chrissi Bergt** (Kate Wollenburg's cousin); **Stephen Black** (Kim Coulehan's nephew); **Nancy Boone** (Gary Gries' sister); **Brett** (Kings' step-nephew); **Jodie Calhoun**; **Casey** (Cindy Sieckman's niece); **John Cathcart**; **Christy** (Terri DeAngelis' daughter); **Pat Coldiron**; **Sandy Cordes**; **Kathy Curless**; **Katie Demopoulos** (Diana Hawkins's niece); **Sara Eble** (Portmanns' friend); **Jane Erbeck**; **Nancy Erbeck**; **Larry Faulkner** (Freda's son); **Justin Feldman** (Bess Sturgill's father); **Cindy Flege**; **Lee Frank** (Barbara Moorhouse's niece's husband); **Darrell Frasure** (St. Paul neighbor); **Jeanne Fuller**; **Clara Garcia** (Cindy Mayhugh's sister); **Lena Gibson** (Pirrmanns' stepsister); **Nathaniel Gibson** (Les Eckerle's step-nephew); **Janie Grandy** (in-law of DeAngelis-Willet family); **Don Grau Jr.**; **Jim Hammerling** (Portmanns' son-in-law); **Ron Harbaugh**; **Chrissy Harris**; **Sandy Hatcher** (Linda Holt's sister); **Elain Heskamp**; **Ed Hirt**; **Andrew Horton**; **Penny and Larry Huber**; **Ellen Hunter** (Jeni Cathcart's grandmother); **Kate** (granddaughter of Dennis King's friend); **Mike Keefe** (Millers' neighbor); **Ken Keith** (Kris Keith's dad); **Chelsea King**; **Dennis King**; **Jackie King**; **Janet King**; **Earl (Buddy) King**

(Dennis's brother); **Marilyn Kline** (Cindy Sieckman's neighbor); **Loretta Kombrink** (Marilyn Portmann's aunt); **Tom and Mike Koze and family** (friends of Faith Pirrmann); **Chet Laine**; **Kelsee Lainhart** (friend of Kings); **Nelson Langefeld**; **Yvonne Lowery** (St. Paul Players); **Carroll Mayhugh Sr.** (Carroll Mayhugh's father); **Cindy Mayhugh**; **Jessica Mayhugh & family** (Mayhughs' niece-in-law); **Samantha Mersch** (Mayhughs' daughter, Sarah Papin's sister); **Jack Miller** (Becky Betsch's uncle); **Linda Miller**; **Mary Mills** (St. Paul Players); **Jessica Mink** (Donald Harris's cousin); **Barbara Moorhouse**; **Charlie Myers** (Coulehans' family friend); **Jean Nolte**; **Carol, Jim, and Jeannie Oerther** (Portmanns' sister and family); **Ann Ohr** (Barbara Moorhouse's cousin); **Richard Osborn** (Betty Pack's brother); **Rosie Osborn** (Betty Pack's sister); **Tom Osborn** (Betty Pack's nephew); **Tom Pack** (Betty Pack's son); **Eric Papin**; **LaCartha Pate** (Jeanne Wagner's friend); **Linda Perin** (Moorhouses' cousin); **Nick Pirrmann**; **Bob Price** (Kings' friend); **Barry Prince**; **Cynthia Reed**; **Dick Replogle** (Linda Miller's brother); **Christopher Rolfes** (Anne's son); **Mike and Judy Ryan** (friends of the Kings); **Sara and Evan** (Barbara Moorhouse's cousins); **Scott Schadel** (friend of McDowell's); **Shawn Schnetzer** (Sturgills' cousin); **Sheila Schultz** (Betty Pack's friend); **Shannon and Dane** (friends of Riddle family); **family** (Kings' neighbors); **Knox Shepherd** (grandson of Pr. Vicki Garber); **Kate Sheridan** (Kings' family friend); **Kim Sieckman**; **Michelle Snavely** (Laines' daughter); **Crosley Spelman** (Spelmans' grandson); **Kathy Spelman and family** (Joyce's sister-in-law); **Michael**

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Our Life Together

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Steele (Mayhughs' nephew); **Frank Sturgill** (Jim's dad); **Geri Toland** (Carole Replogle's neighbor); **Lish Trasser** (friend of DeAngelis-Willet family); **Treasure** (Les Eckerle's cousin); **Ralph Turner** (friend of Dennis King); **Jeanne Wagner**; **Melinda Wakefield** (Sherry Bronner's friend); **Daryl Wesselman** (Betty Pack's granddaughter); **Leslie Willet**; **Kate Wollenburg and family**; **Judy Young** (Janet King's sister); **Barb Zeh** (Jeni Cathcart's mom).

We pray for those with ongoing health concerns who are unable to come to church every week:
Betty Hoffmann, Betty Kline, Shirley Lathrop, Barbara Moorhouse, Jean Nolte.

We pray for our armed forces members: **Graham Barton** (Fords' neighbor); **Paul Cordes** (Elinor Schieman's grandson); **Victoria Derry** (Elinor Schieman's great-granddaughter); **Jared Forst** (Loretta's grandson); **Beau Glenn** (Karen Koehl's son-in-law); **Kylie Hahn** (Gretta Hahn's granddaughter); **Donald Hosea** (Karen Koehl's son); **Samuel McLoughlin** (friend of Cindy Sieckman); **Scott Minton** (Becky Betsch's brother); **Jobeth Ramirez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Joshua Rodriguez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Trent Schwegman** (cousin to the Erbecks and Fords); **Dustin Silvey**; **Alex Wisecup** (son of Nadine and Barry Wisecup).

Church Picnic & Congregation's Ice Cream Social July 23



Annual Church Picnic

**JULY 23
AFTER WORSHIP**

**EAST LAWN
(JENNY LIND ST.)**

**PLEASE BRING A
DISH TO SHARE**

The annual church picnic, and the congregation's ice cream social for St. Paul families and friends, will be held after worship on July 23. Please join us for treats and fun!

**St. Paul
Lutheran Church**

***Mission
Statement:***

Growing a Christian
community where
each is valued, ac-
cepted, and loved.

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH ✦
Community ✦
Ice Cream Social

**July 22
1-3 pm**

Free ice cream!
Games & fun

106 Maple St.
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stpaulreading.org



**St. Paul
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PLEASE
PLACE
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HERE

