



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Do you want to become one of the few, the proud, the Marines? If so, their initial strength test requires men to be able to do 34 pushups in under 2 minutes, run 1.5 in under 13:30, and hold a 40 second plank. If you can successfully complete that, you are fit to enter the US Marine Corps.

Do you want to become a St Paul Police Officer? If you are a man in your 20's, to pass the physical fitness test you need to be able to jump 21.5 inches in the air, do 37 pushups, and run 1.5 miles in under 14:43, plus your waist must be under 40 inches. If you pass that, you are fit to enter the St Paul Police Force.

But what if you want to enter the kingdom of God? What makes you fit for that? In Luke 9:62, Jesus tells us, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." This is Jesus' response when a man says, in effect, that he will follow Jesus, but first "I just need to kiss my mother goodbye, then I am all yours, Jesus." It seems a reasonable request, and yet Jesus seems to be telling him that if he does, he's not fit for the kingdom of God.

Then we are filled with many questions. If this man had not wanted to bid farewell to his family, would he have been fit for the kingdom of God? Was Jesus putting forth some sort of litmus test to determine fitness? Are all the promises of God through Christ Jesus dependent upon our skill at plowing straight furrows?

This is where a little self-examination may prove helpful. Do you ever look back? Is your plowing always true and straight, perfectly focused on following Jesus? Perfectly living as a citizen of the kingdom of God?

Or do you get distracted by the things of this world? Does your head spin round with the works of the flesh mentioned in Galatians 5, "fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, and carousing," causing your furrows to be crooked when you put your hand to the plow?

With such a broad list, how can any of us fail to be convicted? The kingdom of God requires absolute perfection, without one flaw. No poor plowers allowed! Not even if you far outpace all the other plowers with your dedication. One glance back, one tiny bend in your furrow, and you are unfit.

After hearing Jesus' harsh words to this man, perhaps we are desperate to distinguish ourselves from him. We want to come up with proof that we aren't like him. We want to put as much distance between him and us as we possibly can. Or, failing that, we hope to show that at the very least we have great future potential.

But when we do this, we show that we completely misunderstand the gospel. Jesus has set his face towards Jerusalem because that is the only way that you and I can be made fit. In Psalm 129:3 Jesus says, "The plowers plowed on my back; they made their furrows long." As you and I put our hands to the plow and look behind us, our crooked furrows are dug deeply into Jesus' back. We carve our sin onto his flesh. As Isaiah 53 says, "...he was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that made us whole, and by his wounds we are healed."

In Jerusalem, with the sin of the world carved upon him, Jesus was betrayed, arrested, flogged, mocked, and crucified. And this is precisely why God the Father sent only begotten Son, Jesus, into a world of crooked plowers – a world filled with people who are completely unfit for the kingdom of God. For our sake, Jesus plowed a perfectly straight line all the way to the cross, so that our crooked furrows will not be held against us and so that we will not remain unfit and forever outside the kingdom. He passed the fitness test by his death and resurrection, making you fit for the kingdom of God through the forgiveness of your sins. This means that yes, indeed, you will follow Jesus wherever he goes!

Join us each Sunday as we hear the Good News of how Christ makes us fit for his kingdom! See you in church!

Love from your sister in Christ,

Pr. Tricia

St. Paul Lutheran Church

Council Meeting-June 7, 2023 7:00 p.m.

President John Mueller called the June meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in Room 101. Members present were John Mueller, Tim Vogel, Jo Muske, Denise Gicker, Kathy Pederson, Pastor Tricia and Jeff Krueger. Jacob Marz, Sarah Groebner, Kim Graff and Randy Wendt were absent. Also present was Katie Mueller, Parish Coordinator and Anita Jensen, Financial Secretary.

Pastor led the group in a prayer.

M/S/P to approve the Secretary's minutes from the May meeting.

M/S/P to approve the Financial Report as printed.

M/S/P to pay the May benevolence. Anita will mail out giving statements at the end of June. Will also include a reminder about automatic withdrawal contributions to the church as a giving option.

Building and Grounds Report:

- There was nothing to report on Building and Grounds. It was noted that Al Groebner will be on vacation July 11-22. The Buerkle boys have been contacted about taking care of any yard and landscape work needed during his vacation.

Parish Education Report:

- St. Paul's will be hosting VBS in June 11-15. Things are taking shape. Pastor Tricia will do the openings and storytelling. Krystal Plaster and Megan Hillesheim will be in charge of decorating. April Beyer and Brenda Anderson will lead music. Craft items have been ordered. Each church will serve an evening meal.

Pastor's Report:

Visitation

- Visited with and gave Holy Communion to members in their homes, at nursing homes and at assisted living residences.

Worship

- Led worship with Holy Communion at The Maples on May 15, 2023.
- Led worship with Holy Communion at St. John's Circle of Care May 16, 2023.

- Presided at the funerals of Arland Kettner on May 13 and Moe & Shirley Weber on May 15, 2023.

Parish Education

- Leading Bible Study at The Maples on Mondays at 3:00 p.m.

- Leading Bible Study on Tuesday evenings at 6:00 p.m.

- Planning for VBS and purchasing supplies.

- Met with one couple for premarital counseling on May 23, 2023.

Community

- Helped one neighbor with paying her rent from the Good Samaritan Fund.

- Attended the St. John's Circle of Care Board Meeting on June 5, 2023.

- Planning the June 25, 2023 Riverside Days Community Worship Service with the Ministerium.

- Attended the Ministerial meeting May 23, 2023.

- Met with Jenniges/Reiner Trustees to determine scholarship awards on May 10, 2023.

- Met with Augustana District pastors to discuss how to help area congregations who are without pastors on May 23, 2023.

- Attended three graduation parties on May 20, 2023.

- Helped with St. John's Trigger Tournament on May 21, 2023.

- Visited St. John's Circle of Care with my puppy, Bojo, to do resident visits on June 4, 2023.

- Doing pulpit supply in Slayton on Saturday, July 1, 2023.

Old Business:

- Riverside Days Community Worship Service will be held Sunday, June 25 at 10 a.m. in Riverside Park. Gospel Express will provide special music. Aaron Tomschin will be in charge of sound. It will be held at our church if there is inclement weather. We need to supply at least two ushers. Kathy will work on helping find a couple of volunteers. There will be NO 9:00 a.m. service at St. Paul's that day.

- We will have a joint strategic planning meeting with St. Johns Church on Wednesday, June 28 at 6:00 p.m. All council members were invited to attend.

New Business:

- St. Paul's will be hosting an Augustana District Summit on June 28, 2023 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. Randy Freund will be leading the event. Major discussion will focus on lack of pastors to cover congregations in the area. St. Paul's is the only church in the immediate area that has a full-time pastor to serve the congregation. There will be discussion and brain-storming sessions for ideas.
- M/S/P to accept Katie's request to have Mondays off from now until mid-August. She will be available if something comes up and she is needed.
- M/S/P for Katie to obtain a Notary Public Commission that will last for five years. The cost is \$140. Jeff informed that a Notary Public Stamp may be ordered at the *Advance-Press*.

M/S/P to adjourn at 7:45 p.m. Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next meeting will be Wednesday, July 12, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

~Jeff Krueger, Church Council Secretary

2023 Church Council

John Mueller- Chair	Sarah Groebner
Denise Gicker- Vice Chair	Randy Wendt
Jeff Krueger - Secretary	Jacob Marz
Tim Vogel- Treasurer	Kathy Pederson
Kim Graff	Josephine Muske

Deadlines:

Sunday Bulletin: Wednesday by 10 am.

Epistle: 20th of each month. Please call or email the church office with additions or changes for the bulletins or Epistle. stpaul_lutheran@hotmail.com

- Notice: Please update your phone numbers and/or email address with the church office!
- Several of the numbers we have are disconnected and we need to know how to get a hold of you!
- You can leave a note in the box outside of Katie's office, call or email the church office at 507-723-5880 or stpaul_lutheran@hotmail.com. We appreciate you keeping us updated!

Please pray for... Ron Pierson (friend of Peter Heitzman), Taisley Salonek, Mya Scholtz, The family of Sherry Fenger, Dalores Stern, Delwin Beussman, Alvin Matzke, Jaylen Brownlee (LaCole Weisensel's fiancé), Donna Wersal, Marcia Schiller; Moe Lutheran – Trinity, Hudson, SD, New Creation Lutheran Church, Perham, MN, New Hope Lutheran Church, Comfrey, MN, New Life Lutheran Church, Duluth, MN, North Immanuel Lutheran Church, Pelican Rapids, MN, Our Redeemers Congregation, Badger, MN, Our Saviors, Lamberton, MN, Our Saviour's Lutheran Church – Nelson, MN; Jesse Kettner, Cylee Graff, Shane Clemon, Ethan Langseth, Emily Wendt, Tabor Gluth and all those serving in the military, at home and abroad.

Prayer Chain –If you have a prayer concern you would like passed along, please call Jan Severson (723-6358) or the church office (723-5880). Please specify if you want the concern on (1) the Prayer Chain and/or (2) included in Sunday morning prayers which will be included for **two** Sundays unless otherwise specified or request is renewed.

St Paul Attendance
 5/28 9am—36 6/4 9am—57 6/11 9am—49
 6/18 9am—47 Ecumenical Worship in the Park 6/25 10am—136

Budget Recap Year-To-Date (01/01/23 to 06/26/23)

Total Funds for Budget	\$85,777.47	Total Operating Funds	\$85,777.47
Budget	\$105,418.82	Operating Exp.	\$101,702.79
Difference	(\$19,641.35)	Difference	(\$15,925.32)

Thrivent Financial—As always, St. Paul Lutheran Church is grateful for your consideration when you make charitable giving plans. If you are a Thrivent Financial member eligible to direct Choice DollarsSM, we ask you to consider St. Paul Lutheran as you help direct Thrivent Financials charitable funds.

Memorials Given 05/26/23—06/26/23

<u>In Memory:</u>	<u>Given by:</u>	<u>Designated for:</u>
Denton “Red” Kohlhof	Richard & Lois Zihlke	St. Paul Lutheran Church
Sherry Fenger	Robert & Sharon Rogotzke	St. Paul Lutheran Church
Arland Kettner	Daniel Kettner	St. Paul Lutheran Church
	Audrey Rieck	St. Paul Lutheran Church
	Ken & Sharon Renner	St. Paul Lutheran Church
	Tim & Jill Vogel	St. Paul Lutheran Church
	Ed Meidl	St. Paul Lutheran Church
	Karen Shiveley	St. Paul Lutheran Church
	Loren & Donna Wing	St. Paul Lutheran Church
	Family & Friends	Donation for Fellowship Hall TV
	Kurt & Mary Glaeseman	Donation for Fellowship Hall TV
	Wendell Fredin	St. Paul Cemetery
	Family & Friends	St. Paul Music Fund

Church Directory! We have an online church Directory!

- * Go to <https://members.instantchurchdirectory.com/> and create a log-in account with your email the church office has on file. If you can’t log in, let Katie know so we can get it entered!
- * If you don’t have access to the internet and would like a printed copy of the directory, let Katie know.
- * Those with smartphones can easily download the Instant Church Directory app in the Apple App Store or Google Play Store and have the directory at their fingertips!
- * The online directory can be updated constantly, so information should never be outdated! Email updated pictures, address or phone changes to Katie and they can be added instantly!

July 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
St. Paul Lutheran Church, 303 N Cass Ave, Springfield, MN 56087 Church Telephone: 507-723-5880 www.splespringfield.org Pastor's e-mail: pastortriciamattson@gmail.com Office e-mail: stpaul_lutheran@hotmail.com						
2 9:00 Worship 10:00 Coffee Talk 10:30 Ch. 8 Broadcast	3 3:00 pm The Maples Bible Study	4 7:00 pm Ch. 8 Broad- cast	5 10:00 Ch. 8 Broadcast 5:00 pm Parish Ed Meeting	6	7 Office Closed	8
9 9:00 Worship 10:00 Coffee Talk 10:30 Ch. 8 Broadcast	10 3:00 pm The Maples Bible Study	11 10:00 SJLH Worship 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Ch. 8 Broad- cast	12 10:00 Ch. 8 Broadcast 7:00 Church Council Meeting	13	14 Office Closed	15 Good Shephard Schol- arship Applications due
16 9:00 Worship 10:00 Coffee Talk 10:30 Ch. 8 Broadcast	17 3:00 pm The Maples Holy Communion	18 10:00 SJLH Worship 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Ch. 8 Broad- cast	19 10:00 Ch. 8 Broadcast	20	21 Office Closed	22
Al on vacation Katie on vacation					Katie on vacation	
23 9:00 Worship 10:00 Coffee Talk 10:30 Ch. 8 Broadcast	24 3:00 pm The Maples Bible Study	25 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Ch. 8 Broad- cast	26 10:00 Ch. 8 Broadcast	27	28 Office Closed	29
30 9:00 Worship 10:00 Coffee Talk 10:30 Ch. 8 Broadcast	31 3:00 pm The Maples Bible Study					

Worship Service Helpers

Date	Sound & Video	Reader	Acolyte	Usher	Organist
7/2	John Mueller	Daniel Kettner	Wyatt Mueller Ashtyn Rudolph	Team 2	Jeff Krueger
7/9	Peter Heitzman	Daniel Kettner	Grace Jacobs Molly Jacobs	Team 3	Jo Schwartz
7/16	Paul & Jonah	Jordan Pidde	Bobbi Jo Timm Gabby Schenk	Team 4	Jeff Krueger
7/23	Russell Rogotzke	Jo Muske	Brooklyn Anderson Hayden Gluth	Team 1	Jo Schwartz
7/30	Tim Vogel	Mel Vogel	Randee Dombek Abbygail Jeppesen	Team 2	Jo Schwartz

July Birthdays!



Usher Teams

- 1 - Delwin Beussman, Don Bloemke, John Marz, Paul Meidl, Nic Mays
- 2 - Doug Gatzlaff, Kurt Kratz, Dave Bittler
- 3 - Doug Schiller, Russell Rogotzke, Mark Buerkle, Jeremy Dove
- 4 - Tim Vogel, Scott Vogel, Kurt Glaeseman, Bill Vogel

July Altar Guild

July 2
The Mueller
Family

July 18th
?

July Anniversaries!



Graduating Seniors and College Students
don't forget to apply for the Good Shepherd
Scholarship. **Applications must be received
by July 15th.** For a copy of the Eligibility
Rules and Application go to
www.splcspringfield.org/Scholarships or
email Katie in the office at
stpaul_lutheran@hotmail.com

 **American
Red Cross**

St. Paul's next blood drive will be
August 30th from 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Go to redcrossblood.org to schedule your appt.
****2-3 volunteers are needed!****

Please let Katie know if you are able to help!

St. Raphael Catholic School is hosting their
3rd Shoe Drive Fundraiser!!!
It runs now thru August 7th.
Their goal this year is 2,500 pairs of shoes!
Donations of gently worn, used and new
shows will be accepted! Shoes need to be
wearable, clean and without holes/missing
parts (no broken heels on dress shoes for
example). They will take any type of shoe-
men's, women's, athletic, sandals, kid's,
sport, etc.. DROP OFF is located in the
gathering space at St Raphael!

St. John's Circle of Care auxiliary's mission is
to help enhance the lives of both the
residents and staff. The auxiliary has
contributed monetarily to dozens of projects
and given countless hours to volunteer time
in faithful fulfillment of its mission. New
members are welcome, everyone (men,
women and children) are invited to join. The
\$5.00 membership may be left at the St. John
Lutheran Home front desk or given Jo
Schwartz. The dues help with special
programming and enhance employee
morale!

Women of the Word Fall Gathering
September 16, 2023
hosted by St. John's Lutheran Church, Springfield, MN

8:30am Registration & Coffee; 9:00am Worship; 3:00pm Dismissal
Registration Deadline: Before Sep 1, 2023. (\$20/person)

Offering designated go to the "The Table Ministry" in Sioux Falls, SD
Questions? Please contact Jodi Dalsgaard at jodidalsgaard@gmail.com

Visit <https://augustanadistrict.org/church/women-of-the-word/>
For registration form and more information.

Women of the Word is the women's organization of the Augustana District.

**St. Paul Lutheran
Church, LCMC**
303 N Cass Avenue
Springfield, MN 56087

Postmaster: Dated material
Please Deliver Promptly
Address Service Requested

Calendar Highlights - July 2023
15—Scholarship Application Due

Phone: 507-723-5880
Fax: 507-723-8712

Office Hours

Pastor: Tricia Mattson
Monday & Thursday 9-noon
Wednesday 1-4
Or by appointment
pastortriciamattson@gmail.com

Parish Coordinator: Katie Mueller
Monday-Thursday 8:00 am-noon
Email: stpaul_lutheran@hotmail.com

Housekeeping: Steve Lyle

Maintenance: Al Groebner

Financial Secretary: Anita Jensen
Fin_secretary@newulmtel.net

St. Paul EPISTLE is a publication of St. Paul Lutheran Church. It is published monthly to keep members and friends informed of programs and ministries of the church.

Articles may be submitted for publication subject to content.

Sunday Schedule:

9:00 a.m. Worship
10:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Coffee Talk



Springfield Area Food Shelf hours
Tuesday 5:00pm – 7:00pm
Thursday 9:30am – 11:30am
625 N Jackson Ave - Springfield, MN 56087
(Springfield Clinic Lower Level)
507-723-3663 (FOOD)

We are on the Web!
www.splcspringfield.org