

July 2016

The Epistle / Monthly Newsletter

St. Paul Lutheran Church

106 Maple Street

Reading, OH 45215-4811



The Freedom of a Christian

Barbecues, parades, picnics, memorial services, fireworks. These are the festivities that mark our Independence Day when we are reminded that freedom does not come free. This Fourth of July, we give thanks for the men and women who have given their lives in order that we might live.

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. These are the qualities which mark Christian freedom according to Galatians 5:22. This freedom also does not come free; Christ gave his own life in order that we might live.

In this letter to the Galatians, Paul explains the nature of Christian Freedom: “for freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery” (Gal. 5:1). And again, “For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another” (5:13).

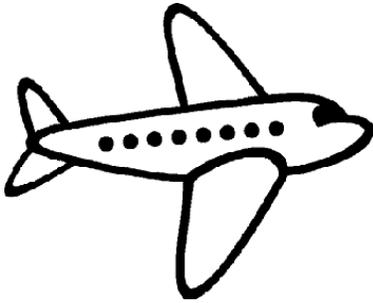
Martin Luther drew from this Scripture to teach about the Freedom of a Christian, one of the central tenets of our Lutheran faith: “A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all.” Both Luther and Paul are compelled to proclaim the good news that Christians have freedom. But not just any freedom. It is the freedom to stop worrying about ourselves, our reputation, and our needs, so that we may instead turn to tend to the needs of our neighbors. This is possible because Jesus Christ has rescued us from sin, death, and the devil. As such, we have nothing left in this life of which we should be afraid; anything that we could lose here on earth has already been won by God! You are already saved and there is nothing—no choice, no action, no failure to act—that will make you lose your salvation. You are promised eternal life with God in the future and God’s presence now. We are—as Luther says—subject to none because no criticism from anyone else, and no sin or failure of our own, can define us anymore. We are defined by God and God alone. Because our relationship with God is secure and he promises to provide us with everything that we need, we can stop worrying about ourselves and our futures. We truly are free.

But we have not been freed so that we can live out our days in “self-indulgence” (Gal. 5:13). We were not freed merely for our own sakes’ but for the sake of the world. This is why Luther says that “the Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all.” God sends us into the world to serve our neighbor and to love them as Christ loves us. If we truly live out of the freedom of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, then our lives will be marked with “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”

Our Second Reading in worship on Sundays throughout the end of June and July will continue to tell us about Christian Freedom. May the juxtaposition of our national holiday and our readings from Galatians and Colossians in the month of July call to mind the freedom that we have in Jesus Christ.

~Pastor Emily Beckering

Seniors Flying Solo



On Sunday July 31, we will attend the production of *Harvey* by the St. Paul Players after the worship service.

Dorcas Circle

The quilts are accumulating gradually. We have nearly reached 100 finished quilts! Thank you for contributions of fabric and sheets. We always welcome them! Don't forget that there will be another QUILT RAFFLE this Fall. It will be held the Sunday the quilts are draped in the sanctuary for the blessings, so the winners will have a large selection from which to choose a quilt. More information in August.

Social Concerns Reminder

- There are still yard sales this summer. These are excellent resources for newborn baby clothes and receiving blankets for our support of the NICU unit at U.C. hospital.
- Reminder to save shoe boxes. We need them for Operation Christmas Child.

Valley Interfaith Backpack Drive for Reading Children

A request has come from Valley Interfaith that our congregation provide 300 glue sticks to add to the book-bags which they provide for local school children in need whose families cannot afford to buy school supplies each fall. We need to have the glue sticks to Valley Interfaith by **July 22**. Anything you can bring in would be appreciated.



Matthew 25 Ministries

A special thanks to those who volunteered their time to help support this wonderful organization on Saturday June 11th. Since there were so many of us, our task was completed quickly. We helped prepare shampoo and conditioners to be shipped over seas to those in need. They didn't have the pill bottle station set up on the 11th because all of the bottles had already been sorted. Check out our Facebook page to see all the fun we had!!

~Chelsea King

Update on the Administrative Assistant Search

Nancy Erbeck and Pastor Emily conducted seven phone interviews, and three in-person interviews last month for the position of Administrative Assistant. They made a recommendation for hire to the Church Council, which was approved on June 14. The counter-offer from the candidate, however, was not feasible. Consequently, the Council has decided to begin the search process again, and has elected to post the position on ZipRecruiter and Monster.com. We believe that we will receive more exemplary candidates from these professional websites.

In the meantime, the Council elected to start paying Chelsea King for the hours that she works in the office. She has graciously volunteered many hours in the office for the past two months to complete the bulletins and *Epistle*. We are grateful for her service, but the Council recognized that since we are beginning the search process again, it might be another month or more before we fill the position permanently. Since Chelsea is effectively serving as the administrative assistant during this time, the Council felt that she should be paid for her work. We will continue to provide updates throughout this process.

Valley Interfaith Ministries

For July, please bring **Shampoo and Conditioners**. Place them under the giving tree in the narthex. We'd love to be able to donate 100 items per month!

Bible Study Series in June-July: Suffering

When we watch the news or consider our own lives, we can be overwhelmed by the amount of suffering in the world. Pastor Emily will lead a six-week Bible study series examining the Biblical witness to suffering and who God is for us in the midst of that suffering. This six-week series will be offered Sunday mornings from 9:00 am-10:00 am. No prior biblical study is required to participate. All are welcome!

Nursery

We are in need of additional volunteers in the nursery on Sunday mornings. If you would be willing to serve in the nursery one Sunday a month or more, then please contact Joyce McDowell. joycemcdowelldc@yahoo.com

Thrivent Action Teams: We need you!

There are still many opportunities for us to use free money from Thrivent to serve our mission at St. Paul's of using the gifts which God has given us so that other people may know Jesus.

If you are a Thrivent Member, please consider filling out an application for a \$250 Action Team gift card so that we can use that money to further our mission here at St. Paul's. All that is required to sponsor an event is to (1) fill out an online application describing the Education, Fundraising, or Service event and then (2) report about the event once it is completed.

There are currently 39 members in our congregation who are also Thrivent Members, and, therefore, eligible to apply for Thrivent Action Team gift cards. Each Thrivent member is eligible for either 1 or 2 gift cards per year, depending on what level of membership you have. This gives us at least 39 opportunities this calendar year to accomplish projects and provide service events for our community.

If you are not sure if you are a Thrivent Member, then please contact Pastor Emily who has been provided with a list of Thrivent Members in our congregation. We will even have someone in the narthex after worship several upcoming Sundays with a laptop computer to help you start the application process if you are interested in sponsoring an event, but are unfamiliar with online applications.

We still need sponsors for all the events listed on the next page. If you are a Thrivent member, please look at this list to determine if there is something that you feel passionate about in this list for which you would like to complete the application for Thrivent Action Team gift card.

Thank you for considering furthering St. Paul's ministry by putting Thrivent's generosity to fruitful use!

Education	Date
1. Live Nativity	July/August
2. Bibles for Confirmation Youth	December
4. Registration fees for Youth Events	July
5. Curriculum for Baptism, New Member, Confirmation, and Bible Study Classes	August

Fundraising	Date
1. Landscaping: New Shrubs and Tree on Church Property	May 31
3. New Paint for Narthex	September 30
4. New Carpet for Narthex and Sanctuary	November 30
5. Stripping/Waxing Floors	August 31
6. Youth Events	June 30
7. Recording Equipment	September 30
8. TV	November 30

Service	Date
1. School Supplies for Ice Cream Social	June
2. Monthly Breakfasts	August
3. Food for Dinner Theater	July
5. Valley Interfaith Women's Vine	October
6. Valley Interfaith Supplies	November
7. Christmas Shoeboxes	October

CELEBRATIONS IN JULY

- 1 Mark & Connie Lohmeier - Anniversary
- 6 John & Karen Kerlin - Anniversary
Donald Hosea
- 7 Terry & Joyce McDowell - Anniversary
- 8 Larry & Penny Huber - Anniversary
Karen Dardeen
Don Grau
Evan Segar
- 10 David Hill
- 11 Norm Dageforde
Lucy Sturgill
- 13 Ruth Jones
- 15 Dennis King
- 16 Andrew Bardes
- 17 Linda Miller
- 19 Bradley Bronner
- 21 Marty Lohmeier
- 23 Emma Hedges
- 27 Richard Fox
Mark Lohmeier
Nelson & Charlotte Langefeld - Anniversary
- 28 Cindy Reed
- 29 Cindy Mayhugh
- 30 Carol Curless
- 31 Jim Forst



Is your birthday or anniversary missing from the list? Please contact the office. Don't be shy! Celebration is part of fellowship!

Our Life Together

For emergency pastoral care, please call Pastor Emily Beckering, 513-760-5884.

If you have requests for the Prayer Chain, call Penny Huber, 513-931-6420. To remove people from the list, contact the office.

We pray for **Jerry Begley** (friend of Kathy Hirt); **Berkeley** (great-grandson of the Curlesses); **Jimmy Bertheaud** (friend of the Portmanns); **Lily Cole** (aunt of David Hill and Chrissy Harris); **Amberly Derby** (friend of Molly McDowell); **Jeremy Doan** (Jean Winkle's grandson); **Jerry Doan** (Jean Winkle's son-in-law); **Kathy Downie** (Sieckman's neighbor); **Bus Faulkner**; **Larry Faulkner** (Bus and Freda's son); **Les Helmich**; Les Helmich's children **Bruce and Elaine**; **Matt Huber** (Penny Huber's son); **Karen Kerlin**; **Jay King** (son of Jamie King, who cleans the church); **Linda Kole** (friend of the Sieckmans'); **Loretta Kombrink** (Marilyn Portmann's aunt); **Charlotte Langefeld**; **Doug Meyers' Family** (friends of the Portmanns); **David Oaks** (son-in-law of Bus Faulkner); **Craig Olsen** (friend of the Sieckmans); **William Pratley** (friend of Pastor Emily); **Sarah Rupert** (Carolyn Koehl's sister); **James Savory** (Jean Winkle's great-grandson); **Pauline Schauer** (cousin of Cindy Sieckman); **Michael Schmitt** (Jean Winkle's son-in-law); **Allan Sieckman**; **Kim Sieckman**; **the Silva Family** (daughter and son-in-law of Tammy Trees); **Jason Simpson** (grand-nephew of Bus and Freda Faulkner); **Speedy Sizemore** (friend of Marie Calhoun); **Scott Songer** (friend of Jean Winkle); **Crosley Spelman** (grandson of Jack and Joyce Spelman); **Audrey Stuart** (sister of Rita Edwards); **Britney Jean Teems** (Jean Winkle's granddaughter); **Irene Waddle**; **Debbie Willet** (co-worker of Holly Ford); **Anna Louise Witker** (Carolyn Koehl's mother).

We pray for those with ongoing health concerns who are unable to come to church every week: **Dottie Bangert, Ken and Shirley Buhr, Ann Christiansen, Norm Dageforde, Pat Edwards, Bus Faulkner, Mary Jane Flege, Ken Garber, Carol Leonard, Marge Malin, Jack and Barbara Moorhouse, Jean Nolte, Heather Segar, Suzanne Semple, Edna Willet.**

We pray for our armed forces members: **Paul Cordes** (grandson of Elinor Schieman); **Jared Forst** (grandson of Jim and Loretta); **John Garbrecht** (nephew of Carolyn Koehl); **Beau Glenn** (son-in-law of Karen Koehl); **Kylie Hahn** (granddaughter of Gretta Hahn); **Donald Hosea** (son of Karen Koehl); **Kyle Murdoch** (friend of Holly Ford); **Jobeth Ramirez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Joshua Rodriguez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Mack Thompson** (grandson of Freda and Bus Faulkner); **Mylan Watkins** (friend of the Ford family).

July Ministry Schedule

If you are unable to serve as scheduled below, please arrange for a replacement. Thank you!

- 3** **7th Pentecost**
Assisting Minister: Taylor Beckering
Reader: Sherry Bronner
Acolyte: Grant Lohmeier
Communion Ministers: Terry McDowell; Elinor Schieman
- 10** **8th Pentecost**
Assisting Minister: Nancy Erbeck
Reader: Carroll Mayhugh
Acolyte: Jack Baumiller
- 17** **9th Pentecost**
Assisting Minister: Terry McDowell
Reader: Jim Forst
Acolyte: Jared Isaacs
Communion Ministers: Shirley and Ron Harbaugh
- 24** **10 Pentecost**
Assisting Minister: Doug Lohmeier
Reader: Linda Miller
Acolyte: Molly McDowell
- 31** **11 Pentecost**
Assisting Minister: Leandra Hawkins
Reader: Sarah Papin
Acolyte: Matthew McDowell

- Greeters:** Bob and Marilyn Portmann
Bulletin Folders: Jean Winkle and Penny Huber
Altar Guild: Loretta Forst, Linen
 Penny Huber, Set Up
 Diana Hawkins, Clean Up

Feeding the Hungry

Passionate about alleviating hunger? There is an opportunity to do something about it! Wednesday, August 10th, from 6:30-8:30pm, our sisters and brothers at Prince of Peace in Loveland are hosting an event to pack meals for local families. Sign-up on the sheet in the narthex if you are interested in partnering to end hunger.

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St. Paul Lutheran Church
A Congregation of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
106 Maple Street * Reading, Ohio 45215-4811

www.stpaulreading.org

Phone: 513/821-0987 Email: mail@stpaulreading.org

10:30 Worship Service

9:00 Bible Study: July 3, 10, 17

Reverend Emily Beckering, Pastor
Barry L. Prince, Director of Music
Janet King, Sacristan
Dennis King, Financial Secretary
David Hill, Drama Ministry Director

<u>Church Council</u>		<u>Term</u>
President	Nancy Erbeck	2015-2017
V.P. & Education	Joyce McDowell	2015-2016
Secretary & Evangelism	Diana Hawkins	2015-2017
Treasurer & Finance	Chris Geiger	2015-2016
Stewardship	Jim Forst	2015-2017
Social Concerns	Penny Huber	2015-2017
Property	Dennis King	2015-2016
Worship	Janet King	2015-2016