

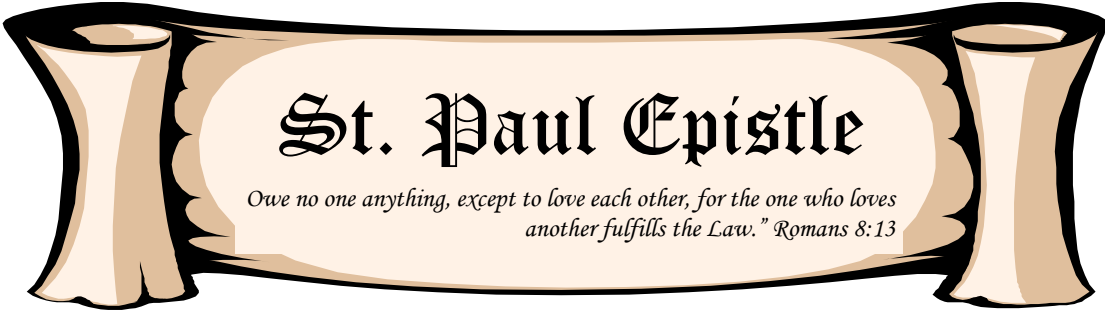
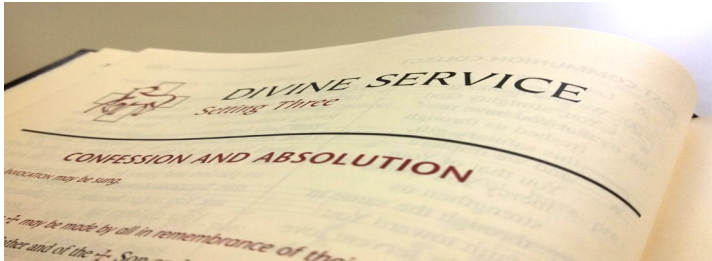


St. Paul Lutheran Church
1417 11th Street, P.O. Box 126
Wichita Falls, TX 76307

Our Weekly Divine Service Schedule

Sunday

9:00 a.m. Sunday School & Bible Class
10:15 a.m. Divine Service
(Holy Communion offered every Sunday at St. Paul)



St. Paul Lutheran Church is a congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Volume 4

September 2021

Issue 8

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Pastor's Meditation

As I've sat here quarantined in my home for nearly three weeks; a victim and prisoner to the dreaded Covid-19/Delta virus, I've had time to read and meditate on various things. One such thing was the middle section of the LCMS' Reporter this month. The article was entitled, "Are Pastors Really Necessary?" This article grieved me that such a topic and such a question would ever need to be asked. Was it really being asked, and were they really looking for an answer to the question, or was it simply rhetorical? I assume that if you also read the article, you would see that it leans toward the latter of being rhetorical. So, why are you grieved if it was rhetorical, Pastor Cody? The answer is obvious...of course, we do! Right, right, right, I get it, but to even have to ask the question is painful. It's painful because there are churches and denominations a plenty who would answer the other way around...of course, we don't need pastors. We don't need pastors because we can just use someone among us here at the church to get up and PREACH for us each week. The inherent problem right there is that "Someone" is usually, if not always, "appointed" as Brother Tom, Brother Rob, Brother So-in-So, and they have no formal theological training whatsoever. But culturally speaking, this is the trend today and has been for quite a while now. You see, American Evangelicalism is vehemently against educated clergy because they don't want someone, i.e. the pastor...telling them, or put better...teaching us what we have to believe. They say this because everyone is content to learn the Bible for themselves. So many want to "experience" God's Word for themselves and let it speak directly to them. This can be dangerous.

Friends in Christ, this is a dangerous path to be on in the Church. We need pastors in the Church for this very reason. We need an under-shepherd, a dear pastor, to lead us and guide us to the green pastures of God's Word and to the quiet waters of the Sacraments. Consider the example. When I was on my vicarage in NW Minnesota way back in 1994-95, we had a new couple join the congregation through adult catechism which I was privileged to teach and get to know them. I had a sweet car back then! I had a 1981 VW Rabbit Diesel with 250K miles on it. That year on my vicarage, I was in the process of restoring it and

(Continued on page 2)

Pastor’s Meditation Cont.,

making it as mint condition as I could. That meant getting some body work done. It just so happened that the guy I was bringing through catechism was a body shop guy who was going to help me with the restoration. When I went by his shop one day, he showed me this car that he had been working on. I said that car looks awesome! He said it looks awesome to the naked eye, but he said this car has been in multiple accidents! I said no way it looks perfect! He then took me to the side of the car and told me to look down the side and see the waves in the paint and showed me where it had been wrecked. I would have never noticed if he had not told me.

The point? When it comes to body work, I didn’t see it...I totally missed it, because I don’t have the expertise; I don’t have the trained eye to see the flaws in the paint. But HE DID! The same goes for your pastor and his seminary training with God’s Word. Your pastor has learned the Biblical languages of Greek and Hebrew and has studied theology for years! He has the “eye” for false doctrine. He has the expertise of studying the Word of God! Let him guide you and teach you that precious Word. This is one such example of how “YOUR Pastor” can be a blessing to you and how important the relationship is between pastor and people.

So, again, could the church get along without pastors? Some say yes...I say NO! The Church needs pastor because Christ commanded it and gave it to us. Quoting directly from the Reporter article, “C.F.W. Walther, the first president of the LCMS (1847-1850, 1864-1878), wrote 10 theses (statements) about the Office of the Holy Ministry. In Thesis III, he wrote, ‘The preaching office [Office of the Holy Ministry] is not an optional office but one whose establishment has been commanded to the Church and to which the Church is properly bound till the end of time.’”

St. Paul also writes, “How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? ¹⁵ And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!...”¹⁷ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (Rom. 10:14-17).

Why are you bringing this up and what does this have to do with suffering with Covid? Well, glad you asked! I just wanted to say, after being away from you, God’s flock at St. Paul, I have missed all of you so very much! I have missed seeing all of you! I have missed preaching and teaching...the very things I love to do for you! I miss giving you the precious Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus in the Lord’s Supper. I love ministering to all of you! You have shown me with your calls, cards, food delivery, texts, and concern a beautiful picture of the relationship that can exist between pastor and people. The simple fact that we can have this kind of relationship is a beautiful thing and a very picture of the relationship that Christ has with His Bride the Church. Serving one another in love. Caring for each other in our needs. Filling in where needed and still the Church functions as needed! I appreciate the elders, organist, and all who have helped in my absence. I appreciate all of you and all the prayers that you have lifted for Michelle and me since this whole thing started. Know that we will not forget your kindness and your love shown to us.

To that end, we can’t wait to be in your midst real soon! The Lord definitely teaches one thing in the midst of COVID....Patience!!! The Lord be with you and we’ll see you soon in the house of the Lord! Now I know why David said, “I was GLAD when they said unto me...Let us go into the house of the Lord” (Ps 122:1)!

In Christ’s Love, +

Pastor Cody
Psalm 84:10

Multi-Ethnic Ministry of North Texas provides worship services in Oromo, Kinyarwanda, Swahilli and English languages. It also provides English as a Second Language (ESL), clothing and food drives. MEMNT is also launching computer and sewing classes. The ministry always appreciates volunteers and supporters in any way possible. Other than the Oromo Lutheran and Karibu Fellowship who meet at Our Redeemer in Dallas, so far three other African Christian groups have joined the LCMS through this ministry. These groups have become part of the church life of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Fort Worth, Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Dallas and Bethel Lutheran Church in Dallas. The Texas District, the Texas-LWML, and Peace Lutheran Church in Texarkana are supporters of this ministry.

Pastor Yadessa’s wife Senait and his children Peniel, Robiati, Olibari and Beckyn are strong supporters of his ministry.

Pray for this ministry and consider ways to work alongside others because the work of God is so much bigger than what anyone can do alone.

May the Lord continue blessing you.



REV. DR. SOLOMON YADESSA
Multi-Ethic Ministry of North Texas

Rev. Dr. Solomon Yadessa is a native of the Oromo people of Ethiopia. Born and raised in a Lutheran family, Solomon began serving the Lord by accompanying his father who was a pastor to 18 congregations. Pastor Solomon's theological studies started at the Mekane Yesus Seminary in Addis attaining two bachelor degrees in Theology and Divinity. Mekane Yesus is the largest Lutheran Church in the world with more than nine million members. Mekane Yesus is in working partnership with LCMS. After working with Mekane Yesus and World Vision International, he came to the US for his Master of Arts degree in Theology, Development and Evangelism at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Iowa.

Pastor Solomon returned to Ethiopia and served at the headquarters of the Ethiopian Evangelical Mekane Yesus Lutheran Church for three years and then returned to the United States and enrolled at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, graduating with a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Missiology in 2010.

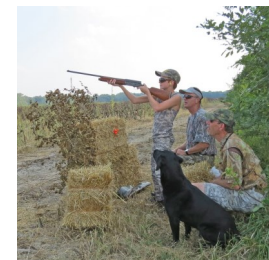
Upon return to Ethiopia, Pastor Solomon experienced persecutions and was imprisoned for six months for his faith during the communist regime in Ethiopia. The Rev. Gudina Tumsa, then General Secretary of Mekane Yesus Church was assassinated by the same government for his faith and human rights stance.

Pastor Solomon returned to the United States and was ordained in the Texas District in 2016, as a missionary at large in North Texas. He now leads the Multi-Ethnic Ministry of North Texas (MEMNT).

MEMNT has strong support from Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Dallas and Faith Lutheran Church in Plano. Pastor Solomon's mission is reaching out to the refugees and immigrants in the DFW area with special focus on the Vickery Meadow area. The Vickery Meadow neighborhood is approximately one mile east of Our Redeemer with people from around 110 nations residing in a radius of 3.5 miles.



On Sunday, September 12, Dr. Solomon Yadessa will be our Mission Festival Speaker. He will be leading Bible class and preaching for us that day. The service that day will be followed by a potluck meal. Please bring a meat and a salad, vegetable, or dessert. If you would like to help out in any way, please contact Leanne Roten or the church office. See y'all then!



Father,/Daughter/Son
Dove Hunt

Saturday, September 11

The hunt will be held at Chad & Janna
Buckmaster's. Arrive before sunrise.

FUN AND GAMES

Our next fun and games date will be **Sunday, September 26th at 4:00 PM.** Come out and join us for dominoes and cards. Bring your favorite snack to share and bring a friend along with you! See y'all there!



Schedule Updates

Adult Catechism and Adult Bible Study will resume on September 13. Adult Catechism will begin at 5 pm and Bible study will begin at 6 pm.

The Elder's meeting scheduled for September 7 has been moved to September 21 at 10:00 am.

LWML/Tabitha Joy will resume their meetings on September 14 at 1:00 pm.

Youth Catechism will begin on September 15 at 5 pm.

Catechism Memory Work for St. Paul Youth **1st Commandment and Meaning**



— WICHITA FALLS —
FAITH MISSION
EVERY STORY MATTERS

The current needs for Faith Mission:

Paper Towels	Coffee
Toilet paper	Cream
Napkins	Sugar
Men's boxer briefs	
Travel deodorant	
Family Size Tea Bags	

If your child needs a ride to Catechism instruction, we will be happy to provide that service to you. Please contact the church office and let us know. William Parker, Janice Wiechman and/or myself will be picking the kids

Thank You

We wish to thank those who served last month:

Organist: Kathy Schkade, Darla English

Elders: Kenneth Schkade, William Parker, and Kevin Copeland

Sound man/PowerPoint: Eugene Kruger

Altar Guild: Janna Buckmaster, Janice Wiechman (setup) Michelle Cody, Leanne Roten (take-down) (And all members!)

Greeters: Ruth Rathgeber, Hank & Judy Hancock, and all greeters

Ushers: Randal Schoppa, Eugene Kruger, ...and all who volunteer on Sundays

All Church Council members

All Board and Committee members

Treasurer: Nina Keethler

Sexton: Randal Schoppa

The *St. Paul Epistle* is published monthly by:

St. Paul Lutheran Church

1417 11th Street P.O.Box 126

Wichita Falls, TX 76307

Phone: (940) 322-6112

www.stpaulwftx.org † Email: stpaulwf@att.net


The Rev. Rick Cody.....Pastor

Cell Phone: 832-745-3314 †

Email: revcody11@gmail.com

Darla English.....Organist

Lisa Schur Parish Office Worker




In memory of Calvin Rathgeber on the date of our 55th wedding anniversary on August 1st to the Elevator Fund by Ruth Rathgeber.




Check out our website!
www.stpaulwftx.org

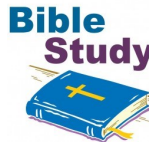
Adult Education



The Adult Bible Class meets every Sunday morning before Divine Service. Our goal is to have 40 people in Adult Bible Study. We want to come together and study God’s Word, and reap the benefits that God promises to those who remain in His Word (John 8:31-32). **We are now studying the book of John.** I think that you will find this class interesting and thought-provoking. Please plan on joining us each Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.



Because of the continued interest in the **Adult Catechism Classes**, Pastor Cody is teaching **Continuous Adult Catechism Instruction** to study together what it is that Lutherans believe, teach, and confess. This class meets weekly on Monday nights at 5:00 pm. Those wanting to become members of St. Paul can join the class at any time, and once through the series of lessons, they can be confirmed into communicant membership of the church. If you are interested in taking this class, please come out and join us! We continue our study of the Book of Genesis! We meet at 6 pm following Adult Catechism. We will start at the very beginning as it is a very good place to start! Come join us..... You’ll love it!

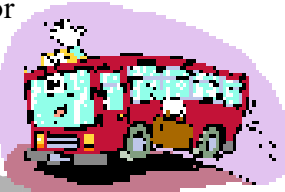


Sunday school for all ages starts at 9:00AM each Sunday morning. The Scriptures are clear, “Train up a child in the way he should go: and **when he is old, he will not depart from it.**” (Prov. 22:6). Bring the kids out and stay for Adult Bible study yourselves and teach them the proper habit to be in as the spiritual leaders of your homes! See y’all there!

Middle School Youth Catechism Class

We have young people that will be gathering together each week to demonstrate to their parents, and their Lord, the importance of this journey in their faith walk. Catechesis is the teaching of our Lord that is drawn from the Holy Scriptures, confessed in the Small Catechism, and expressed in Divine Service. Please pray for them as they study the Word of God and complete this important stage in their lives. The class is open to any and all from the 5th grade through the 8th grade. We meet on Wednesday evenings at 5:00 p.m.

If you or someone you know needs a ride to Divine Service or any other church activity, please call the church office at (940) 322-6112 and we will see what we can do to arrange that for you.



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January 16, 2021 All Board and Committee Planning Meeting Takeaways & Goals

Increase Bible Study and Worship Attendance

- A. Multi-generational Study...Bible Knowledge 101— **Began February 28, 2021**
- B. Weekly Divine Services with the Lord's Supper— **Ongoing**
- C. Advent & Lent noon & 7pm services— **Completed Lent**
- D. Possible Seder Supper—**Did not schedule**
- E. Continued 7pm & 11pm Christmas Eve Candlemas services

Continue/Increase our Social Ministry Outreach/Presence in and to the community

- A. Faith Mission— **Ongoing—tentatively scheduled to serve a meal on Aug. 14**
- B. Rathgeber House— **Ongoing**
- C. Interfaith Ministries— **Ongoing**
- D. Give it Away— **Funds started**
- E. Courtyard Gardens—**Ongoing-delivered 48 Easter Goodie Bags & 40 t-shirts**
- F. First Responders— **Possibly in Oct/Nov**
- G. City Lights Parade

Resume Fellowship Opportunities

- A. Valentine Gala— **Cancelled due to weather, held Italian Bistro Gala 3/6/2021**
- B. Church Camp Out
- C. Confirmation Questioning invitation for entire congregation & reception/dinner— **3/26/2021**
- D. Vacation Bible School- **Completed 6/18— 19 participants & 6/19 - 23 participants**
- E. North Campus worship/sing along
- F. Church meals and special occasion meals
- G. Card showers for all occasions and special birthdays and anniversaries (8/9 Hank Hancock is turning 80, 8/9- Ruth Rathgeber is turning 80.)
- H. Easter Egg Hunt— **3/27/2021**

Trustee/Maintenance/Building improvements

- A. Elevator improvements and repairs— **Ongoing**
- B. Windows replaced in the education wing and music room of the church— **currently at 36k**
- C. Floor at Church Camp (cracking and buckling)
Maintenance things that just come up

Improved Communication to all members

- A. Following constitution for certain meetings, i.e. council meetings, voters' meetings, etc.
- B. Spread sheets showing who has what forms of communications (Cell phone, landline, email etc. noting what preferred form of communication for members)
- C. Phone calls, emails, newsletters, minor prophet
- D. Attempt, if possible, to give at least a 2 week notice on any given changes

***Red indicates the current status of listed project

God's People at Work during September

Elders

William Parker
Kenneth Schkade
Kevin Copeland

Ushers

Randal Schoppa
Eugene Krueger

Altar Duty

Set Up: Janna Buckmaster, Janice Wiechman
Take Down: Michelle
Cody & Leanne Roten

Greeters

Sept. 5- Hank & Judy Hancock
Sept. 12- Kevin Copeland, Ruth Rathgeber
Sept. 19- Del Tech, Penny Becker
Sept. 26- Leanne Roten, Michelle Cody

Readers

Sept. 5—Ken Schkade
Sept. 12- Kevin Copeland
Sept. 19—Eugene Krueger
Sept. 26- Kenneth Theimer

Days to Celebrate in September

Birthdays

3rd Janice Wiechman
4th Michelle Cody, Kayla Cody
8th Bo Hardi
14th Keith Kruger
17th Stephen Myers
19th Jamie Rangel

20th Callie Theimer
29th Delores Palmatary
30th David Schneider



Wedding Anniversaries

14th Freddie & Annie Smith
16th Hank & Judy Hancock



Please Pray

Please continue to pray on a daily basis for:

- ✦ Pastor, Michelle Cody
- ✦ Darla & Ben English
- ✦ Lisa Schur, Parish Office Worker
- ✦ The leadership of our church, all boards and committee members.
- ✦ The mission of Paul Lutheran Church.
- ✦ All those sick or suffering in our church family.
- ✦ Church unity.
- ✦ Our nation and governmental leaders.
- ✦ All military personnel..

Prayers of God's People

FOR - THOSE WITH CANCER:

Jeanette Evans, Janie Khlum, Dennis Keethler, Lee Shores, Kay Castleberry, Chad Brown, Staci Myles, Sally Handrick, Patty Hernandez, and Mike Groover.



PHYSICAL AND OTHER CONCERNS:

Betty Corder, Brantley French, Duncan Hibbard, Ronnie Newman, Kellen Osborne, David Baker, Virginia Martinez, Dean Miller, Jesse Flick, Katey Lewis, Pastor Thomas Handrick, Jordan & Dustin Randall, Ben English, Michelle Cody, Pastor Cody, Nina Keethler, Vicki Holland, and Bob Newman.

HOMEBOUND/SHUT-IN MEMBERS: Dorothy Kutzler (Royal Estates), Virginia Hendricks (Rolling Meadows), Lois Kramer (Rolling Meadows), and Jesse Flick.

ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL: Whitney Colligan (Air Force), Eli Buckmaster (Marine Corps), Brian Clayton (Army), Kate Ridinger Dozier (Navy), Jaydon Martinez (Navy), Trent Meisel (USAF), Zachary Wied (National Guard), Richard Townes (Army), Tim Rosenthal (Air Force), Christopher Harmon (Air Force), Jacob Naughton (Air Force), and Abbey Wolters (Air Force).

WHY THE LCMS AND WHY ST. PAUL LUTHERAN, WFTX?

I was asked, "What drew you to Lutheranism, why the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, and why did you pick Saint Paul Lutheran Church?" I believe I can answer all three in one word: traditional.

I had my first child almost seven years ago and my second child two years ago. Throughout those seven years, I saw the world devolving into what we have today. It's a complete mess out there. America feels lawless and void. Everyone is their own master, morality and reality is whatever you want it to be, and sexual immorality is unabashedly presented as entertainment in plain view of children. So, naturally I said to myself, "That's not how I want to raise my kids!"

Being raised in Evangelical Churches growing up, I at least knew where to start. I knew we needed Jesus in our home. However, the Evangelical Churches we were attending left us feeling empty and fatigued. We were constantly chasing a "spiritual high" through the rock concert style of the praise band and emotionally charged worship. I was always focused on trying to earn my righteousness through good works. When I couldn't get that "high" or when I fell short of the Law, I didn't want to go back. I was made to feel undeserving, unclean, and unholy. I was missing the Good News of the Gospel! I was missing Jesus! I knew I couldn't go back to that type of church. Seeing society rapidly descending into sin, and feeling the lack of the Evangelical Church, I felt drawn to a simpler way of living. I felt drawn to something with substance.

Raising chickens, goats, sheep, and a vegetable garden brought some fulfillment, and it made me to realize that getting back to a more traditional way of living was the answer, getting back to the basics. The nuclear family was now my goal, but I was still lacking church. With a traditional lifestyle in mind, I started researching Roman Catholicism, but there was just too much that didn't sit right with me.

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The **LWML Ladies Group** will meet on **Tuesday, September 14**, at 1:00 p.m. All ladies interested are very welcome to join them!



Our **Women's Bible Study** meets on the 2nd & 4th Thursdays of the month at 9:30AM. They invite all women interested to come for some thought-provoking bible study and great fellowship!

Praying to saints as mediators, indulgences, and Mary being sinless just didn't match up with my (limited) knowledge of the Bible. Being from German descent, I began looking into Luther and why he railed against the Roman Catholic Church. After a few days of reading, I found myself agreeing with everything I found. I just had to check it out. I began searching for Lutheran churches and was quickly dismayed. I saw women being ordained as pastors, and not only support for the LGBTQ+ community, but APPROVAL of their sin. After another search of the internet I, fortunately, found that this was not the real Lutheran Church. I went back and searched for LCMS churches and first saw St. Paul Lutheran pop up.

The building instantly drew me in, and I thought, "Now that's what a real church looks like!" What are the odds I stumble upon this traditional church building in the heart of Wichita Falls! Being almost 100 years old, the building has a beautifully classic look. At first, we saw the stained-glass windows, but the arched frames pulled our eyes upward to the spires rising even higher, pointing up to the bell tower. Looks only go so far! How was the congregation? The priest? What was the service like? Upon entering, we were quickly and warmly greeted by the friendliest parishioners I've met at any church. We instantly felt as if we were adopted into the family. They made us feel most welcomed by giving us firm handshakes and tight hugs. Christ's love was shining through them. Soon after, Father Cody came and joined us in the Fellowship Hall to begin teaching Sunday school. We briefly shook hands and exchanged pleasantries. Shortly after, I was blown away by the teaching. This Sunday school was nothing like I had ever experienced before. It was quite obvious that he didn't just have the Bible nearly memorized; he KNEW the Bible. Father Cody revealed details I had never even began to consider.

Feeling encouraged after the Sunday school lesson, we made our way upstairs to the sanctuary for the Divine Service. I was pleased to see that the beauty of the exterior continued inside. Dark woodwork everywhere, vaulting upward to the high cathedral ceiling. At the altar, there stood a terrific statue of Jesus. Seeing the pierced hands outstretched, I was drawn to think upon His sacrifice for us. Worship began, and the hymns being sung by everyone was so refreshing. No guitar solos. No strobe lights. Just the organ and our voices blending beautifully together. The sermon was just as educational and refreshing as the Sunday school lesson. Father Cody didn't need to shout to keep our attention. There wasn't any promise of a better life if we just gave a few dollars more. And there definitely wasn't any mention of, "Do good deeds to secure your place in heaven!" No, just Jesus Christ. Crucified. Buried and Risen again. Everything about this place, this church, these people, pointed to Christ. I knew we had found what we were seeking. We were finally HOME!

The Russell Heineken Family