



The Messenger

September 2026

**St. Paul's
Evangelical
Lutheran
Church**

3295 S. Union Ave.
Alliance, Ohio 44601
330-823-2285

FROM PASTOR MUSE

"I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." — Romans 12:1

There is something about the end of summer that feels like a return. School buses begin appearing on the roads again. Classrooms reopen. College students move back onto campus. Sports practices fill the evenings. Calendars that seemed a little more relaxed during June and July suddenly become crowded with meetings, activities, appointments, and responsibilities.

For families with children, it is the beginning of another school year. For teachers and school employees, it is a return to classrooms and hallways. Even for those of us whose lives are no longer governed by a school calendar, September often carries the feeling of beginning again. And perhaps this is a good time for us to think about another kind of return: our return to the life of faith and our commitment to being present in the church.

In Romans 12:1, Paul writes, "Present your bodies as a living sacrifice." I have always been struck by the simplicity of those words: present yourselves. In other words: show up. Paul does not begin Romans 12 by asking Christians to accomplish something spectacular. He does not tell them that they must become spiritual giants. He begins with something much more basic. Bring yourself. Offer yourself. Place your life before God.

There is something deeply Lutheran about beginning there, because Paul does not say that we present ourselves to God so that God will love us. He begins, "by the mercies of God." Mercy comes first. Grace comes first. God comes first. We do not come to worship to earn God's favor. We come because God's favor has already been given to us in Jesus Christ. We do not attend church because perfect Christians go to church. We gather because imperfect people need to hear again and again that they are forgiven, loved, claimed, and sent by God. That distinction matters.

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*In other words:
Show up.*

Church attendance can easily become another obligation on an already overcrowded calendar. We can begin thinking, "I suppose I should go to church." And while there is certainly value in discipline and commitment, worship is much more than fulfilling a religious obligation. Worship is where God meets us.

We come carrying whatever the week has given us: successes and failures, celebrations and disappointments, confidence and uncertainty, faith and doubt. We bring all of it into the presence of God. And God gives something back. A Word. A promise. Forgiveness. Bread and wine. A community. And the reminder that whatever happened during the week, we still belong to Christ. That is one reason returning to church matters.

Our culture has changed dramatically in the way it thinks about Sunday morning. For generations, Sunday was naturally protected as a time for worship and family. That is no longer the case. Sports, work schedules, travel, entertainment, school activities, and countless other commitments compete for our time. None of those things are necessarily bad. Many are good and important parts of life. But good things can slowly crowd out the things that give those good things meaning. That is why a new school year might also become an opportunity for a new spiritual year.

As we put school schedules, practices, meetings, appointments, and activities onto the calendar, perhaps we should intentionally put worship there too. Not because

God is keeping attendance. Not because missing a Sunday somehow removes us from God's grace. But because we need what happens when the people of God gather. We need one another.

Christianity was never intended to be practiced entirely alone. The church is not simply a building where individuals come for private spiritual experiences. In Lutheran language, the church is the community gathered around Word and Sacrament. We hear God's Word together. We confess together. We pray together. We sing together. We receive Christ together. And then we are sent back into the world together.

So as backpacks are packed, classrooms reopen, and calendars fill again, make room for something else. Make room for worship. Make room for Christian education. Make room for your church family. Make room for God. And perhaps Paul's invitation can become our invitation for this new season: Present yourself. Show up. Come and see what God will do. There is still more to learn. There is still more growing to do. And by the mercy and grace of God, there is always a place for you here. See you in church.

Soli Deo Gloria, Pastor Muse

Happy September Birthday to You!

May you enjoy many more and may God bless each one of you in many ways as you enjoy another year in God's grace.

2 - Mark Turner	12 - Luke Ince	16 - Bob Wilson	25 - Brittany George
2 - Robert Williams	12 - Jeremy Rhome	17 - Kathryn Paina	27 - Betty Hons
2 - Landon Blevins	12 - Eric Dunn	17 - Michele Hoopes	29 - Margi Hoover
3 - Debbie McGowan	12 - Julie Blevins	19 - Owen Hoopes	30 - Cindy Garnes
3 - Karl Ziemke	13 - Andrew Grove	20 - Gary DePrill, Jr	
4 - Cherylene Stockert	14 - Kathie Menegay	20 - Ashley VanCamp	
8 - Wanda Chidsey	14 - Leroy Zeigler	22 - Chelsea Burnworth	
8 - Greg Paina	15 - Jim Mehl	24 - Pat Virgil	
9 - Mark Roose	16 - Janice Valentine	24 - Austin Webb	
11 - Gina Falconer	16 - Nicole Pollock	25 - David Brenner	



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Our theme for 2026-2027 School year

“I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”

Philippians 4:13

We are about to begin another great education program at St. Paul's. We will have classes for all ages, so we invite you to come out and grow in your faith. Fall classes will begin on Sunday, September 13th. Adult class continues during the summer for those who would like to attend.

Bible Study gathers on Wednesdays at 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM. All are welcome to join the conversation. We are studying the Gospel of John.

“Christ in our home” devotional books are available on the table in Garnes Hall.

If you would like to receive the Daily Devotional email sign up through the web-site or contact the pastor for assistance.

The youth group will take a break for the summer and resume in the fall. Watch for future announcements.

Our Library continues to grow and expand. Take the opportunity to visit our collection and see if there is something that speaks to you.

HEALING EVENT

A healing event will be held on Tuesday, September 15th at 7:00 PM. This event will include a sound bath, meditation, Reiki, Hot stones, deep heat, Light therapy, Red Light, and other avenues of healing. All are welcome to attend, and no experience is needed.

KLUSCH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP:

This year four church members received a scholarship from the Klusch Memorial Scholarship fund. Owen Marriner, Brady White, Brianna Waite and Katlyn Watie were this year's recipients.

MUSIC & WORSHIP

Music & Worship Committee will meet on Tuesday, September 1st at 7:00 in Garnes Hall. Please see Gina Falconer if you are unable to attend.

Thank you to all who shared Special Music with us this summer. We have a few more dates available in September and will also have some open dates throughout the Fall and Winter, if you are interested in providing some Special Music, please see Gina Falconer for open dates.

Come and sing or play handbells with one of St. Paul's Choirs. Choir practices will resume this month. All adult choirs will begin practicing on Thursday. September 24th. Please see below for times. If you have any questions about our choirs, please see Gina Falconer.

St. Paul's choir opportunities. ALL Choirs practice on Thursday evenings.

Joybells (Adult Bell Choir): Practice time 6:15 – 7:00 (starting 9/24)

Chancel Choir (Adult Singing Choir): Practice time 7:15 – 8:30 (starting 9/24)



Sunday, September 6, 2026

Introduction

Conflict is a part of relationships and life in community. Jesus' words in today's gospel are often used in situations having to do with church discipline. The prophet Ezekiel tells of warning the wicked to turn from their ways, and Paul reminds us that love is the fulfilling of the law. We gather in the name of Christ, assured that he is present among us with gifts of peace and reconciliation.

Prayer of the Day

O Lord God, enliven and preserve your church with your perpetual mercy. Without your help, we mortals will fail; remove far from us everything that is harmful, and lead us toward all that gives life and salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Readings and Psalm

Ezekiel 33:7-11 *The prophet's responsibility to warn the people*

Psalm 119:33-40 I desire the path of your commandments. (Ps. 119:35)

Romans 13:8-14 *Live honorably as in the day*

Matthew 18:15-20 *Reconciliation in the community of faith*

Sunday, September 13, 2026

Introduction

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

Prayer of the Day

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Readings and Psalm

Genesis 50:15-21 *Joseph reconciles with his brothers*

Psalm 103:[1-7] 8-13 LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy. (Ps. 103:8) **Romans 14:1-12**

Accepting diversity in the community of faith

Matthew 18:21-35 *A parable of forgiveness in the community of faith*

Sunday, September 20, 2026

Introduction

Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual loving kindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Readings and Psalm

Jonah 3:10—4:11 *God's concern for the city of Nineveh*

Psalm 145:1-8 The LORD is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. (Ps. 145:8) **Philippians 1:21-30**

Standing firm in the gospel **Matthew 20:1-16**

The parable of the vineyard workers

Sunday, September 27, 2026

Introduction

Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.

Prayer of the Day

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Readings and Psalm

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32 *The fairness of God's way* **Psalm 25:1-9** Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love. (Ps. 25:6)

Philippians 2:1-13 *Christ humbled to the point of death on a cross* **Matthew 21:23-32** *A parable of doing God's will*

September 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 7:00 pm Committee meetings	2 10:00 am Bible Study 12:00 pm Midweek Eucharist (in-person and online) 7:00 pm Bible Study	3	4	5
6 9:30 am Worship (in-person and online) 10:30 am Fellowship	7 Labor Day - Church office closed	8 7:00 pm Church Council meeting	9 10:00 am Bible Study 12:00 pm Midweek Eucharist (in-person and online) 7:00 pm Bible Study	10	11 12:00 pm Deborah's 7:00 pm Fundraising Concert	12
13 9:30 am Worship (in-person and online) 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Christian Education	14 7:00 pm Grief Support	15 7:00 pm Healing Event	16 10:00 am Bible Study 12:00 pm Midweek Eucharist (in-person and online) 5:30 pm Youth Group 7:00 pm Bible Study	17	18	19 8:30 am Men's Breakfast
20 9:30 am Worship (in-person and online) 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Christian Education Newsletter Items Due	21	22 5:00 pm Community Dinner	23 10:00 am Bible Study 12:00 pm Midweek Eucharist (in-person and online) 5:30 pm Youth Group 7:00 pm Bible Study	24 6:15 pm Joybells 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	25	26
27 9:30 am Worship (in-person and online) 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Christian Education	28 7:00 pm Grief Support	29	30 10:00 am Bible Study 12:00 pm Midweek Eucharist (in-person and online) 5:30 pm Youth Group 7:00 pm Bible Study			

FELLOWSHIP EVENTS

FELLOWSHIP

Sept. 6 - TBA
 Sept. 13 - Mark Himmelein, Joyce Falconer
 Sept. 20 - Jan Valentine, Lynette Guthrie
 Sept. 27 - TBA

If you haven't noticed, we recently replaced the cream colored tablecloths. The older ones were replaced after many years of service. We also added a new color to the table coverings used on the serving tables. It's always nice to add something new to be used by the church family.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

A big "thank you" to our church family for the donated items collected for "Clothed in Righteousness" during the month of July. There were several hundred individually items plus 4 large packages of bottled water. All items were delivered early in August and were greatly appreciated.

For the month of September, we will be gathering items for the Hygiene Stations within the Alliance City Schools. Following are the items needed: deodorant (travel size), bars of soap, body wash (travel size), shampoo/conditioner (travel size), tissues, body lotion (travel size) sanitary pads, toothbrushes, toothpaste (small size), laundry detergent (small size), hand sanitizers (small size), chapsticks. You can normally find the smaller size containers in the travel section at WalMart, Marcs, or the local grocery stores. The dollar stores will also have smaller size laundry detergent, etc. Giving cash is always an option if you choose not to shop. Mail or drop off your donation to the church office and we will gather the items for you.

The September Community Dinner held at Christ United Church in downtown Alliance will be served on Tuesday, September 22. If you're interested in helping, please check with Greg Brookes. Thanks.

YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group returns September 16th at 5:30 PM.

ADULT EDUCATION

Bible Study Wednesday at 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM.

DEBORAH CIRCLE

Deborah's will return Friday, September 11th at 12:00 PM.

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Men's breakfast: Saturday September 19th at 8:30 AM.
 Please note this is a shift in weeks from previous months.
 We look forward to hosting the men of the church.

MID-WEEK EUCHARIST

Join us for a time of prayer, word and Holy Communion. The service begins at noon and lasts about twenty-five minutes.

EUCHRE AND DOMINOS

Will return in October.

*The Eternal Flame is given to the glory of God
 In celebration of our 58th wedding
 anniversary. Also in memory of our family
 members who have passed
 by John and Karen Wolfe.*



ST. PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

3295 S. Union Ave
Alliance, OH 44601

Non-Profit Org.

U. S. Postage

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ALLIANCE, OH

*Our purpose is to
be the living body
of Jesus Christ!*



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Stay informed and sign up for *The Weekly Messenger* email on our website, Facebook page, or text 4STPAULS to 22828.

The Reverend Timothy H. Muse - Lead Pastor

Rhonda Shilling- Secretary

Kathy Sloan - Organist

Gina M. Falconer - Director of Music

Gayle B. Fiegenschuh - Communion Minister and Visitation

