



The Messenger

October 2026

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

3295 S. Union Ave.
Alliance, Ohio 44601
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FROM PASTOR MUSE

“You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” — John 8:32

Each October, we celebrate the Reformation. We remember Martin Luther, the posting of the Ninety-Five Theses, and a movement that changed the church. We sing “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” and give thanks for the courage of those who called the church back to the good news of Jesus Christ.

Yet Reformation Sunday is more than a celebration of something that happened five hundred years ago. It is also an invitation to ask what God is doing among us now. Where do we need to listen more closely to Christ? What have we come to trust more than God's grace? How is the Holy Spirit calling us to grow?

In John 8, Jesus says, “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” The truth Jesus speaks of is more than a collection of correct answers. It is the truth we come to know by remaining with him: God's love is real, God's mercy is for us, and our lives are held in Christ's hands.

That truth sets us free. We do not have to earn our place in God's family. We do not have to pretend we have everything right. We are free to admit when we have been wrong, to receive forgiveness, and to

begin again.

This is at the heart of our Lutheran faith. Luther's great discovery was that we are made right with God by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. God's love is a gift, not a prize for good behavior. Because Christ has already claimed us, we are free to turn our attention toward our neighbors and their needs.

The church needs that freedom, too. Every congregation develops familiar ways of worshiping, serving, and making decisions. Many of those traditions are precious gifts. Still, our habits can sometimes become more important to us than the people God calls us to love. Reformation invites us to hold our traditions up to the light of Christ's word. Do they help us share the gospel? Do they make room for people who are seeking hope and belonging? Do they help us serve our neighbors with compassion?

To be a church that is always reforming does not mean chasing every new idea. It means returning, again and again, to Jesus. We listen to Scripture together. We pray. We make room for questions. We confess the ways we have fallen short. Then, trusting God's forgiveness, we take the next faithful step.

Sometimes that step is personal. We

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*The truth will make
you free.*

Sometimes that step is personal. We may need to let go of an old resentment, reconsider a judgment we have made, or notice someone we have overlooked. Sometimes it is a step we take together: welcoming a new neighbor, changing a practice that has become a barrier, or finding a fresh way to share Christ's love beyond our walls. Such changes can feel uncomfortable. But we can face them with courage because our hope rests in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ.

As we celebrate the Reformation this year, let us give thanks for the people who came before us and the faith they passed on. Let us also remember that the Holy Spirit is still at work. God is still teaching, forgiving, and sending the church into the world. Christ's promise still stands: as we continue in his word, we will know the truth, and the truth will make us free.

May that freedom open our hearts to God's will and our hands to the needs of our neighbors.

Soli Deo Gloria, Pastor Muse

Fall congregational meeting will be held Sunday, November 22nd following worship. We will approve the Spending Guide for 2027 and elect council members who will begin serving in January 2027.

HOSPITAL ADMITTANCE

The hospitals are no longer informing churches if a member has been admitted. If you or a loved one is in the hospital please inform the church office or the pastor, so that we can be part of the healing.

Happy October 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 - Michelle Smith	10 - Chondra Fassnacht	15- Anthony Scott	31 - John Bienz
2- Beau Siegfried	10 - Josh Turner	16 - Cindy McClarren	31 - Robert Huffman
3 - Betsy Goshorn	11 - Tony Castina	16 - Cecilia Raga	
4 - Sherri Scott-Schweninger	11 - Mark Himmelein	17 - Sarah Leasure	
5 - Pat Nelson	12 - Dorothy Aiello	19 - Andrea Huffman	
6 - Josh White	12 - Greg Hobe	21 - Traci Raga	
8 - Jim Sanor	13 - Benjamin Carman	23 - Caleb Russell	
9 - Pamela Leforte	13 - Brian Shutler	25 - Jill Mehl	
10 - Austin Mehl	13 - Jason Siegfried	25 - Adrienne O'Neill	
10 - Mason Marriner	14 - Nikki Gorby	29 - Elizabeth Meyers	



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Our theme for 2026-2027 School year
 "I can do all things through him who strengthens me."
 Philippians 4:13

Our education program at St. Paul's has begun and is now in full swing. We have classes for all ages, so we invite you to come out and grow in your faith. Our teachers are committed to bring good sessions and ways to grow in faith.

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 meets every Wednesday at 5:30 PM. All youth 1st grade through 12th grade are welcome to attend.

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, October 20th 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.

THANK YOU

Mark Hostettler and Michael Knapik would like to thank everyone for their thoughtfulness. Marge Hostettler was interned Friday July 31st at Rose Hill Burial Park, Akron, OH. Contributions may be made in Marge's name to ELCA World Relief Fund. Blessing!

MUSIC & WORSHIP

Music & Worship Committee will meet on Tuesday, October 6th at 7:00 in Garnes Hall. Please see Gina Falconer if you are unable to attend.

Come and sing or play handbells with one of St. Paul's Choirs. Choir practices have resumed. 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

Chancel Choir (Adult Singing Choir): Practice time 7:15 – 8:30

Remember to wear RED on Sunday, October 25th in celebration of the Reformation.

We will celebrate the saints on Sunday, November 1st. You are invited to bring pictures to be placed during the worship service.



Sunday, October 4, 2026

Introduction

In today's gospel reading, Jesus tells a vineyard parable, which serves as an image of Israel, the prophets' mission, and Christ's death. For Christians, the vineyard also speaks of God's love poured out in the blood of Christ, given to us for the forgiveness of sin. Grafted onto Christ the vine at baptism, we are nourished with wine and bread so that we may share Christ's sufferings and know the power of his resurrection.

Prayer of the Day

Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Readings and Psalm

Isaiah 5:1-7 *The song of the vineyard* **Psalm 80:7-15** Look down from heaven, O God; behold and tend this vine. (Ps. 80:14, 15) **Philippians 3:4b-14** *Nothing surpasses the value of knowing Christ* **Matthew 21:33-46** *The parable of the vineyard owner's son*

Sunday, October 11, 2026

Introduction

In Isaiah we are given a vision of the great feast to come, when God will wipe away death forever. In Jesus' parable about a great banquet, those invited do not come, so the invitation is extended to others. In our liturgy God spreads a table before us. Even amid anxiety and hardship we rejoice in the peace of God which surpasses all understanding. With great joy we feast at the table of the Lord, and we go forth to share the wonderful invitation with others hungering and thirsting for the abundant life of God.

Prayer of the Day

Lord of the feast, you have prepared a table before all peoples and poured out your life with abundance. Call us again to your banquet. Strengthen us by what is honorable, just, and pure, and transform us into a people of righteousness and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Readings and Psalm

Isaiah 25:1-9 *The feast of victory* **Psalm 23** You prepare a table before me, and my cup is running over. (Ps. 23:5) **Philippians 4:1-9** *Rejoice in the Lord always* **Matthew 22:1-14** *The parable of the unwelcome guest at the wedding feast*

Sunday, October 18, 2026

Introduction

In today's first reading God uses the Gentile ruler Cyrus to accomplish divine purposes. When the Pharisees try to trap Jesus, he tells them to give the emperor what belongs to him and to God what belongs to God. To gather for worship reminds us that our ultimate allegiance is to God rather than to any earthly authority. Created in the image of God, we offer our entire selves in the service of God and for the sake of the world.

Prayer of the Day

Sovereign God, raise your throne in our hearts. Created by you, let us live in your image; created for you, let us act for your glory; redeemed by you, let us give you what is yours, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Readings and Psalm

Isaiah 45:1-7 *An earthly ruler as the instrument of God's will* **Psalm 96:1-9 [10-13]** Ascribe to the LORD honor and power. (Ps. 96:7) **1 Thessalonians 1:1-10** *Thanksgiving for the church at Thessalonica* **Matthew 22:15-22A** *teaching on giving to the emperor and to God*

Sunday, October 25, 2026

Introduction

Jesus' summary of the law in today's gospel echoes our first reading from Leviticus. We are called not only to love God with heart, soul, and mind, but also to love our neighbor as ourselves. It is out of such deep care that Paul shares the gospel with the Thessalonian community. In the confession of sins, we acknowledge that we have not loved God, neighbor, and self; yet we gather to hear the word of forgiveness and to be strengthened by word and meal to be signs of God's love and mercy in the world.

Prayer of the Day

O Lord God, you are the holy lawgiver, you are the salvation of your people. By your Spirit renew us in your covenant of love, and train us to care tenderly for all our neighbors, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Readings and Psalm

Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18

Holiness revealed in acts of justice **Psalm 1**

Their delight is in the law of the LORD. (Ps. 1:2)

1 Thessalonians 2:1-8

The apostle's tender care for the Thessalonians

Matthew 22:34-46 *Two great commandments: love for God and neighbor*

October 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 6:15 pm Joybells 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	2	3
4 9:30 am Worship (in-person and online) 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Christian Education	5 7:00 pm Committee meetings	6 10:00 am Bible Study 12:00 pm Midweek Eucharist (in-person and online) 5:30 pm Youth Group 7:00 pm Bible Study	7 10:00 am Bible Study 12:00 pm Midweek Eucharist (in-person and online) 5:30 pm Youth Group 7:00 pm Bible Study	8 6:15 pm Joybells 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	9 12:00 pm Deborah's	10
11 9:30 am Worship (in-person and online) 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Christian Education	12 4:00 pm & 7:00 pm Grief Support Columbus Day - Church office closed	13 7:00 pm Church Council meeting	14 10:00 am Bible Study 12:00 pm Midweek Eucharist (in-person and online) 5:30 pm Youth Group 7:00 pm Bible Study	15 6:15 pm Joybells 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	16	17 Octoberfest
18 9:30 am Worship (in-person and online) 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Christian Education Newsletter Items Due	19	20 7:00 pm Healing Event	21 10:00 am Bible Study 12:00 pm Midweek Eucharist (in-person and online) 5:30 pm Youth Group 7:00 pm Bible Study	22 6:15 pm Joybells 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	23	24
25 9:30 am Worship (in-person and online) 10:30 am Fellowship 10:45 am Christian Education	26 4:00 pm & 7:00 pm Grief Support	27 5:00 pm Community Dinner	28 10:00 am Bible Study 12:00 pm Midweek Eucharist (in-person and online) 5:30 pm Youth Group 7:00 pm Bible Study	29 6:15 pm Joybells 7:15 pm Chancel Choir	30	31

FELLOWSHIP EVENTS

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Coffee Hour for the month of October.

Oct. 4 - Mark Himmelein, Joyce Falconer

Oct. 11 - Greg and Cathy Brookes

Oct. 18 - Jeff and Norita Webb

Oct. 25 - Will and Judy Saunders

YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group is held on Wednesday at 5:30 PM.

ADULT EDUCATION

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

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Men's breakfast: Due to scheduling conflicts there will be no men's breakfast in October.

DEBORAH CIRCLE

Deborah's Friday, October 9th at 12:00 PM.

EUCHRE AND DOMINOS

Euchre night returns Friday, October 2 at 7:00 pm. Join us for an evening of fun and fellowship! We meet the first Friday of each month. Hope to see there.

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.

SAVE THE DATE

Annual Oktoberfest, Saturday October 17, more information to follow.

*The Eternal Flame is given to the glory of God
In memory of Kaden Cole and all our
grandchildren. By Russ and Deb Garrott.*



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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Find us online!

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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

