



# St. Paul Lutheran Church

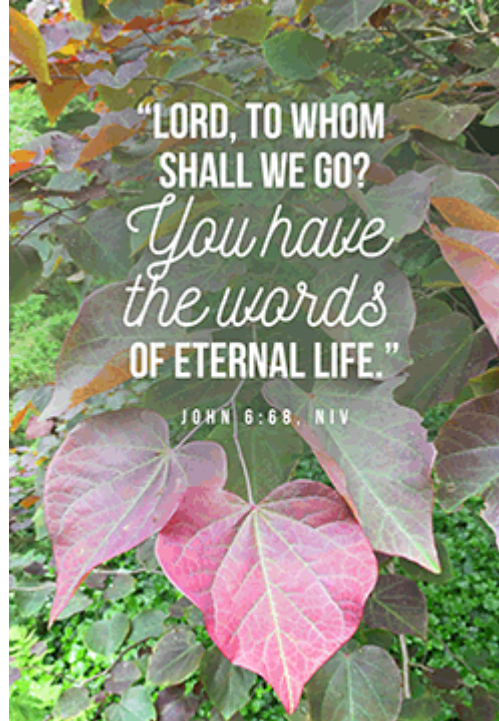
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La Grange, Texas

*The Rev. Stan Larson, Interim Pastor*  
*Praise Band*

**Sunday, 9:00 a.m.**

**August 25, 2024**

**Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost**



## **Next weekend's readings:**

**Deuteronomy 4: 1-2, 6-9, Psalm 15, James 1: 17-27**

**Mark 7: 1-8, 14-15, 21-23**

## **LISTEN TO ST. PAUL SERVICES!**

Visit our webpage, [www.stpaulg.org](http://www.stpaulg.org), and click "**Listen**" to hear our services live on your smart phone or computer! You can also view our bulletin, weekly service video, newsletters and current calendar. Visit our Facebook page to

## **St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church**

*Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

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## Welcome!

- + Welcome to worship! All are welcome at the table of grace. We believe that Christ is truly present as we share the bread and wine. Those at home are invited to participate with appropriate elements.
- + The 9 a.m. service will be on Facebook live & audio streamed on our webpage, [www.stpaullg.org](http://www.stpaullg.org). It will also be posted on our Facebook page. You may listen to last week's service on KBUK 104.9 FM on Sundays at 10 am.
- + Everyone is invited for coffee and snacks in the Fellowship Hall following Sunday morning's service.

In today's gospel many people take offense at Jesus' invitation to eat his flesh and drink his blood; even many of Jesus' disciples turned away. This is the backdrop in John's gospel for Peter's confession of faith. "To whom can we go?" asks Peter, in words we sometimes sing just before the gospel is read. "You have the words of eternal life." In order to take such a stand, as Peter and Joshua did, Paul tells us to arm ourselves with the word of God. We pray in the Spirit that we might be bold ambassadors of the gospel.

## GATHER

### Prelude

### Announcements

*Those who are able, please stand.*

### Confession and Forgiveness

*The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their baptism.*

**P:** Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, the God of manna, the God of miracles, the God of mercy. **Amen.**

Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**God, our provider, help us. It is hard to believe there is enough to share. We question your ways when they differ from the ways of the world in which we live. We turn to our own understanding rather than trusting in you. We take offense at your teachings and your ways. Turn us again to you. Where else can we turn? Share with us the words of eternal life and feed us for life in the world. Amen.**

Beloved people of God: in Jesus, the manna from heaven, you are fed and nourished. By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough. Through Jesus, ✝ the bread of life, you are shown God's mercy: you are forgiven and loved into abundant life. **Amen.**

### HYMN

*(See Overhead Screen)*

## Greeting

**P:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

## Prayer of the Day

**P:** Holy God, your word feeds your people with life that is eternal. Direct our choices and preserve us in your truth, that, renouncing what is false and evil, we may live in you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

*The congregation may be seated.*

## First Reading: Joshua 24: 1-2a, 14-18

*In the Near East, covenant means “agreement” or “alliance.” It describes relationships and is the primary word used to characterize the relationship between God and Israel. By delivering Israel, God has already begun the relationship. Joshua calls upon the people to respond.*

<sup>1</sup> Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. <sup>2a</sup> And Joshua said to all the people, <sup>14</sup> “Now therefore revere the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. <sup>15</sup> Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

<sup>16</sup> Then the people answered, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods; <sup>17</sup> for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples though whom we passed. <sup>18</sup> and the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God.”

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm 34: 15-22

<sup>15</sup> The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous,  
and God’s ears are open to their cry.

<sup>16</sup> **The face of the LORD is against those who do evil,  
to erase the remembrance of them from the earth.**

<sup>17</sup> The righteous cry, and the LORD hears them  
and delivers them from all their troubles.

<sup>18</sup> **The LORD is near to the brokenhearted  
and saves those whose spirits are crushed.**

<sup>19</sup> Many are the troubles of the righteous,  
but the LORD delivers them from every one.

<sup>20</sup> **God will keep safe all their bones;  
not one of them shall be broken.**

<sup>21</sup> Evil will bring death to the wicked  
and those who hate the righteous will be punished.

<sup>22</sup> **O LORD, you redeem the life of your servants,  
and those who put their trust in you will not be punished.**

## **Second Reading: Ephesians 6: 10-20**

*Like a general giving a rousing speech to troops before battle, this letter closes by calling on Christians to be equipped for spiritual warfare against evil. The full armor of God includes truth, righteousness, peace, faith, the gift of salvation, and the word of God inspired by the Spirit.*

<sup>10</sup> Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

<sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. <sup>14</sup> Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. <sup>15</sup> As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup> With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup> Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

<sup>18</sup> Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. <sup>19</sup> Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, <sup>20</sup> for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*Those who are able, please stand.*

## Gospel Acclamation

*(See Overhead Screen)*

The Holy Gospel according to St. John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

### Gospel: John 6: 56-69

*The “hard saying” that offends Jesus’ disciples is his claim that his followers must eat his flesh and drink his blood. The followers who return to their old lives know something about how odd this sounds. Simon Peter, on the other hand, knows something about the scarcity of living, gracious words. He asks the most important question: “To whom shall we go?”*

[Jesus said,] <sup>56</sup> “Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. <sup>57</sup> Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. <sup>58</sup> This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.” <sup>59</sup> He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

<sup>60</sup> When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?” <sup>61</sup> But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, “Does this offend you? <sup>62</sup> Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? <sup>63</sup> It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. <sup>64</sup> But among you there are some who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. <sup>65</sup> And he said, “For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.”

<sup>66</sup> Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. <sup>67</sup> So Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you also wish to go away?” <sup>68</sup> Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. <sup>69</sup> We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*The congregation may be seated.*

**Children’s Word**

**Pastor Stan Larson**

**Sermon**

**Pastor Stan Larson**

*Those who are able, please stand.*

**Hymn**

*(See Overhead Screen)*

## Apostles Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## Prayers of Intercession

Calling on the spirit of Wisdom to guide our hearts and our minds, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

Holy God, you have the words of eternal life. Lead the church to put its trust in Jesus, the living Word. Direct preachers, teachers, writers, and all the baptized in faithful speech and bold witness. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Creator God, we and all creation are sustained by your Word. We pray for all who remind us of our interconnectedness with all living things. Prosper the work of conservation organizations, ELCA advocacy, and local climate justice advocates. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of wisdom, as our nation navigates another election cycle, guide our leaders to act justly for the sake of the world. Bring about fruitful conversation among your people and bring about change where you see fit. Sustain all who serve on juries in their deliberations. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of restoration, bring healing and wholeness to all who cry to you. Where pain is sharp, bring a sense of comfort and relief. Where grief runs deep, bring your tender mercy. Care for those on our hearts. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of new life, protect students and teachers for a new school year. Bring an end to school shootings and cycles of violence. Move us to do all that is necessary to ensure a safe future for our children. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for our companion synods—the Lutheran Churches of Central African Republic and Peru. May we with them continue to spread the gospel and the love of God. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of every generation, we remember with thanksgiving all who have completed their baptismal journeys. Strengthen us in our baptismal callings to serve you faithfully until our journey's end. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We lift up these prayers to you, gracious God. Receive them into your holy keeping. **Amen.**

### **The Sharing of the Peace**

**P:** The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

*The congregation shares the peace and may then be seated.*

**Offering** *The offering plates will be passed.*

*Those who are able, please stand.*

### **Offertory**

*(See Overhead Screen)*

### **Offering Prayer**

**P:** Jesus, Bread of life, you have set this table with your very self, and called us to the feast of plenty. Gather what has been sown among us, and strengthen us in this meal. Make us to be what we receive here, your body for the life of the world. **Amen.**

## MEAL

### **The Great Thanksgiving** *ELW 144*

**P:** The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places

give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,

through our Savior Jesus Christ;

who on this day overcame death and the grave,

and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,

with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*(See Overhead Screen)*

## **Words of Institution**

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

## **Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen**

*The Congregation may be seated*

## **Communion**

*All are welcome to the Lord's table. We will be communing by intinction. You will be given a wafer, then proceed to dip the wafer in the offered wine or white grape juice before ingesting the dipped wafer. If you are physically unable to come forward for communion, please tell an usher and communion will be brought to you.*

*Those who are able, please stand.*

## **Prayer after Communion**

**P:** Jesus, Bread of life, we have received from your table more than we could ever ask. As you have nourished us in this meal, now strengthen us to love the world with your own life. In your name we pray. **Amen.**

# SENDING

## **Blessing**

**P:** The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, ✝ be upon you now and forever. **Amen.**

## **Sending Song**

*(See Overhead Screen)*

## **Dismissal**

**P:** Go in peace. You are the body of Christ. **Thanks be to God.**



**This Weekend: (8/25)**

**9:00 am USHERS:** Glenn Eilert, George Eilert,  
Katy Anders, Gary Anders

**LECTOR:** Praise Band

**ALTAR GUILD:** Sharon Elias

**Fellowship Refreshments:** Wendy McCredie

**FLOWERS:** In celebration of their 50th Wedding Anniversary on  
August 24 by Ronnie and Bonnie Schielack

**Next Weekend: (9/1)**

**9:00 am USHERS:** Todd Oehlke, Gerald & JoLene Hughes,  
Gloria Raschke, Bonnie Sladek

**LECTOR:** To Be Determined

**ALTAR GUILD:** Ashleigh Parks

**Fellowship Refreshments:** Linda Morrison

**FLOWERS:** Open

**SUNDAY (8/25):** 9:00 am Worship  
Children's Ministry Meeting

After Service

10:30: Adult Education

**TUESDAY:** 8:30 am St. Paul at  
Second Chance this week

**WEDNESDAY:** 6:30 pm LYO  
7:00 pm Praise Band

**SUNDAY (9/1):** 9:00 am Worship  
10:30 Adult Education

**Reminder**—meeting today in the parlor for Children's Ministry concerning programs for the education of the youth of St. Paul.

All are welcome as we continue discussions for this ministry.



**Reminder**—St. Paul is at Second Chance Tuesday 8/27 thru Saturday 8/31. Volunteers will return on Monday, 9/2 to straighten up for the next volunteer group.

**Reminder**—Community Bible Study will resume on Wednesday, September 4, 2024 in the Friendship Room. This group welcomes all ladies to the study.

