



# St. Paul Lutheran Church

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La Grange, Texas

*The Rev. Stan Larson, Interim Pastor*  
*Organist: Cindy Pundt*

**Sunday, 9:00 a.m.**  
**September 1, 2024**  
**Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost**

For it is  
from within,  
from the  
human heart,  
that evil  
intentions come...

*Mark 7:21, NRSV*



### Next weekend's readings:

**Isaiah 35: 4-7a; Psalm 146; James 2: 1-10, 14-17**

**Mark 7: 24-37**

### 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*

Rev. Stan Larson, Interim Pastor

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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.

Jesus protests against human customs being given the weight of divine law, while the essence of God's law is ignored. True uncleanness comes not from external things, but from the intentions of the human heart. Last week Jesus told us "the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life" (John 6:63). Now James says God has given us birth by the word of truth. We who were washed in water and word when we were born in the font return every Sunday to ask God to create in us clean hearts.

## 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, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin and come to God for healing.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**Gracious God, have mercy on us. We confess that we have honored you with our lips, but have harmed our neighbors with our tongues. The cravings at war within us cause conflicts and disputes. In our desire to be first we make distinctions among ourselves. We place the needs of the poor and the suffering last. In your great mercy, forgive us our sins. Draw near to us with grace in time of need, and turn us to follow in the way of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

God promises to forgive our iniquity and to remember our sin no more. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✝ Jesus Christ, the source of eternal healing, your sins are forgiven. **Amen.**

### HYMN

*Let Justice Flow like Streams*

#717

### 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.**

## **Kyrie** *page 138*

**A:** In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us gracious Lord. **Amen.**

## **Canticle of Praise** *pages 139-140*

**A:** Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.

**Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

## **Prayer of the Day**

**P:** O God our strength, without you we are weak and wayward creatures. Protect us from all dangers that attack us from the outside, and cleanse us from all evil that arises from within ourselves, that we may be preserved through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

*The congregation may be seated.*

## **The First Reading: Deuteronomy 4: 1-2, 6-9**

*The Israelites believed the law was a divine gift that provided guidelines for living out the covenant. Moses commands the people to obey the law and to neither add to nor subtract from it. The Israelites are also to teach the law to their children and their children's children.*

<sup>1</sup> So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the Lord, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. <sup>2</sup> You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the Lord your God with which I am charging you.

<sup>6</sup> You must observe them diligently, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!" <sup>7</sup> For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is whenever we call to him? <sup>8</sup> And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today?

<sup>9</sup> But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children.

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

## **Psalm 15**

<sup>1</sup> LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle?

Who may abide upon your holy hill?

<sup>2</sup> **Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right,  
who speak the truth from their heart;**

<sup>3</sup> they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends;  
they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.

<sup>4</sup> **In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who fear the LORD.  
They have sworn upon their health and do not take back their word.**

<sup>5</sup> They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes  
against the innocent.

**Those who do these things shall never be overthrown.**

## **Second Reading: James 1: 17-27**

*The letter of James was intended to provide first-century Christians with instruction in godly behavior. Here Christians are encouraged to listen carefully and to act on what they hear, especially by caring for those least able to care for themselves.*

<sup>17</sup> Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. <sup>18</sup> In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

<sup>19</sup> You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; <sup>20</sup> for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. <sup>21</sup> Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.

<sup>22</sup> But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. <sup>23</sup> For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; <sup>24</sup> for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were

like.<sup>25</sup> But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

<sup>26</sup> If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless.<sup>27</sup> Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world

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

*Those who are able, please stand.*

**Gospel Acclamation** *ELW 142*

**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.**

**Alleluia. Alleluia.**

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

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

*Mark's gospel depicts Jesus as challenging traditional ways in which religious people determine what is pure or impure. For Jesus, the observance of religious practices cannot become a substitute for godly words or deeds that spring from a faithful heart.*

<sup>1</sup> Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around [Jesus], <sup>2</sup> they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. <sup>3</sup> (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; <sup>4</sup> and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) <sup>5</sup> So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?” <sup>6</sup> He said to them, “Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, ‘This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; <sup>7</sup> in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.’ <sup>8</sup> You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.”

<sup>14</sup> Then he called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand: <sup>15</sup> there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile. <sup>21</sup> “For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, <sup>22</sup> adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. <sup>23</sup> All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

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**

*O Master, Let Me Walk With You*

**#818**

**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**

Drawn together in the power of the Holy Spirit, we pray with confidence for the church, God's good creation, and all who are in need.

*A brief silence.*

God of every generation, give the church a sense of purpose and belonging. Sustain and build up leaders and lay people as we accompany one another in our life with Christ. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of creation, you named humans as co-creators with you. Where the earth cries out in pain, bring wholeness. Guide governments and industry, that environmental laws and practices seek to heal and not harm. Bring relief and justice to people and places suffering from climate catastrophe. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Sovereign God, we pray for local communities of every kind: rural and urban; established and new. Lead those in authority to seek the good of all through their words and actions and to mentor others in honest and generous ways. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Healing God, you draw near to all who are hurting. Be with all who desire relief from chronic and acute illness, cancer, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Strengthen health care workers, therapists, and caregivers. Tend to those who are close to our hearts. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

On this Labor Day weekend we remember and give thanks for all who have fought for workers' rights around the world. Continue to improve working conditions and establish fair wages so that all people may thrive. 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.**

Comforting God, console us as we mourn our departed. We hold fast to the promise that death has been defeated by our Savior Jesus Christ. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We entrust these and all our prayers to you, holy God, in the name of your beloved child, Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

## **The Sharing of the Peace**

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

*Congregation shares the peace and may then be seated.*

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

*Those who are able, please stand.*

**Offering Song** *ELW 181*

**Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of blessing. Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life. Gather the hopes and the dreams of all; unite them with the prayers we offer. Grace our table with your presence, and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.**

## **Offering Prayer**

**P:** Blessed are you, O God, source of every gift of your creation. By these gifts and with our lives, help us to serve one another and all in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **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:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of pow'r and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

## **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.



**HOLY COMMUNION**



## 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.*

**Agnus Dei page 146**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.**

## 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:** Holy God, you have welcomed us to this meal and fed us with dignity at your table. Send us now to welcome others and to be at peace with one another, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## SENDING

## Blessing

**P:** God all mighty, God most merciful ✝ bless you, keep you, and give you peace. **Amen.**

## Sending Song

*On What Has Now Been Sown*

*#550*

## Dismissal

**P:** Go in peace. Follow Jesus. **Thanks be to God.**

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

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

**LECTOR:** Bonnie Sladek

**ALTAR GUILD:** Ashleigh Parks

**Fellowship Refreshments:** Linda Morrison

**FLOWERS:** Open

**Next Weekend: (9/8)**

**9:00 am USHERS:** Michael Mach, Hannah Bellue Holub, Lin-  
da Diers, Patti & Kenny Weber

**LECTOR:** Praise Band

**ALTAR GUILD:** Jackie Skelton

**Fellowship Refreshments:** Open

**FLOWERS:** Annette Citzler

**SUNDAY (9/1):** 9:00 am Worship

10:30: Adult Education

**MONDAY:** Church Office closed

**WEDNESDAY:** 8:30 am Bible Study

6:30 pm LYO

**NO PRAISE BAND THIS WEEK**

**SUNDAY (9/8):** 9:00 am Worship

10:30 Adult Education

The Church Office will be closed on Monday, 9/2 in observance of Labor Day holiday.

**Reminder**—Morning Bible Study will resume on Wednesday, 9/4 at 8:30 am in the Friendship Room. This group welcomes all ladies to the study from the community.

**Reminder**—there will be NO Praise Band practice this week.

**Reminder**—Altar Guild will meet on Tuesday, 9/10 at 2:00 pm in the Friendship Room. Please consider joining this ministry group.

Confirmation classes will resume on Wednesday, September 11 at 5:00 pm in the Friendship Room. If you have a child who is in the 7th or 8th grade, please contact Pastor Stan or the church office.

**What's Happening at St. Paul**—next week most groups will resume meeting after their summer break. More will be in the bulletin next week and the newsletter but here is a summary: On Monday 9/9 BOTH Friends in Faith and (separately) Fishers of Men at 6:30 pm; on Wednesday, evening 9/11 the following will meet: Hand Bells at 6:00, Choir at 7:00 and Praise Band at 8:00, all in the sanctuary. St. Paul LYO will meet at 6:30 pm Wednesday 9/11 in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone is welcome to all the groups.