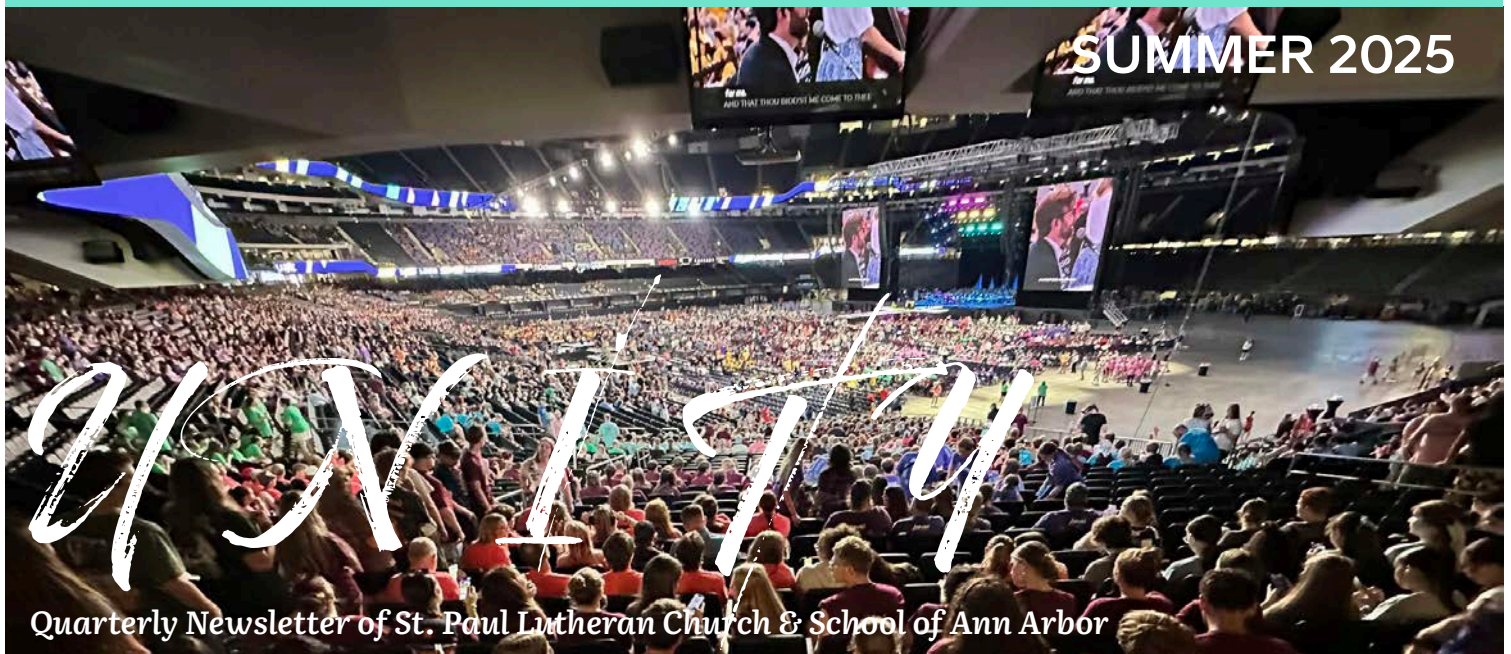




St. Paul  
Ann Arbor

Sowing Truth. Building Faith. Shining Love.



Quarterly Newsletter of St. Paul Lutheran Church & School of Ann Arbor

## Endure: LCMS Youth Gathering 2025

By Lisa Altevogt, Parent Chaperone

### On our way!



Scores of high schoolers, chaperones, and their parents gathered in the St. Paul School parking lot to pray over and load up for the epic bus ride. The Lord must delight to bring together so many in the Body of Christ. Tyler has done so much to organize, plan, and prepare us for this event. NOLA, here we come!

The bus ride began to teach students and even leaders about how to endure. Students dug deep to keep a positive attitude and interact with others to help pass the time. How many people can say they have stopped on a bus with 55 other people at a Buc-ees at 1 a.m.? That's team bonding!

### Arrival in Louisiana, Friday

The Cajun Encounters gator park, in nearby Slidell, was amazing. From excellent boat captains, we learned many aspects of this ecosystem, and of course, saw plenty of alligators! There is a lot of beauty, movement and peace in these flooded out forests. All participants returned to the bus in one piece!



The tour guides still talk about Hurricane Katrina (2005), its lasting impact, and more than one has brought up evacuation routes. Made me wonder... where in our lives do we have evacuation routes planned out? Where is our plan to go when storms threaten? The threats here for hurricanes are real,

(cont'd on pg. 2)

### In This Issue:



Forward Together: St. Paul's Strategic Plan [Pg. 3]

Nourished for the Journey - MI District Convention [Pg.4]

New Community Groups are forming this fall! [Pg. 5]

Reflecting on VBS and our SPAA Mission [Pg. 6]

The Regular Practice of Discipleship [Pg. 7]

Stephen Ministry & Paper Peace Corps Update [Pg. 8]

Meet our new Business Manager! [Pg. 9]

SPAA Regular Worship Schedule resumes Sept 13th! [Pg. 9]

Livestream News & New SPAA Mascot! [Pg. 12]

## Endure... cont'd from cover

each season.

Many student hands helped our check in process at the hotel. These kids are strong and take initiative. There was time to rest and relax, but these exhausted kids found new life! Many explored the hotel and spent time enjoying the freedom of “not being on the bus” : ).

Dinner was a delicious pizza affair with extra cinnamon twists and make-shift plates out of cardboard boxes—thanks, Jen! A door dash woman named Jasmine apparently delivered all of our meal's flatware...to Pastor Roggow's house in Ann Arbor. Today is teaching us how to roll with it, laugh, and how to discipline ourselves to rest after pushing really hard.

### Saturday

We spent time getting to know each other a little more in our Family Groups and then took off on foot to find the “Best Beignets” in New Orleans. Our crew showed up at a very busy, classic bakery, Du Monde's, and stood in the heat, making friends, and learning endurance. The powdery donut wonders were worth the wait! We followed up that experience with a walk by the great Mississippi, seeing modern steamboats and recognizing this was a major port for the trafficking and enslavement of humans for hundreds of years. Soon, we were at the Convention Center for games, activities, and cool air. Students enjoyed fast-paced basketball, volleyball, and there were even tables for drawing. We had our first spotting of St. Paul YAVs (Young Adult Volunteers) Kelsey and Mallory, bringing their enthusiasm and support to the kids.

Lunch was at Mothers, a New Orleans staple, and featuring the “best ham in the world.” Students were adventurous with plates of roast beef or shrimp Po'boys, red beans and rice, or crawfish Étouffée. We all marveled at the delicious local specialties and God's gift of our taste buds. Kids then spent time resting in the cool Hilton A/C or pick up games of football in the hotel pool. Adult Leaders continue to work together and coordinate to help come alongside these precious young people.

The rest of the day was spent checking out local shops on the RiverWalk and the first Mass Event that evening. One highlight was singing “Let Me Tell you 'Bout my Jesus” with 20,000 people and the sobering video about Hurricane Katrina, its aftereffects and how it built endurance in the citizens of New Orleans. At the event, the speaker, a Deaconess who has worked for decades in the DR, brought to life the stories of endurance she has seen thrive though

Photo on Cover: Over 20,000 students and adult leaders gathered for a mass event in the Superdome at the LCMS Youth Gathering in New Orleans.



God's intervention in their lives. We walked home with a lot of people and our shepherd at the time, looked like a guy with a small speaker on his head, playing fun tunes. Pastor Roggow keeps pulling experienced tricks out of his bag to help make this trip a success. After a long day of serving people at home in A2 and a flight, Pastor Ted has arrived!

### Student highs of the day:

- ...”just being together with people we don't get to see often,”
- “the (Roots of Music) marching band at the Mass Event”

### Sunday, Day One of the Gathering

Began the day with breakfast and a morning devotional with Pastor Ted. Bible Study in the Conv Center that started out with a hilarious skit video of how “not” to evangelize to your friends. Thank you, YAVs!! The Pastors (Rev. Doug Bender from Macomb, MI, and Rev. Mark Rouland) taught about how “Jesus endured.” People who don't know Jesus, recognize him as an historical figure, a moral teacher, and someone who healed others. Yet, God speaks about who Jesus is (Luke 9:35). Then, Jesus speaks about who He is (Mark 14:61) and we as broken people still reject this evidence. Jesus, Our Savior, understands rejection. We can learn from His example how to endure. Kids then did a combination of breakout sessions and activities. St. Paul volleyball players dominated the court with Ellie making a smashing good serve at one point...into an opponent's face! (this grace-filled lady chose to serve under-hand after that).

### Spotted!

- Groups of THREE
- Rachel, Jeremy and Nathaniel Potts in the Lutheran Braille Workers Association interactive booth,

(cont'd on pg.10)





# Forwad Together: St. Paul's Strategic Plan

By Pastor Ted Hopkins



## St. Paul Ann Arbor

I can hardly believe that I have been your pastor for a year already. And what a great year it has been! God has done great things through our church and school ministries over the last year! I hope you'll look at the St. Paul Gratitude Report coming out soon to see the details of what God has done through you!

Last year a St. Paul ministry team worked together to define a strategic framework for St. Paul Lutheran Church and School. That team defined the St. Paul mission: equipping families and individuals to know Christ, to discover truth, and to create meaningful connections. The team identified four values of St. Paul: Transparency—open hearts, open books, and open doors; Unity—bringing people together in Christ; Integrity—standing on the solid ground of Christ and Holy Scripture according to the Lutheran Confessions; and Edification—diving deeper into the Word of God and understanding God's creation. Finally, the team chose a daily vision for St. Paul: Sowing Truth, Building Faith, and Shining Love. This strategic framework describes what St. Paul does as a church and school ministry (mission and vision), and who we are as a people who love others with open hearts and open doors, who seek unity in Christ with all, and who care deeply about education, through the day school, preschool, Infant-Toddler House, and church, while standing firm on our confession of Jesus Christ and the good news of God's free grace given in Him.

The strategic framework provides a framework in which we can live and work together on God's mission here in Ann Arbor, but it doesn't yet tell us where we are going. Our strategic framework could describe many different ministries with schools in different places. What is God calling us to here in Ann Arbor in 2025? What are the specific challenges that we face? How can we serve together on God's mission to build up his Kingdom here and now?

Our next step in helping us to move forward together as a church and school ministry is to build a Five-Year Vision

for St. Paul. As I mention a "Five-year Vision," I suspect that there are some of you who are wondering why we even need such a thing in a church. Isn't St. Paul Lutheran Church's five-year plan the same as what Jesus gave his church in Matthew 28: to disciple all nations by baptizing and teaching? Yes, absolutely! Discipling all nations is exactly what St. Paul is called to do, and it's what we are doing, and will be doing. However, how do we want to do that together? How are we going to disciple people in Ann Arbor in 2025? What are the specific challenges we face that we want our ministry to lean into? What are the specific strengths we have as a congregation that we will tap into together? How can all of us be built up to daily disciple our families and shine the love of Jesus with our neighbors?

We don't need a Five-Year Vision to tell us that our goal is to bring God's Word to people and bring them to Jesus through Holy Baptism. We need a Five-Year Vision in order to unite us in how we will disciple people in Ann Arbor

***"...a specific vision for the future will helps us figure out what we should not be doing, what we should be doing more of, and what we might need to add for the people of St. Paul to more effectively bring Christ to their neighbors and communities."***

in 2025 and the coming years. The point of such a vision is not to simply add more programs. My hope is that a specific vision for the future will help us figure out what we should not be doing, what we should be doing more of, and what we might need to add for the people of St. Paul to more effectively bring Christ to their neighborhoods and communities. A common vision helps us to work together on Sunday and during the week as we are united in the ministry of Jesus in Ann Arbor today.

This vision will help us look at our facilities and evaluate what projects we may want to start or continue (like our building campaign for school expansion!), but I hope this process will help us prioritize ministry over facilities as we look at the future. I'm concerned that in the past we have focused more on the challenge and upkeep of our two

(cont'd on pg. 5)



# Nourished for the Journey - A look back at the 104th Michigan District Convention

By Ellen Shasko, SPAA Lay Delegate



Hello St. Paul family! If we haven't met before, my name is Ellen Shasko. I'm married to Wesley and we have four children. We've been members at St. Paul for over thirteen years now and our three oldest are graduates of St. Paul school, while our youngest will be in 8th grade this year. From June 22nd – 24th, I attended the Michigan District LCMS convention at CUAA. Pastor Roggow and I were the voting representatives for St. Paul. However, we weren't the only St. Paul members participating at the convention. What a blessing to see so many of our members contributing in various roles – district and campus staff, volunteers, musicians, floor committee members, advisory delegates and more.

The convention is held every three years and allows representatives from congregations across Michigan to come together to elect individuals to roles throughout the district and to review, debate and vote on resolutions. This year's convention theme was "Nourished for the Journey" and was based on the ministry of Elijah from 1 Kings 19. If you are interested in reviewing any of the convention materials, they can be found on the following page: <https://michigandistrict.org/convention>.

Among the many positions up for election, highlights included the re-election of President Davis to another three year term and the election of Pastor Roggow to the nominating committee for the 2028 Michigan District Convention. The resolution portion of the convention is broken into four categories: administration, doctrine, education and mission. Long before the start of the convention, these resolutions start as overtures sent to the district by various congregations or groups of congregations. The overtures are then compiled, reviewed, and edited by the floor committees to become

the resolutions that the delegates vote on during the convention.

Lest you think this all sounds very dull, then let me convince you that there was much more to the convention. We had several opportunities to worship together during the convention and the opening service was especially moving. The chapel was filled to overflowing and the many voices joined together in song and prayer – soli deo gloria! Many of the events throughout the convention were captured on video and are posted in the following playlist: <https://michigandistrict.org/resources/convention-2025-video-playlist>. If you are short on time and want to get a sense of what the convention was like – be sure to watch the overview video at the top of the playlist. There was plenty of opportunities to eat and fellowship together. Even though the weather was very hot and we experienced a couple of sudden storms, we were provided with endless bottles of water, temporary A/C units in the gym and many cold treats. I also enjoyed the presentations by Synod President Harrison on the Book of Concord and its relevance today as well as Dr. Joel Biermann reminding us of the importance of being witnesses of our faith with a joyful heart.

Without a doubt, there was a deep sense of collective grief as we gathered on the once thriving campus of CUAA, knowing that this fall will be very different. Yet even in the sadness (and yes, tears) we recognize the goodness of God and trust in his provision for us.

This was my first time in such a role, and I thank all of you that voted to send me as the lay delegate. It was an experience I won't forget and was privileged to attend. Should you have any specific questions about the convention proceedings, please feel free to contact Pastor Roggow or myself.

## Serving at District Convention



Thanks to you and the people of St. Paul for providing the brunch after the Memorial Service and serving more than 60 people who had lost a loved one in the last triennium. Because of the connection with Concordia and so many church workers, you were just the right congregation to be involved. Thanks so much for doing it! Scan the QR code for a special thank you message from our Michigan District President!



# New Community Groups are forming this fall!



Are you interested in gathering with other people to do something you love for 8-12 weeks this fall? We have community groups forming as book clubs, doing service projects, playing basketball (or pickleball), hiking, studying God's Word, or anything you want to do with others. Signups for fall community groups start August 21. **If you are interested in facilitating or co-facilitating a short-term group, meeting for up to 12 weeks (as often as you'd like), please reach out to Lexie Brown (lbrown@stpaulannarbor.org) for more information.**

## Community Group FAQ's

### What is a Community Group?

Community Groups are generally short-term groups that meet for up to 12 weeks to engage in a shared activity or interest.

### What are the goals of a Community Group?

Community Groups are one of the best ways to get started in connecting with other people at St. Paul. We have four goals for these groups:

- Equip you to know Christ more fully
- Create opportunities for meaningful relationships
- Serve one another and the community
- Promote overall well-being, body, mind, and spirit

### Who can join a Community Group?

These groups are open to anyone regardless of where you go to church or even if you go to church. Please invite your friends!

## Forward Together... cont'd from pg. 3

physical locations and not enough on the opportunities for doing ministry in both places. The vision we need at St. Paul is not merely practical—like a maintenance schedule or a facilities plan—but theological and biblical. We need to find clarity on specifics for how God is calling us to minister to people in Ann Arbor on both campuses. Our school is a clear strength of our ministry, and spiritual formation has been an important part of who we are at St. Paul. But, we also need to define the problem: why is spiritual formation important in Ann Arbor today? What problem does St. Paul Lutheran school and church help solve through spiritual formation? How else is God at work through the people of St. Paul to build God's kingdom here in Ann Arbor? We are putting together a Vision Team to discuss these questions among others and work through Will Mancini's book *God Dreams* to develop a Five-Year Vision for St. Paul.

I'm excited to see how God will work through us over the next five years! This vision process will help us to recognize the challenges we face, the strengths that we have, and how we can move in the same direction, united in Christ's

mission to disciple all nations by baptizing and teaching.

Following Jesus with you,  
Pastor Ted Hopkins



**Worship + Picnic + Fellowship + Games!**

*Picnic and activities take place outside after our worship service - feel free to dress comfortably!*

**Main course & beverages provided**

**Please bring:**

**Last name A-J bring dessert**

**Last name K-Z bring a side**

**RSVP HERE**



*Note: this will be our only worship service at St. Paul this weekend as we gather together as one SPAA family!*





# Reflecting on VBS - How it Helps Accomplish our SPAA Mission

By Lexie Brown, Director of Family Life Ministry



For a week at the end of June, St. Paul partnered with other churches in Ann Arbor to host Vacation Bible School. This year our theme was "True North: Trusting Jesus in a Wild World." We were able to **sow truth** among children who don't have a church home and **build the faith** of those who are already very connected to Christian community. Throughout the week, we taught kids that when we wonder, feel alone, need hope, and need help we can trust Jesus! We had a lot of fun with our Alaskan northern lights theme and even had a special visitor - Scout Rivers (aka Tyler Seehafer) who needed to be pointed to Jesus, our True North a lot! Kids were placed in multi-age crews and rotated from station to station throughout the morning. Together we sang worship songs, learned Bible stories, did crafts, memorized Bible verses, ate snacks, and played games.

When it comes to our mission and vision, at St. Paul, VBS hits the nail on the head in accomplishing that. We are **equipping children to know Christ and discover truth** through everything we teach them at VBS. A few places in particular where kids encountered this would be the Bible Adventure station, where they learned a



Bible story, the Sticky Scripture station where they memorized a Bible verse each day, and the opening and closing where Mrs. T-K and Scout Rivers introduced and reinforced the daily takeaway point. Additionally, VBS is a

wonderful way for everyone involved to make **meaningful connections**. Relationship building is a huge component of VBS. I saw this happening in a few different places. The first and most obvious would be in the crews. Each crew consisted of 6-9 kids, a crew leader, and one or two crew leader assistants. These crews became little families throughout the week as they got to go through the stations together and process what they were learning and experiencing. Additionally, the station leaders got to make meaningful connections with their assistants. This year we had 52 middle schoolers serve as volunteers at

VBS. These students had just completed 5th-8th grade. They had the opportunity to bond with the older leaders (high schoolers, college students, and adults) as well as bond with the younger kids they served. When asked "What was the best thing about working with your crew?" one middle school-aged crew leader assistant shared that they liked "Getting to tell kids about Jesus and having fun at the same time." Finally, at VBS we got to **shine love** to each other, but also to our community as we collected donations for Hope Clinic, one of our ministry partners in the community.



Every year I am amazed by the wonderful volunteers who give their time and energy to making VBS happen. This year, out of roughly 100 volunteers at VBS, 38 middle schoolers and 13 high schoolers from Ann Arbor area Lutheran churches served as crew leaders, crew leader assistants, and station leader assistants. Right now, we are facing a huge shortage of church workers.

VBS provides what our church body calls an essential experience defined as "opportunities to connect, serve, and have experiences that may foster youth to consider church work vocations." (definition comes from LCMS Set Apart to Serve materials). For me personally, serving as a crew leader at VBS when I was in high school definitely played a role in my going into church work. VBS at St. Paul is exposing our youth to what church work can be like. It gives them a taste of serving and teaching children while growing in faith themselves, helping them develop skills necessary to be a pastor, teacher, director of family ministry, or DCE!



It is an incredible joy and blessing to witness the excitement of people of all ages during VBS each year. St. Paul has

been blessed to partner with a few other churches in Ann Arbor for VBS the last few years. This year, we had an absolute blast together reflecting on how no matter what the world throws at us, we can trust Jesus our True North!



# Following Jesus Together: The Regular Practice of Discipleship

By Jason Hallman



In the summer of 2024, the Hallman family spent 14 days driving to the Grand Canyon and back. Armed only with Google Maps and a minivan full of opinionated younger humans, we knew each night where we were staying but our rough itinerary allowed free exploration along

the way. That's how we found ourselves wandering the Arizona desert.

In Monument Valley, Arizona, a recent rainstorm meant that our minivan was deemed unsuitable for our planned driving tour on dirt roads. So, our family instead set off on a "short" 2.1 mile hike in the 95F heat. We enjoyed the impressive views, unique flora, and thankfully saw no rattlesnakes. As we passed several trail markers too weathered to be legible, I was convinced by our sweat and diminishing water supplies that we were well beyond the half-way point. Finally we approached a marker with some visible numbers, and I confidently expected to see "1.5 mi" or more of our ongoing adventure had been completed. Instead I was shocked to read "0.7 mi." Not even half of what I expected—and still much less than half of our planned journey! As a family, we reflected on that moment, discussed our options, and ultimately swallowed our pride by returning the way we had come in the interest of hiking safety.

For me, following Jesus in discipleship often feels like that Monument Valley hike. Life is sometimes scenic, sometimes strenuous, sometimes confusingly marked, and filled with regular opportunities to make choices. And we're blessed that it's not something meant for us to do alone. We have others to help us notice the trail markers, to see the opportunities to become more like Jesus (who walks alongside us), and to respond to his invitations to help bring a small piece of his Kingdom.

Earlier this year, I invited four other men from our church—two of whom serve as our elders—to join me in a simple experiment: to meet regularly (every other week), talk honestly, and journey together in discipleship. We call

it a "huddle." We've met sometimes in my living room, sometimes by my backyard fire pit with bourbon in hand, but always with intentionality. Our structure has been to explore some specific discipleship tools by author Mike Breen as a way to create that space for reflecting on our daily lives. Breen puts it this way: *"Jesus didn't invite people to study him; he invited them to follow him."*

So far these tools have been helpful not as a curriculum to gain knowledge, but as a way to create intentional real-life conversations. We've talked about how Jesus both invited his disciples into close relationship with him and challenged and helped them to grow. That model has begun to shape the culture of our group, too: high invitation, high challenge. We've also spent time discussing how to take notice when Jesus might be speaking into our lives and shaping a change of direction in us. We're doing this by reflecting together on the big and small events of our lives and the choices those moments present us with—and how to take small, intentional steps of obedience as we respond.

**"It's been a relational space purpose-built not just to know more about Jesus, but to recognize the work of the Holy Spirit in helping us become more like Jesus."**

The feedback I've received so far suggests this is something refreshing that's needed for discipleship. One of the guys told me: *"This time feels important. It's about creating an intentional space where these deeper conversations can be had."* Overwhelmingly I've heard that taking the time with intentionality is the real engine of this group, where people can challenge each

other to grow while supporting one another along the way. It's been a relational space purpose-built not just to know more about Jesus, but to recognize the work of the Holy Spirit in helping us become more like Jesus.

It feels like we've only just begun, but already we're seeing fruit: vulnerability, prayer, and courage to look for ways the Holy Spirit is active in all of our vocational spaces. And I'm praying others in our church catch this same vision. I've come to believe that discipleship is the regular practice of a life following Jesus. It's how we can walk together, side by side, around fire pits and dinner tables, in conference rooms and living rooms, becoming more and more like Jesus along the way.





# How does Stephen Ministry Sow Truth, Build Faith, & Shine Love?

By Lexie Brown, Director of Family Life Ministry & Stephen Leader

In 2025, we have been embracing a new mission and vision statement at St. Paul. Our mission is to **equip families and individuals to know Christ, discover truth, and create meaningful connections**. Along with that, our more concise vision statement is “**sowing truth, building faith, shining love**”. Stephen Ministry at St. Paul aligns with and supports this mission and vision very nicely!

There are two ways I see our Stephen Ministry lining up with our mission and vision. The first is when it comes to the training and continuing education that each of our Stephen Ministers undergoes. Each Stephen Minister is a member of our congregation who has gone through over 50 hours of training in order to care for people who are experiencing a challenge in life. Additionally, the Stephen Ministry team meets twice a month for peer supervision. This is where we help each other be the best caregivers we can possibly be. We assist one another in coming up with ways to better help our care receivers. This often ends up looking like brainstorming what questions we can ask our care receivers when we visit with them to help them work through and process whatever life has thrown at them. We also do continuing education which is usually a book study. This training and continuing education is distinctively Christian and thus helps each Stephen Minister **build their faith** and grow spiritually. Additionally, as I've attended these meetings each month, I have made such **meaningful connections** with the other Stephen Ministers on the team.

The second way I see Stephen Ministry lining up with the mission and vision of St. Paul is through the care that our Stephen Ministers provide for their care receivers. This is another opportunity for us to **create meaningful connections**. The thing that makes these connections especially meaningful is that Stephen Ministers invest significant time into their care receivers by meeting with them for one hour each week for as long as they need to listen and support them emotionally and spiritually. Furthermore, Stephen Ministers are **shining love** to their care receivers in our church and in our community through the care they provide. Some care receivers are members of our church, but you do not have to be a member of our church or any church in order to be cared for by a St. Paul Stephen Minister. Stephen Ministry is a wonderful outreach opportunity for our congregation because people often come to know Jesus when they are facing a challenge in life and Christians come around them and care for them. If you have someone in your life who lives in the Ann Arbor area who could use a Stephen Minister, please connect them with one of our Stephen Leaders!



Sowing **TRUTH**.  
Building **FAITH**.  
Shining **LOVE**.

## Paper Peace Corps - Update!

By Ruth Schmude



Thank you to all who have contributed to the Paper Peace Corps over the years.

The pastors and congregations in Africa, India and the

Philippines have greatly benefitted from the vast amount of Bibles, catechisms and religious materials that have been sent to them.

**St. Paul is no longer accepting Bibles or catechisms for this mission - the Paper Peace Corps.** The expense of sending these materials overseas to these countries is extremely overwhelming.

Again, thank you for your support throughout these years. Please continue to pray for pastors Ekon, Moses, Maglanque, their families and their congregations so they continue to spread the “Good News.”

In His service,  
Ruth Schmude





## Thank you Elaine & Ken Bachman!



Our congregation would like to express heartfelt appreciation to Elaine and Ken Bachman for over a decade of service in coordinating funeral meals and receptions at St. Paul. Elaine signed on as the official leader, and Ken has been by her side sharing Christ's love with bereaved families and friends. Elaine coordinates the efforts of many volunteers who prepare food, deliver it to the church, set tables and serve food in the fellowship hall, and clean up afterwards.

As of now, Elaine is stepping back from her leadership position, and one or two more people are needed to share this responsibility with Sheila Garcia. If you like to plan and organize, and have a flexible schedule, please volunteer! If you are willing to prepare food and drop it off at the church in time for a reception, please volunteer! If you like setting tables, or washing dishes, and are willing to volunteer, please let us know! Many Hands make light work! **If you are willing to volunteer as a funeral meal helper in any capacity, please contact Sheila Garcia (734)478-9049, sheilagarcia@hotmail.com or the church office (734) 665-9117, office@stpaulannarbor.org**

## Meet our new Business Manager



Our St. Paul Board of Directors is very pleased to announce that David Theuerkorn has accepted the Business Manager position at St. Paul Ann Arbor. He has already begun onboarding for his position and working with our staff as of August 4th. Please give David a warm SPAA welcome!

### A little more about David:

My wife Christine and I will celebrate our 34th wedding anniversary this August. We have 3 daughters: Cecilia (married to John), Katherine

(married to Daniel), and Evelyn. We also have 2 wonderful granddaughters: Ilana (age 4) and Theadora (age 2).

For almost 30 years I worked in the private sector as a manager and co-owner of a number of small businesses operating in automotive tooling manufacturing, senior care services and marine sales. In 2018 I was part of a team that co-founded New Anthem Church in Mount Clemens, Michigan where I became Business Manager and Director of Operations.

My wife and I enjoy taking driving trips to unplanned destinations, we love spending time with our children and grandchildren, I'm a book and film enthusiast, I'm a history buff, occasional gardener and I really enjoy watching soccer.



## Regular worship schedule resumes September 13th!

Just a reminder that our summer worship schedule will be ending on August 31st!

**Join us on Sunday, September 7th at 10:15am for our all one "Unity Service" and picnic** at our school (see page 5). Note: This is our only worship service at St. Paul this weekend.

**Then, beginning September 13th** our regular worship schedule will resume: Saturdays @6:30pm (Downtown), Sundays @8:30am (Downtown) and 10:45am (School). Discipleship Hour will also resume on Sundays at both campuses at 9:30am. Holy Communion will still be offered at both campuses every weekend.



St. Paul Lutheran  
Church of Ann Arbor

### Reminder:

**Our regular worship schedule resumes  
September 13th!**

**Saturdays @ 6:30pm - Downtown**

**Sundays @ 8:30am - Downtown**

**Discipleship Hour @ 9:30am on Sundays (both campuses)**

**Sundays @ 10:45am - School**



## Endure... cont'd from pg. 2



connecting with others and reaching out to explain the work of LBWA.

- Super expensive food for lunch!!
- Youth Leader Tyler, encouraging skills of responsibility and follow through ("did you respond to your leaders text?"). This leader gives it his all, whether navigating concerns of kids, handling group expectations, and modeling endurance.
- "The Christian Faith: A Lutheran Exposition" published work on sale at the CPH stand, written by our own Pastor Ted Hopkins!
- Tyler sprinting up the steps to the Superdome, with a bunch of kids on his heels!
- Pastor Roggow's creativity, in organizing a catered dinner of crawfish mac-n-cheese, scrumptious Jambalaya, crawfish queso, roast beef Po'boys and fried waffles!

The kids are communicating their take aways from the sessions in very mature ways and following through on the plans for the day. Sessions highlighted our identity, mental health, vocation, Biblical truth, and sexual integrity. The Mass Event in the evening produced laughter with Mascot Mayhem, Trade Up or Pass, and a powerful drama with "confessions" of what kids were truly struggling with in secret, but which God was bringing into the light for healing. God sees us and we are His joy! Tanner Olson shared the first of his outstanding poems, "Let Hope Interrupt the Story" and reminded us that God don't make mistakes.

Musician and speaker, Flame, spoke with humor and wisdom to the group about how he began life thinking he was going to "do" things for God, instead of pursuing a relationship with Him. God endures us. Flame then lit it up with his DJ for a closing concert!

### Student "high" for the day:

- a presenter that spoke from the heart

- Flame concert

**Low for the day:** It's hot!!

### Monday, Day Two:

#### Spotted!

- Groups of TWO!
- Grulke family!
- Assistant Youth Leader, Jackson, pouring into kids with his humor, attention, and presence.
- Pastor Roggow, offering friendly support via the LCMSYG Care Team

Bible Study began again with a terrific band from Concordia Irvine, and nice seats up front. Students were encouraged to consider how to have conversations about their faith and the pastors talked to us about the cloud of witnesses (Hebrews 12:1). Abel, Sarah, Moses—these were imperfect people; not perfect, but restored. Pastors reminded us that we are not alone in our struggles; we are surrounded by the church, other Believers, and others who endure just like we do.

Students attended a variety of Sessions, sharing some feedback:

- "Presenter shared how God called him to serve even though it wasn't his first choice of work."
- "I took notes the whole time...speaker talked about what is a "good yes" when making decisions and how to rest."
- "The Bible is real. It is fact, not someone's feelings or opinion, like online. The speaker taught us that these are just not personal stories, but a record of history, and the things are in many other historical documents."



We made a very hot trek on foot to the SuperDome and were welcomed to a fun event just for the Michigan District. There, students and leaders reconnected with many friends from home, enjoying a meal of fried shrimp,





stuffed mushrooms, and meat pies, with a lovely selection of cheeses! A Roots Of Music quartet provided another excellent set of home-town New Orleans Jazz. After a huge group photo on the main floor, we got to our front row seats. The Mass Event in the evening again had the funny and talented AJ and Hannah as the MCs. There was deeply moving worship led by the Band, light up glasses, and glow sticks. Students heard two powerful speakers, one of whom was Shelly Schwalm. She reminded us "God's people endure, not alone, but together; and you are an important and wanted part of this family. You belong!" For many, the highlight of the evening was the energetic and amazing performance by Northern Irish band, Rend Collective. Our students still had a lot of jumping and dancing left in them for the concert!

### Tuesday, Day 3:

To close our morning Bible Study session, pastors had us all turn to our right, extend one arm forward to the person in front and one arm reach back to the person behind, clasping hands. We were interconnected as those running with endurance, together. We are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses!

After sessions, our Service Learning Project brought us to friendly and familiar faces of Rachel, Jeremy and Nathaniel Potts and crew. Students seemed to settle right in to the tasks they were given, working together to create pages for actual Braille publications and binding large print calendars. It was a joy to have a task with a beginning and an end and to spend time working as a team, for the benefit of others.

We rode the trolley to dinner at a New Orleans staple, Katie's—a restaurant that endured and overcame Hurricane Katrina devastation to be thriving today. There is a 6 foot water mark on the door frame, "despising the shame" of the ravaging floods of 2005. Owner, Scott, pointed down the street to his long-time church home, St. John Lutheran, and gave us a wonderful welcome to the busy restaurant. We feasted on scrumptious meatballs—his mother-in-law's recipe—fried catfish, and some adult leaders even split a slice of Lemon Doberge. This 7-layer cake separated by a thin layer of custard is a southern delicacy. Let's get this up here to Michigan, folks!!

Tonight's Mass Event had a more somber tone at times, as we remembered people who had been at the last NYG in 2022, but were no longer with us. There is a chair at the table and it's empty, Pastor Finnern told us. That makes today hard. But, we have hope: God has prepared an enormous house for us in heaven where the table will be full again. No pain, no tears, no death. Tanner's poem echoed the hardship of today but the hope of the future.

### Wednesday, Closing Day:

We experienced a Divine Worship service with 20,000 other Lutheran Christians at the SuperDome as our final mass event. An outstanding choir, with local member Ryan Shasko participating, was a focal point of moving us through the service. They sang alongside an NYG band ensemble which both performed and led us through hymnody. The worship band also moved us through renditions of "Holy, Holy, Holy." In his sermon, District President Harrison said he "saw 20,000 in a fiery furnace, unbound, unburnt, and I see another one with them, even the Son of God." He reminded us how discoveries in history and archeology continue to find evidence supporting the Bible as an accurate depiction of history and experience; and that there are 60 people mentioned in the Bible who are also found in other historical texts verifying their lives and works. Historically verified, they are some of the cloud of witnesses on which we base our faith in God. Finally, Pastor Harrison quoted Jesus's words to underscore our Gathering theme: "If you endure in my Word, you will know the truth and the truth will set you free." The YAVs, as well as our own Pastor Roggow and assisted by students Noah, Jacob, and Nolan, served hundreds in our area Holy Communion, We are the Body of Christ!



### Heading home

Students and Leaders laughed, talked, did free-styling clips, and slept on our way through Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio and home to Michigan. We are changed by this experience and continue as a part of the cloud of witnesses enduring this life and into the next.

Thank you, St. Paul congregation and the Special Gifts Committee, for sending us! We are also grateful to our Lord for preparing such a successful adventure. We go forward with friendships made, inspiration, and tools to rely on as we daily live out our faith.

# Livestream News!

**Beginning Sunday, September 14th** our livestream will be moving to our YouTube channel!

There are several reasons for this change, but mainly that YouTube is a platform designed for streaming and hosting video content, while Facebook is better suited to social connection.

Therefore, as of Sunday, September 14th you will be able to access our worship & sermon messages in the following ways:

**Worship - watch live on YouTube, Sunday mornings at 8:30am (scan the QR code!).** You can also view our archived library of past worship services. You do not need an account to watch our livestream on YouTube. However, if you have an account and would like to subscribe to our YouTube channel you can be notified of when a new service is live.

**Sermons - listen to our sermon audio right from our website at [www.stpaulannarbor.org/worship-online/sermons](http://www.stpaulannarbor.org/worship-online/sermons)!** You can also listen on Spotify (no account needed) by searching for St. Paul Ann Arbor. If you subscribe to our Spotify channel you will be notified when new sermon content is uploaded.



Please note: due to very low participation, we have decided to discontinue our phone-streaming service. This will also be effective beginning September 14th.

Thank you for your patience and support as we navigate this transition in the fall and a big thank you to our awesome livestream team!! Without this group of very dedicated volunteers we would not be able to offer our worship services or sermons online. If you are interested in joining our livestream team or if you have any questions about how to access our livestream or our sermon content please contact Natalie Nesbitt ([nnesbitt@stpaulannarbor.org](mailto:nnesbitt@stpaulannarbor.org)) or Tyler Seehafer ([tseehafer@stpaulannarbor.org](mailto:tseehafer@stpaulannarbor.org))!



We are excited to share some BIG news from our school! After thoughtful input and collaboration with our administration, teachers, and parent community, we are proud to introduce the new St. Paul Athletic mascot! This new mascot was carefully chosen to reflect the spirit of our school and the values we strive to instill in our students—

**strength, resilience, perseverance, growth, and renewal.** It represents not only who we are but also who we are becoming, both on and off the field/court.

Scan the QR code to watch the reveal video and get a first look at the energy and inspiration behind our new identity.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact our athletic director, Mr. Caleb O'Hara, at [athletics@stpaulannarbor.org](mailto:athletics@stpaulannarbor.org), or Mr. Burgess at [bburgess@stpaulannarbor.org](mailto:bburgess@stpaulannarbor.org).

We hope you are as excited as we are for this new chapter of St. Paul School of Ann Arbor.

## SPAA Athletic Mascot Branding Team

Bob Burgess, Caleb O'Hara, Elise Snapper, Sam Conway, Steve Schmit, Travis Grulke, Nancy Muyanja, and Sarah Ryan.

**To learn more about the ministries of St. Paul Ann Arbor visit our website at [www.stpaulannarbor.org](http://www.stpaulannarbor.org)**

*If you would like to submit an article or news item for any of the St. Paul communications please contact Natalie Nesbitt, Media Outreach Coordinator at [nnesbitt@stpaulannarbor.org](mailto:nnesbitt@stpaulannarbor.org).*



St. Paul  
Ann Arbor

**We equip families and individuals to know Christ,  
to discover truth, and to create meaningful connections.**