



St. Paul
Ann Arbor

Sowing Truth. Building Faith. Shining Love.

SUMMER 2026



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

Welcoming Community - Becoming a People Connected to our Neighbors

By: Pastor Ted Hopkins

In late May, the Vision Team presented a new long-term vision for St. Paul Lutheran Church and School: Welcoming Community. Over the next seven years, leading up to the 125th anniversary of our congregation, we will focus on how Jesus has brought us new and abundant life with God and others, and how the Holy Spirit invites us to bring that same fullness of life to our neighbors.

First, we need to learn to see all the ways God works for us and through us to create meaningful connections. Welcoming begins with God, not us. We are first receivers of His gifts. So, we want to notice how God deepens our faith, connects us with others, and brings us comfort through other people. This vision will help us observe how God welcomes us into deeper community with Jesus and His Church.

Second, Jesus is inviting us at St. Paul into deeper relationships with our neighbors. Neighbors are not just the people who live next door or across the street. They are the people whom God has placed in our lives: at work, school, home, the park, and everywhere we gather, even in our own families. These are the people we meet in our various vocations and callings, and Jesus is calling us into deeper community with them.

While this could mean inviting neighbors to church, many unchurched people will first need to experience meaningful, supportive, loving community—friendship!—before they find their way into the life of the church. So, the goal of this Welcoming Community vision is not simply to get people into church. It is for St. Paul to become a welcoming community: a people who

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Meet our new Principal, Amy Roth!

By: Natalie Nesbitt & Amy Roth



This past spring, St. Paul Ann Arbor issued a call to Amy Roth in St. Joseph, Michigan and she accepted! Amy and her husband Mike moved to Ann Arbor this summer and Amy officially started in her role as Principal of St. Paul School on July 13th. We are thrilled to have Amy leading our school and welcome both Amy and Mike into our St. Paul family. Here is a little bit about Amy and her family.

Tell us about your family -

My husband, Mike, and I have a wonderfully blended family with eight children and eight grandchildren, with our ninth grandchild due in October. Mike is a soon-to-be retired LCMS pastor and will be joining me in Ann Arbor at the beginning of September.



I met Mike when he accepted a call to my home congregation, Peace Lutheran in Saginaw, Michigan. After the passing of his first wife, he was raising four young children—Rachel, Adam, Hannah, and Abigail. What began as helping his family get settled grew into a wonderful friendship, then a marriage. I was blessed to adopt his four children, and together God blessed us with four more: Sarah, Jacob, Benjamin, and Joel.

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Saginaw, Michigan, where both of my parents dedicated their careers to education as teachers and administrators in the public school system. My brother and I attended Lutheran schools from kindergarten through twelfth grade, and those experiences helped shape both my faith and my love for Christian education.

What made you want to become a Lutheran school teacher/principal?

Having eight children allowed me to see the beautiful

way God has uniquely created and gifted each child. Supporting their learning led me to seek my teacher certification. I was especially interested in addressing the needs of students with different learning styles. This led me to my first Master's degree in Early Childhood Education. During Covid, I grew more concerned about learning gaps and increased student needs and completed my second Master's in Special Education. The passion for administration came from watching my Dad serve and seeing the tremendous impact he had in that role.

What are your favorite things to do outside of school?

I love spending time with my family, reading, and traveling.

What is your fondest or most impactful memory as a teacher/principal?

It's hard to choose just one favorite memory, but hearing from former students and their parents is always a highlight. I am honored to be a part of their journeys and to help them reach their full potential, particularly those who have overcome learning obstacles.

What are you most excited about in taking the role of Principal at SPAA?

So many wonderful things are happening at SPAA! The joy is contagious in the school, and I'm excited to dive into this ministry and serve the staff, students, and families!

How would you describe your overall leadership style?

My leadership style is centered on serving others and leading with Christ at the heart of all I do. I believe the best leadership starts with building strong relationships, listening well, and working alongside others. I strive to lead with humility, honesty, and compassion while encouraging everyone to grow and do their very best. I value open communication, collaboration, and creating a school community where students, staff, and families feel known, supported, and appreciated for the unique gifts God has given them.

How can our church family best support you in this new role?

I really appreciate your prayers! Please pray that God would grant me wisdom, humility, and discernment as I begin this new ministry, and that He would continue to bless St. Paul's students, families, staff, and congregation.

Anything else you would like to share with the congregation?

Please reach out and say hello! I'm looking forward to meeting you. Also, please send along any Ann Arbor area recommendations and favorites.



Welcome Rachael Oram & Grace Wiebe

Meet Our New Middle School Science Teacher - Rachael Oram!



Mrs. Rachael Oram will be teaching middle school science and serving as our 7th-grade homeroom teacher. Mrs. Oram earned her Master's degree in education from the University of Michigan and brings experience as both a high school science teacher and an instructional coach. She has a passion for helping students develop strong study habits, scientific thinking, and the confidence to succeed. Mrs. Oram and her husband met at Calvin College and are looking forward to becoming part of the St. Paul school community with their three daughters, who will all be attending St. Paul this fall: Lucy (4th grade), Marielle (Kindergarten), and Frances (Pre-K). Students can look forward to hands-on learning, opportunities to explore STEM careers, and an exciting new classroom resi-



dent—a friendly bearded dragon from a reptile rescue in Grand Rapids!

Meet Our New Director of Christian Education Intern - Grace Wiebe!

We are excited to welcome Grace Wiebe, a DCE student intern from Concordia University, St. Paul, who will be serving with us this year. Grace has a heart for ministry and especially a passion for investing in the next generation through education and faith formation. After conversations with her university supervisor, she felt confident that this placement would be a great opportunity to continue working with children and youth while growing in her calling to ministry. She is looking forward to getting to know the congregation and serving alongside everyone in the months ahead.

Grace enjoys spending time outdoors, especially in the



spring when nature begins to come alive again. Whether she's going for a walk or hiking, she loves being outside and appreciating God's creation. When she's indoors, one of her favorite hobbies is crocheting. She also enjoys catching up with family and friends whenever she has the chance.

One of Grace's favorite Bible verses is Isaiah 40:8: "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever." She especially appreciates this verse during the spring season. As the world around us changes and fades, it reminds her that God's Word and His love for us remain constant and unchanging.

Grace shares that some of the greatest influences on her faith have been her parents. They raised her in the church, prayed for her faithfully, and encouraged her to seek the



Lord in all she does. She remembers her mom singing hymns to her when she was young and her dad praying with her before bedtime—moments that continue to shape her faith today.

During her previous fieldwork experiences, one of her favorite memories was when a student offered a heartfelt prayer about noses—a simple and joyful reminder of how children approach God with honesty and wonder.

A few fun facts about Grace: she has traveled to 20 states, enjoys Mediterranean food (as long as it doesn't include lamb!), and her favorite ice cream flavor is raspberry chocolate chip. When it comes to movies, she loves the classic *The Parent Trap*.

We are thankful that Grace will be serving with us this year and invite you to help us give her a warm welcome when you see her around church!

Parking Lot Construction Has Begun!

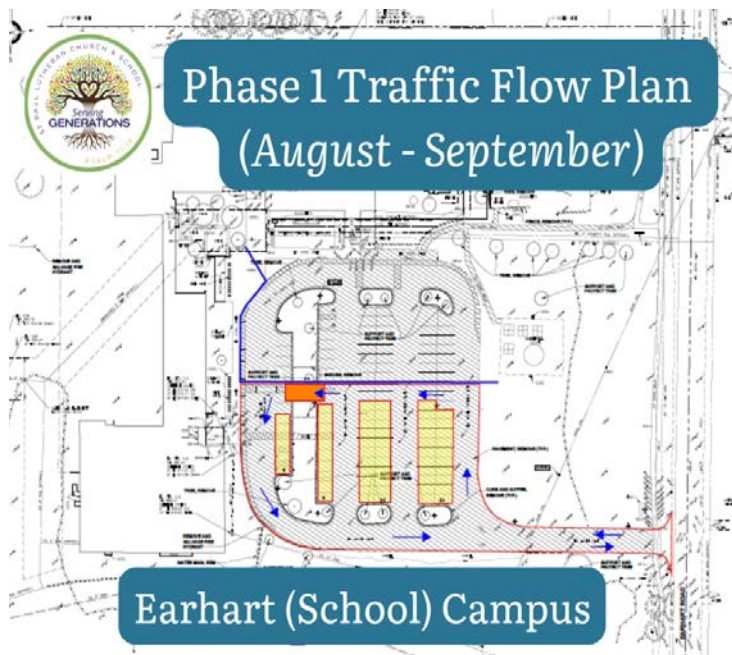
By: Natalie Nesbitt, Director of Communications



The day we've been waiting for has finally arrived—construction on our new parking lot is officially underway! While we are excited to see this long-awaited project begin, we also know it comes with some challenges as we prepare to welcome everyone back to school.

Because construction has started later than originally anticipated, our parking and traffic patterns will look different during the fall.

Phase 1 (August–September) will impact the parking lot nearest the school's main entrance. During this phase, all school traffic will enter and exit through the gym/worship entrance under the awning using a new drop-off and pick-up traffic pattern.



Phase 2 (September - November): The remaining portion of the lot near the gym entrance and the road to Earhart.

We know this transition will require a little extra patience and flexibility, and we are incredibly grateful for your partnership as we work through these temporary inconveniences. The end result will be a safer, more functional parking lot that will serve our church and school community for many years to come.

Tentative Project Timeline

- Site Work (parking lot, roads, drainage, utilities): August 2026 – November 2026
- Building Shell (new addition): Fall 2026 – Late Winter 2026/27
- Interior Construction (HVAC, fire protection, finishes): Winter 2026/27 – Late Spring 2027
- Final Renovations & Completion: Spring 2027 – Fall 2027

(Please note: all dates are tentative and subject to change.)

What to Expect Through Fall:

Construction will be visible and active throughout the fall and winter months. You can expect:

- Heavy equipment and construction materials on-site
- Temporary fencing and barriers
- At least 50% of the parking lot under construction at any given time

Coming late 2026/early 2027: Our "Fill it Up Campaign"!



Later this year our fundraising efforts will focus on furnishing the new media center and preschool classroom. As construction begins, if you would like to help purchase specific items (chairs/tables/etc) stay tuned for upcoming communication on how you can donate!

Look for more details coming SOON! For more information on the project and the different ways you can give scan the QR code or visit our website at www.stpaulannarbor.org/give/building-campaign



Fall Kick Off - Sunday, September 13th!

We know that fall is a busy time with many good things to look forward to, but how about church?

At St. Paul Ann Arbor, we want to welcome you and our neighbors into community!

On Sunday, September 13th, at both 8:30am & 10:45am services, we are celebrating fall by kicking off a new sermon series, our fall community groups, sharing our fall Sunday morning opportunities for adults & kids that will begin on September 20th, and enjoying some snacks and social time together after church (both campuses).

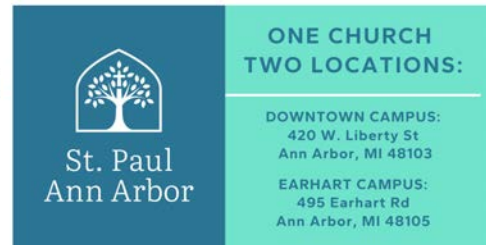
Please note, we will not have our annual Unity service this fall (due to Earhart Campus parking lot construction) but we plan to celebrate all together in the spring!

FALL KICK OFF

SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 13

8:30 AM
DOWNTOWN

10:45 AM
EARHART



NEW Community Groups are Forming this Fall!

By: Natalie Nesbitt, Director of Communications



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:

- **Moms in the Middle - NEW!**
- **Walk & Talk Bingo - NEW!**
- **Men's Coffee & Conversation - NEW!**
- **Mahjong - NEW!**
- **Men's Bonfire Nights - NEW!**
- **Bach Vespers**
- **Tuesday Bible Study w/ Pastor Roggow**
- **Hiking**
- **Men's Breakfast**
- **Women's Bible Study**
- **Love Ypsi Diaper Pantry**
- **Dad's Breakfast**

- **ACTS (Sewing Group)**
- **Love Ypsi Meals**

and more!

Signups for fall community groups start August 28th and end September 18th.

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!



Hey Pastor: Why do Lutherans Talk About ‘Calling’ a Pastor/Principal/Teacher etc., Instead of Just Hiring One?

By: Pastor Aaron Roggow

Pastor: “I’ve received a call...”

Person: “On your cell?”

Pastor: “Well, yes, they called my phone to tell me, but not that type of call.”

When it comes to career church work, we use some language that’s different from a summer job or corporate America. Most occupations and HR departments will talk about ‘hiring,’ ‘promoting,’ ‘demoting,’ or ‘firing’ individuals in the company. In the church, however, we use a different approach. The work that God gives us each to do, whether in a church career, regular employment, or just within the home, is referred to as Vocation. Vocation comes from the Latin root word “voca,” which in English means “call”. Each of us is called to different work as we uniquely care for the people God has placed around us. When it comes to work in God’s church, that “calling” aspect of the work done by a pastor, teacher, or church worker is emphasized. It’s not a job. It’s more than just a skill hire. It’s a ministry of service that one is called into by Jesus and His church.

HOW DOES SOMEONE BECOME “CALLABLE”?

Over the years, the church has developed different ways of training up workers to serve in God’s church. A mixture of personal gifts, passion, interest, willingness, and encouragement from others leads someone to study for churchwork. In the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS), we train workers through Concordia Universities and at Seminaries to serve in a variety of vocations:

- **Pastor**
- **Lutheran School Teacher**
- **Deaconess**
- **Missionary**
- **Director of Christian Education**
- **Director of Church Ministries**
- **Director of Christian Outreach**
- **Director of Parish Music**
- **Director of Family Life Ministry**

After a time of training and degree completion, students are certified by the LCMS to serve in one of these ministry professions. This makes them “Callable.” From there,

these workers are placed into their first position as a called worker. Part of entering church work is a willingness to serve wherever the broader church has a need for a worker and their gifts.

HOW DO NAMES GET ON A CALL LIST TO RECEIVE A CALL?

When a congregation needs a church worker, they can either call someone straight out of Seminary or a Concordia, or they can call someone who already works at another congregation. Church workers aren’t placing their names on call lists. And except for difficult circumstances, workers aren’t asking to be considered for service in a new place. Actually, if they aren’t interviewed or called by a congregation or school, a worker may never know that their name was on a list.

Call lists are put together by LCMS District Offices (there are 35 of these across the country). Workers that serve in churches and schools across the country make up the list of the Synod’s Ordained and Commissioned workers. Some names of individuals are suggested by the district as workers who could meet the needs of the calling school or congregation. Other names are added to the list by congregation members who know someone who might be able to serve them. These names then make up a call list that is shared alongside the workers’ personal information. A congregation or school may reach out to some of these workers if they’d like to interview them before issuing a call, but sometimes calls are extended based only on the worker information that they receive from the District.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SOMEONE HAS MORE THAN ONE CALL?

Whenever a church worker receives a call from a congregation and is already currently serving in a position, they now have two calls. One is to the role and place where they are now, and the other is to the newly called position. The church worker now has to prayerfully discern where God can and will best use them and their gifts. This is very similar to decisions that anyone faces when receiving a job offer, praying that they can use their God-given gifts in a way that blesses and serves others. They also think about how this new role could affect their family. These considerations lead a church worker to either accept or return (decline) a call. In either case, whatever happens,

(cont’d on pg. 9)



Welcoming Community... cont'd from pg. cover

make friends with their neighbors not simply as a means to evangelize them, but because they genuinely care about them. And in friendship, the Holy Spirit will bring opportunities to share God's Word and the grace of Jesus Christ, just as God has used people to do the same for us. This year, we are focusing on having our eyes open to see God at work. Our goal is to collect 500 stories of how God has been at work in our lives: deepening relationships, bringing us the comfort and peace we need, opening occasions to serve, and leading us into opportunities to share Christ with our neighbors. Starting in September, be on the lookout for opportunities to share your stories of how God has been at work in your life.

Jesus often said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." The same is true of eyes that the Holy Spirit opens to see God's work: Those who have eyes to see, let them see! That's my prayer this year: that God would open our eyes to recognize those around us as neighbors, to see how much He loves them and us, and to lead us into meaningful relationships with them.

It has been amazing to see how God opened my eyes during the weeks when we were finalizing this one-year vision of collecting stories. Let me give you one example. At a graduation picnic in May, I met John, who is about my age. After talking for a bit, I discovered that he had lost his older brother to cancer, just as I had, within the last couple of years. We talked about our brothers, about loss and grief, and about hope and Jesus. While John wasn't quite on the same page with me regarding Jesus, he was open to listening because we shared this same deep pain. I was only trying to be friendly when I started a conversation with John, but the Holy Spirit had other plans—and I was just there for it.

God bless you all as we seek to be a welcoming community here at St. Paul!
Pastor Ted

Welcoming Community: 2026-2033 St. Paul Ann Arbor Vision

In the underconnected and transient Ann Arbor area, St. Paul seeks to revitalize our neighborhoods through relationships. Many people have full, busy lives yet still long for deeper connections, with others and with God.

In Jesus God gives full and abundant life. Through this gift, we believe that God has prepared St. Paul Ann Arbor to cultivate a community where people are known, loved, and welcomed into abundant life together. We seek to

become this welcoming community by following Jesus with our neighbors and equipping others to do the same, showing up for one another and walking together in faith and life.

To begin this work, God is calling each of us at St. Paul Ann Arbor into deep and lasting relationships with and among our neighbors. By 2033, the 125th anniversary of St. Paul, we hope to welcome 7000* neighbors into deeper relationships with Jesus and His people. This is not a vision for growing St. Paul membership, but for becoming a people intentionally connected to the neighbors God has placed in our lives.

We imagine a community of imperfect people from all backgrounds who pray, eat, and play together, connecting meaningfully with one another in Christ.

We imagine kids and their families building faith in community: learning to pray, forgive, and trust in Jesus together.

We imagine people at all stages of life's journey, nourished in their faith by God's Word and each other.

We imagine neighbors becoming friends, together shining the abundant love of God in our neighborhoods.

*Why 7000? Everyone contributes! Scripture regularly uses 7 and 10 to represent completion. For us, 7000 (7x10x10x10) symbolizes the full mission God is calling St. Paul, and each of us connected to St. Paul, to pursue over the next 7 years. In addition, 7000 works literally too. If the 350 regularly worshipping adults—plus children and families connected to our school—each deepen connections with two or more people annually, we will achieve this goal.

Collecting Stories of God at Work

God unites us to Himself in relationship, and we want to be a place of deep and lasting community with Him and one another. This isn't primarily about numbers. This is about God at work connecting people in relationships. For 2026-27, we want to collect 500 stories of God at work in our relationships within and beyond our church: deepening connections, leading to service, and giving opportunity to witness. These stories include any in which you see God has shown up in your relationships, leading you to deeper connections with neighbors or fellow church members.



Youth Ministry

By: Tyler Seehafer, Director of Youth, Media & Missions

High School Youth Group: A Place to Belong

High school is busy. Between sports, activities, music, homework, jobs, friends, family, and everything else that fills a student's schedule, it can be difficult to find time to slow down and simply be present. That is one of the reasons our high school youth group continues to be an important part of our ministry.

Each Sunday evening starting August 30th from 6–8 PM, our high school students gather for a time of food, fellowship, fun, and growing together in faith. We spend time studying God's Word, asking questions, having conversations about what it means to follow Jesus in everyday life, and simply enjoying time together.

More than anything, we want youth group to be a place where students know they belong and can find rest. High school can bring plenty of questions and challenges, and students need a community of Christian friends who can encourage them, walk alongside them, and remind them that they don't have to navigate life and faith alone.

We are thankful for the great group of high school students who are already a part of our ministry, and we would love to see even more students become involved. Whether you've been coming for years, haven't been in a while, or have never attended before, you have a place here.

Our prayer is that youth group would be more than another activity on a busy calendar. We want it to be a community where students can grow in their relationship with Christ, build meaningful friendships, ask honest questions, serve others, find rest, and be encouraged to live out their faith wherever God has placed them.

So, if you know a high school student who could use a place to connect, grow, and have some fun with other Christians, invite them to join us Sunday nights from 6–8 PM. We would love to have them be part of what God is doing in our high school ministry! We meet in the new Youth Center at the Downtown Campus.

Mighty Waters: High School Gathering on Mackinac Island

This summer, our high school students had the opportunity to travel to Mackinac Island for the 2026 Michigan District High School Gathering, joining more than 800 high school

students from across Michigan for four days of faith, fellowship, worship, and fun.

The theme for this year's gathering was "Mighty Waters," based on Jesus' words in John 4:14: "But whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."



Mackinac Island was the perfect setting for this theme. Surrounded by the waters of the Straits of Mackinac, our students were reminded of both the peace and the incredible power of water. Yet even the mighty waters surrounding the island pale in comparison to the power of God's Word and the saving water we receive through Christ.

Throughout the four-day gathering, our students participated in large-group worship, Bible study, games, fellowship, and time together as a youth group. They also attended a variety of workshops and breakout sessions that challenged them to think more deeply about their faith, ask important questions, and consider what it means to follow Christ in their everyday lives.

One of the most meaningful parts of an experience like this is seeing hundreds of young Christians gathered together in one place. Our students were able to meet other high school students from across Michigan, build friendships, worship together, and be reminded that they are part of a much larger community of young people growing in their faith.

It was an incredible four days filled with laughter, friendships, worship, learning, and memories. Most importantly, we pray that the message of Mighty Waters continues to stay with our students—that they remember the promise of Christ and the living water He gives, which leads to eternal life.

If you see one of our high school students in the coming weeks, ask them about Mackinac Island and the "Mighty Waters" gathering! They would love to share about their experience.

(cont'd on pg.9)



Youth Ministry... *cont'd from pg. 8*

Middle School Youth Growing in Faith and Serving Others

This summer, 18 of our middle school students had the opportunity to attend the Michigan District Gathering, joining a few hundred other middle school students from across the state for an incredible time of faith, fellowship, and service.



The trip began with some fun and fellowship at Frankenmuth Waterpark before our students jumped into several full days of singing, Bible study, games, activities, worship, and small-group time. Throughout the gathering, students were encouraged to grow in their understanding of what it means to live out their faith each day.

One of the highlights of the trip was an opportunity to serve others in a very tangible way. Our students partnered with several other groups to build 16 beds for children who do not have a bed of their own. They worked hard, served one another, and did an awesome job! It was a wonderful reminder that our faith isn't just something we talk about—it moves us to love and serve our neighbors.



Students also participated in workshops and breakout



sessions focused on defending their faith, standing strong when their faith is challenged, and understanding what it means to walk faithfully with Christ.

It was an awesome trip filled with memories, laughter, worship, learning, and opportunities to serve.

If you see one of our students in the coming weeks or months, ask them about the Michigan District Gathering! They may have a story or two to share about what they experienced and how God worked through the weekend.

Faith, Fun, Fellowship & Lock In

Middle schoolers (grades 6-8)! Join us one Wednesday each month from 4:00–5:30 p.m. in the gym for Faith, Fun & Fellowship! This after-school gathering is a great time for middle school students to enjoy fun activities, group builders, and fellowship with friends. We are also excited to have our annual Lock In on the schedule for January 22nd! We will have more info and signups to come.



Upcoming FFF Dates:

September 23

October 28

November 11

December 16

January 22 — Lock-In

February 3

March 24

April 21

May 12

Hey Pastor... *cont'd from pg. 6*

we know that God is using these workers in His church wherever He sends them, and we give Him the glory.

SO HOW DO PROMOTIONS IN THE CHURCH WORK?

The church doesn't really see a change in position as a promotion like in other industries. Let's say a school picks a current teacher in that school to become the new school principal. This teacher has two calls, too. The calls are to the same school in different positions. If they see God using these gifts in this new way, that's great. It's not seen as a promotion, but just a change in position. Different workers have different gifts that they bless others with in unique ways. A change in particular vocation isn't a promotion or a demotion; it's just a different way to serve.

WOW, I'M GLAD I ASKED!

I'm glad I could clarify this for you. Maybe someday you'll be asked to serve on a call committee for a church worker. It can be a difficult time for a calling church or school and a difficult time for the worker being called. In everything, we know that Jesus is Lord of His church, and calls are filled according to His good timing. To Him alone be the glory!



Do You Have a Hey Pastor Question?

We'd love to know what it is! Just email Pastor Roggow at: aroggow@stpaulannarbor.org

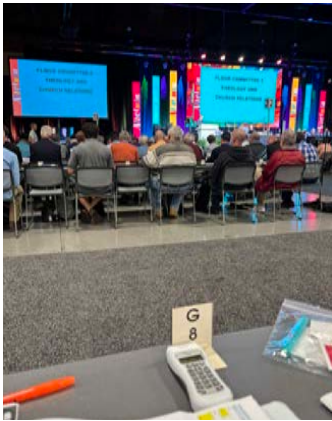


A Look Back at The LCMS Synodical Convention

By: Ellen Shasko, Ann Arbor Circuit Lay Delegate



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, warm greetings from the 69th regular convention of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod held in Phoenix, Arizona. I was blessed to be able to serve as the voting lay delegate for our Ann Arbor circuit. Pastor Kyle Weeks from St. Luke served as the voting pastoral delegate for the circuit. The convention was held from July 18th-23rd and the theme from 1 Corinthians chapter fifteen was: "Christ is Risen Indeed".



Every three years, the Synod convention brings together delegates from across the country to conduct the business of the church – including electing national leadership and guiding the direction of Synod on key issues. This year the voting delegation of nearly 1000 addressed over 70 elected positions and more than 100 resolutions grouped by floor committee: National Witness, International Witness, Mercy, Life Together, Theology & Church Relations, Pastoral Ministries & Seminaries, University Education, Finance, Structure & Administration, and Ecclesiastical Supervision & Dispute Resolution.

The resolution process began months before the convention with the ten floor committees taking the 374 overtures received from entities across the Synod (including 21 from the Michigan District) and formulating them into the 112 resolutions that were reviewed, amended, discussed and voted on by the delegation. Over 100 more overtures were received in 2026 than were received in 2023, so the workload of the floor committees was significant. The eleventh floor committee facilitated candidate slates for each of the elected positions.

Beginning six weeks before the



convention, registered lay and pastoral delegates from every congregation had the opportunity to vote for the Synod president. This is the only election that takes place before the event. Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison was elected for a sixth and final term on the third ballot. The remainder of elections including the first vice president, the regional vice presidents, and positions on the board of directors, regents at the universities & seminaries, and other Synod boards took place during the convention.

Not to be lost in all the business of the convention is the opportunity to worship and pray, take communion together, have meaningful conversations with delegates from both large and small congregations all over the United States, listen to thoughtful essayists, and raise the Easter greeting together with one voice: Alleluia, Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed! Alleluia! Those interactions serve as a reminder that there is far more that unites us as brothers and sisters in Christ than separates us.



Wesley was able to join me on the trip, working as a volunteer page for two of the days and joining me every day for worship. As promised, it was hot in Phoenix, including one record-breaking day. Thankfully, the convention center offered respite from the heat alongside fantastic views of downtown Phoenix and the surrounding mountains. I learned so much from both the hours spent preparing ahead of time and the days on the convention floor and I am very thankful for the opportunity to attend.

For full election and resolution outcomes: Visit the Synod website at lcms.org/convention/national.

For daily summary videos: View updates from Dr. Scott Yakimow of the Michigan District office on YouTube (@michiganLCMS).

Questions? If you have any specific questions about the proceedings, please feel free to reach out to me directly at ewshasko@gmail.com.





MISSIONS



St. Paul Lutheran
Church - Ann Arbor

Sowing TRUTH. Building FAITH. Shining LOVE.

Our Churches in Africa - For Your Prayers

By: Ruth Schmude

Dear members of St. Paul,

The news has reported persecutions of Christians in several countries. One of them is Nigeria, Africa. St. Paul has been a supporter and prayer partner with Pastor Christian Ekong for many years. Pastor Ekong is the President of the Lutheran Church of Nigeria. As a congregation, we have collected and sent various religious materials, Bibles and Catechisms over the years.

I immediately contacted (Pastor Ekong) regarding the status of his area. His response was as follows:

Grace and peace to you and your family this Holy Trinity season!

Pardon my long silence of not reaching out to you. The tasking of shepherding God's flock in our situation has been very challenging - our roads, places of worship, farms and even houses are no more safe.

Our churches in the northern states are mostly affected. Life generally in the country is a difficult one because people can't travel freely. We cannot go to farm. Schools must have armed security. To add to this, there is so much hunger, and corresponding health problems arising from these challenges.

Nigeria is bleeding indeed! We are suffering in the hands of Muslim leaders and other whom corruption has eaten into their bone marrow.

*In all we continue to trust God!
Thank you for your thoughts and prayers for us.*



Dr. Christian Ekong
(President/Archbishop)
The Lutheran Church of Nigeria

Please keep Pastor Ekong, his family and congregation in your prayers.

In His service,
Ruth Schmude

Learn more about Pastor Ekong and the Lutheran Church of Nigeria at: <https://lutheranchurchnigeria.org/about-the-president/>



Community Group Sneak Peek - Moms in the Middle!

By: Cathy Krzyske

Moms in the Middle...Where Moms Sip, Share and Strengthen Faith

Motherhood is one of the hardest jobs in the world. You are responsible for your child's well-being, but your own as well. It's a journey filled with joy and laughter but also challenges and uncertainties. And that's where the magic of mentorship comes in. As mothers we're so focused on being mentors to our children we forget about someone being a mentor to us. That's where someone who has been through those ups and downs and has come out stronger is needed. They have the capacity to provide guidance, navigate challenges and celebrate victories with you with God's love and guidance. Having a mentor means having someone to share the journey with – someone to laugh with, cry with, and learn from.

For those of us in our sixties, St. Paul never had the option of Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) or anything else of that nature to the best of my knowledge. Now St. Paul mothers have the option of MOPS. However, there is a need for those moms going through the Junior High and Senior High years with their children. Even more so with those moms who work and cannot attend daytime activities. These moms need an option that doesn't require them to prepare for a study or be responsible for food or planning. Time is already a factor they struggle with. They need an outlet to socialize with other women



where they can talk through and pray about things they are going through with their children during these years.

That is why we started this new group last fall and had a great success! So we will be starting back up in September. Those new wanting to join us are welcome! We will be meeting the second Friday of each month through May. We are a group of mentor moms and moms of Jr/Sr High School students. We are very laid back providing a time for moms to talk about anything they want in a safe and friendly environment. Drinks and heavy appetizers are provided. We meet at the home of Cathy Krzyske. If you are interested, please feel free to text Cathy at 734-904-0674. **For more information or to check out our other Fall Community Groups visit: www.stpaulannarbor.org/connect/community-groups**



To learn more about the ministries of St. Paul Ann Arbor visit our website at: 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.



St. Paul
Ann Arbor

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