

Our Worship

St. Paul Luth Church

✠ 420 W Liberty ✠
734.665.9117

Saturday Worship

6:15pm/6:30pm

Sunday Worship

8:30am

Fellowship/Discipleship

9:30am/9:45am

St. Paul Luth School

✠ 495 Earhart Rd ✠
734.665.0604

Sunday Worship

10:45am

Fellowship/Discipleship

9:30am/9:45am

Holy Communion

Sat. May 4 (D)

Sun. May 5 (D)

Sun. May 12 (S)

Sat. May 18 (D)

[D = Downtown / S = School]

Rev. Gary Bender
Vacancy Senior Pastor

Rev. Aaron Roggow
Associate Pastor

Mr. Robert Burgess
Principal

Mrs. Cheryl Crawford-Gore
Early Childhood Director
Downtown Campus

Mrs. Monica Slack
Preschool Director
School Campus

✠
Established 1908

St. Paul Lutheran Church

*an exciting place
to encounter an ancient faith*



Our Vision as a Congregation:

GATHER – To be people who welcome others into community with us.



LC-MS

*420 W Liberty St and 495 Earhart Rd
Ann Arbor, Michigan*

Web: www.stpaulannarbor.org

Fifth Sunday of Easter

✠ Sunday, April 28, 2024 ✠ 8:30am

To Our Guests

Welcome in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! We are honored that you have chosen to worship with us. Please stop by our **Guest Welcome Center** in the narthex for more information about our ministries. May God bless your worship today!

If You Have Children

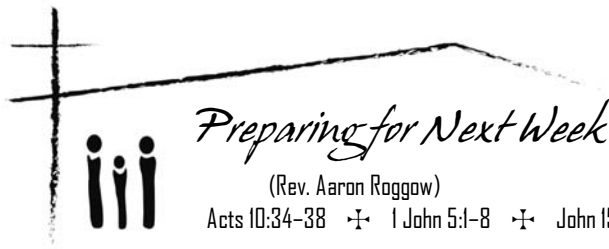
We welcome and encourage the attendance of small children in our worship services. We believe that they can learn to worship their Lord and Savior even at an early age. We also understand that they will at times behave as the young children they are. If your child becomes excessively restless and creates a commotion that might be disturbing to the worship of others, a *cry room* (at the rear of the church) is available for your use, and a *nursery* is located at the foot of the narthex stairs. *Children's Clipboards* are available at each entrance to our sanctuary. Ushers will be happy to assist you.



“I am
the
true
vine ...”



John 15:1



Preparing for Next Week

(Rev. Aaron Roggow)

Acts 10:34-38 ✠ 1 John 5:1-8 ✠ John 15:9-17

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

RINGING OF THE BELL

WORDS OF WELCOME

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C: **He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

HYMN

“O Blessed Spring”



LSB# 595

WE CALL UPON THE NAME OF GOD

*Invocation
Matthew 28:19b*

The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen!**

WE TURN TO GOD, MINDFUL OF OUR SINFULNESS

Confession of Sins

P: In today’s Gospel we hear Jesus say, “*I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.*”

We became “branches” of Jesus the vine through our Baptism. The Holy Spirit has enabled us to hear the Word our Lord speaks. That Word is His forgiveness, which takes away our sins and makes us fruitful for His purposes. Without such mercy and grace we cannot live as branches of our life-giving Vine. Let us consider our need for such forgiveness and confess our sins.

C: **Most merciful God, we confess to You that even though we are in Christ, we often live as if we were not. Sin dwells in us like a plague. We fail to bear fruit and we deserve none of Your blessings. As a vine-dresser prunes the vine for greater strength and harvest, remove our sin and distractions which lead us away from an abundant life in Christ. Nourish us that we would bear fruit in keeping with repentance, for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

(We observe a moment of quiet reflection as we consider our own sinful condition)

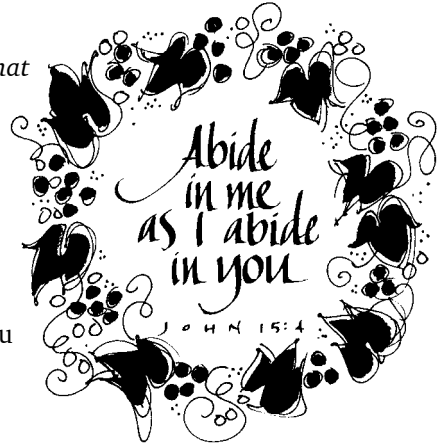
GOD TURNS TO US, EAGER TO FORGIVE

Absolution
(with 1 John 4:9,10,13)

P: *“God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. This is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ... By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.”*

Almighty God in His mercy has given His only Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you for all of your sins. As a called and ordained servant of the Word, I announce the grace of God to all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I forgive you for all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen!**



PRAISE TO CHRIST THE TRUE VINE

(LSB# 540)

1 Christ, the Word of God in - car - nate, Lord and Son of
3 Christ, the shoot that springs tri - um - phant From the stump of

A - bra - ham; Christ, the ra - diance of the Fa - ther,
Jes - se's tree; Christ, true vine, You nur - ture branch - es

Per - fect God, the great I AM; Christ, the light, You
To bear fruit a - bun - dant - ly. Graft us in - to

shine un - van - quished, Light and life You bring to all; Light our
You, O Sav - ior; Prune our hearts so we re - main Fruit - ful

path with Your own pres - ence, Grant us grace to heed Your call.
branch - es in Your vine - yard Till e - ter - nal life we gain.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Collect

P: Risen Lord, You are the vine and we are the branches. Apart from You we have no life. By Baptism You have grafted us into Your gracious life. Cause Your Word to abide in us and make us fruitful witnesses to the glory of Your Father, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

SENDING for FAMILY LIFE INTERN

✠ Molly Breitenbach

✠ *We Hear the Word of God* ✠

FIRST READING ✠ Acts 8:26–40

²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is a desert place. ²⁷ And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸ and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹ And the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and join this chariot.” ³⁰ So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” ³¹ And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. ³² Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this: “Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth. ³³ In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.” ³⁴ And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” ³⁵ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶ And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?” ³⁸ And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. ³⁹ And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea. (ESV)

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING ✠ 1 John 4:1-11

¹ Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³ and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. ⁴ Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. ⁵ They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. ⁶ We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error. ⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. (ESV)

L: This is the Word of the Lord.
C: **Thanks be to God.**

WE RISE TO THE GOSPEL

Alleluia
(LSB# 474)

3 Je - sus the vine, We are the branch - es; Life in the
Spir - it the fruit of the tree; Heav - en to earth, Christ to the
peo - ple, Gift of the fu - ture now flow - ing to me.
Refrain
Je - sus is ris - en and we shall a - rise:
Give God the glo - ry! Al - le - lu - ia!

HOLY GOSPEL ✠ John 15:1-8

¹ [Jesus said,] “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.” (ESV)

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.
C: **Alleluia! Thanks be to God.**



APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth

And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life ✠ everlasting. Amen.

HYMN

“I Am the Vine”



(Tune: LSB# 760)



1. "I am the Vine," my Sav - ior said, "My
 2. The Gar - d'ner knows that I am not a
 3. How can I say, a sick - ly branch, "The
 4. O Sav - ior, I must hum - bly say, "Hold



Fa - ther is the Gar - d'ner." He loves the plant so
 health - y branch and fruit - ful; the fruit I bear is
 Gar - d'ner must re - tain me! And though I bear so
 me a lit - tle long - er." O Gar - d'ner, I will



ten - der - ly, and comes the fruit to ga - ther. He
 oft - en small, and how could it be use - ful to
 lit - tle fruit, the Vine must still sus - tain me!" If
 dare to pray, "Trim me and make me strong - er." Then



has the right to see in me the fruit I should be
 God who rules the heav'n and earth, and has the best of
 there may be some good in me, a ti - ny fruit that
 make me bear some fruit to share, a seed to spread the



bear - ing, the love I should be shar - ing.
 all things? Can He ac - cept such small things?
 shows it. It is the Vine who grows it.
 sto - ry, Your ten - der love and glo - ry!

Text: ©1997 Verfasser D. Verborgten, b. 1957

MESSAGE

“True Branches of the True Vine”
Rev. Gary Bender

John 15:1–8

RESPONSE

(Tune: LSB# 760)

**The Vine is Jesus Christ, my Lord;
He keeps me strong and feeds me.
Though crooked be my branch and worn,
His faithful growing leads me.
The fruit I bear is how I share
His message of abiding—
Each seed His grace providing!**

Text: ©2024,2021 Kirchenlied S. Schreiber, b. 1685

✠ *We Worship the Lord with Our Offerings* ✠

During the Offering, we invite your participation in our Ritual of Friendship. Please fill in the requested information on the Friendship Pad (which is located at the end of the pew at the center aisle) and pass it down the pew. Also, as the pad is returned, please take note of who is worshipping with you in order that you might greet them following the service.

(For electronic and convenient giving options, see the end of this worship folder)

VOLUNTARY



CANTICLE OF THE TRUE VINE

(Tune: LW# 417)



1 I am the True Vine from a - bove and
2 My Fa - ther's love cares for each branch— the
3 Je - sus, I pray You, live in me so
4 Help me to joy in things a - bove, help



you My branch - es green; A - bide in Me and
goal a fruit - ful vine— The bar - ren branch He
I may live in You. Your Spir - it give that
me de - sire Your ways, That I may bear the



in My love good fruit shall then be seen. A -
pares a - way, each fruit - ing branch trims clean. Dwell
pa - tient - ly, my Fa - ther's will I'll do; And
fruit that lasts and glo - ry give and praise To



part from Me no good thing comes, but in Me blos - soms spring.
in My Word and in My love and you'll be al - ways Mine.
bear - ing fruit that will en - dure, may Your dis - ci - ple prove.
Fa - ther, Son, and Spir - it, one, now and for all my days.

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✠ *The Prayers We Bring to God* ✠



P: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

PRAYERS for THIS DAY

(As prompted) P: *Lord, in Your mercy,*
C: **hear our prayer.**

P: Into Your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray:

The Lord's Prayer
Matthew 6:9-13

C: **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.**

TAKING IT HOME

John 15:5 (ESV)

P: [Jesus said,] "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit,

C: **for apart from me you can do nothing."**

WE RECEIVE THE BLESSING OF GOD

Benediction
Numbers 6:24-26

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with His favor and ✠ give you peace.

C: **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS


EASTER ACCLAMATION

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C: **He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

HYMN

“Fruitful Trees, the Spirit’s Sowing”

 LSB# 691

POSTLUDE



⌘ *Our Worship Servants* ⌘

Liturgist: Rev. Aaron Roggow

Preacher: Rev. Gary Bender

Lay Reader: Katie Contreras

Music: Caleb Gard

Family Worship Team: Fred & Laurie Metzger

Hospitality: Nancy Niemela

Elder: Zach Lahrman

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✠ *Our Offerings and Gifts* ✠

Looking for different options to financially support the ministry of St. Paul through your regular offerings or one-time gifts?



Just text “GIVE” to **734-436-3634**
(This will also allow you to set up a recurring gift if you choose.)

Online: <https://www.kindridgiving.com/app/giving/stpaulaa>



Mail checks to: St. Paul Lutheran Church
420 W Liberty St
Ann Arbor, MI 48103



For more giving information, go to: <https://www.stpaulannarbor.org/give/>

Notes and Upcoming Events

NEWEST ITEMS

NOW . . . **Stephen Ministry**

Are you struggling right now or know someone who is? A Stephen Minister will walk with you through life's challenges. Stephen Ministers in our congregation are trained and supervised lay people who will provide one-to-one, Christ-centered care to those who need a listening ear. Think of Stephen Ministry if you are dealing with a long-term illness, or a relationship falls apart or your home is very empty after your last child moves away or you feel lost in a new place or job or your family and friends no longer want to hear your story. If this is you, reach out to our Stephen Ministry Leaders: Karen Baker (tttkbaker@gmail.com 734-730-8842), or Cherise Callahan (callahcl@yahoo.com 734-395-8775), or Jane Burch (janeburch@gmail.com 734-277-5315).

TODAY . . . **Puerto Rico Mission Presentations**

As many of you know, St. Paul supports James and Christel Neuendorf in Puerto Rico as missionaries. Recently Tyler Seehafer was invited to see the mission and all that they are doing to extend the Church. During Discipleship hour this Sunday, join us to hear what is currently going on and if you might be interested in the possibility of traveling to Puerto Rico as part of a mission team!

Mon, April 29 . . . **Visual Faith Ministry**

St. Paul Lutheran Church | 420 W Liberty St (Fellowship Hall) | 7:30pm
Visual Faith Ministry invites you to an evening where we will explore how to use the Joy Journal resource from Visual Faith Ministry. The Gifts of Joy Journal incorporates 3 devotional practices into a single resource: gratitude pages, prayer templates, and monthly calendar spaces for devotional journaling. Don't have a joy journal? We've got you covered! There will also be time set aside for fellowship, and you're invited to bring anything related to Visual Faith that you may want to work on (the Joy Journal, faith mail, etc.). Visual Faith coaches will be available to answer questions or help with ideas. For more info or to RSVP, contact Leigh Hollman (jlhollmann@comcast.net)

Sat/Sun, May 4/5 . . . **Michigan District Sunday**

Laura Thomas, Director of Development for the Michigan District, will share a presentation regarding the work of the District and how we can work together in unity for the mission and ministry of the Church. Please join us on Saturday, May 4 following the 6:30 pm service or on Sunday, May 5 at 9:45 am during the Discipleship hour.

UPDATED . . . **Spring Clean Up — POSTPONED**

Thanks to our recent mulch crew, much of the Spring clean up of our downtown gardens has been completed! We plan to have another clean-up date this Fall and we hope you will join us!

NOW . . . **Men's Ministry Golf!**

It's time for golf! Each week we will play nine holes at various courses around the area. You are invited to join us as often as you can. For more information and weekly course locations (TWIG notes), email Ron Allen (allenrm@med.umich.edu or allenr@cuaa.edu)

June 17–20 . . . **VBS 2024!**



St. Paul Lutheran School (495 Earhart Rd, Ann Arbor) | 9:00am–Noon
St. Paul Lutheran Church in partnership with St. Luke, ULC, and New Life are excited to take kids deep into an amazing undersea adventure where they'll experience the ever-flowing, never-ending love of God. At Scuba VBS, kids will be immersed in the Word and discover what living water is really all about! VBS is open to children who have turned 4 by June 1 through those who have completed 4th grade. Register here (<https://tinyurl.com/3t4s6skb>), or use the QR code at left. Lots of volunteers—all ages—are needed, so please consider signing up. Contact Lexie Brown with any questions (lbrown@stpaulannarbor.org).