



Walking Together

St. Paul Lutheran Church and School
 Catonsville, MD
 September 2023

Connected

I am the vine, you are the branches. John 15:5

That is the theme for the 2023-24 St. Paul Lutheran School year. *Connected*. It is a great theme and verse. We should all meditate a little on this verse and what it means not just for the school but for all of St. Paul Lutheran church.

We are all *connected* to Jesus by faith. He is the vine, we are the branches. We receive all grace and mercy through our connection to the Crucified One. Just like a branch has no life apart from the vine, without Christ and his forgiveness given to us through Gospel and sacraments, we are nothing.

We are *connected* to one another. So often we think of our Christian life in individual terms. It's me and Jesus! However, there are no solitary branches. Through the vine every branch is connected to the other. That's a picture of us as a congregation. We are connected to each other in Jesus. We make our way through this life together, relying on Christ together, supporting one another and serving one another.

We are *connected* to Christ and to each other and Christ works through us to produce fruit. The rest of John 15:5 says *Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit*. Together Christ produces in us good works, service, praise, thanksgiving, prayer, and witness..

Connected. We are connected. One congregation, St Paul Lutheran: church, school, every board and committee and group, every family, every person in the pews. *Connected*.

Pastor Alms



Sunday School and Adult Education Classes Resume

On September 10th, all new classes for Sunday mornings will begin! Join us from 8:45 – 9:45 AM.

Class		Teacher	Location
K – 4 th Grade	Old Testament – God Restores His People	Andia Orujov	Room 204
5 th – 7 th Grade	Apologetics	Jeffrey Hemmeter	The Learning Center
8 th – 12 th Grade	Apologetics	Cameron and Vanessa Jones	Room 203
Women's	Meant for Good – A Study of Joseph	Michelle Johnson	Room 206
Adult	End Times	Pastor Alms	Fellowship Hall

Hymn of the Month

The God of Abraham Praise, LSB 798

This hymn has its origins in a famous hymn sung in Jewish synagogues for hundreds of years and still sung today: Yigdal Elohim Hai (“The Lord be exalted”). In the mid 1700’s, Thomas Olivers, a Christian, attended a Jewish synagogue service with Charles Wesley in London and heard the hymn. He was moved to write a Christian paraphrase of what he heard. His original hymn text had twelve verses and was included by John Wesley in a popular collection of hymns. It was adapted for use by Lutherans in 1978 by the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Hymnody. The tune for the hymn is based on the original tune for the synagogue hymn. While the LSB includes nine verses we will sing only the first four. There the powerful images of God’s power and might are balanced by a strong confession of Christ’s work for us and our trust in Him: “He deigns to call me friend; He calls himself my God. And he shall save me to the end through Jesus’ blood.”

From the Congregational President

We are just getting into the swing of things. We just had our first council meeting and we are focusing on strategic moves for the church and school. What does this mean? It means focusing on where we want to be in 2 years and beyond. We will be working to identify those things we want to accomplish and what needs to be done to get there. As we progress we will keep the church informed. Additionally, we will be starting off our Capital Campaign, starting with identifying those who will be on the committee. These are big lofty goals, but something we will work towards over the year.

Our council is full this year, which is fantastic! Once again, here is a list of those who are on council:

- President – Aaron Nelson
- Vice President – Greg McDonald
- Treasurer – Paul Lubell
- Secretary – Sally Foks
- Asset Management Board – Brad Johnson
- Mission Board – Cameron Jones
- School Board – Carolyn Loudon

Feel free to email or call me if you have any questions, comments, or concerns. We are looking forward to a great church year!

Blessings to all,
Aaron Nelson
nelsaar@yahoo.com

Interested in Mid-week Bible Studies?

Please fill out this [Super Short Survey](#) to help us plan.





Let's see what God can accomplish when we all give more.

It's a stretch, but we will get there!

Lutheran Books and Beer: The Screwtape Letters

We will tackle this C. S. Lewis classic this fall at Lutheran Books and beer. Lutheran Books and Beer is an opportunity to enjoy discussion of Lutheran theology and enjoy good German beer. Yes, C. S. Lewis was an Anglican not a Lutheran, but he had many important insights and we will discuss the book from a Lutheran viewpoint. So, join us. Generally, we meet every fourth Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at The Rathskellar restaurant in Arbutus at 5782 Main Street. The first meeting is September 28th.

News From the Elders

These are the elders for 2023; contact any of us with personal concerns via email, phone, or in person: Kevin Dungey (Chairman), Jim Baeder, Norm Giguere, Roy Krakat, Bill Oldhouser, Jeff Piegols, and Bruce Staudinger.

Elders Adult Education Sub-Committee Report

- The Elders Adult Education Sub-Committee, made up of Pastor Alms, Kevin Dungey, Bill Oldhouser, Dana Stigdon, Cameron Jones, Brian Haberl, and Heather Krakat, met to process information gathered from the summer congregational surveys. Survey results indicate that the Summer Bible Study classes have been well received. Classes were led by experienced leaders (Pastor appreciated participating rather than leading), offered interesting and varied topics from week to week, and were well attended. Survey results also support the idea of offering more than one class per semester, fall and spring, although offering 3 classes spring of 2023 diluted attendance.
- The committee decided to offer Sunday adult education classes for 6 weeks at a time. Thus, for the fall, 2023, Pastor will offer a 6-week class on the End Times (a popular topic from the survey) running 9/10-10/15. No plans as yet for the period 10/22-11/26. 12/3-12/17 will be on prayer. Michelle Johnson will offer a Bible study for women, topic to be determined.
- The survey showed an interest in Bible study/classes that would meet during the week at church either during the day or at night. Another survey will be sent out to discern the level of interest and whether to offer daytime or nighttime classes. The committee felt that it would be good to offer an evening class during the fall semester once the results of a survey are known. Meanwhile, if you are interested in either a daytime or evening Bible Study to be held at church during the week, please contact Kevin Dungey (kdungey49@gmail.com).

Sunday School

Andia Orujov will teach the elementary grades, Jeff Hemmeter and Mike Schmidley will teach the Middle School grades, and High School classes will be taught by Cameron and Vanessa Pacheco-Jones for 6 weeks and then Chris and Kaitie Parsons for the next 6 weeks.

Oktoberfest

Pastor and Suzanne Alms will host an Oktoberfest party at their house on October 28 from 6-9 PM. Food and refreshments will be supplied by the Rathskeller Restaurant in Elkridge. Please mark your calendars! Tickets will go on sale soon.

In His service,
Kevin Dungey,
Board of Elders

Youth News

Plans are under way for the fall of 2023. Annika Nguyen is helping lead the youth group this year. Thank you, Annika! Plans are for a kick off get together with games and food in September, a corn maze for October, the SED Youth retreat in November and a Christmas party in December.

Church Choir

Next to the Word of God, Music deserves the highest praise! – Martin Luther

If you enjoy singing . . . please, consider joining the Church Choir! Youth and Adults are welcome! We will be happy to see your face and hear our voice!



Rehearsals are from 7:30 pm – 9 pm in the Choir Loft and resume on the Wednesday after Labor Day Weekend, September 6th. We begin singing the following Sunday and continue singing Anthems through Holy Trinity Sunday.



Christmas, Holy Week and Easter are exciting highlights for each year.



If you are interested, please, contact Organist/Choir Director, Renata O'Reilly at 410-300-2710.

Soli Deo Gloria

Greetings from the Asset Management Board!

First, we want to thank and acknowledge **Suzanne Giguere** for her years of service on the Asset Management Board! Her skills and dedication will be missed!

Brad Johnson will be taking over as Chair of the board and continue serving as the liaison to the Cemetery Committee. Amanda McKay is joining the board and will be the liaison to the Operations Manager and Property and Maintenance Committee. Jim Kyne will be serving his second year as liaison to the Investments Committee.

Have you noticed how nice the floors look throughout the building? We recently had the floors stripped and re-waxed during the evening hours, including the sacristy and bell tower! This is an annual project to keep the floors looking shiny and new!

Also, a new ductless air conditioning system was installed in the choir loft classroom and small conference room. This system is much more efficient and quieter than the old window units, providing a more conducive learning environment for our students!

In the coming months we will be looking at doing more general upkeep type maintenance, like replacing and repairing the concrete in certain sections of sidewalks around the Church grounds. We'll provide monthly updates via the newsletter.

If you have any questions or concerns for the Asset Management Board, please e-mail Brad Johnson - bjohnson2@comtechnologies.com.

Blessings to all,

Brad Johnson

Women's Guild

Ladies, we are hosting the LWML Fall Rally on **Saturday, September 23rd**.

8:30 – Registration, \$5.00

9:00 – Breakfast

9:45 – Martha McGlynn

10:00 – Speakers from Faith Works Ministry,
LeChelle Redd and Tina Jasion

11:30 – Close with prayer.



GIFTS OF THE HEART: travel size toiletries, feminine hygiene products, diapers.

I will be looking for help setting up on Friday evening and will be sending out an email in the next couple of days looking for people to sign up to bring breakfast casseroles, bagels, fruit and yogurt. If you can think of anything else we might want to serve please let me know.

Our 1st meeting following summer break will be September 26th at the home of Pat Wesselman. Meeting will begin at 10, bring a bag lunch and plan on staying for some fellowship after the meeting. Drinks and dessert will be provided. Hope to see you all there.

St. Paul Men's Club Planning Meeting September 16th

Calling all confirmed men at St. Paul to attend the Men's Club Meeting on Saturday, September 16th at 8 AM in the fellowship hall (consider joining the work day crew at 9 am!). There will be a short Bible study and prayer time followed by a planning meeting for this fall and spring. One of the topics will be choosing the date and time for a monthly meeting as we try to get the group meeting regularly. Please come with potential topics for Bible study, fellowship and service activities. An egg dish and other light refreshments will be provided. For more information please contact Jim Baeder at baeder@umd.edu or 301-775-0111. A signup sheet at church will be posted to obtain an approximate head count.

St. Paul Lutheran Oktoberfest

Come celebrate the autumn season with Oktoberfest! Enjoy fellowship and German food and drink at the home of Pastor and Suzanne Alms (214 Rosewood Ave, Catonsville) on 28 October from 6-9 pm. Proceeds from this event will benefit the Wyneken Project. The Wyneken Project supports urban LCMS churches in Baltimore, continuing Friedrich Conrad Dietrich Wyneken's mission for building Lutheran churches from Baltimore to St Louis and San Francisco. Find out more about the Wyneken Project [here](#). Tickets for Oktoberfest are \$30/person for those who would just like to enjoy food and \$40/person for those wishing to also have German beer/wine. Tickets will be sold from September through October 17, with a limited number available. You may [purchase Oktoberfest tickets here](#) or look for ticket envelopes in the narthex. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor, JB Jaeger, or Chris Parsons.



From the Mission Board

The Mission Board has many activities planned as we go into the Fall, and we are enthusiastic about the opportunities God has given us to engage with and serve our neighbors. As you glance over these community activities, prayerfully consider supporting these programs with your time and talents. There is an indescribable joy in seeing the smiles of our neighbors, school families, and friends when you are serving them by doing the Lord's work. What an incredible privilege we have in being His hands, feet, and voice! When you reflect that these are moments when the seeds of faith are planted or when lives might be changed, that is amazing grace!

Lunch On the Lawn – Sunday, September 17, 12- 2 pm



The Mission Board is again planning an event for church, school and our Colonial Gardens community. You're invited to bring your blanket or lawn chair and enjoy a picnic on our church grounds on Sunday, September 17th. Sign up to bring a side dish or dessert to share.

Trunk or Treat – Saturday, October 28, 3 - 4 pm

Save the date and start planning now for your trunk décor! More details coming soon!

English as a Second Language (ESL)

Classes begin on Monday, September 18. It's not too late to volunteer! Join us on Monday or Thursday nights from 7:15 – 9:00 (or both). Share your culture, help with lessons and meet a great bunch of new people. See Irene Giguere or email her at irmiguere@gmail.com volunteer.

Special Fundraisers for Orphan Grain Train

Orphan Grain Train collects, packs and ships needed items to people of the United States and the world that are affected by natural disasters, man-made turmoil, and who are at poverty level. This year our shipments have included:

- solar lights to the Ukraine
- school supplies to Liberia
- truck loads of Harvest Pack meals, clothing and other supplies to Appalachia
- distribution of over 1,000 new and gently used winter coats/ jackets in Baltimore City (and surrounding areas), Ukraine and Appalachia
- medical supplies/equipment to Ghana, Cameroon and South Sudan

We sponsor a “walk out” medical supply program for the community, which has also benefited some in our St. Paul members. All of the ministry is done through volunteer donations- both monetary and hands-on work. What a blessing when God's people work together to help others!

Consider helping this ministry by attending one of the two October fundraisers. Tuesday, October 2, Ledo's Pizza (right near the Warehouse) is donating 20% of purchases to OGT. Saturday, October 14, the Overton Run will donate all proceeds to OGT. (scan QR code to register) Check out the 2 flyers for more information- or talk to Irene Giguere.

LCMS Convention Report

I wish to thank the members of St Paul for sending me to the recently concluded LCMS Convention in Milwaukee. It was the experience of a lifetime for me. Some of the random events that made a lasting impression were:

1. Lutheran pastors know how to have fun
2. President Harrison is phenomenal. (More about him later)
3. The intensity at which some items were debated
4. Camaraderie that developed among the working groups I participated in (Southeastern District and Standing Committee 13-Elections and Credentials)

Resolutions and Presentations

There were countless resolutions presented, many of which commended people or groups for their good works and were not controversial. Some, however, which to me seemed to be “no-brainers” were considered with great displays of emotion. One of the highlights was the admission of many Lutheran churches, from all over the world, that were admitted into fellowship with LCMS. The most emotional admission was the Lutheran Church of Ukraine. Another highlight was the honoring of military chaplains. Rear Admiral, retired, Daniel Gard, was presented the Silver St Martin of Tours Medal. The citation was read by Rear Admiral Gregory Todd, Chief of Navy Chaplains.

One sad but necessary event was the elimination of fellowship with the Japan Lutheran Church over their ordination of women. This was the culmination of a process that started in 2009.

A current controversy concerns Concordia University-Texas whose Board of Regents voted to dissociate from the LCMS about one year ago. Despite many overtures presented to them to repent their action, they have persisted and the schism seems to be permanent. A motion that all parties pray for repentance and forgiveness was narrowly defeated.

Finally, another resolution that one would think would pass easily was defeated with 60% against. This was to study the switching to a four-year convention cycle, issue a report on this in eighteen months, and present at our 2026 Convention. Because of COVID, which became a horror early in 2020, we have operated on an ad hoc four-year cycle since the 2019 Convention.

President Harrison

President Harrison has an impressive appearance. He is about 6’ 4” and built like a football player. His demeanor and conduct of the Convention is equally impressive. When time permitted, he let debate continue, sometimes even more than the Standing Rule of twenty minutes. When the schedule was tight, because of pre-programmed events, he used the Chair’s prerogative to cut off debate, always with a sense of humor. During a reception in his honor Wednesday evening, he entertained us by playing country music on the banjo and guitar such as “Rocky Top” and “I Saw the Light”. He had a great singing voice as well. It was quite a treat.