



Walking Together

St. Paul Lutheran Church and School

Catonsville, MD

August 2026

WAIT, WHY ARE WE HERE AGAIN?

Have you ever had a moment when you get up from the couch in the living room and walk into the kitchen? Then you look around and say to yourself, “Wait, why am I here again? What did I come here to do?” Sometimes it comes to you in a flash, and other times you look around confused, throw up your hands, and go back to watching television.

This kind of thing can happen to us as a congregation. Things get busy. There are capital campaigns, funerals, vicar goodbyes and vicar hellos, voters’ meetings, learning cottages, cemetery houses for sale, newsletters, a heating system to be replaced, and a new school year approaching—and we can walk into the narthex and say, “Wait, why are we here again? What did we come to do?”

Congregations can get forgetful. Churches can have amnesia. At times, we drift along, carried forward by the energy of the everyday tasks and business of being a church. We can check off the to-do list, call the meeting, complete the task, and feel good. It is easy to gather all the work and call it church—to imagine that machinery and organization are the reasons we are here.

Every so often, we must wake ourselves up and remember the reason we exist. That reason is simple: to proclaim, receive, and rejoice in the mercy and presence of Jesus Christ for us sinners. That’s church: forgiveness, the Word of God, the Holy Supper, the strong promises of Christ, prayers, the mutual fellowship and care of one another, and the overflowing witness that goes out to those around us. We are not an organization that exists to perpetuate itself, guarantee our survival, or grease the wheels of the system so that it keeps going.

No, we have an eternal purpose: Jesus Christ among us. Sinners headed for eternal life. Hearing, remembering, and being a part of the mighty acts of God, who turns the world upside down with His grace. That’s what we are. That’s who we are. That’s what we do.

So, if you ever end up in the narthex and wonder why you are there, the answer is: Jesus for sinners, eternal truth and a new life, holy and free.

Pastor Alms

FROM THE CONGREGATIONAL PRESIDENT

I am sad. Steve has left us. He means so much to each of us, the church, the school. He has been a part of everyone's experience in church, directly or indirectly. Everything went fast, which is a blessing for Steve and a heartbreak for us. While it's hard for each of us in different ways, it's comforting to know he got to spend time with his family and that he will be in his eternal home, waiting for us. Keep Barb and the rest of Steve's family in your prayers as they deal with this difficult time.

Steve had many roles at church and school, to include being the Operations Manager. From the time Steve needed to be out on disability leave, we started looking at ways to handle the multiple aspects of that position with current employees and volunteers. In the short term, we are thankful for Suzanne Alms, Debbie Oldhouser, Sara Ruzicka, Linda Jones, and others, who have been and continue to fill in and work hard to keep the office going. Moving forward, some of the roles will move to our bookkeeper, our secretary, and back to the Asset Management Board. We are still going to have to hire someone to do a lot of the day-to-day work that Steve did. We have decided to hire an Operations Manager to focus on building related activities (32-40 hours per week) and an HR specialist (around 16 hours per week). If you know someone interested in either of these positions, please have them contact Suzanne Alms or Pastor Alms.

The cemetery house is now listed and ready for sale. It has been listed for \$349,000. The listing can be found on www.realtor.com, search for the address 1022 Joh Ave, Baltimore, MD. Hopefully, we can sell the house in a short timeline.

The learning cottage is progressing slowly and will not be ready for this school year. After many delays, we are finally hoping to get permits approved on Tuesday, August 4th. Once permits are approved, we need to get electric, water, and sewer connections installed and inspected and footings installed. After final approval, we can get the learning cottage installed.

At our voters meeting in June, we elected 4 newbies and 1 veteran to council and our boards. We welcome David Nguyen (VP), Jerry Jurik (Treasurer), Karyn Borth (Asset Management Board), Keegan Guyett (Mission Board), and returnee Carolyn Loudon (School Board). We will have an officer installation at a September service. We look forward to working with everyone who got elected and look forward to the upcoming year.

We are moving forward with the Capital Campaign. Cameron Jones is leading that along with his executive board on the Capital Campaign Committee. You will see updates from him and his committee throughout the year.

As always, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns about anything feel free to contact me.

Blessings to all,
Aaron Nelson

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Planning for St. Paul's Ministry Expansion Campaign, *Firmly Rooted, Boldly Building*, continues to move forward. Our executive leadership team (Cameron Jones, Christina Nelson, and Jon Brooks) has been meeting regularly with our LCEF consultant, working through the details and documents that will shape this campaign and bring it to life. We are grateful for the careful, prayerful process and for the partnership LCEF has provided along the way. While we are not yet ready to share all the specifics, we are excited about what God is doing and where He is leading St. Paul. The full vision for this campaign, including the "what," the "why," and the financial goals, will be unveiled at our **Campaign Kickoff on Sunday, September 13**, immediately following the worship service as a congregational potluck. We hope every family will plan to be there. In the meantime, we invite you to pray for this process, for our leadership team, and for open and generous hearts across our congregation. Questions can be directed to Cameron Jones.

WELCOME TO BACK-TO-SCHOOL MONTH

Welcome to back-to-school month, marking the dog days of August! Our teachers and staff are busy recharging in preparation for the energy that will come with the students returning in mid-August. We will celebrate the opening of the 2026/27 school year during our service on August 23. We invite you to join us in praying for a successful and blessed year ahead. We are excited to announce that our elementary and Early Childhood Care (ECC) programs have strong enrollment this year. Our specific prayer is that all our actions will be a blessing to those around us and draw our children closer to God.

Additionally, we are pleased to share that we qualified for an Aging Schools Grant and have promptly spent every dime and been reimbursed for the cost to update some of our technology, including cameras, door crash bars, and keypads. We are grateful to everyone who assisted in securing these grants from the Maryland Department of Education.

The Learning Cottage continues to be a topic of discussion and a planned improvement for our campus. As the signs on our lawn indicate, we will present our variances to the county board on August 4. We certainly hope that the next time we see them, our discussion will be about something other than our Cottage.

We're so blessed to be allowed to work here and excited to have our hallways again filled with the voices and laughter of children. There are some spots available for children you know and love in our prek-3 room and first grade. Have the families call our office today to find out more. (410)747-1924

ISAIAH: ALL 66 CHAPTERS IN 12 WEEKS

Impossible? Way too much? We will see. Pastor Alms will lead a study of the prophet Isaiah this fall. September 13th through November 29th . Buckle up and come along for this amazing prophetic ride.

SUNDAY SCHOOL WILL START ON SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 13TH.

Mark the date!

SAVE THE DATE: MINISTRY EXPANSION/CAPITAL CAMPAIGN KICKOFF

Something incredible is on the horizon! Join us for a special presentation as we unveil the vision for our upcoming ministry expansion. More details coming soon—you won't want to miss it! Sunday, September 13th.

NEWS FROM THE ELDERS

The elders for FY 2026-2027 are Jim Baeder, Kevin Dungey (Chairman), Norm Giguere, Roy Krakat, Bill Oldhouser, Jeff Piegols, and Bruce Staudinger. Please contact any of us with personal concerns via email, phone, or in person.

Meet St. Paul's New Vicar!

Our new vicar's name is Nathaniel Demlow; he goes by Nate. Nate has two sisters; one is two years older than he is and the other is his twin. He says he was raised in a faithful Lutheran home. Reading is his favorite hobby. He also has enjoyed building things with Legos.

Nate just got married on July 11 to Meredith. They toured the Great Smoky Mountains for their honeymoon. Nate and Meredith both enjoy visiting and exploring new places. Meredith wants to be a high school teacher; she will be teaching at Concordia Preparatory School in Towson during the year that they will be with us.

I asked Nate how he came to want to become a Pastor. Initially, he thought he'd become a software or mechanical engineer, like his father. However, when he was in 8th grade, he realized that he was not good enough at math. Then, Nate's parents sent him (and his sisters) to a Christian high school. He enjoyed this high school very much. He said that the teachers there noticed him and encouraged him to take classes in history, philosophy, and even theology. He also attended the Christ Academy summer program at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, a two-week summer program geared toward theologically curious high school students. Here he served in several roles, for example, as a student counselor.

For college, he chose to attend Concordia University in Seward, Nebraska. Initially he majored in business administration but soon switched to history with a minor in biblical languages. Nate said finally that he just fell in love with the Pastoral Ministry because he saw that serving as a Pastor best fit his gifts.

Kevin Dungey

LUTHERAN BOOKS AND BEER STARTS AGAIN THIS FALL

This year we will read and discuss together "Has American Christianity Failed?" by Bryan Wolfmüller. The author asks the question: has American Christianity lost sight of Christ's finished work? He explores the weaknesses of revivalism, pietism, mysticism, and enthusiasm, then points readers back to the certainty of God's Word, forgiveness, and the promises of Jesus. The book is available on Amazon. Our first meeting is September 24th at 7 p.m. at the Rathskellar in Elkridge (5782 Main St, Elkridge, MD 21075). Read the first chapter and come on the 24th.



Even though Christmas is still 5 months away, here at Compassion Place we're already getting ready!

You can help us prepare for our "Miracle of Christmas" gift program for families in 3 big ways:

1. *Share the info for "Miracle of Christmas in July" in your church's bulletin, e-news, or Facebook page. (It doesn't have to still be July to count!) You may consider the following blurb:*

- Christmas in July at Compassion Place- LMS

Christmas may still be months away, but your brothers and sisters in Christ at Compassion Place already getting ready! You can help us prepare for our family gift program "Miracle of Christmas" by shopping online and having the gifts sent directly to us. Check out www.compassionplace.org/christmas for the shopping link and additional details. Thank you for your partnership!

2. *Shop our Amazon Wish List yourself. Click [HERE](#) to see our Amazon Wish List and start shopping.*

3. *Mention this program to folks you know who like to support families around the holidays.*

Please note that you will need to sign in to your Amazon account after clicking the link. Please make sure to select "Compassion Place" as the delivery destination so that all purchased gifts come straight to us. (You may see "Glen Burnie" as the location; that is intentional.)

We will save these items until December when they will bless any unsponsored families who have signed up. The lead-up to Christmas gets crazy, so consider this a great way to spread out your holiday giving. Thank you for your generosity that will make it possible for us to bless many families later this year!



Crab Feast is almost here!

Saturday August 22, 2026

3:00-6:00 P.M.

Annapolis Evangelical Lutheran Church

38 W Central Ave, Edgewater, MD 21037

EVENT DETAILS:

Tickets: \$70.00 (pre-purchased); \$75.00 (at the door)

Children 8 and under eat free!

Youth (Ages 9 – 13) - \$25.00

Save 10% when you purchase a table of 8 spots for \$500

Contact our main office to secure your tickets today!

Compassion Place (LMS)

601 Hammonds Lane

Baltimore, MD 21225

(410) 636-0123

email@compassionplace.org

What's on the menu?

Steamed crabs

Fried chicken

Hot dogs

Pulled pork BBQ

Maryland crab soup

Corn on the cob

Cole slaw

Potato salad

Watermelon

Beverages: Water, Soda, Iced tea, Beer

SERVING IN AUGUST

	Cantor	Reader	Greeter	Usher 1	Usher 2
Aug 2 nd	TBD	Ed Cohen	Debbie Oldhouser	Roy Krakat	Caleb Ferry
Aug 9 th	TBD	Karen Eichelman	Irene Giguere	Geffrey Hemmeter	Keegan Guyett
Aug 16 th	JB Jaeger	JB Jaeger	Joy Brooks	Bill Oldhouser	Cole Peterson
Aug 23 rd	JB Jaeger	Kate Baeder	Bruce Staudinger	Cameron Jones	Jim Wedeking
Aug 30 th	Jim Baeder	Kevin Dungey	Betsy Mitchell	Bruce Staudinger	Chris Meyer

DAILY READINGS

Aug. 2	Ninth Sunday after Trinity	2 Sam. 22:26–34	Psalms 51:1–12	1 Cor. 10:6–13	Luke 16:1–9 (10–13)
Aug. 9	Tenth Sunday after Trinity	Jer. 7:1–11 or Jer. 8:4–12	Psalms 92	1 Cor. 12:1–11 or Rom. 9:30–10:4	Luke 19:41–48
Aug. 16	Eleventh Sunday after Trinity	Gen. 4:1–15	Psalms 50:7–23	1 Cor. 15:1–10 or Eph. 2:1–10	Luke 18:9–14
Aug. 23	Twelfth Sunday after Trinity	Isaiah 29:17–24	Psalms 146	2 Cor. 3:4–11 or Rom. 10:9–17	Mark 7:31–37
Aug. 30	Thirteenth S. after Trinity	2 Chron. 28:8–15	Psalms 32	Gal. 3:15–22	Luke 10:23–37

