



# *Spirit of St. Paul*

St. Paul Lutheran Church, East Lansing, MI

SEPTEMBER 2020

## **Guiding Principles**

We are a people who:

- ❖ Listen for God's Call
- ❖ Believe and Trust in God's Call
- ❖ Answer God's Call
- ❖ Support each other in times of joy and sorrow
- ❖ Live out our faith in prayer and service
- ❖ Share food with the hungry
- ❖ Believe the gospel is for all, not just Christians.

Fellow Ministers in Christ,

Fall is quickly approaching, and we will be working together on those things that are part of the yearly rhythm of the church year, figuring out ways to accomplish those things under current conditions of safe-distancing and focusing on keeping everyone safe. The Council has decided outdoor worship will continue for those who have found it helpful, while encouraging “at risk” folks and those not comfortable in attending, to stay at home. Sunday School is not yet feasible, so we will currently rely on Mary’s Kid Chat and an outdoor worship Children’s Message as needed. Confirmation will start again this month with 3 young people. We have discussed meeting in person by safe distancing and look forward to continuing this

educational opportunity for our youth.

The Worship Committee made up of the Praise Team (Stacey included) and ably led by Pat Cramer has decided to include additional settings and to alternate the Our Father. Praise Team Sundays will utilize the newer version and Traditional Sundays will utilize the older version. My Weekly Devotion and Word, and Service will continue on Facebook and You Tube, with the Praise Team (Elene, Steve & Kathy) recording the music. Thank you for their efforts and to Rick in posting these online. If you view these online, please hit the share button if you feel others would enjoy any of these. Also, if you view on You Tube you can subscribe, and they will automatically be sent to you as they post. We are fortunate enough to remain as a close-knit community of people who care for one another but yet are able to have our sick and shut ins and others worship with us online.

I was fortunate enough to join the Synod’s *Learning with the Bishop Virtual Event-Grief and Loss in Congregational Settings* with Bishop Michael Girling house of the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod & Author of *Embracing God’s Future without Forgetting the Past: A*

Conversation about Loss, Grief and Nostalgia in Congregational Life. In order to talk about congregational life, it is also important to talk about our individual lives at this time of rapid change which brings a loss and leads to grief. David Roozen, American Congregations Thriving and Surviving [faithcommunitiestoday.org](http://faithcommunitiestoday.org) says “Few would disagree that we live in a period of profound social and cultural change. Cultural sociologist Ann Swindler refers to such times as “unsettled.” By this she means that traditional ways of doing things typically no longer work and new strategies for action must be developed without any assurance they will work.” This was from 2015! Do you feel unsettled? I believe we are all unsettled and I would like us to share each of our narratives about the changes in the congregation over the years and in our lives. Bev D. (thanks for all you do) sent a request concerning what day/time is convenient to get together as I requested to talk about grief since we will be talking about grief and the new model for grieving, replacing the traditional stages with specific tasks. There will be letters in the Newsletter with people’s narrative. I could have phrased that better because it is about change and how we process this together and share each of our narratives. The Bishop thought this was an important thing to do for the survival of congregations, as many are struggling in the midst of current conditions. I hope you will be prayerfully considering joining in. Also, Bible Study is starting up again after a summer hiatus and we will be studying the Book of Revelation, which contrary to many, is a book of great hope. It looks like Jon will be joining us for this. Gather Bible Study continues via ZOOM.

One loss that we will grieve is the loss of Rodger Johnson, knowing because of belief in Christ God will bring Rodger with him.

***<sup>13</sup> But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14 (NRSV)***

Because of Rodger’s health battles, he nor Bev were able to join us for in person worship. I was so thankful for those who came together to make online worship happen so that Rodger and Bev were able to actively worship with us online at a difficult time in their lives. To me, this demonstrates why it is important we continue to include others that may not be able to join us in person. James and his friends did a special tribute for Rodger, which is posted online. Thank you, James, for your heartfelt desire to offer Amazing Grace and How Great Thou Art as gifts to Bev and family and reminding us of Rodger’s smile. It looks like we be able to celebrate Rodger by having a fish fry when we can come back together. Thank you, Chuck, for your willingness to lead this effort.

Mary and I continue to give thanks to God that we have been able to be a part of a faith community that the Spirit is active as we work at loving one another and serving others in need. The Community Garden has been very productive and because of the hard work of our people like Tracy and Barb and God's abundance we are not only sharing the bounty with our members but also other places in our community. I currently joined an ELCA Vitality training and am looking for leaders to join in. Vitality is a key aspect of long term survival for congregations. I will keep you posted. Enjoy the fall!

Thanks to Norma for keeping the office going and assisting with many things.

Blessings,

Pr. Carl

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**Council**

### **Outdoor Church through September**

Outdoor Church at St. Paul has been a success! Many members have come together to worship the lord, while maintaining responsible social distancing practices. Outdoor Church will continue, weather permitting, through September. In case of inclement weather on any given Sunday, church may move inside following stringent social distancing guidelines prepared by our Worship Committee. Social distancing guidelines and the plan for Fall worship will be reviewed by the Church Council in September.

### **Online Worship Continues**

There are also several opportunities to worship on-line for those who cannot worship at St. Paul in person or who would like extra opportunities throughout the week. Weekly services, devotions, and children's message can all be accessed from St. Paul's website at

<https://stpaul-el.org/worship-2/>

### **St. Paul's Webpage Is Changing**

An ad hoc committee has been reviewing St. Paul's webpage, identifying areas for improvement, and making revisions. Please take a look at <https://stpaul-el.org/> and let us know what you think.

### **Call for 2021 Church Council Members and Officers**

At the annual meeting this Fall, our church will need to elect several new council members and officers. Please consider whether you would like to serve on Council during 2021. Our church needs you.

--- St. Paul Church Council

## **Guidelines for Worship**

### **Outdoor Worship**

- As we continue outdoor worship, we would like to remind you of the CDC guidelines we are following. Your safety is our utmost concern. To make the worship the safest way possible here are basic rules we must observe out of love for others. We ask that you observe these at all times.
- Keep 6' feet apart unless family members. Research is showing person to person contact is the way people become infected. In case of inclement weather, people will remain in their cars and worship will be broadcast on 1610AM.
- Everyone wears a mask. There will be a greeter/usher to facilitate safely distributing face masks and hand sanitizers by placing on a table at least 6' feet apart.
- No touching, hugging, shaking hands at any time. We will share the peace by waving at others.
- The building continues to be cleaned, and sanitized; and will be open for anyone wanting to wash their hands or use the restrooms. We will need to be attentive to the 6' social distancing rule when entering and exiting, or inside the facilities. One person at a time is highly recommended.
- Bring your own lawn chair. Greeter/usher can facilitate carrying these to a place 6' feet apart from others. If the lawn/uneven surface is an issue for you there will be designated areas in the parking lot for seating.
- No singing. Singing has shown to infect an area far greater than 6', so we will use pre-recorded music on speakers, or have a live Cantor only singing at a microphone at a far distance.
- We request you print out the bulletin from the Webpage for safety. You can also use your electronic device-cell phone, iPad, etc. if you prefer.
- No fellowship after worship.
- An offering box with a slot to drop offering envelopes or cash through will be provided. It will be stationary (not passed), sitting on the table with the masks and sanitizer. This allows for those who do not wish to use online giving, and for visitors.
- A designated area for people who become sick while at the service will be made available until you are able to leave. Most of you could go to your cars, but we understand that there are those who do not drive. If you should get sick and need help, please speak with someone from 6', which means speaking loudly and with

possible disruption to the service. This is not likely to happen, but having a plan is for your safety.

- If at any time you have the following symptoms, please remain home and worship with us on-line: fever, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, and/or new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea, and diarrhea. If you become sick during worship, kindly make your way to your car. If you need assistance, please make this known by hand gestures or speaking up; your safety is important.

Thank you for your kind words, flexibility, and patience with us during this challenging time. Thank you to the volunteers who set up and take down for worship each week. We could not do this without you!

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### **SEPTEMBER READINGS**

#### **Sunday, September 6**

*Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

Ezekiel 33:7-11

Romans 13:8-14

Matthew 18:15-20

#### **Sunday, September 13**

*Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

Genesis 50:15-21

Romans 14:1-12

Matthew 18:21-35

#### **Sunday, September 20th**

*Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

Jonah 3:10-4:11

Philippians 1:21-30

Matthew 20:1-16

#### **Sunday, September 27**

*Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost*

Ezekiel 18:1-4,25-32

Philippians 2:1-13

Matthew 21:23-32

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### **Discussion on Grief and Loss**

Grief is a complex experience that includes emotional, social, spiritual, and physical dynamics. It is our common human response to loss. In this time of change, uncertainty, and upheaval, many are dealing multiple losses both individually and as congregations which result in grief upon grief.

Bev Durkin recently sent out an online survey. This information will assist Pastor Carl in scheduling this topic with all of you.

Please take time to full out these 3 easy questions (by September 1<sup>st</sup>) at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FG2HZZR>

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## ***A Tear in the Tapestry***

*by Bev Dirkin*

I wrote this two days before my Son died and I would like to share it with you: June 20

A lady died today. She was not a friend, not a loved one, only an acquaintance. Yet, I feel diminished by her loss. We were made aware of her struggles with brain tumors and her short life expectation just a few weeks ago. But her death still strikes a surprising note, when announced. I continually expect to see a coworker in the restroom, since she and I seemed to be on the same "rest" schedules. She was killed in an automobile accident on the way to work, just a few months ago. I still want to call my Mother on the telephone each night, but she peacefully passed on a short half year ago. Somehow the fabric of life seems to stay in-place, in spite of the many holes and tears that appear as people are ripped from our grasp. All that remains is their image on the cloth. Each one added to the contrast, the color and depth of the tapestry in life and each loss leaves a gaping hole in death. We move forward, trying to patch the holes they leave, praying that the fabric will remain strong and that the fabric will survive the tear.

I open the door to my grown Son's room each morning to make sure he is still breathing, before I leave for the office. When I admitted this to a friend at church, she reminded me that this was nothing new. Didn't I check to see if he was breathing when he was but an infant, lying in his crib? Am I convinced that his poor health has brought him to a state of vulnerability that matches that of an infant? I don't know if the fabric can stand the strain of his loss, if it happens. Some holes seem too big to endure. Life seems so fragile and death so near, hovering to grab even those who remain vigilant. Each of us is diminished by the loss of one whose threads are woven in the fabric of our lives. We move forward focusing on the threads remaining.

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## **Women's Bible Study**



Our Gather Bible Study will continue with the next ZOOM meeting on September 9th at 11:00 a.m. We begin Fall 2020 with a three-session Bible Study called "Holy Time" with the Rev. Meghan Johnston Aelabouni. In this three-session Bible study, Rev. Johnston Aelabouni invites us to remember the past, recognize the present and reimagine the future.

Session 1: Holy time: Remembering the past

Scriptures: Deuteronomy 21:10-25:19, Luke 22:18-20, 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

Themes/Questions: What is faithful memory? How do we remember the past—good and bad? How do we embody memory in our worship through Word and Sacrament, and why is this important? How does faithful memory put us back together (re-member us) as faithful people? Contact Norma ([officemanager@stpaul-el.org](mailto:officemanager@stpaul-el.org)) for more information and a copy of the Study.

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### **Bible Study – Thursday Evening**

The St Paul Bible Study group reconvenes in September.



We meet on ZOOM every Thursday evening at 6:30 beginning on September 10<sup>th</sup>. We will be reading *The Rapture Exposed: the Message of Hope in the Book of Revelation* by Barbara Rossing, who is a New Testament professor at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. Jon K. will lead our study.

“The idea of The Rapture” the return of Christ to rescue and deliver Christians off the earth is an extremely popular interpretation of the Bible's Book of Revelation and a jumping-off point for the best-selling Left Behind” series of books. This interpretation, based on a psychology of fear and destruction, guides the daily acts of thousands if not millions of people worldwide. In *The Rapture Exposed*, Barbara Rossing argues that this script for the world's future is nothing more than a disingenuous distortion of the Bible. The truth, Rossing argues, is that Revelation offers a vision of God's healing love for the world. *The Rapture Exposed* reclaims Christianity from fundamentalists' destructive reading of the biblical story and back into God's beloved community.”

If you are interested in being a part of this group, please email Jon ([jonkeune@gmail.com](mailto:jonkeune@gmail.com)) to let him know. Please provide your email address so you can receive weekly emails as reminders or in case of changes. The group will not meet on the night of Church Council meeting.

This book is available at <https://www.amazon.com/Rapture-Exposed-Message-Hope-Revelation/dp/0813343143> or

Jon can also share PDFs of chapters, if that would be helpful to anyone.

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### **Fellowship**



On the **fourth** Sunday every month we will replace ZOOM coffee hour with ZOOM Bar Theology hour at 6:00 p.m. Look for emails detailing ZOOM codes. This is a way to join together until we can fellowship again in person. Please consider joining us!

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Food Pantry Garden



Thank you to our gardeners and their hard work as our garden flourishes. We have harvested zucchini, summer squash, cucumbers, greens, lettuce, peppers, green beans, and tomatoes, so many tomatoes. With much more to come!

Our clients are so excited when they get fresh produce! Nothing tastes better.

We continue to receive donations of fresh vegetables from Carolyn, a woman who farms numerous acres in the area. She promises more too! What a wonderful gift! With this abundance of produce we have reached out to other pantries to share in our good fortune. Our garden, as well as those of others, are truly a blessing those in need.

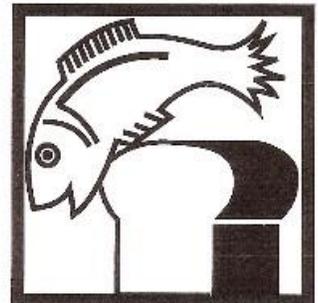
Please know that you are welcome in the garden to help harvest. Opportunities to support this important Ministry will be ongoing into the fall.

We appreciate your prayers for favorable weather conditions, strong backs and knees, and strength to make it through the growing season.

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St. Paul Pantry

A total of 790 clients have been served from January 1-July 31, 2020, which meant 259 families were helped. In the month of July we are currently seeing Food Pantry clients on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday evenings and the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Thursday afternoons of the month. This has been working well so far and we will continue this in the month of August. If we see an increase in clients needing to access the Food Pantry, we are able to increase our hours.



*St. Paul Pantry*

We would like to thank the Garden volunteers for all their hard work. The garden is producing now, and the Food Pantry clients are benefiting from this and love the fresh produce.

We received good news at the end of July from Meijer's. St. Paul's Food Pantry is being included in the Fall Simply Giving Program. The campaign will run from Sunday, 8/23/20, through **Saturday, 10/24/20 (Meijer recently extended this time frame from 5 weeks to 9 weeks)**. We have once again been partnered with the Meijer store on **Lake Lansing Road**. Double Match Days will continue and be held on **Friday, 9/11/20 and Saturday, 9/12/20**. For every \$10.00 donation card purchased on these dates, Meijer will provide an additional contribution of \$20.00. Char and Bev attended a conference call regarding the program on

Monday, 8/17/20. We have received a pantry kit with cards that the congregation can access. These are available in the narthex at Church.

The Food Pantry is still seeking volunteers who are able to work on Thursday afternoon pantry distribution days or Monday morning food delivery days (about once every 4 weeks). Please contact Bev Johnson, Char Smith, or Tracy Collins if you would be able to help out.

The following is a list of items needed for the Food Pantry which we generally cannot obtain from the Greater Lansing Food Bank:

|                           |                     |                       |                   |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Dish Soap</b>          | <b>Toilet Paper</b> | <b>5# Flour</b>       | <b>Spices</b>     |
| <b>Laundry Soap</b>       | <b>Paper Towels</b> | <b>4# Sugar</b>       | <b>Tea Bags</b>   |
| <b>Shampoo (all ages)</b> | <b>Kleenex</b>      | <b>Veg/Canola Oil</b> | <b>Boxed Salt</b> |
| <b>Conditioner</b>        | <b>Deodorant</b>    | <b>Syrup</b>          | <b>Catsup</b>     |
| <b>Disposable Razors</b>  | <b>Mustard</b>      | <b>Bar Soap</b>       | <b>Toothpaste</b> |
| <b>Toothbrushes</b>       |                     |                       |                   |

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### **Meijer / Simply Give – UPDATE**

In a letter dated August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Meijer wrote the following:

“In our continued joint effort to feed hungry families and enrich lives in the communities we serve, we are excited to announce that we will be extending our Fall Simply Give Campaign to a total of **9 weeks** to help extend our collaborative efforts to feed hungry families in our communities. The new fall campaign dates will now run from Sunday, August 23, 2020 through **Saturday, October 24, 2020.**”

#### **Double Match Days will continue**

- During the fall campaign, the Double Match Days will be held on ***Friday, September 11, 2020, and Saturday September 12, 2020.*** For every \$10 donation card purchased on these dates, Meijer will provide an additional contribution of \$20, bringing the **total donation to \$30** for a single customer purchase!
- Our partnering Meijer store for this campaign is: **1350 W. Lake Lansing Road** You **must** make the purchase of the \$10 donation card at this location to **benefit** the St. Paul Food Pantry.
- Each pantry’s donation resulting from Double Match Days will have the opportunity to be matched by Meijer up to a maximum amount of \$10,000 for the campaign.

(Customer donations of \$5,000 would be doubled matched by Meijer at a maximum amount of \$10,000).

“The sole purpose of the *Simply Give* program is to help our food pantry partners feed the growing number of hungry families in the communities we serve. Meijer is working diligently to be good stewards of these generous donations by ensuring they are only used to purchase food to stock your shelves.”

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## Celebrations

### Birthdays

02 Jessica Fortune  
06 Carol Buzzita  
13 Nathan Anderson



19 David Fortune  
25 Caroline Collins  
28 Lindsay (Cramer) Keller  
29 Julie Anderson

### Anniversaries

02 Jim & Ardyth Claucherty  
19 Dennis & Maryann Louney



30 Rick & Kathy Klingensmith

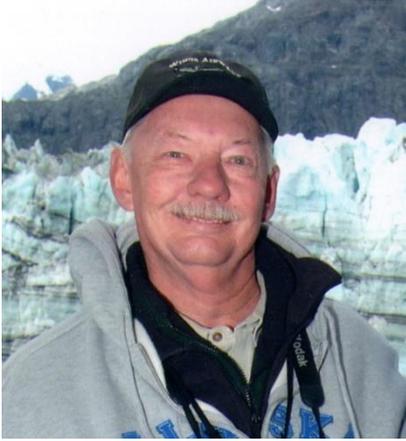
***Please note:*** If your birthday or anniversary is NOT listed and it should be, we may not have it on file. If you would like to have your day recognized in the future, please let the office know. We apologize for any errors that may have occurred, as it was not our intent.

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## Mark Your Calendars

### St Paul Happenings for August 2020

- 6 Pantry Offering
- 7 LABOR DAY
- 9 Women’s Bible Study – 11:00 am ZOOM Meeting
- 10-11 Meijer *Simply Give* Double Days
- 17 Council Meeting
- 25 Newsletter Deadline
- 27 Bar Theology



Rodger D. Johnson, age 76, of Lansing, passed away on Sunday, August 23, 2020.

Rodger was born September 27, 1943 to Robert D. and Esther Johnson.

Rodger and Beverly Johnson were married September 4, 1965. He loved spending time with his family, fishing, and reading.

He is predeceased by his parents, Robert & Esther Johnson and brother, David Johnson. He is survived by his wife, Beverly A.

Johnson; sons, Rob (Lori), Scott (Sara), & Sean (Lynnette); grandchildren, Abigail, Tyler & Linna; sister, Nina (David).

Arrangements are being made with Gorsline Runciman Funeral Homes, East Lansing Chapel. A private service will be held by family. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to St. Paul Lutheran Church or St. Paul food pantry, East Lansing. Memories and online condolences may be shared with the family at [www.greastlansing.com](http://www.greastlansing.com).

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## **Thoughts**

*“He told the wind to pipe down and said to the sea,  
“Quiet! Settle down!”*

*The wind ran out of breath, the sea became smooth as glass.” Mark 4*

The wind ran out of breath...

Some days I am filled with anger over what is happening in this nation. Then as quickly as the anger leaves—my soul grieves.

There are winds of—  
sheer madness  
blatant injustice  
seething hatred

There are winds of—  
rampant disease  
immense sorrow  
devastating loss

A storm is raging—  
a war is going on way beyond what we can see.

Pray with me, friend...  
that God would once again speak to the winds—  
and these destructive gales in our land would run out of breath.  
Our anger and grief will continue to rise up—  
but, He can speak to those winds too...  
filling us with inner peace.

Kathy Troccoli

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## Community Help Wanted

### Volunteers Urgently Needed!

Judson is ready to serve children with back to school clothing in August and September—but **volunteers are desperately needed!** Due to Covid-19, many of their high risk volunteers are unable to serve right now. This has forced Judson to limit how many families they can serve.

Volunteers from local congregations are needed to fill this gap and get children necessary clothing. ***It has been 3 months since clothing banks were open and families are in great need!***

Your Congregation can help Judson's Love Clothing Center serve children with back to school clothing in August & September! By volunteering in groups of 5 or 10 people (individuals can also participate), you can help distribute clothing. **Without volunteer teams, we will not be able to help children on Saturdays!** Please talk to your church members now about participating in a day of blessing others with the love of Jesus!

*Dates for your group of 5 or 10, Saturdays from 9:00 am—2:30 pm*

**August 8, 15, 22, 29; September 12, 19, 26**

CALL CHRISTIAN SERVICES to reserve your date (394-5413) and to check availability. Volunteers must be high school age and older with one adult for each student volunteer. *Judson's safety procedures are available for your review—just give us a call!*



| Sun   | Mon  | Tue   | Wed  | Thu   | Fri   | Sat  |
|---|--|---|--|---|---|--|
| 30<br>10:00 AM – Outdoor<br>Worship<br>Facebook &<br>You Tube                                     | 31   | September 1<br>2–6 pm - Pastor in<br>Office | 2<br>5:30 PM - Pantry Dist                     | 3   | 4<br>Worship<br>Facebook &<br>You Tube  | 5<br>Labor Day<br>Weekend  |
| 6<br>PANTRY OFFERING<br>10:00 AM –Outdoor<br>Worship<br>Facebook &<br>You Tube                    | 7<br>LABOR DAY   | 8<br>2–6 pm - Pastor in<br>Office           | 9<br>11:00 AM - Women’s<br>Bible Study on ZOOM | 10<br>2:00 PM - Pantry Dist<br><br>6:30 PM - <i>The Rapture<br/>Exposed Bible Study</i>         | 11<br>Worship<br>Facebook &<br>You Tube                                       | 12<br><div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Meijer Double Match Simply Give Days<br/>at the Lake Lansing Meijer location</div> |
| 13<br>10:00 AM –Outdoor<br>Worship<br>Facebook &<br>You Tube                                      | 14<br>Council Reports Due to<br>Council President and<br>Church Office | 15<br>2–6 pm - Pastor in<br>Office          | 16<br>5:30 PM - Pantry Dist                    | 17<br>7:00 PM – Council<br>Meeting  | 18<br>Worship<br>Facebook &<br>You Tube                                       | 19   |
| 20<br>10:00 AM – Outdoor<br>Worship<br>Facebook &<br>You Tube                                     | 21   | 22<br>2–6 pm - Pastor in<br>Office          | 23   | 24<br>2:00 PM - Pantry Dist.<br><br>6:30 PM - <i>The Rapture<br/>Exposed Bible Study</i>        | 25<br><b>NEWSLETTER<br/>DEADLINE</b><br><br>Worship<br>Facebook &<br>You Tube | 26   |
| 27<br>10:00 AM – Outdoor<br>Worship<br>Facebook &<br>You Tube<br><br>Evening Bar<br>Theology Hour | 28   | 29<br>2–6 pm - Pastor in<br>Office          | 30   | October 1<br>2:00 PM - Pantry Dist.<br><br>6:30 PM - <i>The Rapture<br/>Exposed Bible Study</i> | 2<br>Worship<br>Facebook &<br>You Tube  | 3  |

## September 2020



## **St. Paul Lutheran Church**

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East Lansing, MI 48823

517/351-8541

[www.stpaul-el.org](http://www.stpaul-el.org)

**Our Purpose: Feeding God's people both inside and outside while listening to what the people need.**