

THE Epistle from St. Paul



JUNE 2026

Role of an Acolyte and Assistant in Worship

Dear sheep of the Good Shepherd, The Holy Spirit strengthen your faith to walk in the way of Jesus! For a while now, we've rejoiced in the work Jesus does through our Sacristans (those who assist in preparing for and conducting the Liturgy, especially the Altar Guild, crucifers, book bearers, and elders). Recently you may have noticed a young man assisting with different parts of the liturgy. That's Axel Pottratz, who was installed as an acolyte a few weeks ago, and has been doing a great job!

If you're like me, you're probably accustomed to an acolyte being the person who "lytes" the candles. Growing up, that's where I thought the word came from (it seemed to me like Church language often added syllables and spelled things funny, so it felt like it fit). While our congregation growing up employed acolytes in a narrower role (lighting candles), they have had much broader responsibilities over the history of the Church, since at least the third century.

The term "acolyte" just means follower. It comes from the Greek word *akolouthéo* (ἀκολουθέω), "to follow," and refers to someone in the chancel who follows and assists the pastor during services. The chance to serve as an acolyte (or a crucifer or sacristan, for that matter) is a way to encourage a man toward the pastoral Ministry. He learns liturgical movements, practices serving in front of the congregation, and works with the pastor to develop some of the skills necessary in the Holy Ministry (reading for the congregation, chanting, praying, etc).

Certain portions of the liturgy of the Divine Service are reserved for ordained pastors—they're marked with a *P*, for "Presider." Other portions are marked with an *A* for "Assistant," allowing for the assistance of a trained layman. Our acolyte will participate in the "Assistant" role for this summer, and we pray the Lord form him for service as an ordained minister of the Gospel: *In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, amen. Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Amen. God of all grace and mercy, bless all those who assist at this altar, that they may be faithful in their service. Grant that through their service Your Church may be built up in faith to the honor of Your most holy name; Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. God be with you all!*

Matthew 16:4 Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Luke 5:27-28 After this [Jesus] went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, "Follow me." And leaving everything, he rose and followed him.

John 8:12 [Jesus said,] "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

1 Timothy 13-14 Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

Higher Things Conference Begins June 29

Join us in praying for and celebrating our group headed to the Higher Things Conference in St Louis, June 29 - July 3! Centered on the theme “Dying Church, Rising Hope” and Romans 6:11 — “So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus” — this conference will immerse our youth in worship, catechesis, fellowship, and the rich gifts Christ gives through His Word and Sacraments. Those attending are teens: Astrid P., Calla F., Quinn W., Hannah H., Lars P., Cael F., Colby F., McKenna B., Jaydee H., and Emma T. Leaders are Zack Nelson, Sarah Newton, Jeff Fahrman, Pastor Newton, and Laura Nelson.

Higher Things conferences encourage young people to stand firm in Christ in the midst of a culture that often feels uncertain and isolating. Throughout the week, our teens will participate in daily worship, Bible study, and gather alongside other Lutheran youth from across the country who confess the same hope in Christ crucified and risen.

What to expect:

- Christ-centered worship grounded in Word and Sacrament
- Breakout sessions and Bible studies
- Fellowship with Lutheran youth and leaders from across the nation
- Encouragement to live confidently in their baptismal identity in Christ
- Opportunities to grow in faith, vocation, and service within Christ’s Church

Please keep our group in your prayers as they prepare for this week together — for safe travels, encouragement in the faith, deep conversations, joyful fellowship, tons of fun, and confidence in the hope that rises through Christ alone. Even as the world may say the Church is dying, Christ continues to build and sustain His Church through His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation. — *Laura Nelson*



We’ll be meeting to go over important 2026 Higher Things Conference updates, make some decisions about our St. Louis adventures, and dive into our pre-conference Bible study—the same one all participants will complete before we head to WashU! There’s a lot to cover, so you won’t want to miss it. But if you absolutely can’t make it, please let Laura know ahead of time.

- ◆ June 3, 10, 17 • Teens + Leaders • 5-7pm
- ◆ June 24 • Parents + Teens + Leaders • 5-7pm





JR AND SR YOUTH SAILING & KAYAKING

June 13, 2026 • 12-5pm • Big Creek

All 6th through 12th graders are invited to an exciting day of sailing, kayaking, swimming, and hanging out on the beach at Big Creek. We will meet at St. Paul at 11:30 to carpool, or you may meet us there at the beach after 12pm. Life jackets, lunch, and drinks will be provided. Be sure to bring swimwear, sunscreen, and a lawn/beach chair. All youth will need to update their health/medical release forms and turn them in ahead of time in order to participate. *Adult volunteers are also needed!*

Please join us for this fun afternoon!

The June Juggle is Real

June juggle? We feel it. But the Main Thing is STILL the Main Thing!

June kicks off with sunshine, vacations, VBS, and a whole new summer rhythm. Whether you're packing for a trip or just trying to keep up with the kids' changing schedules, life doesn't exactly slow down—it just shifts. That's why some of our regular youth activities take a summer pause or look a little different. We're creating room for rest, family time, and spontaneous moments of joy.

But even in the change of pace, one thing stays the same: God's Word and His Sacraments are still the foundation. The Main Thing is STILL the Main Thing.

So wherever June takes you—whether it's to the pool, the pew, or somewhere in between—we hope you'll stay rooted in Jesus and connected to His church. We're walking with you every step of the way.

Laura Nelson
Director of Youth Ministry

Ledges Fun June 7

Junior youth, here's the schedule:

-8:30am Student drop off at St Paul
-9am Load up and head to Ledges State Park
10am-12pm Explore + play in the Creek*
12:15pm Load up and grab some lunch**
3:00pm Unfortunately, the fun must come to an end. Parents and guardians, we'll have your students back to St Paul at 3pm to pick up.

Two special notes: friends are always welcome and wear sneakers!

Things to bring...sunscreen and insect repellent, water bottle, sunglasses and/or hat. *Second set of shoes...and maybe a whole second outfit -- HA! **Please bring money for lunch. We'll stop for lunch at the students' choice.

We will have background-checked chaperones escorting our tweens/teens to Ledges so RSVPs are required for this adventure to ensure we have enough drivers! Please RSVP with Laura Nelson on or before June 7.

June Youth Calendar

June 3, Pre-Higher Things Bible Study & Stuff 5-7pm
June 3, Open Gym 5-7pm
June 7, Worship (8 & 10:45) ± Fellowship in between
June 10, Open Gym 5-7pm
June 10, Pre-Higher Things Bible Study & Stuff 5-7pm
June 13, Sailing with Mr Sohn 1-5pm
June 14, Worship (8 & 10:45) ± Fellowship in between
June 14, Swimmy Summer Sunday 1-4pm
June 16, JR Youth @ Ledges State Park 8:30-3pm
June 17, Open Gym 5-7pm
June 17, Pre-Higher Things Bible Study & Stuff 5-7pm
June 21, Worship (8 & 10:45) ± Fellowship in between
June 21, Sunny View Service & Sunday Sips
2:10-3:30ish must rsvp
June 24, Open Gym 5-7pm
June 24, Parent/Teen Pre-Higher Things Bible Study & Stuff 5-7pm
June 28, Worship (8 & 10:45) ± Fellowship in between
June 28, Mill Pond Service and Sunday Sips
1:40-3pm must rsvp

VBS June 7-11

Join us for a Tropical Trek where we will learn how Jesus came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10)! As we traverse fun and exciting places, like a dormant volcano and island caves, we'll discover how God finds us and helps us in every challenge we face.

Sunday, June 7 - 4:00-6:00pm. Kick off VBS with food and fun! Short program at 5:30pm.
June 8 to June 11 - 9:00am to Noon
Thank you to everyone who registered!
Registration is now closed.



ALL 6TH-12TH GRADERS WELCOME!

OPEN GYM

GAMES. FRIENDS. FUN.

HANG OUT. PLAY HARD. BELONG.

WEDNESDAYS
MAY-AUGUST
5:00-7:00 PM

CHURCH GYM
(FLC)

DROP IN ANYTIME.
LEAVE WHEN YOU NEED TO.

LIGHT SNACKS PROVIDED!
BRING A BAGGED SUPPER IF YOU'D LIKE TO EAT WHILE YOU'RE HERE.

A PLACE TO CONNECT.
A PLACE TO BELONG.

WE CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU!

June Parks Mom's Group 2026

03	Deer Creek Park 1601 NE Chambers Pkwy, Ankeny, IA 50021 Park with zipline	Summer Parks Kickoff
10	Tropical Trek VBS @ St Paul No park this week.	Tropical Trek VBS
17	Union Park 2009 Saylor Rd, Des Moines, IA 50313 Rocket slide, carousel, and splash pool, shaded	
24	Easter Lake Park and Splash Pad - Athene Northshore 2816 Shoreline Rd, Des Moines, IA 50320 (Bring suits, there is sand and park is near a lake.)	

Meet at 10 AM.
Please pack a lunch!



Above photos: watching the Moms Group kids.

May Was a Busy Month for LWML

Hello mission-minded ladies! What a fun time our LWML team members had watching the man! Moms Group kiddos while the moms were able to spend some time together enjoying a coffee and conversation. It was a blessing for both of our groups!

We'd also like to thank all those who were able to join us for the LWML Des Moines East Zone Spring Rally that our LWML group hosted this year. The group enjoyed a wonderful breakfast, a devotion by Pastor Newton, presentations by the two area LCMS preschools, and putting together the Jesus and Me booklets for the preschool children. Many hands came together to make this a successful event! (see photo at right)



We also want to thank Hope Ministries for giving our group a special tour of their new Women & Children Center. We saw the room our donations supported last year and this year. What a gift it's been to be able to support the mission work at Hope (see photo at right).

As we close out the year, you have one more chance to join us for our last LWML get-together before summer break. Mark your calendar for Tuesday, June 9 for dinner at Perkins (714 SE Oralabor Road, Ankeny). Arrive by 5:30pm and we'll order and enjoy some good fellowship and food together. RSVP by June 7 to one of the LWML board members.



To stay connected, keep an eye on bulletin announcements for summer fun serving or get-together opportunities that may come about. Monthly meetings will resume starting the second Tuesday in September. Until then, did you know there are free devotions and Bible study resources through LWML? Some even have an audio option and come in different languages. Check 'em out ~ we'd love to hear what you think of them! www.lwml.org/bible-studies

A friendly reminder - St Paul LWML plans to hold its Sixth Annual Craft and Vendor Fair on Saturday, November 14, 2026! To have another successful event, we are looking for vendors. **Are you (or do you know of) a crafter, artisan, or service provider who would like to sell their wares or services and help a good cause at the same time? REGISTRATION IS OPEN** now so secure your spot. Email StPaulCVFair@gmail.com for more info and the registration link. Booth space fees and food sales, sponsored by St Paul LWML, will support missions!

And a special closing note from Kim Rasler: Over the past few years, we've seen new faces joining our events and meetings and we appreciate the relationships built within the church and all the support the congregation has given to mission related projects we've worked on. As my term ends as St. Paul's LWML President, I'd like to thank Sue Stoll, Vicki Sickels, and Sarah Kroemer for stepping up to serve for this upcoming term beginning July 1. It's been an honor to serve on the board and I look forward to serving as a team member with these leaders! Now....let the summer fun begin!

Your LWML Board and Sisters in Christ,
Kim Rasler, Sue Stoll, Betty Berlau, and Vicki Sickels



Treasurer's Report

April 2026 Summary

Offerings/Income	\$69,105.15
Expenditures	\$46,626.81

Please contact Duane Suhr with questions or comments pertaining to this report or our congregation's financials.

Lady Dinners June 2

Lady Dinners meet on **Tuesday, June 2** at Now or Later Restaurant (3750 E University Ave., Des Moines) at 11:30am. Carpooling is available, just contact Betty or Donna.

If you have any questions please see Betty Berlau or Donna Stoelk. Lady Dinners is open to all single ladies at St. Paul.

Nursing Home Ministry

Led by Pastor Newton or Pastor Kottlowski, St. Paul provides services to local nursing homes once a month. Members are always welcome to attend the services.

- Sunny View at 2:30pm on June 21
- Rock Creek at 2:00pm on June 16
- Mill Pond at 2:00pm on June 28

May Elders Meeting

Present at May 12 meeting were Steve Bradley, Kaleb Grev, Adam Haselhuhn, Tim Krehbiel, Dan Pottratz, Hans Schaeffer, Peter von Qualen, and Pastor Newton. Items for discussion included staff evaluations and nominations for the board of Elders for 2026-2027.

Official Acts

Baptisms: Aurora Saxton, May 10
Leola Saxton, May 10
Funeral: Sandra Kay Miller, May 7
Transferred Out: Mike, Amber, Hannah & Blaine Giese to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, State College, PA

April Attendance

Average Sunday Attendance for April
2026 — 339 2025 — 324
Average YTD Attendance through April
2026 — 302 2025 — 279
Average Sunday School (pK-12th) — 38
Average Adult Bible Study — 56
Average Midweek Service — 75
Average Midweek Adult Bible Study — 39
Average Midweek (pK-12th) — 58

April Membership

Baptized — 697 Confirmed — 602
Households — 295

Hans Schaeffer and Peter von Qualen will be returning to the board with one year of eligibility remaining. Jon Jero, Gary Hauge, Dan Pottratz, and Kaleb Grev will be returning with three years of eligibility remaining.

Respectfully submitted,
Adam Haselhuhn
Head Elder

Voters Meeting June 1

Don't forget to attend the voters meeting on Monday, June 1 at 6:30pm. Elections will be held for open council and elder positions.

Christ Lutheran-St. Paul Golf Outing

REGISTER NOW!

**Saturday, August 1
8:00am
Woodland Hills
Golf Course**

**Four-person best shot.
Registration forms in the
Narthex.**

**Contact Greg Stokke with
questions at 515-681-3127.**



Join us for a delicious

SPAGHETTI DINNER

followed by **BINGO!!!**

SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 2026

St. Paul Lutheran Church
1100 SE Sharon Drive, Ankeny, IA



DINNER 5:00-7:00PM

BINGO 6:30PM

FREE WILL DONATION

SPAGHETTI, GARLIC BREAD, SALAD,
DESSERTS, WATER AND LEMONADE
(GF OPTIONS WHILE SUPPLIES LAST)

BINGO: \$1/CARD

PAPER CARDS, 2 GAMES PER CARD,
CASH AND PRIZES

**ALL AGES WELCOME
FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!**



For more information, contact Lori
515.314.7262
loriwesack@gmail.com

Thank you for standing with us to show how
strong the **HDSA COMMUNITY** is when we
CARE and fight for a **CURE** together!

Stewardship Updates

The Stewardship Board will serve the meal (burgers, hot dogs, watermelon, chips cookies, beverages, etc.) at the 2026 VBS opening on June 7 from 4-6pm in the front lawn, weather permitting.

The weekend of September 18-20, the Stewardship Board will host a camping weekend at Prairie Flower campsite. There will be a potluck supper Saturday night; Stewardship will provide the main course. More details to come!

The Children and Family Board has been serving donuts and coffee for the month of May. Stewardship will serve in June. The Church Council will serve in July.

In His Service,
Ken Kise
Stewardship Board Chairperson

Office Hours Changing

Beginning June 1, the church offices hours are changing to Monday through Friday 8:00am to 4:00pm. If you need to stop in the church it's best to call ahead. Staff will be taking vacation time, going to conferences and generally enjoying summer!

Thanks to the generous PTO policy here at St. Paul I'm able to take off every Friday! With fewer events and activities, it's pretty quiet on Fridays anyway. I'll be able to spend lots of time with my grandsons. Visiting Reiman Gardens is one of our favorite things to do in Ames. I also plan to go up to Nemaha to spend time with my parents. I enjoy taking care of my mom's flower gardens. We also go to Sac City shopping, down to the farm where my Mom grew up and other activities.

I hope you all have a fabulous summer!
— *Kathy Olson*

JUNE 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 9:00am Staff Meeting 6:30pm Voters Meeting	2 11:30am Lady Diners	3 5-7pm Youth Open Gym 5-7pm Pre-Higher Things Conference Study & Stuff 7:00pm Summer Liturgy	4 9:00am-Noon VBS Decorating	5 <i>Offices Closed</i> 9:00am-Noon VBS Decorating	6 9:00am VBS Tent Set Up
7 8:00am Worship Service Fellowship Hour 10:45am Worship Service VBS Opening Program & Picnic 4:00pm-6:00pm	8 9:00am-Noon VBS	9 9:00am-Noon VBS 5:30pm LWML @ Perkins 6:30pm Elders Meeting	10 9:00am-Noon VBS 5-7pm Pre-Higher Things Conference Study & Stuff 7:00pm Summer Liturgy	11 9:00am-Noon VBS 5:30PM VBS Tent take down	12 <i>Offices Closed</i>	13 Noon-5:00pm Youth Sailing & Kayaking 5:00-8:00pm HDSA Fundraiser
14 8:00am Worship Service Fellowship Hour 10:45am Worship Service 1:00-4:00pm Youth Swimmy Summer Sunday	15 9:00am Staff Meeting	16 8:30am-3:00pm Jr. Youth @ Ledges State Park 2:00pm Rock Creek Service 6:30pm Council Meeting	17 5-7pm Youth Open Gym 5-7pm Pre-Higher Things Conference Study & Stuff 7:00pm Summer Liturgy	18	19 <i>Offices Closed</i>	20
21 8:00am Worship Service Fellowship Hour 10:45am Worship Service 2:30pm Sunny View Service (Jr/Sr Youth Service & Sunday Sips)	22 9:00am Staff Meeting	23	24 5-7pm Youth Open Gym 5-7pm Pre-Higher Things Conference Study & Stuff 7:00pm Summer Liturgy	25	26 <i>Offices Closed</i>	27 2:30pm Hilchen-Gilbert Wedding
28 8:00am Worship Service Fellowship Hour 10:45am Worship Service 2:00pm Mill Pond Service (Jr/Sr Youth Service & Sunday Sips)	29	30	1	2 <i>Offices Closed</i>	3 <i>Offices Closed</i>	
Senior Youth Higher Things Conference						

ELDER OF THE WEEK

07: Jeff Fahrman
14: Hans Schaeffer
21: Peter von Qualen
28: Steve Bradley

ALTAR COMMITTEE

Sundays —
Vicki Sickels, Mary Sulr
Wednesday Evenings —
Betty Berlau

ALTAR FLOWERS

07: Denise & Randy Benda
14: Karla Harris
21: Charlene & David Shaw
28: Hilchen-Gilbert Wedding

OFFERING COUNTERS

June 7
Kevin Kisker, Doyle Witt

June 14 & 21

Jennifer Dorfler, Marilyn Sharar

June 28 & July 5

Dewayne McGohan, Rod Silvey

USHERS

June 7
8:00am — Jon Gerths, Don Halbur
10:45am — Jason, Jaydon, Jordan, and Jalen Buls

June 14 & 21

8:00am — Les Stave, Jeff, Cael, Colby Fahrman
10:45am — Dewayne McGohan, Mike Koester Craig

June 28 & July 5

8:00am — Ray Marvin, Randy Sunderman, Curt Hora
10:45am — David Reddel, Mark Lauthen

June Birthdays

01: Mattox Hoffmann Brent Rangen Rich Wood	13: Stacia Bradley Tori Hilchen Kristin Strothcamp	22: Keagan Gilbert Larry Senne Amelia Wesack
02: Eva Mae McCoid	14: Lori Christiansen	23: Lindsey Clark
03: Bruce Voss Carol Wandt	15: Hannah Haselluhm Tim Krehbiel	24: Quinn Wielenga
04: Caleb Kehrl Sue Senne Linda Sprague	16: Josie Marvin George Newton Jadyn Patten	25: Brenda Gleason Taylor Rangen Marilyn Sharar
05: Landon Schum	17: Linda Finzen-Mathers Kenla Grev	26: Darren Allen Reyno Davis
06: Sharon Townsend	18: Nathan Sloan	27: Molly Newton Austin Poock
07: Don Binneboese Laura Bull Anya Zogg	19: Jacob Dozler Aubree Winkelmann	28: Josh Remington Julie Schrader Jeff Wangsness
08: Kara Juhl Allison Meissner Benjamin Rangen	20: Toni Billings Ashley Ott	29: Pam Huseman Phil Eshelman
09: Rachel Burgess Leah Depp	21: Levi Forde Jayden Krehbiel Will Krehbiel	30: Hazel Marvin Debbie Olsen Ava von Qualen
10: Mona Kretlow	22: Hudson von Qualen Eric Ott Kyle Ott	31: Dale Musfeldt
11: Mona Kretlow	23: Travis Wielenga	

June Wedding Anniversaries

02: Lorelli & Don Matz Lindsay & Nate Trueblood	12: Judy & Steve Bradley
04: Polly & Randy Anderson Char & David Shaw	14: Viviane & David Kottlowksi
05: Carol & Jim Anderson Denise & Randy Benda Emily & Paul Ebert Carolyn & Gary Vesely	16: Kate & James Harken Miranda & Terry Patten Andy & Michelle Smith
06: Megan & Peter von Qualen	17: Laura & Zack Nelson
08: Linda & Tim Glenn Alyse & Randy Sunderman	18: Katie & Hans Schaeffer
09: Deb & Ray Olsen	19: Candra & Kaleb Grev
10: Michelle & Rick Tucker	20: Jenna & Justin Hopp
	21: LeAnn & Paul Hilchen
	22: Stephanie & Kyle Strozinsky
	23: Stephanie & Johannes Schrader
	24: Michelle & Johannes Krader
	25: Kristen & David Brunelle

Full size calendars
are available at
church.