

# THE SPECTRUM

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. PAUL-REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH

**MAY  
2024**

**Liturgy  
10:30 a.m.**

**9:30 a.m. starting on  
May 26**

**Sunday School  
Confirmation  
9:30 a.m.**

**Adult Forum  
9:10 a.m.**

**Nursery  
Kids with Parents  
10:15 a.m.**

**Livestream video** via  
SPR's FB page or look  
in your e-mail on  
Sunday mornings.

**Visit us on the web!**  
[www.stpaulref.org](http://www.stpaulref.org)

St. Paul-Reformation  
is a congregation of  
the Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in  
America (ELCA).

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*The Spectrum* items, articles and columns need to be to the Parish Office by the 12th of the month. *The Spectrum* goes to print on the 15th and this date is hard and fast. Articles received after the 12th may or may not be included.



## Cantata Vespers for the Ascension

with J. S. Bach's cantata  
*Gott fähret auf mit Jauchzen*

**Thursday, May 9 at 7:00 p.m.**  
*a light reception follows.*

**ONE OF THE RESOLUTIONS** of the ELCA's 2022 Churchwide Assembly was the creation of a "Commission on a Renewed Lutheran Church." Convened largely in response to strife in the Sierra-Pacific Synod regarding its bishop several years ago, this Commission is charged with looking at our structures, governance, and ways of operating to determine if it is time for the ELCA to write a new constitution (or amend the current one).

What does this mean for you? Probably nothing at all. The Commission could come and go, do their work, fade off into the archives of the ELCA, and the vast, vast majority of our members would see precisely no change at all in the ways that we function.

Even so, when we talk about governance in the church, we are talking about *ecclesiology* (that is, the theory of what the church is). Among American Lutherans, there are differing *ecclesiologies*, and several prominent ones dwell in tension with each other in the ELCA.

At its founding, the ELCA struck a delicate balance between these, agreeing "...on a polity, but not what the polity means." Questions like: "What is a Bishop?" "How much power do congregations have?" "Is our structure hierarchical?" and the like have dogged the ELCA since the beginning. The answer to all of these questions and more: yes, *and...* Our structure as a denomination is a hybrid between congregationalism (the congregation holds power), and episcopacy (the bishop holds power). Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't, and God still sits in heaven ordering all things. *Yawn.*

As we come to Pentecost and the end of the Easter season, it is a good time to think about these things, mostly because all of these things—and all of our structure and governance—is *for the sake of evangelical mission*. I am sad to report that

changing governing documents of the ELCA does not mean that the institution as whole changes, because it is still filled with the same, people who make mistakes and disappoint, who achieve and do well, who struggle and start again. Constitutions do not change this, or bylaws, or resolutions of the Churchwide Assembly. It is impossible to legislate a change in the hearts of people. *That* task comes through the work of *conversion*.

The Holy Spirit is the source of conversion of heart, and conversion of heart does not come through the law (what you should have done and didn't!); it comes through the Gospel (Christ has done this, we respond in thanksgiving). While we speak of this much during Lent, Pentecost is another time when it is important to recognize and take stock of how the Holy Spirit is calling new things and new parts of us into being. What inside us is changing for the better? Are we growing in wisdom, in compassion, in kindness? And, if

not, what is stopping us from doing that? How do we "unblock" the barrier? Can we even do that, or is that—too—the work of the Holy Spirit?

At Pentecost, the Spirit appeared "as a violent wind," and wind—if strong enough—has the power to move things out of its way. The Holy Spirit attends to this work: moving the things in us out of the way that are blocking the way toward growth in faith, daily conversion of heart, and an increased openness to justice and mercy. The church is always changing, the one constant since the Day of Pentecost. And still, Jesus promises to be with us "until the close of the age." That is a promise forever and for always. It is this presence of Christ at which all our *ecclesiologies* begin and end, coupled to the joyful shout "Come, Holy Spirit!"

+Pr. Patrick H. Shebeck, Senior Pastor



**“Conversion of heart does not come through the law; it comes through the Gospel.”**

## FROM THE CANTOR

### Summer Lyceum Preview

This year Sister Stacie will lead our Summer Lyceum, in which we will read Phyllis Tickle's *The Great Emergence*. Written by the founding editor of the religion department at *Publisher's Weekly*, this book examines the societal changes that happen every 500 or so years and how they affect religion. What do the events of the Great Schism and the Protestant Reformation have to teach us about the time in which we are living? Do Phyllis Tickle's observations and hypotheses still apply after a world-wide pandemic? We'll look at some period sources and articles that have been written after the book was published to guide our discussion. Join us Wednesdays in June at 7:00—8:30 p.m. in Tidemann.

Since Easter was so early this year, that means Ascension Day, which always takes place on the 40<sup>th</sup> day of Easter, is also early. I have been traveling in Europe over this day, both in Germany and in France, and been surprised to find that shops are closed and people get a day off from work. It was an important feast day for J.S. Bach, too, who wrote BWV 43 *Gott fähret auf mit Jauchzen* for Ascension Day in Leipzig in 1726. The opening chorus quotes Psalm 47, still the psalm appointed for this day: "God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of the ram's horn," but the German translation replaces "ram's horn" with *Posaune*, the German word for trombone. Bach doesn't take the bait – there are no trombones in this cantata. It was seen as an old-fashioned instrument in his day. Trumpets were much cooler, so Bach includes three of them to lend both a festive and a regal air to the music. The middle movements are solo settings of an anonymous poem that explore themes of Jesus' majesty, now seated on the throne, as the hero who has run his race on earth, and as the victor who has overcome Satan. After all this praise, the



poet places us in the scene with the disciples looking up toward heard, and we have first-person language for the first time: the alto soloist sings, "I stand here by the way and look toward him with joy." In a similar sentiment, the soprano soloist sings, "I stand here by the way and look toward him with longing." The remaining three movements contain a theme common in much German devotional poetry of the time, which I have told the choir can be summarized as, "Jesus, take me with you!" In the final stanza, the narrator of the poem is still standing there in the scene on the Mount of Olivet, watching as Jesus ascends and saying:

*Draw us after you, and we shall run,  
give us wings of faith!  
Help us, so that we may flee far from here  
[where we are standing] on the hills of Israel!  
My God! when shall I travel there  
where I shall be joyful forever?  
When shall I stand before you  
to see your face?*

Although the cantata ends with a question and uncertainty about the timing, we are united with Jesus' death and resurrection through our baptism, and therefore we have assurance that we will be with Jesus again. Come celebrate this Ascension joy on **Thursday, May 9 at 7 p.m.**

+ Sr. Stacie Lightner



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## COUNCIL CORNER

The Parish Council met on Tuesday, April 9, 2024, to discuss and act on the following issues.

John Rent, Council Treasurer, presented financial results from February. Revenue continues to track with projections, although a large donation expected for February, landed the first week of March. Additionally, expenses continue to meet projections. Members reviewed and discussed the professional financial practices of the church. John Rent was recognized for his exceptional work as the Council Treasurer.

Susan Martyn, Council Vice President, and Pastor Shebeck gave a final update on the smooth operations of the Warming Hub in its second year at SPR. The Ramsey County staff are very appreciative of the congregational support. SPR will apply for the ELCA Domestic Hunger Grant for the upcoming year and Council discussed various options for how to apply that money to support

the Warming Hub in the future. Susan Martyn provided essential leadership in ensuring effective collaboration between SPR and Warming Hub staff.

Pastor Shebeck discussed the possibility of a capital campaign to address the outstanding capital needs of the church. Input from the congregation will be solicited. The Council and Pastor discussed the impact of economic and political forces on the timing of such an endeavor. Pastor and Sister Stacie will both be exploring possible sabbaticals. The Lilly Foundation offers grants to support congregations and staff during sabbaticals.

Easter worship services were exceptional. Much gratitude was expressed for the ministry provided by Pastor Shebeck and the incredible music provided by the incomparable Sister Stacy and the choir. We are incredibly blessed to have them.

Alyn Bedford led the Council through a discussion of the identified Council goals for the upcoming year, focusing on assignments and priorities. The highest priorities include the operations and structure of endowment fund, our governance documentation and personnel practices.

Respectfully submitted

*Kristin Benson, Council Secretary*

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN TIME...?

The Parish Council would like your feedback as to...timing for our next Capital Campaign. Is it getting to be time? Our most recent Capital Campaign was in 2017, and we want to hear your thoughts! You can fill out a card in the narthex with these questions for your consideration:

1. ***Is it getting to be time for a new Capital Campaign?***
2. ***Would you contribute to such a Campaign?***
3. ***What excites you about this possibility?***

Now is not the time to identify projects; it is the time for us to be taking the temperature of the congregation on this matter! Your voice is important—please take a moment to fill out a card in the narthex and share your thoughts!



### LEARNING FROM STUDENTS IN EL SALVADOR

Elmer Alvarez Martinez is studying Business Administration, and will graduate this year in July. He writes: "I am happy to give thanks to God, and to you for the support that you have provided to me, and also to my Pastor Conchi

who has supported and advised us. Your support has made possible great accomplishments among us and, God willing, we will continue to achieve triumphs in the future. I ask that you continue your support, especially for the young people who follow us with hopes of entering the University with dreams of careers."

### 8:00 A.M. ON HIATUS

SPR's 8:00 a.m. liturgy will go on hiatus until the fall. We are reevaluating the need for this service, and would love to hear your thoughts. See you in the fall (maybe?)!

### SYNOD ASSEMBLY

The St. Paul-Area Synod will meet for its annual Synod Assembly at St. Andrew's Church in early May. SPR's Voting Members are: Pr. Patrick, Sr. Stacie, Jim McGowan, and Marilyn Harder. On the docket: resolutions related to gun violence prevention, memorials to the Churchwide Assembly, and the budget. Please pray for the Assembly as it begins its work.



### THEOLOGY ON TAP

**Thursday, May 16, 7:00 p.m.** at Blackstack Brewing, 755 Prior Avenue North, Saint Paul. This is for the young and the young at heart. Please join us as we kick the theological football around!

### BIRTHDAYS

04 Paige Johnson  
07 Mary Chilvers, William Puroway  
08 Dawn Puroway  
10 Mikko Matala  
11 Joel Nasset  
13 Andres Albertsen  
15 Katie McKee  
17 Bonnie Olson  
21 Janice Erickson  
24 Marilyn Harder  
26 Linda Dahlen  
30 Pat Graham, Doris Ikier

### ANNIVERSARY

24 Tim and Diane Brennan

### PENTECOST WITH THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION

will be held on **Sunday, May 19** at 10:30 a.m. A reception



follows. We will be confirming Sebastian Badilla, Henry Hanson, Alex Saylo, Mya Wagner, and Ellis Bedford.

### THE LAST SUNDAY OF SUNDAY SCHOOL

will be **Sunday, May 19**. Weather permitting, kite flying will happen that day. Watch for more information!

### ONE SUMMER LITURGY

We move to **One Summer Liturgy** starting **Sunday, May 26 at 9:30 a.m.** On some summer Sundays, we will gather for post-liturgy fellowship outside; on others, we will gather in the Lower Auditorium as usual.

## MAY MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Thank you to all the volunteers who help make the 10:30 a.m. Sunday morning services “run.”

### May 5 Sixth Sunday of Easter

Ian and Jamie Block, *Asst. Ministers*  
 Mark Sandberg, Laura Stuart, *Lectors*  
 Blake Webb Woodage  
 Jim Bowen, *Cantor*  
 Lay’ani Stuart, Hilary and Roman Hund,  
 Tom Webb, *Greeters/Ushers*  
 John Johnson, *Coffee/Treats*

### May 12, Seventh Sunday of Easter

Margaret Schuster, Aaron Brown, *Asst. Ministers*  
 Cheri Gohr, Alyn Bedford, *Lectors*  
 Ellis Bedford, *Acolyte*  
 Erica Perl, *Cantor*  
 Dorcas Adedigba, Kristin Benson,  
 Deanna Sande, Joe Voss, *Greeters/Ushers*  
 Karen Allard, Deanna Sande, *Coffee/Treats*

### May 19 , Pentecost with Rite of Confirmation

Jamie Block Amy Rouillard, *Asst. Ministers*  
 Anthony Hedlund, Jim McGowan, *Lectors*  
 Daniel Adedigba, Elizabeth Adedigba,  
 Claudia Hanson, Henry Hanson, Noelle Puoway  
 Aspen Rouillard-Horne, *Acolytes*  
 Dawn Klesk, *Cantor*  
 Bonnie Olson, Anthony Hedlund, *Greeters/Ushers*  
 Linda Dahlen, *Coffee/Treats*

### May 26 Trinity Sunday– 9:30 a.m. service

Aaron Brown, Victoria Smith, *Asst. Ministers*  
 John Whalen, Cynthia Peyton, *Lectors*  
 Mattias Badilla, Sebastian Badilla,  
 Lu Beckman, Mya Wagner, *Acolytes*  
 Jim Bowen, *Cantor*  
 Joe Herbert, Joe Voss, *Greeters/Ushers*  
 Open, *Coffee/Treats*

## JUNE HAPPENINGS

### JUNE 9 BLESSING OF THE BIKES

Kids of all ages are invited to join us with their bicycles (or other wheeled contraptions!) as we bless their Bikes (and their summer play).

### JUNE 16 JUNETEENTH COMMEMORATION

SPR will commemorate Juneteenth on the Sunday previous, June 16. Please note: the Parish Office will be closed on Wednesday, June 19.

### JUNE 29–30 PRIDE WEEKEND

An annual tradition, SPR will once again host a booth at Twin Cities Pride in Loring Park June 29-30. Volunteers will be needed to help out—watch for more information coming soon!

### NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED

SPR will welcome a sizeable group of new members in late June, many of whom are participating in “The Way.” Please get to know these wonderful new members!



### BIG GAY BRUNCH: RESCHEDULED

**Join us on Saturday, May 18 at Roxy’s Cabaret**

SPR will travel to Roxy’s Cabaret in Minneapolis for their Saturday Drag Brunch starting at 11:00 a.m. Tickets are \$17 (food and drink additional), and a sign-up is located in the narthex; we have room for 10 in total. We invite all SPR’s GLBTQIA+ members to join us...and anyone else who simply wants to join us to celebrate community (and hilarity!); all are welcome!



**QUILTING for Charity** Join us on **Saturday May 4, 10:00 a.m.** You can sew, arrange blocks, iron, tie layers together, cut fabric! Work on your own projects. Join in on the fun! Bring a snack to share. Coffee provided. Contact Gwen Peyton at [gwenpeyton5@gmail.com](mailto:gwenpeyton5@gmail.com).



### MEALS MINISTRY!

Once a month, SPR members help each other by preparing and delivering meals for members who may find it challenging to always have a home-cooked meal. Meals cooked in the church kitchen at **9:00 a.m. on Saturday May 18.** Volunteers needed; please join us. The alley door will be open. Your contributions for this ministry are greatly appreciated. For more info please contact Gwen Peyton, [gwenpeyton5@gmail.com](mailto:gwenpeyton5@gmail.com).



### BREAKFAST CLUB +

**Join us Sunday May 5** at the Louisiana Café on Selby Ave after the second service. All are welcome to join this time of fellowship, good conversation and food. No agenda: just fellowship!

**BUILDING UPDATE +** The Tuesday Crew and others continue working on multiple repair, improvement projects.

#### Projects:

- Clear leaves from downspouts
- Repair lights in downstairs bathroom
- Hang flags and vinyl signs outside, take down rope and warning signs.
- Put in 5 window A/C units in apt. and office.

- Repair large worship cabinet door.
- Repair toilets.
- Put up and take down tables in lower level.
- Manage recycling and trash dumpster issues.
- Adjust heaters in Music Studios for cost saving.
- Meetings to discuss and plan the repair of ceiling in Tidemann, gutter and items from Safety Inspections
- Other repairs and tasks

**Staff:** Met with RayCo Construction twice to discuss repair of damaged east side gutter. Proposal requested from current and new phone and internet providers. Building walk-throughs and discussions with City of St. Paul Fire and Safety Inspector and Elevator Inspector. Thanks to all who volunteer to keep this building and spaces inside in condition to use and rent out.

### SPR SENDS TWO OFF TO ORDINATION!

St. Paul-Reformation is sending two newly-minted pastors off to the ELCA! In April, Pr. Alexis Mattson was ordained to serve as Associate Pastor at Advent Lutheran Church in Maple Grove, and on May 5 Ryan Heckman will be ordained to serve as Pastor of St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Avon, CT. You can watch Ryan's ordination online, look for a link in the weekly email. Congratulations to these wonderful new pastors; SPR is delighted to have been part of your journey of formation!

### BIBLE MATTERS

Please join us **on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m.** In the lower auditorium for this time of study, fellowship, and learning as we look forward to the coming week's lectionary texts.

**DONATE TO SPR USING YOUR SMARTPHONE!** *A great way to donate whether you are at church or out and about!* Now you can give from anywhere in the world! It's fast, easy, and secure. Search your app-finder for "GivePlusChurch," download it, click "sign up," and follow the instructions. You can donate to either the Good Samaritan Fund or the Parish General fund (in addition to your regular pledge). Give it a try! **Thanks to all who are using this quick and easy way to donate!**

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## PARTING SHOT



*Pastor Alexis Mattson was ordained by the Bishop of Minneapolis in late April to serve as Associate Pastor at Advent Lutheran Church, Maple Grove. Alexis and her husband Jeremy (and their new baby, Edison!) are members at St. Paul-Reformation. Congratulations, Pastor!*