

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Crookston, MN

September 13th, 2026 Sixteenth Sunday after
Pentecost



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

September 13th, 2026 Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

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WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS/SHARING THE PEACE

OPENING WORDS/CALL TO WORSHIP

Give praise to God! Praise the Lord, for it is God who saves.... It is God who forgives.... It is God who delivers.... Give thanks and praise to the Lord!

Amen.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Let us confess our sins to God who forgives and saves.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious and loving God, you lived for us—we have not lived for you. You have forgiven us—we have not forgiven others. You have loved us—we have not loved ourselves nor have we loved one another. Take pity on us and forgive us, God. Help us to forgive. Help us to live for you. Help us to love through Christ our Lord. Amen.

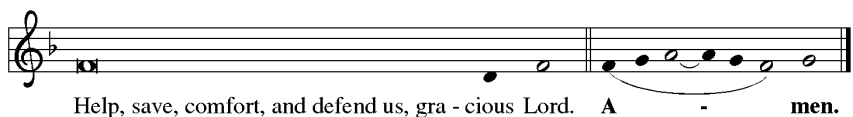
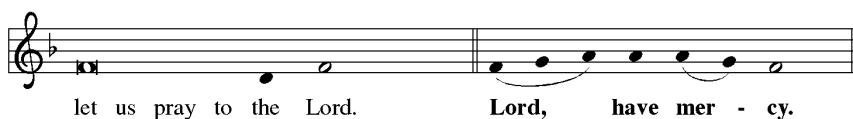
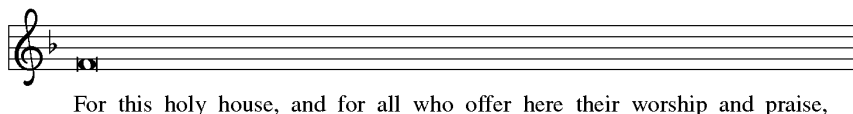
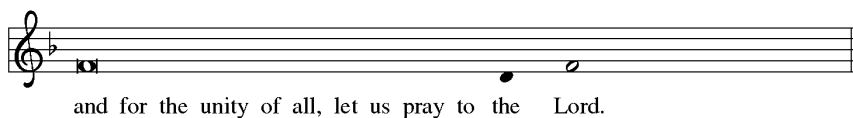
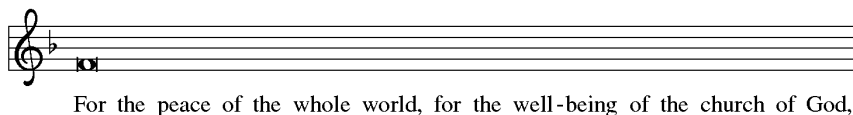
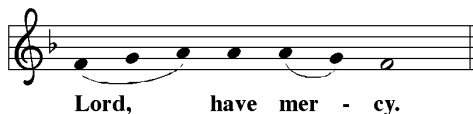
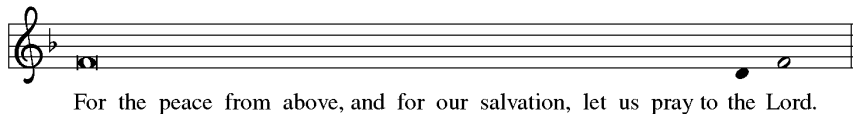
People of God, our sins are forgiven. God is merciful and gracious and is Lord of us all. Reconciled to the God who loves us, let us live and love through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN: #835 All Creatures Worship God Most High!

GREETING (p. 203)

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

KYRIE (p. 138)



CANTICLE OF PRAISE (p. 140)



Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,



we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God who is our strength, you have protected us from those who would seek to oppress us. You have shielded us from those who would seek to destroy the good gifts you have put in us. Your love and power never fail. Thanks and praise to you, our

safety and stronghold. We exalt you, O God, majestic in holiness, for there is none like you. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC Sunday School

“He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands”

First Reading: Exodus 14:19-31 (CEB)

Having decided to let the Israelites go from Egypt, Pharaoh had second thoughts and sent his army after them (14:5-8). Though the passage through the Red Sea became a sign of salvation for the people of Israel, Pharaoh’s forces drowned in the waters. As a result the Israelites believed in the Lord and in the Lord’s servant Moses.

¹⁹ God’s messenger, who had been in front of Israel’s camp, moved and went behind them. The column of cloud moved from the front and took its place behind them. ²⁰ It stood between Egypt’s camp and Israel’s camp. The cloud remained there, and when darkness fell it lit up the night. They didn’t come near each other all night.

²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea.

The Lord pushed the sea back by a strong east wind all night, turning the sea into dry land. The waters were split into two. ²² The Israelites walked into the sea on dry ground. The waters formed a wall for them on their right hand and on their left. ²³ The Egyptians chased them and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh’s horses, chariots, and cavalry. ²⁴ As morning approached, the Lord looked down on the Egyptian camp from the column of lightning and cloud and threw the Egyptian camp into a panic. ²⁵ The Lord jammed their chariot wheels so that they wouldn’t turn easily. The Egyptians said, “Let’s get away from the Israelites, because the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt!”

²⁶ Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the water comes back and covers the Egyptians, their chariots, and their cavalry.” ²⁷ So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. At daybreak, the sea returned to its normal depth. The Egyptians were driving toward it, and the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. ²⁸ The waters returned and covered the

chariots and the cavalry, Pharaoh's entire army that had followed them into the sea. Not one of them remained. ²⁹ The Israelites, however, walked on dry ground through the sea. The waters formed a wall for them on their right hand and on their left.

³⁰ The Lord rescued Israel from the Egyptians that day. Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ Israel saw the amazing power of the Lord against the Egyptians. The people were in awe of the Lord, and they believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

Psalm: Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21 (CEB)

^{1b} I will sing to the Lord, for an overflowing victory!

Horse and rider he threw into the sea!

**² The Lord is my strength and my power;
he has become my salvation.**

**This is my God, whom I will praise,
the God of my ancestors, whom I will acclaim.**

³ The Lord is a warrior;
the Lord is his name.

**⁴ Pharaoh's chariots and his army he hurled into the sea;
his elite captains were sunk in the Reed Sea.**

⁵ The deep sea covered them;
they sank into the deep waters like a stone.

**⁶ Your strong hand, Lord, is dominant in power;
your strong hand, Lord, shatters the enemy!**

⁷ With your great surge you overthrow your opponents;
you send out your hot anger; it burns them up like straw.

**⁸ With the breath of your nostrils the waters swelled up,
the floods surged up in a great wave;
the deep waters foamed in the depths of the sea.**

⁹ The enemy said, "I'll pursue, I'll overtake,
I'll divide the spoils of war.
I'll be overfilled with them.

I'll draw my sword; my hand will destroy them."

**¹⁰ You blew with your wind; the sea covered over them.
They sank like lead in the towering waters.**

¹¹ Who is like you among the gods, Lord?

Who is like you, foremost in holiness,
worthy of highest praise, doing awesome deeds?

²⁰ Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand. All the women followed her playing tambourines and dancing.

²¹ Miriam sang the refrain back to them:

Sing to the Lord, for an overflowing victory!

Horse and rider he threw into the sea!

Second Reading: Romans 14:1-12 (CEB)

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.

¹ Welcome the person who is weak in faith—but not in order to argue about differences of opinion. ² One person believes in eating everything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. ³ Those who eat must not look down on the ones who don't, and the ones who don't eat must not judge the ones who do, because God has accepted them. ⁴ Who are you to judge someone else's servants? They stand or fall before their own Lord (and they will stand, because the Lord has the power to make them stand). ⁵ One person considers some days to be more sacred than others, while another person considers all days to be the same. Each person must have their own convictions. ⁶ Someone who thinks that a day is sacred, thinks that way for the Lord. Those who eat, eat for the Lord, because they thank God. And those who don't eat, don't eat for the Lord, and they thank the Lord too. ⁷ We don't live for ourselves and we don't die for ourselves. ⁸ If we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we belong to God. ⁹ This is why Christ died and lived: so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰ But why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you look down on

your brother or sister? We all will stand in front of the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ Because it is written,

*As I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow to me,
and every tongue will give praise to God.*

¹² So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the



words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

Before: The holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35 (CEB)

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

²¹ Then Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, how many times should I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Should I forgive as many as seven times?”

²² Jesus said, “Not just seven times, but rather as many as seventy-seven times. ²³ Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ When he began to settle accounts, they brought to him a servant who owed him ten thousand bags of gold. ²⁵ Because the servant didn’t have enough to pay it back, the master ordered that he should be sold, along with his wife and children and everything he had, and that the proceeds should be used as payment. ²⁶ But the servant fell down, kneeled before him, and said, ‘Please, be patient with me, and I’ll pay you back.’ ²⁷ The master had compassion on that servant, released him, and forgave the loan.

²⁸ “When that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him one hundred coins. He grabbed him around the throat and said, ‘Pay me back what you owe me.’

²⁹ “Then his fellow servant fell down and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I’ll pay you back.’ ³⁰ But he refused. Instead, he threw him into prison until he paid back his debt.

³¹ “When his fellow servants saw what happened, they were deeply offended. They came and told their master all that happened. ³² His master called the first servant and said, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you appealed to me. ³³ Shouldn’t you also have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴ His master was furious and handed him over to the guard responsible for punishing prisoners, until he had paid the whole debt.

³⁵ “My heavenly Father will also do the same to you if you don’t forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

After: The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE AND BACKPACK BLESSING SERMON “The Impossible Math of Grace”

**HYMN OF THE DAY: #359 Where Charity and Love Prevail
(Alt tune)**

APOSTLES’ CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition concludes: God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

OFFERING

God is unfailing in blessing and love. With thankful hearts, let us offer up to God a portion of what God has given us.

Offering Song: #186 Create in Me a Clean Heart

Offering Prayer: O God, we thank you for these gifts.

Multiply them, and enable the work of love and the righteousness of your kingdom in the world. We thank and praise you. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (p. 145)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, Forever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING

May the God who protects and defends keep you in safety, mercy, and love. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN: #545 Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing

CHARGE: Walk in the strength and confidence that God guides your feet. Therefore live for God—show mercy and love one another. **Thanks be to God.**

SUNDAY BULLETIN

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Crookston, MN

September 13th, 2026

Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

For those who need healing in body, mind, or spirit:

Julie Love	Eunice Sondrol	Judy Luettjohann
Darleen Jackson	Katie Bakken	Julian Bertils
Marlo Moren	Evie Gunderson	Nancy Eia
Mike Ophus	Loiland family	Trevin Monahan
Nash Erdman	Stuart Hanson	Mark Peterson
Glorrayne Casmey	Lucile Torkelson	Delores Sandager
Carol Chaffee	Kari L Trudeau	Mary Ann Knotek
Leah Knotek Ellefson	Luanne Devos	

For our missionaries: Steve & Kelly Solheim
City of Joy Rwanda

For our servicemen: Brandon Johnson D.J. Brace

Please keep them in your prayers this week.

If you have prayer requests, please contact the church office at 218 281-3638 or our prayer chain coordinator, Marian Bakken: (h) 218-281-1584, (c) 218-275-3143, marianbakken@gmail.com.

MISSION

To bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all people

1214 University Avenue – Crookston, Minnesota 56716

Website: stpaulscrookstonmn.com

facebook.com/stpaulscrookstonmn

Phone: 218-281-3638

Email: stpauls@midconetwork.com

Ministers

St. Paul's members

Council President

Anna Peterson

Pastor

Rev. Curt Peterson

Organist

Mary Ann Knotek

Webmaster

Anna Peterson

Treasurer

Betty Arvidson

Financial Secretary

Kathie Barnes

Custodian

Marilyn Flateland

Administrative Assistant

Tammy Frohlich

THANK YOU TO THOSE SERVING TODAY!

Ushers

Dan and Brandi Halland

Scripture Reader

Dan Halland

Acolyte

Judson Halland

Offering Counters

Kathie Barnes and Dan Haland

Altar Guild

Barb Erdman

Fellowship

Parish Fellowship serving Root Beer Floats

Livestream

Anna Peterson

SEPTEMBER WORSHIP SERVICE TEAM

Thank you, Super-Duper September Team, for filling in so many slots this month! All remaining is 9/20 Acolyte, and 9/27

Fellowship. **Thank you** very much!

Cole and Kelli Bertils

Norma Hoppe

Emily Giannetta

Judy Gustafson

Dan and Brandi Halland

Connie Wilkens

Jeff and Ingrid Remick

Bob and Becky Cameron

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK

Exodus 16:2-15

Psalms 105:1-6, 37-45

Philippians 1:21-30

Matthew 20:1-16

Readings for September 20th, 2026

17th Sunday After Pentecost

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday: 9am- 2pm, and Tuesday 12-5 pm. Please leave a message after 2 pm on the answering machine/drop something in the mailbox (north side of building)/call ahead. Pastor Curt is usually in the building but may be out on other church business.

Worship via Facebook: facebook.com/stpaulscrookstonmn

Sunday, September 13 16th Sunday After Pentecost ***RALLY SUNDAY***

8:45 am	Sunday School/Adult Bible Study
10:00 am	Worship
11:00 am	Fellowship

Monday, September 14

8:30 am	LWR Quilting
6:30 pm	Fellowship meeting

Tuesday, September 15

7:00 am	Men's Coffee Fellowship
9:30 am	Circle: Joanna Naomi
1:30 pm	Circle: Lydia Rachel
7:00 pm	AA meeting

Wednesday, September 16

8:30 am	Senior Quilts
5:30 pm	Stewardship meeting
6:30 pm	Confirmation Orientation
7:00 pm	Choir practice
7:30 pm	Youth Gathering Interest meeting

Thursday, September 17

Friday, September 18

Pastor's Day off	Church office closed
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Sunday, September 20 17th Sunday After Pentecost

8:45 am	Sunday School/Adult Bible Study
10:00 am	Worship and Communion
11:00 am	Fellowship
6:30 pm	Women's Book Read

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD'S LOVE

September 6th, 2026

Attendance:45

Our gifts towards Budget:

Sunday Envelopes	\$3,257.54
Loose Offering	\$ 70.00
Over and Above Benevolence	\$ 10.00
General Treas/No Benevolence	\$ 230.00

Other (non-budget) Receipts:

Improvement Fund	\$ 345.50
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Needed weekly towards 2026 Budget:

	\$4,675.42
Total received towards Budget	\$3,567.54
Total (non-budget) Receipts	\$ 345.50
Total Received	\$3,913.04



The most recent Treasurer's Report was approved at the last Church Council meeting. You can review it in the bulletin or web bulletin from August 30 or contact Tammy in the office and she can provide a copy.

SPECIAL MESSAGES

RALLY SUNDAY IS TODAY!

We are ready for a wonderful year of learning and growing in faith! Sunday School officially begins today. Here is everything you need to know:

- **Sunday School:** Open to children aged 4 through 5th grade.
- **Confirmation:** All 6th and 7th graders are invited to begin Confirmation this year.

Rally Sunday Details (TODAY):

- **8:45 AM – Early Start!** The children will be singing, *"He's Got the Whole World in His Hands,"* during the worship service this morning!
- **Lesson & Craft:** Our first lesson focused on how following Jesus means loving and serving our neighbors. We put this into practice by decorating "thinking of you" cards to send to members of our church family.
- **After Worship:** Stick around! The Parish Fellowship Committee will be serving delicious **Root Beer Floats** to celebrate the start of the new year.



Registration Information: Please complete your registration forms as soon as possible. You can find the forms in the following places:

- In your email inbox
- On our church website
- In our Sunday School Facebook group
- Back of Sanctuary on the small table with bulletins
- At the church office

We can't wait to see you there and start a fantastic new year together!

CONFIRMATION IS STARTING THIS WEEK!

We are excited to kick off another wonderful year of Confirmation! Due to our anticipated numbers, we are inviting all **6th and 7th graders** to begin their confirmation journey this year, and our **8th and 9th graders** to continue theirs.

Parent & Student Orientation:

- **Wednesday, September 16th (6:30 PM)**
- We will cover expectations regarding attendance, service projects, and worship notes, as well as introduce some exciting changes for our Youth Serve Sundays this year.

Regular Classes

- **Begin Wednesday, September 23rd (7:00 PM – 8:30 PM)**
- Some of our engaging topics this year will include the Church Calendar, Faith Life, and The End of All Things.

How to Register: You can find the registration form in your email, on the church website, in the back of the church or in the SPY Facebook group. You can also complete a form in person at orientation on the 16th.

We can't wait to see you there!

ST. PAUL'S WOMEN'S BOOK READ

St. Paul's Women's Book Read will meet for our Fall Kick-off Gathering on September 20th, 2026 at 6:30 pm. We will enjoy fellowship with one another as we discuss our Summer Read - "*Lone Dog Road*" by Kent Nerburn. We extend a warm welcome to all who may be interested. Join us for lively discussions and Christian fellowship!

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Stenshoel-Houske Funeral and Cremation Service is hosting a Grief Support Group on the third Monday of every month at the Crookston Public Library/Lake Agassiz Regional Library from 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm. The group is open to anyone; it is helpful for people in all stages of the grief cycle, to find a place where they can feel comfortable and be with people who understand what they are going through. The next gathering will be on **Sept. 21.**

REFLECTION AND PRAYERS

Questions for Reflection

Forgiveness is a hard thing. When has someone forgiven you? Is there someone you need to forgive or ask forgiveness?



Household Prayer: Morning

Gracious and loving God, thank you for this day. Strengthen my resolve to love and show mercy throughout the day. Lead my feet to your holy dwelling place, and guide the work I have to do for today. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Merciful God, thank you for keeping me in the safety of your arms and for new mercies and the glory you showed through the day. Keep my family and me through the night. I thank and praise you! In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

WELCOME BACK! (AND CATCHING UP ON SUMMER GIVING)

As summer winds down and familiar fall routines return, we are so glad to see everyone gathering back together! If travels, lake weekends, or busy summer schedules kept you away from church recently, please know you haven't missed your chance to be generous.

Your ongoing financial support is vital to how we carry out our mission to *share the gospel of Jesus Christ with all people*. Your gifts enrich lives right here at home through Sunday School, Confirmation, Parents' Education Nights, meaningful worship, pastoral visitation, and lifelong faith formation. They also allow us to extend our hands outward, supporting community partners like Care and Share and Lutheran Social Services, as well as global missions like Lutheran World Relief and ELCA World Hunger. Thank you for faithfully catching up on your summer giving and supporting our shared calling!

KIT DONATION TIME

Each year, our dedicated WELCA ladies put together school kits for Lutheran World Relief, thanks to the generous support of our church family. It is a wonderful time to begin purchasing supplies for the kits as school supply sales are beginning!

Each kit contains:

- 70-sheet spiral bound notebooks (4) wide or college ruled paper
- 30-centimeter ruler (or a ruler with both centimeter and inches)
- Pencil sharpener
- Blunt scissors (safety scissors with embedded steel blades work well)
- #2 pencils (5) (unsharpened with erasers)
- Black or blue ballpoint pens (5) (no gel ink)
- Box of 16 or 24 crayons
- 2 ½ inch eraser

Donations can be brought to the Fellowship Hall and placed in the tote on the welcome table.



THANK YOU in advance for your generous support every year!

SWO (SYNODICAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION)

Women of the E.L.C.A. Northwestern Minnesota Synodical Women's Organization will hold their 38th Annual Convention on **September 18 and 19 at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Crookston**. The keynote speaker will be inspirational Christian speaker and author Gaye Lindfors, a native of Climax. There will be breakout sessions and button up your faith wall hanging project. Participate by bringing a button to attach to our quilted wall hanging. For more information call 281-4276.

IMAGINE MORE: 2027 ELCA YOUTH GATHERING INTEREST MEETING

Are you ready to "Imagine More"? All youth in 8th–12th grade are invited to an informational meeting about the 2027 ELCA National Youth Gathering!

The Gathering is happening in Minneapolis from 6/28-7/2, 2027. Join us to learn what the Gathering is all about and how we will prepare together as a group through upcoming fundraising events and dedicated devotional time.



**Join us Wednesday,
September 16th at 7:30 pm to learn more.**

For more information, please contact Pastor Curt (218-281-3638).

MN ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Minnesota program is free and provides benefits of up to \$1,400, plus additional support to respond to emergencies.

Who qualifies?

Both renters and homeowners can qualify. Eligibility is based on income and household size. For example, a family of four could earn up to \$73,969 annually and qualify to receive financial assistance with energy bills. The Energy Assistance Application is available online at:

<https://energy-assistance.web.commerce.state.mn.us/>

THANK YOU FOR A GREAT PARENTS' EDUCATION NIGHT

We want to extend a sincere thank you to everyone who attended this week's Parents' Education Night here at St. Paul's! A very special thank you goes to our guest speaker, Rachel Rudolph, MS, RDN, LD, Clinic Dietitian at Riverview, for her wonderful presentation, "Fueling Happy, Healthy Kids".

For those who couldn't make it, Rachel shared some fantastic, practical advice for building healthy eating habits at home. Here are a few highlights of what we learned:

- **Building a Balanced Plate:** A healthy plate is half fruits and vegetables, a quarter whole grains, and a quarter protein.
- **Hydration is Key:** Water should always be the main source of hydration, while juice, soda, and energy drinks should be limited.
- **Navigating Picky Eaters:** When kids refuse a meal, pressure and bribes usually backfire; instead, try offering small, bite-sized portions and pairing new foods with safe, familiar favorites.
- **Healthy Habits:** Kids are more likely to eat what they help pick out and prepare, and take the time to put screens away during meals. Four small steps we can take right now: add a colorful fruit or vegetable to every plate, swap one sugary drink for water each day, cook as a team at least once a week, and plan ahead for busy days.

Thank you again to Rachel and to all the parents who joined us to learn and grow together!

CELEBRATE RECOVERY

Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered, 12-step recovery program for anyone struggling with hurts, habits, or hangups of any kind. The belief is that healing is possible and you don't have to walk through it alone. It is a safe, nonjudgemental place to find community and freedom from the issues that are controlling our lives. Brochures are available on the table by the East door, or call: 218-277-0465.