



September 11, 2022 14th Sunday Pentecost

Mailing/Offices: 103 E. Cedar Street, Anamosa IA 52205 Website: www.stpaulanamosa.com Fax: (319) 462-4843

The Pulse deadline is noon on Monday for the upcoming Wednesday/Sunday Pulse.

Starting Next Week

Wednesday services at 6:00 pm as usual

September 18th – Resume inside worship, two services **8:00** and **10:30** NOTE TIME CHANGE (no more outdoor services at Wapsiana).

Dinner with Friends will once again try to meet at Jones County Local, 22962 Co. Rd. E. 34, Anamosa. (They had a small fire last month). Since they do not accept reservations we will meet early at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 22. All are welcome, come on out for some fellowship and good food!

Questions: Sherri Evans 319-981-0283

100th Anniversary Items:

We are still looking for wedding photos of those married at St. Paul Lutheran Church to include in our “St. Paul 100th Anniversary pages”

We are still looking for short bios of all who will be included in the 2023 Photo Directory. The Bio’s will be used in two ways.

Call Lois if you are not sure if you have turned in your bio. Thanks for your help in these matters.

2023 Directory Photo Sign Ups Are Available on the first page of the St. Paul Website (stpaulanamosa.com)

EVERYONE can help by choosing to:

- ◆ Submit a digital photo of your family to Lois at stpaulanamosa@gmail.com OR
- ◆ Make an appointment (the link to Sign-up Genius is <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e4bada72aa5f8c70-2023> or on our webpage “2023 Directory Sign Up”) OR
- ◆ **You get written permission** from your new professional photography session to use their image in our directory. **Additional option: (If you want to use your Lifetouch photo from the 2018 or 2019 directory please call Lois.** We would like as many new photos as possible but we now have permission to use the Lifetouch photos from before.)

Deadline for photos will be December 1st. (Sooner is always appreciated)

Please Pray for the Following

(Why people want prayers isn't important, *the prayers are!*)

We pray for Marilyn Lambertsen and all who need healing, strength or comfort. For peace in our nation and world, for those seeking a safe home. To add a name call or email Lois at 462-4841/stpaulanamosa@gmail.com. Names will be listed for 4 weeks and may be renewed.

September 18th Readings:

Genesis 12:1-9

Ps 113

Matt 28:19-20

GriefShare is available upon request.

Please contact Nancy Douglas if interested 319-551-3358.

AA meets in the lower level of the CE building on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 pm.

Jones County Food Bank: Urgent help is needed at the Jones County Community Food Bank - food and funds have fallen critically low. For the last few months, the number of families and individuals requesting foods has been increasing and the shelves are almost bare. Funds are also being diminished by the demands of purchasing food at higher prices.

To donate money, checks may be written to Jones County Community Food Bank and mailed to 105 Broadway Place, Anamosa IA 52205. Items needed this week: canned vegetables, canned fruits, beef stew, Mac & Cheese and personal care items. **Please place items in the back of the church for collection by St. Paul volunteers OR call the Food Bank to make your own delivery arraignments (462-4343)**

Bread Bakers:

September: Marcy Pate

October: Verna Lewison

Deliver Food to Food Bank:

September: Myra Powell

October: Barb Kleis

Introduction: The grumbling of the religious leaders in today's gospel is actually our holy hope: This Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. That our God seeks and saves the lost is not only a holy hope, it is our only hope. As the writer of 1 Timothy reminds us, "The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Thanks be to God.

First Reading: Exodus 32:7-14 The Message

The famous incident of the golden calf, recounted in this reading, comes after Moses has been on Mount Sinai for a very long time. The people were told not to attempt to look upon God; instead all communication between God and Israel was to be mediated by Moses. During Moses' long time on the mountain, God gave instructions for proper living and told Moses how to build the Ark of the Covenant that was to serve as a visible reminder of God's loving presence and guidance.

Moses remained on the mountain for such a long time that the people must have thought he deserted them or died attempting to communicate with God. They panicked, building an image of God as a young bull, one of the signs of youthfulness and strength from their Egyptian past. While their true God and deliverer from Egyptian slavery was explaining the law of life to Moses, the people proclaimed the calf made by their human hands to be the god who brought them out of Egypt. They sang and danced before their golden idol despite God's earlier command not to make any graven images of Him or worship other gods (Ex. 20).

God observed the people's idolatrous behavior and sent Moses down the mountain to intervene. God, given human emotions in this story, is furious. Although Moses and God had just been discussing the covenant God wanted to renew with Israel, God is now willing to abandon them and establish his covenant with Moses' clan {*Kohen*} and his descendants alone. Moses defended the whole nation against God's wrath by challenging God's honor. This is actually most clear in verse 12 where Moses asks, "Why should the Egyptians be able to say, 'With evil intent {God} brought them out that He might kill them in the mountains.'" If God follows through on his threatened punishment, it will give the Egyptians and other non-believers the ability to question the integrity of Israel's God.

Moses is the true hero of this story. He reminded God of the promises made to their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God had promised lasting fidelity and had even sworn allegiance to all the people, not just a chosen clan. Moses does not change God's mind; rather, God sees that Moses understands His intent for His people and is able to show mercy to those who choose Him. Because of this incident and his actions in the Exodus, the Jews have long held Moses in great esteem. Moses foregoes having his own descendants remembered as the chosen people of God in favor of upholding the earlier covenantal promises that included the whole family of God. Moses is a messianic figure, a redeemer, deliverer, and mediator for the Israelite people.

Second Reading: St. Paul's first letter to 1 Timothy 1:12-17

The Message

Paul is making himself known to the early Christian communities, and this letter is a personal one written to the young man he laid hands on and appointed as overseer (bishop) of the church in Ephesus (Western border of modern Turkey.) The purpose of the letter is to spell out morality and church order for the sake of these faith communities still forming around their leaders.

As we know from the Acts of the Apostles and from Paul's own letters elsewhere, Paul had once zealously persecuted the early followers of Christ as a threat to the orthodox Jewish establishment. But Paul had an encounter with the Lord Jesus while on his way to Damascus, Syria to capture more Christians (if you look carefully at this story, Paul was not knocked off a horse as is often depicted in paintings, but he did have a life-changing encounter.) After his conversion, Paul heard the voice of the risen Lord calling him to be an apostle to the Gentiles (non-Jews) by proclaiming the good news in far away places. Paul accepted the mission and applied the same zeal to serving the gospel as he had used to persecute Christians. Paul was the right man for this mission because he was a Roman citizen, educated in the Greek philosophical schools, who had become a powerful orthodox Jew. He understood in his heart and mind the worlds of Jew and Gentile alike. His letters reflect his attempts to translate the two worlds into the other's language.

Here, Paul is confronting some "false" teachers who have become pervasive in Timothy's community. According to Paul, the only way to stay faithful to the truth is to emulate the teacher. He holds himself up as the model of a person saved through the grace and mercy of Jesus the Christ and invites Timothy to follow in his footsteps. The other teachers in this case seem to be the stoics. This group of Greek philosophers taught that the goal and meaning of life is to achieve self-sufficiency, autonomy, or radical individualism (this thinking will be ratified by Pelagius in the 4th century and in modern U.S. culture.) Paul emphatically announces that it is Christ who brings meaning to life (i.e. salvation). We cannot achieve it through our own efforts. We need the assistance of the spirit of Jesus and a radically alive community.

Christians who realize they have made mistakes in their lives can relate well to this passage today. Paul acknowledges that only by receiving mercy and being strengthened by God's spirit can we really serve Christ and each other well. There is hope for all of us; even those who appear to be most corrupt, because Jesus came to save sinners.

Gospel: Luke 15:1-10 [11-32] The Message

"You are known by the company you keep," was a common enough phrase that even the Pharisees (Jewish religious leaders) began to wonder about this famed teacher Jesus who spent his time with tax collectors and sinners. At the same time the Pharisees were inviting Jesus to their table, an act proffered between peers in a "give and expect return" culture, the religious leadership was questioning Jesus' integrity. Their actions smacked of hypocrisy, so Jesus points out their lack of honor by telling them a set of parables having to do with the theme: "Lost, Found, Rejoice!"

The parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin emphasize the importance of seeking those who have been lost. Jesus is talking about the Kingdom of God and who is considered "in or worthy." The

Taped services are found on St. Paul website, St. Paul YouTube page or St. Paul Facebook page.

Wednesday, September 7

***6:00pm Service (WD4 Open House)**

Bring lawn chairs

Greeters: Darla Algoe

Reader & Prayers: Darla Algoe

No PowerPoint: worship outside near CE bldg

Sunday, September 11

***10:30am Service at Central Park**

Comm Prep: Ed Gerst & Susan K

Greeters: Fred Austin Family

Reader: Brynn Austin

Prayers: Jason Geltz

Tuesday, September 13

*No Scripture Study

*Grief Support by request, call Nancy Douglas

*7:00pm AA—LL CE building

Wednesday, September 14

***6:00pm Service**

Greeters:

Reader & Prayers:

PowerPoint:

***6:00pm WD4**

Sunday, September 18

***8:00am Service**

Comm Prep: Jan Allaire, Verna Lewison

Greeters: Ed Gerst & Susan Koppenhaver

Reader & Prayers: Virginia Danielson

PowerPoint: Grant Lubben

***10:30am Service**

Comm Prep: Ralph & Sandra Andresen

Greeters: Ralph & Sandra Andresen

Reader & Prayers: Ralph Andresen

PowerPoint: Samuel Kenny

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday 9-2

Tuesday 8:30-1:30

Wednesday 9-2

Thursday 9-2

Closed Friday

Pharisees had a very difficult time imagining that the Gentiles could have any claim on God's reign since they had previously rejected God's offer of covenant. The shepherd and the woman are images for God and/or his people Israel. The lost sheep and coin are those who have remained in disbelief: pagans or Gentiles and some Jews. Luke is pushing the boundaries of God's Kingdom to include those who were considered outside favor.

[The parable of the prodigal sons and father plays out the importance of forgiveness in God's Kingdom. The elitist Pharisees are being directly challenged to accept the Gentiles and those considered "poor, lame, or sinners" to the banquet table of God's Kingdom. The word prodigal means "extravagantly wasteful." In this story, the ignorant younger son is obviously wasteful of his relationships, inheritance, tradition, and any respect he enjoyed from his community. In a different but more profound way, the father is willing to waste his standing in society and his wealth on a son who had dishonored him by declaring their relationship "dead."

The story opens with arrogance. The younger son, who clearly was living a comfortable life in his father's home, demands his inheritance. In Jesus' day, as now, it was unusual for a parent to divide up the estate prior to one's death. The son's request, then, displays not only his foolish greed but also his disregard for his father. He completely severed his family ties. In the eyes of the villagers, he was dead, but unlike them, the father (God) waits day after day, searching the horizon for his lost son to return.

As if the younger brother's arrogance wasn't enough, he then has the immature audacity to waste the inheritance. The older brother develops deep resentment over his brother's squandered wealth, accusing him of spending it on "loose women." Perhaps you can imagine the older brother snickering as his younger brother fell on hard times. When Jesus' audience is told that the young man had been living with pigs in Gentile land, which rendered him unclean according to Jewish law, they would have understood that he hit rock bottom. While in desperation, the son reflects on his former life and recalls his father's loving, gentle treatment of the "adopted" servants. He experiences a conversion of heart, and in humility, returns to his father to beg forgiveness and seek acceptance as a house servant.

The father, who was treated despicably by the boy, sees his son while still a long ways off (i.e before the rest of the villagers). Abandoning his resolve, he runs out to meet the young man, his joy bursting forth. He rejoices over the return of his lost son. In contrast to the older brother who refuses to forgive and accept the boy back, the father embraces him while lavishing mercy and love upon him. Not only does the father forgive the boy, but he calls him "son." He places his own robe and signet ring upon his finger, reestablishing the boy's place in the family and staving off the villagers' wrath.

He puts the shoes of the freedman on his feet so all would know that he is a slave to no one and to no sin. To help facilitate the boy's reconciliation with the village, the father offers a meal for everyone. The invitation is extended; now it is up to the villagers to accept and celebrate. Take note of the one who rejects the invitation to the meal; the older brother. His behavior, in this story, is ultimately no better than the younger brother's. He publicly dishonors his father by saying that he has been unfair to him, treating him like a slave. The son rehearses the sin of the younger brother, holding it up as the reason for his inability to forgive. But the father responds to him the same way he did the younger son. He simply offers the mercy-filled invitation to the meal again.

While the father's response may seem incredible to us, it does challenge us to consider how we respond to those who wrong us. It gives us a concrete example to better understand how our God can accept back sinners and why heaven (the Christian community) would rejoice over one lost person being found. It is a demanding lesson with a hope-filled promise. It affirms the lesson of the first reading, that like the patron/father, **God's mercy is greater than judgment.** Leaders of every generation, from the Pharisees to the bishops, have been challenged to act in the image of the father, with mercy and longing for all people to be gathered at the table of celebration.

If we put this parable in the context of Luke's community, it could be reasoned that the older brother represented the Jews who were expressing resentment over having to accept the "squanderers," the Gentiles, to their table. Luke reminds his audience that God desires the presence of all his family at the banquet of the Kingdom. Reread the parable and think of the older son as the Jewish Pharisees, the younger son as the Gentiles, and the father as The One True God.]

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Please call us if we can be of assistance. PLEASE leave a message if we cannot answer. We will return your call ASAP.

Taking it home:

- Sometimes, people will say that bad things happen as a wake up call. What do you need to change in your life to be truer to the gospel commandment to forgive and seek forgiveness?
- The younger son had to admit that he had hurt his father before he could return: maybe it's time to acknowledge that your greed or indifference has hurt another. Be humble and ask forgiveness.
- Reflect on a relationship in which you have withheld forgiveness. Reconsider. Pray. Reestablish contact and give the person another chance.
- Who is a hero to you, having defended you or your honor?
 - Have you ever stood up for someone else because you could see s/he was misguided or less powerful than another? What helped you to do that? How did you feel afterwards?
 - The table and meal were at the center of Jewish family life and continue to be the center of our Sunday worship. What role do the table and meal play in your family's life? Are you more like the stoics or the members of Paul's community when it comes to life around the table? If necessary, re-establish a family meal night with no phones, T.V., talk radio, or disruptive music during the meal.

Mindfulness (breathe and read through three times. Which words or ideas hold energy for you? What images emerge in your imagination? How would you draw this truth?):

“Sacramental listening reminds us that current suffering isn't the end of the story. God loves us deeply, and the vision for the future is vaster and more magnificent than we could ever imagine. In these moments of profound human presence, we are awakened to the divine presence and see that the kingdom of God is coming and yet is already here.” – Richard Rohr

“You will have many more Aarons building you golden calves than Moses leading you on any exodus.” – Richard Rohr, Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life

THE USE of the MEANS of GRACE: A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament

Adopted for Guidance and Practice Aug, 1997,
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

PREPARATION for Holy Communion IS RECOMMENDED

Principle 42 Forms of preparation for Holy Communion focus the community of faith both on the breadth of creation's need for redemption and the depth of God's redemptive actions. Such forms of preparation are recommended, but not required, for that person "is worthy and well prepared who believes these words, 'for you' and 'for the forgiveness of sins'" '74

Application 42A Opportunities for corporate and individual confession and absolution, including the use of the Brief Order for Confession and Forgiveness, are especially appropriate. Helpful forms of personal preparation may include self-examination, prayer, fasting, meditation, and reconciliation with others through the exchange of peace.

Background 42B In considering preparation for Holy Communion many people in our congregations have turned for counsel to Paul's admonition to the Corinthians: "Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For all who eat and drink without discerning the body eat and drink judgment against themselves ." Paul's words are addressed to those in the community who are eating and drinking while excluding from the meal others who belong to Christ. "Do you show contempt for the church of God," he says, "and humiliate those who have nothing? "The body that Christians need to discern is the body of Christ which is the Church and that is the body which is being ignored by the exclusions in Corinth.

Response to The Use of the Means of Grace:
Do any words or thoughts seem important to you in these passages? What questions emerge?

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Return Service Requested

