



The Messenger

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL (WELS), GREEN BAY

Confident Hope

— Pastor Ben Enstad

August, 2025

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. — Hebrews 11:1

It can be hard to be confident sometimes. You hope to catch a lot of fish, but it's hard to be confident when the fish aren't biting at any of your bait or lures. You hope to have a good day, but it's hard to be confident when things don't go your way, or someone was mean to you.

You hope God will keep all his promises to you, but it's hard to be confident when he seems so far away when bad things happen, or your sins feel too big for God to forgive, or the devil always seems to be winning.

That's why it's so important to listen to God's Word instead of just what we see with our eyes or what the world says. God says, **Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.**

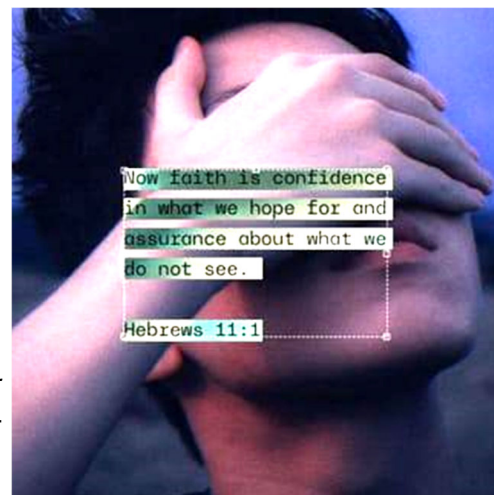
Faith, simply put, is confidence. But what we put our confidence in makes all the difference in the world. It doesn't matter if you put your confidence in the strongest person, the strongest team, the strongest country, the strongest tools, none of them can compare to God! None are as strong as God and none are perfect and almighty like God. Everything we see with our eyes can fail us. That's why we can never be truly confident if our hope is in things we can see, because

those things can't guarantee us they won't fail.

But with God it's different! When we put our confidence and trust in God, when our faith is in God, we will never be disappointed! When we put our faith, our trust, our confidence in God, we have the assurance that everything we hope for will happen. And what we hope for is that God will keep all his promises. And since they're God's promises, there's nothing iffy about them.

Faith in God brings the absolute assurance about things God has said to us in his Word, even though we have never seen them. That means we are confident God really created the world—Jesus really was born of the Virgin Mary—Jesus really lived a perfect and holy life—Jesus really performed all those miracles—Jesus really suffered on the cross for the sins of the whole world and died—Jesus really did rise from the dead so he could save us—Jesus really did promise to send the Holy Spirit into our hearts and give us the gift of faith so that we could trust in him as our Savior and be confident that our sins are all forgiven—be confident that we have a new life to live, free from the power of the devil—and be confident and assured that one day we will see Jesus in heaven!

That's why when we're doubting or weak, putting our confidence in ourselves, other



people, or the things we see, God lovingly comes to us with what we need. God just keeps throwing his promises at us. Promise upon promise upon promise! Grace upon grace upon grace! Then we have **Confident Hope.**

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Worship Themes: *Undivided Attention* concludes in August...



August 3 — Eighth Sunday after Pentecost: On Useful Resources
August 10 — Ninth Sunday after Pentecost: On Heavenly Treasure

...and is followed by *Wounds that Heal*

Not all wounds are bad. A skilled surgeon takes a deadly, sharp scalpel and cuts through flesh and muscle. The end result of that wound is not harm, but healing. In the same way, we often say that words cut us to the heart. Words can wound. Sometimes, however, those painful words provide the very healing we need.

“Jesus went through the towns and villages, teaching as he made his way to Jerusalem” (Luke 13:22). Jesus knows that when he gets to Jerusalem, he is going to die. So, with a sense of extreme urgency, Jesus shares truths we need to hear, even though it hurts to hear these cutting words.

We might not like everything Jesus says in this series, but to ignore what Jesus teaches is to court eternal death. Hard as it may be, let us listen and take all that Jesus says to heart. For while Jesus speaks words that wound us, his intent is to heal our very soul.

August 17 — Tenth Sunday after Pentecost: God's Word Divides
August 24 — Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost: The Door Is Very Narrow
August 31 — Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost: Those Who Exalt Themselves Will Be Humbled



This year's St. Paul Church Picnic is at Bay Beach, on Sunday, August 24.

- Worship is at 9:00 a.m., followed by fun and food. No regular worship will take place at church on that day.
- If you plan to attend, please RSVP using the QR code below to help the team plan. RSVP forms are also available in the narthex.
- Bring a lawn chair for worship seating.
- Desserts are requested also and can be brought to the park (Please note on the RSVP that you will bring a dessert to share).



August Fellowship: Our fellowship dining group is having our first supper event this month at the Club Chalet, 4642 Nicolet Drive, on Tuesday, August 12, 5:00 p.m. For this event, seating is reserved **by RSVP only**. Please call or text John Royce at 920.819.0746 or by email at johroy@att.net. Please respond no later than Sunday, August 3. We'd love to have you join us.

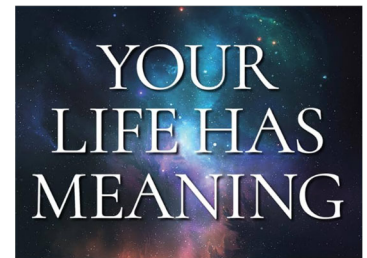
August, 2025

St. Paul Book of the Month — *Your Life Has Meaning: Discovering Your Role in an Epic Story* — by Luke George Thompson

In *Your Life Has Meaning*, Luke George Thompson draws from popular movies, famous books, philosophy, and every-day life to present what Scripture teaches so clearly: that in Christ Jesus our Savior, our lives are not accidents. Each of us, baptized into Christ, is an essential character in the Lord's story.

This pocket-sized book of 143 pages offers theological depth beyond what you'd expect from its page count, and does so in clear and simple language. It is a must-read for anyone who is feeling rudderless in life, but highly recommended for all readers because of the solid undergirding it provides for each of us as we navigate lives that are very often quite different from what we expect. Readers will grow in their appreciation for how the ordinary things we do are sacred in the context of God's greater plan.

— Pastor Jon Zabell



DISCOVERING
YOUR ROLE
in an EPIC STORY

LUKE GEORGE THOMPSON

Bay Area Life Center Quarterly Update: April-June 2025

Thank you to all who donated to Bay Area Life Center for Mother's Day. We raised nearly \$2,000 which will go toward a match from Christian Aid & Relief.

2,430

Total number
of guest
check-ins

68

New guests

4,001

Diaper packs
distributed

70,040

Total number of
diapers
distributed

Just Between Friends, a clothing resale shop in Oshkosh, donated a large amount of clothing on April 13. Thank you to Harold Peterson from Mt. Olive for donating the use of his trailer and to the 12 Fox Valley Lutheran High School National Honor Society students for sorting the donations!

40 Days for Life, an international organization that campaigns against abortion in more than 60 nations worldwide, recently blessed the BALC. We received numerous clothing items, more than 1,200 diapers and 36 packages of wipes as a result of their 2025 donation campaign.

62

of Volunteers with
hours

1,216.25

Volunteer hours

170

of children's Easter
books given away

In June, leaders from the Bay Area Life Center spoke at the WELS Education Conference at the KI Center in Green Bay. This was a great opportunity to share the mission of BALC. We also received monetary donations and diapers from attendees.



We're currently looking for volunteers to help with the following tasks:

- Pick up diaper orders from Target (west side Green Bay)
- Sort clothing donations
- Rack clothing donations
- Clean rooms at the Bay Area Life Center

If interested in helping or learning more, email volunteering@bayarealifecenter.com.



The Messenger

School News

— Principal Stephen Miller

2025-2026 School Year Theme: Find Rest in God Alone

As we begin another school year at St. Paul Lutheran School, we do so with hearts anchored in the peace and strength of our Savior. Our confidence and joy are found in the words of Psalm 62:1-2: "He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will never be shaken."

As we prepare to welcome students through our doors, we are surrounded by the energy, planning, and anticipation that come with a new beginning. Yet, in the midst of all the busyness, our true rest is not found in perfect schedules or successful outcomes, but in Christ alone. We rejoice that God continues to bless us with the opportunity to share His plan of salvation with so many children and families.

We also thank God for the many volunteers who generously gave their time and talents this summer to prepare our building for the year ahead. What a gift it is to serve together as a church and school family! A heartfelt thank-you to our congregation for your prayers, support, and encouragement in so many ways.

There are many ways you can continue to support our school ministry this fall:

- **Come cheer on our volleyball or soccer teams** during home matches—your presence means a lot!
- **View our school calendar** at stpaulgreenbay.com/school-calendar
- **Support classroom needs** through our wish lists at tinyurl.com/StPaulWishList
- **Consider serving as a short-term substitute teacher**—a great way to bless our students and staff.

If you're willing to help in any way, please contact me directly. Thank you for standing with us in this gospel ministry. May your own soul find daily rest in God alone.

Thank You Note:

Dear Members of St. Paul Lutheran,

I want to sincerely thank you for financially supporting me as I enter my final year at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. I have been a student for a handful of years now, and it all started at St. Paul Lutheran as I made my way through grade school and graduated in 2014. Throughout my school years at Luther Prep, MLC, and now WLS, I have received so much help and encouragement from you all. So, thank you, not only for your help in this upcoming school year, but for every year you have supported me in pursuing pastoral ministry. Thank you for your gifts, your words of encouragement, and your prayers. God has certainly blessed his Church, and the grace that he has freely given to all of you shines outwardly to me as I have seen your love and generosity. I will keep St. Paul Lutheran Church in my prayers as I give thanks to God for all of you!

In Christ,
Jacob Zabell



August, 2025

Elements Bible Art Camp 2025

July 14-18, 9:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

Our annual summer event for kids was greatly blessed again this year. *Elements Bible Art Camp* was held from July 14-18. In total, eighty-two children from ages 3-11 were registered, and, on average, 62 attended each day. A majority of the children were from our congregation, but we saw a high number of children attending from outside our congregation, too. Some of these non-member children attend our school, but others came from area churches (even a Catholic church family) to join the fun. Praise to the Lord!

The Lord blessed us with good weather also. Most days were pleasant, and outdoor activities on the one rainy day worked just as well in the gym.

Lessons connected important elements of the Bible (Law, Gospel, Promises, Means of Grace, and God's plans) with the Elements of Art (line, shape, color, value, form, texture, and space) through Bible stories and art projects. For example:

- A lesson on the Ten Commandments reminded us how God's **LAW** guides our lives and connects us to him, just like **LINE**s connect and guide in art. That day's art projects had the little ones making line tape designs with a "God Guides Me" message, and the older group working on a commandment Zentangle (Look it up...).
- A lesson on **GOD'S PLANS** for the life of Joseph showed us how God **SHAPES** our lives for his purpose, just like shapes can build a piece of art. Connected projects were shape collages that included self-portraits for the middle group and a "big picture" collage for the older.

Even the camp's games and snacks connected to elements. Participants got moving with activities like a Stay on the Line playground challenge or a Color Scavenger Hunt, and they ate **COLOR**ful fruit skewers or a multi-**TEXTURE**d trail mix.

A big thank you goes to the **twenty-eight volunteers** who helped teach Bible lessons, facilitate art projects, lead groups, referee games, serve snacks, decorate spaces... all to make the camp run smoothly. Thank you also to everyone who donated funds to provide the supplies that made the week faith-growing, art skill-building, and fun! You are all greatly appreciated!



Left: The 3-4 year-olds (and Matthew) at games time



Right: Gathering for Bible Lesson and Art Lesson time

The Messenger



**CHRIST
THROUGH US**
SYNOD CONVENTION 2025

Synod Convention 2025

— Peter Schaeewe

As a delegate to this year's synod convention, I am asked to share information with our congregation about what took place. I have much to share.

You'll see **Christ Through Us** throughout this report. This tag was the theme of the convention, is the title of the long-range plan, and is also the theme of the 175th anniversary celebration. It comes from 2 Corinthians 5:20 — "We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us."



A glimpse of the convention floor

You may remember that Rod Haskins was our congregational delegate at the last synod convention. Former St. Paul member, Jason Schmidt, was at this convention as the lay delegate from his new congregation, St. Paul in Winneconne.



President Mark Schroeder formally announced that he will not run again for the office of WELS President when his term expires in 2027.

Did you know? General information about synod conventions...

- **When?** The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod meets in convention in July of odd numbered years. The 2025 convention met from July 21-24.
- **Where?** This year's convention was held at Martin Luther College. The site of the convention rotates between three of our synod schools: Martin Luther College in New Ulm, MN; Luther Preparatory School in Watertown, WI; and Michigan Lutheran Seminary in Saginaw, MI.
- **How many people attend the convention?** Around 400 voting delegates are chosen to serve. In addition, representatives from WELS leadership and various ministries and missions attend the convention as advisors or observers. Guests (such as representatives from churches with whom we are in fellowship) are also invited.
- **How are delegates chosen?** About half of the voting delegates are lay members from WELS congregations. Each circuit sends one congregational delegate. Congregations are in rotation based on the last convention attended. The remaining delegates are a fixed number of called workers from each district. Called worker delegates are selected based on years of service and years since last attending a convention. It is a rare privilege; in my years of ministry, this was only my second time as a delegate (The other was in 2001.).
- **What are a delegate's responsibilities?** Delegates are assigned to floor committees, which study sections of the convention's *Book of Reports and Memorials* (I can show you mine, if you're interested.). Each floor committee presents a formal report and, in some cases, resolutions to the convention floor. The delegates in full convention then hear reports and vote on resolutions presented by each floor committee. I felt that I had light duty, serving on the Committee #4 — Congregational Services; we met only once to review and highlight the informational report from that very busy and helpful branch of our synod.

What was on the agenda? — Nothing controversial; much that was informative, encouraging, and inspiring...

- **Elections:** On the rotation for re-election, current officers Rev. James Huebner (first vice-president since 2009) and Rev. Robert Pasbrig (recording secretary since 2005) asked not to be considered for nomination again. Current second vice-president, Rev. Joel Voss, was elected as first vice-president. Rev. John Bortulin was then elected to fill the second vice-president position, and Rev. Tyler Peil was elected as recording secretary. Twenty other positions were filled throughout the convention on the Synodical Council, boards, and commissions — many rounds of voting and run-offs using our hand-held voting devices.
- **Ministry Financial Plan:** On Tuesday morning, following President Mark Schroeder's report to the convention, Mr. Kyle Eagan, WELS chief financial officer and treasurer, shared information about our synod's financial status, which is blessedly healthy. He then presented the ministry financial plan for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027. The balanced plan,

which includes support for WELS ministerial education, WELS missions, congregation and district ministry, and ministry support, was approved.

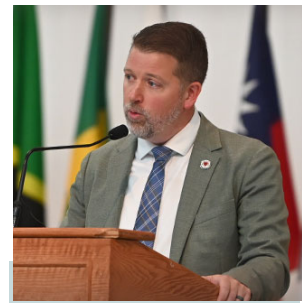
- **Christ Through Us Long-Range Plan:** A key agenda item was the presentation of a long-range plan, a framework to guide our synod's work for the next decade. Rev. Jonathan Hein, Congregational Services Coordinator, gave a summary. Many people worked for two years, surveying and analyzing, developing priorities and goals. Pastor Hein highlighted issues that challenge the synod through survey results: membership decline, especially from younger adults and women; called worker shortages; geographic redundancy; and loss of mission effectiveness in Lutheran schools (Positive news was also shared, by the way: in-person worship attendance, adult Bible study attendance, and youth Bible study attendance are all up by large percentages in the last four years.). With the convention's vote to approve the framework, specific objectives will now be developed to meet the challenges. I liked the visionary "FROM —> TO" format of the plan: "Here's where we are" analysis leading to "Here's where we'd like to be" goals.
- **175th Anniversary Presentations:** The convention essay, "175 Years of God's Surprising Grace to the Wisconsin Synod" was also presented on Tuesday afternoon by Prof. Joel Otto of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. You might yawn at the thought of a historical presentation, but Prof. Otto grabbed our attention with a repeated focus on God's gracious activity in his church and by sharing good stories and fun family connections.

That evening, Prof. Paul Koelpin of Martin Luther College presented another interesting history, this time of the New Ulm campus, filled with much information I didn't know about my *alma mater* — and good stories that kept his brother giggling (I was sitting next to him.). Other presentations about our synod schools are scheduled for later in this anniversary year.

- **Reports:** Wednesday brought a stretch of reports from various areas of synod work: the Commission on Inter-Church Relations, Board for World Missions, Board for Home Missions, Congregational Services, the Ministry of Christian Giving, and Ministerial Education. We also saw the beginning of floor committee reports and resolutions that concluded in our final session on Thursday morning.

Reports from the presidents of our synod schools again included good stories, like the one from Michigan Lutheran Seminary President Mark Luetzow about a high school senior who had long planned to become an engineer but is now enrolled in the pastor track at Martin Luther College. Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary President Earl Treptow shared comments of the astonished accreditation team visiting the Seminary recently, like "You have actual pastors teaching men how to be pastors?!" and "You provide a full year of vicar training?!".

- **Mission Presentations:** A highlight of the convention came on Wednesday evening with presentations from world missionaries, including Rev. Luis Acosta (*Academia Cristo* for Spanish ministry), Dr. Erik Landwehr (Native American Missions), and Rev. Howard Mohlke (One Africa Team). Home missionaries also spoke: from Lakewood Ranch, Florida (Rev. Caleb Free), Gilbert, Arizona (Rev. Mark Schroeder — "the lesser"), Falcon, Colorado (Rev. Steven Prah), and Mankato, Minnesota (Rev. Jonathan Bourman). Each speaker shared inspiring stories about the challenges and blessings of their work in sharing the gospel. My favorite story was from Pastor Prah who told about an older couple who grudgingly attended Christmas Eve worship with their family. I'll share that video and other important information in future communications.

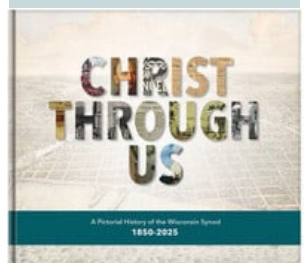


Mr. Eagan very clearly presented the proposed Ministry Financial Plan.

MARRIAGES IN 2024

- 915 total in WELS
- 25% of those marriages occurred in 2.6% of congregations (~30 churches).
- Two-thirds of congregations had zero marriages.

This slide showed a surprising statistic from a long-range plan survey.



Prof. Otto worked with Pastor John Braun to produce the anniversary book, *Christ Through Us*, a copy of which is in our church library. You can borrow my copy, too; all convention delegates received one as a gift.

I could tell you many more stories about my experience: seeing people that I haven't seen since high school, my past connection to the delegate sitting next to me (We had assigned seats.), spending time with friends who live in the New Ulm area, opening and closing worship, clouds and rainbows... But I'm out of space.

Being a delegate at synod convention was an uplifting experience. God's blessings are greatly evident in the work of the WELS. Blessings will continue as we focus on his Word and our mission.

August 2025

ST. PAUL SAN PABLO LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 8:00 AM – Communion Service 9:15 AM – Adult Bible Hour NO Teen Bible Hour 10:30 AM – Communion Service	4 6:30 PM – Communion Service	5 7:00 PM – Evangelism Committee Meeting	6 6:00 AM – Breakfast Bible Study 9:00 AM – Women’s Bible Study 7:30 PM – Prayer at the Close of Day	7 9:00 AM – Bible Study	8 4:00-5:00 PM – Food Pantry Distribution	9
10 8:00 AM – Service 9:15 AM – Bible Hour (Teens are with Adults in the Fellowship Hall) 10:30 AM – Service 11:45 AM – Welcome Home Committee Meeting	11 6:00 PM – PTO Meeting 6:30 PM – Service	12 5:00 PM – Fellowship Dinner 5:30 PM – Tech Committee 6:00 PM – Stewardship Committee 6:30 PM – Board of Christian Education 7:00 PM – Board for Member Care	13 6:00 AM – Breakfast Bible Study 9:00 AM – Women’s Bible Study	14 9:00 AM – Bible Study 6:00 PM – New Member Meet and Greet and the Romboy home 7:00 PM – Women’s Group at Captain Jack’s	15	16
17 8:00 AM – Communion Service 9:15 AM – Bible Hour 10:30 AM – Communion Service	18 6:30 PM – Communion Service	19 First Day of School for Grades 7 and 8 6:30 PM – Church Council Meeting	20 First Day of School for Grades 3K-6 6:00 AM – Breakfast Bible Study 8:20 – School Opening Service 9:00 AM – Women’s Bible Study	21 9:00 AM – Bible Study 7:00 PM – Men of St. Paul Bible Study Group	22	23
24 9:00 AM – Worship and Church Picnic at Bay Beach	25 6:30 PM – Service	26	27 6:00 AM – Breakfast Bible Study 9:00 AM – Women’s Bible Study	28 9:00 AM – Bible Study	29 No School – Labor Day Break	30
31 8:00 AM – Communion Service 9:15 AM – Bible Hour 10:30 AM – Communion Service						



St. Paul Lutheran Church exists to celebrate our freedom from sin, death, and hell through Jesus Christ; to nurture our church family with God’s Word for lives of service to Him; and joyfully to share the good news of salvation with the world around us.

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL (WELS)

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