



St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church



## Standing Firm

*In Rockford, Illinois*

*Withstand in the evil day, and having done all... stand firm. - St. Paul*

My friends,

Confirmation. What's it for?

Last week we peeked inside this pandora's box, acknowledging that Confirmation is neither spoken of in Scripture, nor does it have a clearly defined purpose within Church history. We also faced the hard fact that for many families, Confirmation lies somewhere between, "we have to do this or else" and "once this is finished, we can finally stop going to church!"

None of this sits very well with me.

I believe that the goal of Confirmation is clear from what happens on the day our young people are confirmed. Confirmation is that moment when a **baptized** child becomes a **confessing** adult, and by this, they testify before the world the power of the death of Jesus by feasting upon the body and blood of their Lord.

Confirmation is **first communion**. But it's more! It's not first and last communion. It is first communion with the intention communing regularly (think weekly!) for the rest of their lives.

*(continued on p.3)*

## Announcements

Choir resumes practices on Thursday, September 20th, from 6:00 - 7:00pm at the Northwest Site. If you like to sing please join us! For more information call Dawn Stock at 815-871-5808.

**Not-Friday-Night Fisking** - For September, we're shifting gears a little bit and having a men's night of firearm safety and target practice, Sunday evening the 16th. Guys are invited to the Grocholl Farm [9228 Harrison Rd. Rockton, IL 61072] starting at 3pm to swap stories and shots. Several officiantos will be on hand to ensure an educational time is had by all, and that we all go home appreciating our second amendment rights. Keeping all things in good order, once we're finished with the ammunition, we will retire to the patio where you are free to enjoy a BYOB before heading out for dinner on your own. RSVP to [Revfisk@gmail.com](mailto:Revfisk@gmail.com) or via text [630 768 2797](tel:6307682797) if you plan on joining us.

### **In Case You Missed It**

**Liturgy Sunday's** will take place this morning at Northwest Site and next Sunday at Central Site. These will be services on learning why our Liturgy is what it is.

**You are invited** to the installation of Pastor Kevin Olson at Redeemer Lutheran church today at 3:00pm. Refreshments served after the service.

**Mid-Week Bible Class** – (Formerly Monday Morning Bible Class) continues Wednesday, September 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am in the undercroft with treats and fellowship. The first class will begin with a business meeting and Pastor Fisk will begin teaching at 9:20. Class is over at 10:20. Questions? Call Shirley Ahrens at 815-637-3110.

**Wednesday Morning Prayer Service** will follow the Mid-Week Bible Study in the Sanctuary at Central Site at 10:30am.

**SPYS Frisbee Golf** will be held September 22<sup>nd</sup> at Anna Paige Park at 1:00pm. Parent help is needed. Please contact Mike Rolando, Katie Lopez or Jennifer Beck. Please meet at the park.

### **Save the Dates:**

**September 15<sup>th</sup>** – Liturgical Training – 9:00am NW

**September 15<sup>th</sup>** – Set Apart Stewardship Team Lead Meeting 10:00am-NW

## **Standing Firm** (*continued from p. 1*)

This is **not** a moment. Not a graduation. Not a test. This is the beating heart of **discipleship**, to **receive** everything that Jesus commanded, especially his words, "Do this in remembrance of me." This is young Christians becoming adult Christians, child-like faith within becoming aware of the Faith that never dies, and a bold step on an eternity-long journey that will see us walk into and out of our graves with our heads held high.

That means that **this is no joke**. Flip to the rite of Confirmation in the hymnal in front of you, and you will see that it involves a series of **solemn vows**, including the oath to remain a Lutheran Christian the rest of your life, to suffer even murderous death rather than give up Lutheran teaching and practice. That's pretty bold!

Is this something we are truly preparing our young people to do? Is this something we are truly prepared to do ourselves? Do you believe that the Lutheran confession - what we "say" that the Bible says - is actually what the Bible says, and therefore the eternal, powerful and unchangeable Word of God, without which there is no salvation?

Most people leave the church because of far less challenging things than martyrdom: sports, a few quippy, skeptical questions, or plain boredom. I am convinced that the only way to change this is for the entire life of a congregation to embrace with the conviction those vows we ask our young people to speak. If we don't take the vows seriously, then why should they?

This is why I am writing to **you**, because we at St. Paul are on a journey that is much bigger than a few decisions about buildings or the rebooting of an extracurricular class. We are on a journey through the world of darkness, toward the world of light. We are in a war against powers and principalities of evil, yet buttressed by the God of all good. We are the baptized, and if we hope for others to join us, then it is high time for us all to confirm this fact in our own minds as the one thing needful, more precious than life itself.

So, let me ask you: do you intend to suffer all, even death, rather than depart from this Faith and Church?

Until next time, Pastor Fisk

*"Withstand in the evil day, and having done all... stand firm." - St. Paul, Ephesians 6:13*

# Calendar

## Last Sunday

Attendance September 2, 2018: 65/95 = 160

Attendance September 3, 2017: 68/77= 145

Attendance Summer Family Sunday School: 68

**Sunday, September 9<sup>th</sup> Serving: Elders: Mike Woolery, Jon Schuknecht, Organist: Dorothy Beck, Ushers: Group 1 & C ; Altar Flowers provided at the NW Site by Betty Steiner in loving memory of family members.**

8:00am – Worship (Central Site)

9:30am - Family Sunday School (Northwest Site)

10:30am –Worship/Communion - Liturgy Sunday (Northwest Site)

## Tuesday, September 11<sup>th</sup>

9:00am - Piecemakers (Northwest Site)

9:15am – Health Cabinet (Central Site)

## Wednesday, September 12<sup>th</sup>

7:00am – 8:15am – Men’s Prayer (Spring Garden-Loves Park)

9:00am – Mid-Week Bible Study (Undercroft)

10:30am – Mid-Week Worship (Central Site)

6:00pm – Confirmation (Northwest Site)

## Thursday, September 13<sup>th</sup>

11:00am – Knitting Etc. & Community Activity Potluck (Northwest Site)

## Saturday, September 15<sup>th</sup>

9:00am – Liturgical Training (Northwest Site)

10:00am – Set Apart Stewardship Team Lead Meeting (Northwest Site)

**Sunday, September 16<sup>th</sup> Serving: Elders: Mike Woolery, Jon Schuknecht, Organist: Bonnie Dickinson, Ushers: Group 2 & D**

**Scripture Readings:** Isaiah 50:4-10, James 3:1-12, Mark 9: 14-29

8:00am – Worship/Communion -Liturgy Sunday (Central Site)

9:30am - Family Sunday School (Northwest Site)

10:30am –Worship (Northwest Site)

3:00pm – Not-Friday Night Fisking -Guys Target Practice @ Grocholl Farm

## Save the Dates:

September 15 – Liturgical Training – 9:00am - NW

Set Apart Stewardship Team Lead Meeting 10:00am-NW

## St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church

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*StPaulRockford.org*

Pastor Jonathan Fisk 630-768-2797 RevFisk@gmail.com

*(Email if you need me this week. Text if you need me today.)*

Pastor Frank Ciprys 815-962-6814

Sue Wilkinson - 815-979-3952

Prayer for the Day 815-963-7641 *(press 3 when call is answered)*