



ST. PAUL HIGHLIGHTS

September 2023

VOLUME 72 ISSUE 09



IMPORTANT DATES FOR THIS MONTH
SEPTEMBER 4TH-LABOR DAY-OFFICE CLOSED
SEPTEMBER 16TH-ROSH HASHANA
SEPTEMBER 24TH-HOMECOMING
SEPTEMBER 25TH-YOM KIPPUR

| DATE | TIME | ASSISTING MINISTER | MUSIC LEADERS | ALTAR GUILD | AUDIO/VIDEO | USHERS/ GREETERS |
|------|-------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| 9/3 | 10:00 | Liz Wittmann | Craig Housum | Barb Spatz Erika Tully | Jeff Campbell Phil Sultan | Team 1st |
| 9/10 | 10:00 | Taffy Pavlick | New Day Singers | | Jeff Campbell Phil Sultan | Team 2nd |
| 9/17 | 10:00 | Cindy Cain | New Day Singers | | Jeff Campbell Phil Sultan | Team 3rd |
| 9/24 | 10:00 | Tafy Pavlick | New Day Singers | | Jeff Campbell Phil Sultan | Team 4th |



SEPTEMBER CELEBRATIONS

HAVE A CELEBRATION COMING IN OCTOBER?
 If you have a July celebration you would like in this space,
 Please notify the office by **September 22nd**.





MEG 2: THE TRENCH (2023); MOVIE REVIEW

Daniel Skillman / 2023-09

Last year, around this time, I reviewed Baz Luhrmann's *Elvis* (2022). It was a cinematic masterpiece for the ages about the thrilling, and heartbreaking tragedy of the king of rock'n'roll, that told us something about America as a nation, and perhaps something about ourselves as individuals. I've seen just about every movie there is from *Casablanca* (1942) to *Oppenheimer* (2023). For my money, *Elvis* is the best movie ever made.

Meg 2: The Trench (2023) is not.
Meg is big, loud, and Dumb with a capital "D."
It's hard to overstate just how dumb it is.

A megalodon in captivity.
A megalodon trained by humans.
A megalodon **existing**.

There's a deep sea trench shielded by a layer of murky water impenetrable by megalodons,
but easily bypassable by humans in submarines.
That's convenient.

About humans in submarines...
We're talking about deep sea subs.
With huge landscape windows.
That glide with ease to 25,000 feet.
And make high speed maneuvers.
And sustain hits by falling rocks the size of, well, megalodons.

Then there's the dive suits.
The self-contained suits that allow individual humans to survive 25,000 feet below sea level.
And walk on the seafloor.
And run.

On the seafloor.

A seafloor that's completely illuminated by...I don't know...electric spotlight seaweed?

But wait, there's more dumb.

How about the deep sea dive suit that sustains a crack in its **all glass helmet**,
and doesn't immediately implode?

Yeah.

But wait, there's even more!

There's the fella who exits a deep sea mining base, under 25,000 feet of water, without a submarine

...or even an impossible deep sea dive suit.

Dude just holds his breath and ironmans it to the nearest available air lock in the underwater mining base.

Did I mention the underwater mining base?

I don't mean a few hundred feet down.

I mean all the way down.

In the trench.

25,000 feet.

A huge mining base.

With 20 foot ceilings.

And a hoarder's amount of junk lying around.

Ok.

I mean...ok.

Does a megalodon escape captivity?

Sure it does.

Does it wreak havoc?

Quite a bit.

Does a megalodon leap out of the water and eat a helicopter?

I'm not saying, "Yes."

But would it surprise you by the time it does (if it, in fact, does)?

No.

But is there, maybe, another monster in the picture, I hear you ask?

My goodness, just one?

Oh no.

Monsters abound.

They're everywhere.

And does someone, after witnessing their enemy being eaten by a giant megalodon, utter the line,

"See you later, chum?"

By the power of Arnold Schwarzenegger, they indeed do.

Is it all big?

Yes.
Is it loud?
Ear splitting.
Is it dumb?
It is, perhaps, the dumbest thing ever committed to celluloid.

So, naturally, I'm giving it my most hearty recommendation.
Forget *Barbie* (2023).
Forget *Oppenheimer* (2023).
Meg 2: The Trench best captures the American zeitgeist of 2023.
Big.
Loud.
And, oh, so dumb.



COUNCIL CORNER

***C4.05. THIS CONGREGATION SHALL, FROM TIME TO TIME, ADOPT A MISSION STATEMENT WHICH WILL PROVIDE SPECIFIC DIRECTION FOR ITS PROGRAMS.** St. Paul Approved Constitution dated 2017.

I've heard it said recently that "we are not the same St. Paul's church that we used to be". Church Council has been mulling this over for some time now. It seems good to us, and the Holy Spirit, that we recognize this change as a positive force because this opens us to new directions for our ministry. Certainly, we need to remember and celebrate our rich history. But now, we are faced with a new season of ministry at St. Paul. It's time to set aside the old mission statement and replace it with a new statement that more accurately defines our strategic direction. This strategic direction and focus for our ministry needs to encompass the whole Congregation. That is the purpose of a mission statement. The mission statement needs to be clear and concise, and able to be recollectd by everyone in the Congregation. It should be written on the doorposts and hung on banners in our parking lot. In this way, the statement will provide all of us a point of focus and lens in which to guide us in everything we do in the name of Christ at St. Paul.

I invite you to make an attempt at writing a Mission Statement. It should describe our unique brand and style of ministry that we provide. If you think you have something good, submit it to the church office or put it in my mailbox located in the office. Chris Hall

Council Members: Gary Grizzell, Chris Hall, Randy Hamilton, Wes Hansen, Amy Hofmann, Mike King, Dennis Mille, Lisa Nelson-Firing, Phil Sultan, Donna Tindera, and Pastor Skillman.

Glenn G. Hutchison – Simple, quiet man.

Our brother in the faith, Glenn Hutchison, passed away in May 2023. In his obituary, Glenn was described as a “simple, quiet man who enjoyed sunshine, old hymns, baseball hats, red pickup trucks and watching football on Sunday.” To me, he will be remembered as a real Hero in the Faith.



I first got to know Glenn when he was teaching Confirmation Classes to my oldest son. I can still hear his words when teaching about the Confession. He was standing on top of a chair to get the kids' attention, and he said: “confession is in thought, word, and deed!” Another time, my son and I were shopping at South Park Mall, when we ran into Mr. Hutchison. Later, my son told me he was concerned Mr. Hutchison was going to ask him to recite the Lord's Prayer right then and there at the mall. Of course, Glenn would have never done anything like that. Glenn was a faithful servant at St. Paul, teaching Sunday School, Confirmation, and Vacation Bible School classes. He was passionate about sharing his faith with the younger generation.

After Betty, his wife, passed away, I noticed that Glenn's trousers were getting loose around his waist. Dave and I decided to have him over to dinner and feed him a calorie-rich meal. We decided the menu to be lasagna, salad, garlic bread and dessert. Glenn continued to amaze us that day because we discovered there was nothing wrong with his appetite. We had him as a guest for dinner a time or two after that, but not enough times, because I wish I had more memories to share about this remarkable man.

Here is one more story that I want to tell, but it is hard for me and makes me want to cry tears of joy and sorrow. A few weeks ago, the church was notified that Glenn named St. Paul Lutheran Church as the beneficiary of an insurance annuity that he held. That dear man loved his church, and he believed in continuing to support his church even in his death.

It is because of these things, i.e., his enthusiasm for teaching children, enjoying a meal with friends, his fondness for red trucks, and sunshine, that I will always remember Mr. Glenn G. Hutchison, as a hero in the faith.

The Church Council has directed the funds to be placed in a council directed account until it can be decided the best way to use the money. We wish to honor this man's legacy in the best way possible.

Submitted by Chris Hall.



PROPERTY COMMITTEE

In July you will remember that we reported that in the last year we have had three locations where the copper water pipes in the building leak due to corrosion “eating” through the pipes. Investigation is complete and the specifications of the equipment suggested by Stack Heating and Cooling have been verified so that a water filter and softener system will be installed to protect the water lines and the hot water heating lines from further damage. The proposal not only removes the problem minerals from the city water and boilers, but adds a tankless water heater to the kitchen to supply hot water specifically for the dishwasher. This will allow the dishwasher to use water much hotter for sterilization than allowed in the other sinks and facilities in the building. Council has formulated a financial plan to fund this project, and scheduling of the installation is in process.

The proposal that St. Paul received from the Solo Squares dancers offering to contribute to the expense of adding air conditioning to the Fellowship Hall is not quite “fine tuned” yet. A quotation to install a system that will blend perfectly with the interior of the Fellowship Hall has been received. The quoted cost does not include the installation of the wiring required to power the air conditioner because the cost of installing power lines around to the back of the building and then coming through the building to get to the air conditioners in Fellowship Hall is very expensive. Jim J. has proposed an alternative way this could be done, and the proposal has been conceptually approved by the Berea Fire Department. Cleveland Electric Illuminating has verified that the existing power transformers on the utility pole have the capability to power the proposed Fellowship Hall air conditioning equipment. The City of Berea Building Department Electrical Inspector now needs to approve the concept and provide specific construction criteria that must be followed to be approved. Once the proposal is detailed, the cost for providing the electrical power can be added to the equipment cost, and the funding total for the complete project can be considered.

We have received several compliments on how attractive the flowers and shrubs are on the West side of the Sanctuary facing Eastland Road, the courtyard, and the new flower bed around the electric sign on Bagley Rd. The flower beds are the creation of our dedicated lawn mower Jon Williams. He has had assistance from Linda Jungeberg, Amy Hofmann, Mike King, and flowers from Trish Jacobs and Corrine Bozin-Grizzell, so please let them know if you enjoy their creativity.

If the weather and schedules ever cooperate, we still plan to make repairs to the parking lot before winter so that we minimize the damage during the cold season before we can do some long term repairs next year.

The usual monthly reminder: When the major repairs and replacement of parts of St. Paul was built into the budget almost nine years ago now, the congregation was advised that a 7% increase in giving would be able to support that plan. The congregation has been faithful to their unanimous approval and allowed St. Paul to make several improvements that have reduced the upkeep and operating expenses for the congregation. In last

November's congregational meeting, the financial report showed that the level of giving has decreased about 5% in the last year, making it difficult if not impossible to continue with the annual repairs in the future years. Please prayerfully consider what you may be able to do to help offset this decrease so that we can continue to make the necessary repairs and replacements before they become more costly emergency situations.

Committee Members – Dennis Mille (liaison to council), Bill Goette, Ruth Hamilton, Scott Harkema, Diane Mille, Dave Navy, Linda Jungeberg



Exciting News: Growing in Faith is Coming!

In the letter to the Ephesians we read: "I pray that, according to the riches of God's glory, you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through the Holy Spirit and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love."

The Northeastern Ohio Synod is pleased to announce that beginning this Fall they will be offering courses for lay people who want to be more deeply rooted and grounded in love. These courses will be taught by pastors and offered online throughout the Fall.

Coming soon they will have much more information about the classes, how they are offered, cost, and so much more!

Stay tuned!



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Welcome BW Students! Backpacks were packed and distributed to incoming BW students during their Weekend of Welcome! Thank you to our amazing volunteers who helped pack and deliver!



Our First Annual Car Show was an amazing success!
Thanks to all who participated, car owners, spectators and our staff and volunteers.



SAVE THE DATE



MONDAY NIGHT AT MIKE'S GROUP ACTIVITIES

MIRACLE LEAGUE



After a rewarding season coaching at the Miracle League of Medina (a softball league designed especially for mentally and physically challenged adults and children), a handful of guys from the Men's Group (and Sue Flick) attended the final game of the season on Sunday, July 30th. The game was followed by a beautiful awards ceremony, where every player was recognized and received a gift card, a brand new softball, and a medallion. Then we enjoyed lots of pizza, sides, and cake. A blessed day was had by all.

Thanks to Ken Richardson (the Miracle League director and driving force) for building such a wonderful group and bringing together so many people, young and old, so that we could all be blessed. Thanks also to Mark Lickert, the Men's Group rep, that brought the Miracle League to us as an event we now cherish.

A great day and a great season.

FAREWELL PICNIC FOR JACK FLICK

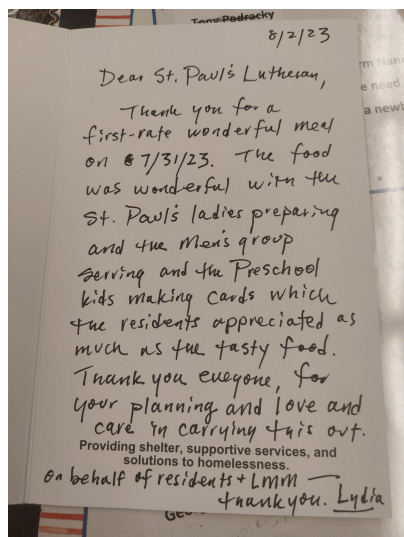


The Monday Night at Mike's Men's Group had its Summer Picnic on Monday, August 14th, where we honored Jack Flick. Our brother, Jack, and his wife Sue, are moving to Illinois in October to be nearer their dear grand-daughters, and we wanted to say THANK YOU for all his friendship and Christian brotherhood over four decades. Twenty of us partied at Mike King's house, and beside some good food, beverages, and conversation, we reminisced about our many good times with Jack. Jack, a charter member of our Men's Group, has been an active member and will be missed.

When you see him around St Paul, help us thank him and wish him and Sue a happy bon voyage.



PROVIDING A MEAL FOR THE MEN'S SHELTER



On Monday, July 31st, "The Community Meal Ladies" and the Men's Group combined their many talents to buy, prepare, deliver, and serve a great meal to the Men's Shelter at 2100 Lakeside. It was a big challenge for all of us, but the effort was a great success, providing meals for 240 men at the Shelter, and being blessed as we worked together and had fun doing it.

The Men's Group serves at the Men's Shelter quarterly, but this was the first time we teamed with "The Ladies" to prepare the food as well. We're already talking about plans to do this again next year. The guys couldn't be more thankful for the ladies' help and guidance through the entire process. It was a night, and a meal, to remember.

We received a nice Thank You note from the shelter!

ST PAUL EARLY EDUCATION CENTER



We are excited to be starting our new preschool 2023-2024 preschool year. Our 4 and 5 year olds start on August 31st and our 3 year olds start on September 5. Both Mindy and Myself have planned some fun field trips like Red Wagon Farm Tour, Olmsted Falls Popcorn Factory tour and a special storytime at Berea Library. We will be having sign-ups for our "Mystery Readers" again and we will be bringing back our Christmas Program on December 17th, 2:00-3:30 in the worship space. Another exciting addition to this year will be monthly Chapel time with Pastor Dan and our preschool families. We are excited to be back at preschool Stop by our rooms and check out our "Blessing Tree" as it grows throughout the year.

Blessings,
Liz Campbell
Mindy Kushlak



SHEEP AND GOATS



REDEEMER CRISIS CENTER

OUR MISSION

Building a community of hope, through serving, witnessing and celebrating.

WHO WE SERVE

Hunger is the inability to identify where your next meal is coming from.

The Center's goal is to help families and individuals with the food resources necessary to feed themselves and their families in their homes for the next 9 – 12 nutritious meals. Since joining the Hunger Network of Greater Cleveland in 1976, we have served people living on the near west side of Cleveland who continuously struggle to survive financially.

Our clients include:

- Senior Citizens and the Disabled on Fixed Incomes
- Recently Unemployed/Underemployed Families
- The Homeless
- Those Below the Poverty Level
- People Facing Unexpected Circumstances
- The Working Poor

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- Family Food Bag
- Clothing Bank
- Household Goods
- Community Meals
- Parent and Family Support Programs
- Tea with Friends
- Summer Youth Programs
- Holiday Bag Packs
- Community Garden
- Furniture

8/23/23
Dear St Paul Church Family,

Wow! we are so grateful
for your generous gifts for
the Navajo Lutheran Mission.

Your gifts arrived just in
time for the school year
beginning. Many needs shall
be met thanks to all of you.

Thank you, everyone.

In His Love,
Barb & Jeff Neepow



22SNP



SHEEP AND GOATS COLLECTIONS

Thank you to those who have supported our benevolent efforts through Sheep and Goats contributions. Below is a report of the success:

| | | |
|----------|--|------------|
| January | COTA for Team Cormack | \$1,320.25 |
| February | EEC "Andrew Tayte Memorial Scholarship Fund" | \$1,340.25 |
| March | St. Paul Family Assistance | \$1,010.67 |
| April | Vacation Bible School | \$ 857.25 |
| May | Habitat for Humanity | \$1,126.89 |
| June | Navajo Mission (Arizona) | \$1,805.25 |
| July | Young Life | \$ 670.25 |
| August | Berea Community Outreach(in process) | |
| | Total to date | \$8,130.81 |

DESIGNATED FUND DONATIONS

Thank you to those who have donated to specific continuing Designated Funds for the Church. From January through May 2023 we received the following specific donations to Designated Funds for the Church:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Special Benevolence - Miscellaneous | \$ 215.00 |
| Special Benevolence- ELCA receipts | \$ 125.00 |
| Habitat for Humanity | \$ 150.00 |
| Redeemer Crisis Center | \$ 525.00 |
| Community Meal | \$ 5,940.00 |
| Family Assistance | \$1,060.67 |
| Building Fund | \$ 858.88 |
| Cemetery Restoration Fund | \$ 550.00 |
| Designated Property Needs | \$ 200.00 |
| Memorials/Honorariums | \$ 371.68 |
| Outreach Committee Receipts | \$1,000.00 |
| Education Services | \$1,091.24 |
| Music Ministry Fund | \$2,780.25 |
| Early Education Center Fund | \$460.00 |
| Total January through July | \$15,327.72 |

The contributions for Sheep and Goats and Designated Fund Donations (both total \$23,458.53) are over and above the Congregational Contributions reported on the Year-to-Date Financial Summary. We truly have a generous and giving congregation. Many thanks for your continued support.

With Gratitude, Dennis Mille, Treasurer

BELLS

(Submitted by The Faithful Ringers)

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy. Psalm 67:4

Lord, we thank you for all bells–

Ancient bells and new bells,
Sounding throughout history bells.

Freedom bells and liberty bells,
Bless us all with peace bells.

Great bells and small bells,
Pealing forth in steeple bells.

Cow bells and sheep bells,
Counting in your sleep bells.

School bells and recess bells,
Tolling of the hours bells.

Sleigh bells and jingle bells,
Dashing through the snow bells.

Bluebells and coral bells,
Chiming in the garden bells.

Doorbells and dinner bells,
I think I hear ice cream bells.

Church bells and chapel bells,
Now it's time to pray bells.

Wedding bells and funeral bells,
Calling friends together bells.

Best of all are handbells, high and low and sweet bells,
Ringing for the Lord bells.

Gold and shiny swing bells, music to our ears bells,
Praying without words bells.

Thank you, Lord, for bells!

Amen.



Dear siblings in Christ,

You may have recently seen a video from Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton — Future Church: God's Love Made Real. We have an unprecedented opportunity to learn about our church — to listen to and learn from YOU! Will you lend us your voice?

We want to learn more about our church, about what is strong and good, and about where we need to grow in Christ together. This information will help us learn how to better serve our congregations, synods, ministry partners and the world around us. It will help us lean into the vision and do our part in creating a world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation. But we need your voice to do it. We need the voices of your colleagues and friends.

There are two distinct opportunities for you to lend your voice to the future of our church:

1. Take a survey.
2. Watch for opportunities to participate in a listening group.

We hope you will do both, but if you have to choose, please do the survey and encourage those around you to do the same.

These two steps will help us become "Future Church: God's Love Made Real" and move together, as a church, in the directions the Spirit is calling us to go. All resources can be found at <https://lovemadereal.elca.org/>

Sincerely,

Louise Johnson

Executive for Administration, Office of the Presiding Bishop

FINANCIALS

St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church Year-to-Date Financial Summary as of:

July 31, 2023

| Income and Expenses Summary | Current Year Actual YTD | Current Year Budget YTD | Over/(Under) Budget | Previous Year Actual YTD | Curr vs Prior Yr Variance | Percent Change |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Income | | | | | | |
| Congregational Contributions | \$ 154,365.07 | \$ 164,091.00 | \$ (9,725.93) | \$ 166,554.72 | (12,189.65) | -7.3% |
| Building Use | 17,805.00 | 2,917.00 | 14,888.00 | 3,000.00 | 14,805.00 | 493.5% |
| Interest | 528.86 | 9.00 | 519.86 | 6.10 | 522.76 | 8569.8% |
| Other Income | 2,739.93 | 1,050.00 | 1,050.00 | 1,588.45 | 1,151.48 | 72.5% |
| Total Income | \$ 175,438.86 | \$ 168,067.00 | \$ 6,731.93 | \$ 171,149.27 | 4,289.59 | 2.5% |
| Expenses | | | | | | |
| Benevolence | 2,673.13 | 3,282.00 | 608.87 | 3,331.09 | 657.96 | -19.8% |
| Worship | 8,734.59 | 9,967.00 | 1,232.41 | 7,156.88 | (1,577.71) | 22.0% |
| Programs & Services | 3,558.95 | 6,007.00 | 2,448.05 | 1,942.40 | (1,616.55) | 83.2% |
| Property | 37,377.01 | 36,808.00 | (569.01) | 37,814.39 | 437.38 | -1.2% |
| Staff Salaries and Benefits | 120,745.36 | 125,089.00 | 4,343.64 | 110,844.30 | (9,901.06) | 8.9% |
| Contracted Services | 23,132.30 | 21,372.00 | (1,760.30) | 14,206.17 | (8,926.13) | 62.8% |
| Administration & Support | 11,589.72 | 12,950.00 | 1,360.28 | 8,359.30 | (3,230.42) | 38.6% |
| Total Expenses | 207,811.06 | 215,475.00 | 7,663.94 | 183,654.53 | (24,156.53) | 13.2% |
| Operating Surplus (Deficit) | \$ (32,372.20) | \$ (47,408.00) | \$ 14,395.87 | \$ (12,505.26) | (19,866.94) | |

Income and Expenses Summary Notes:

Income

The YTD period ending July 31, 2023 has an operating deficit of \$32,372, \$19,866 more than July 2022's deficit. Congregational Contributions through July 2023 are \$12,189 less than contributions received through July 2022. Total Income is \$4,289 more than at July 31, 2022.

Congregational Contributions are under budget by \$9,725 and Total Income is over budget by \$6,731 as of July 31, 2023. This increase in Total Income was the result of \$15,000 rent paid by Early Education Center (EEC) to the Church.

Note: Other Income includes periodic gifts made by the Thrivent Choice Donation program, clothing recycling program, and other miscellaneous unrestricted income.

Expenses

Total expenses are under budget by \$7,763 as of July 31, 2023. Total expenses YTD are \$24,156 more than total expenses as of July 2022.

Note: Benevolence payments are percentages of contributions. Therefore, when contributions are higher, benevolence payments are higher.

Note on Budget Expenses: Total annual expense budget is \$368,611 or \$30,717 per month.

In order to avoid the estimated \$80,496 annual deficit, revenue should equal the annual expense budget.

As of July 31, 2023, we have a \$39,581 shortfall (\$215,019-\$175,438) of income to budget expenses.

| Balance Sheet Summary | As of July 31, 2023 | As of July 31, 2022 | Over (Under) Variance |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Assets | | | |
| Current Assets (Cash) | \$ 219,450.44 | \$ 207,431.30 | \$ 12,019.14 |
| Invested Assets (Endowment) | 675,452.56 | 690,768.36 | (15,315.80) |
| Total Assets | \$ 894,903.00 | \$ 898,199.66 | \$ (3,296.66) |
| Liabilities | | | |
| Accounts Payable | \$ 2,888.95 | \$ 2,527.20 | \$ 361.75 |
| Loan from Endowment Fund | \$ - | \$ - | 0.00 |
| Payroll Withholding | \$ 2,949.02 | \$ - | 2,949.02 |
| Accrued Expenses and Other | \$ 300.00 | \$ 300.00 | 0.00 |
| Payroll Protection Program Temp Loan | \$ - | \$ - | 0.00 |
| Dedicated Fund Balances | \$ 215,651.23 | \$ 167,688.92 | 47,962.31 |
| Total Liabilities | \$ 221,789.20 | \$ 170,516.12 | \$ 51,273.08 |
| Equity | | | |
| General Fund | \$ (4,247.92) | \$ 38,115.18 | \$ (42,363.10) |
| Investments (Endowment) | 677,361.72 | 689,568.36 | (12,206.64) |
| Total Equity | \$ 673,113.80 | \$ 727,683.54 | \$ (54,569.74) |
| Total Liabilities and Equity | \$ 894,903.00 | \$ 898,199.66 | \$ (3,296.66) |

Balance Sheet Summary Notes:

Dedicated Funds include contributions designated for specific Council-approved categories (i.e. Memorials/Honorariums, Habitat for Humanity, Sheep and Goats contributions, Youth Trips/Projects, Music Ministry, Youth Ministry, and others). These funds are tracked separately and the contributions and/or expenses are not reflected in the Operating Income and Expenses Summary. A complete listing of the current Dedicated Funds can be found on the full balance sheet.

The Market Value of Invested Funds increased .86% in the month of July.



MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER:

HOW DOES GOD RESPOND TO YOUR GENEROSITY?

Greetings, I want to share a recent article by Rick Warren, which appeared in a Clint Hurdle, Daily Devotional, August 18, 2023, which was timely for **our** church:

"I heard a story about a man who took his son to McDonald's and bought him super-size French fries. On the way home, he reached over and took one little French fry and ate it. His son got upset and said, "Dad, you can't have that. These are my fries!" The dad immediately had three thoughts:

"First, my child has forgotten that I am the source of all fries. I took him to McDonald's, I paid for the order, I gave them to him, and I'm driving him back home. The only reason he got any fries was because of me, the Great Fry Giver!

"Second, my child doesn't realize I could take the fries away in a second if I wanted to. Or I could buy him an entire truckload of fries if I wanted to, because I have the power to do either.

"Third, I didn't need his fries. I could easily get my own. I could buy myself a hundred cartons of them if I wanted to. I just wanted him to learn to be unselfish."

Those three lessons are the same ones God wants you to learn so that you can be generous with other people. First, God wants you to remember that he is the source of everything you've got. You would have nothing—you wouldn't even be alive!—if it weren't for God. Second, God could take it all away from you in an instant, or he could double it, because he's got the power. Third, God doesn't need your money. He just wants you to learn to be unselfish and develop your faith.

What happens when you start becoming a more generous person? ***"God is able to make it up to you by giving you everything you need and more so that there will not only be enough for your own needs but plenty left over to give joyfully to others"*** (2 Corinthians 9:8 TLB).

If you will practice generosity, God will give you everything you need plus more so you'll have enough to share with other people. He's looking for a channel like a straw, and when he finds it—someone who's willing to say, "God, use me to be a blessing to other people"—he just starts pouring blessing straight through it.

If you will learn to be generous, God will bless you more than you can imagine!"

Presently **your church** needs your generosity as we have a current operating deficit of \$32,372. Please consider how you can best help us meet this shortfall.

With Gratitude, Dennis Mille, Treasurer

USING AN INDIVIDUAL RETIREMENT ACCOUNT (IRA) FOR DONATIONS TO THE CHURCH

Did you know that if you are age 70 ½ or older that you can make a direct transfer from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) to your church which satisfies your Mandatory Retirement Distribution (MRD) and **NOT PAY ANY INCOME TAX ON THE DISTRIBUTION!** That's right - NO INCOME TAX ON THE DISTRIBUTION and it qualifies towards any Mandatory Retirement Distribution (MRD). The limit that can be gifted is \$100,000.00 without it being counted as a taxable distribution. The distribution also is not included in the taxpayer's adjusted gross income (AGI) for determining premium increases for Medicare. However, this tax break means the donor cannot claim the donation as a deduction on Schedule A of their tax return. To take advantage of an IRA contribution to the church, the transfer must take place before the end of the year. If you are interested in making a contribution from your IRA please contact the church office and Dennis Mille will contact you to provide further information on making the transfer.

In addition to current contributions from an IRA, you may also want to consider designating St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church of Berea as a beneficiary of the IRA. A church receiving IRA distributions as a beneficiary does not pay any income tax.

Thank you for considering these methods of helping your church financially.

With Gratitude, Dennis Mille, Treasurer

APPRECIATE YOUR BLESSINGS WITH APPRECIATED STOCK

Did you know that you can donate appreciated stock to the church? So long as you have owned the stock for more than one year (long term) then a donation of the stock avoids you paying income tax on any gain. You also receive a charitable contribution equal to the average of the high and low price of the stock on the date of your gift. The only limitation is that the value of the gift cannot exceed 30% of your adjusted gross income. You are also required to file IRS Form 8283 (Noncash Charitable Contributions) if you intend to itemize your charitable deductions for income tax purposes. Please contact the church office if you are interested in making a stock gift and Diane Jones, the Bookkeeper for St. Paul, will provide you with the necessary information to provide your financial institution to transfer the stock to the church. In addition, we can also accept stock certificates. Thank you for considering a stock gift to benefit the ministry and services of your church.

With Gratitude, Dennis Mille, Treasurer

INCREASING MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE

Just ask one person a week

This is not a broken record (if you're old enough to know what a record is and remember what happens when a groove is scratched causing the music to repeat itself). Just repeating an important need for St. Paul. Discipleship is similar to financial support expressing gratitude for the blessings you have received. With discipleship we are introducing others to Jesus. The growth and recovery of our church needs an expanding membership with members like you. This year we hope that you will accept the challenge of asking a family member, neighbor or friend to attend our church services. Your extending an invitation to worship with us makes it possible for us to provide a meaningful and friendly place of worship to share the message of God's love to the community. How can you bring up visiting us? Have a conversation with the person on how are services at their church (maybe they don't go to church). Ask what they think about weekly open communion (maybe they haven't taken communion in a long while and this is an excellent opportunity for them to visit us for communion). You can also encourage others to view our services by going to www.stpaulbera.org and selecting watch a service. <http://www.stpaulbera.org/donate>. Thank you for accepting this challenge.

With Gratitude, Dennis Mille, Treasurer



FOOD DONATIONS FOR OTHERS

"NONPERISHABLE" items may be placed in our Food Box outside Door #2 at any time of the day or night.



"PERISHABLE" items may be taken directly to the Berea Community Outreach Food Pantry at:
535 Wyleswood Dr, Berea
Please call Natalie at
440-826-5800 X 4401 for hours

You are making a difference in the daily lives of others.



COMMUNITY MEAL NOW TWICE A MONTH!

Free Community Meal
available Wednesday
September 13 and 27
at 5pm-Drive up/Take out from Door #2
here at St. Paul



BEREA SENIOR LUNCHEON

**Tuesday September 12th at noon at St.
Paul Lutheran Fellowship Hall
Cost \$5.00**

**Contact the
Berea Community Outreach
"Active Senior Network"
for reservations
at 440 891-3316**

MEMORIALS

Margaret Lisca
Marilyn Kemz

OFFICIAL ACTS

Baptism
7/30 Charlotte Ivy Thompson

Funeral
8/18 Margaret Lisca

ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
276 EAST BAGLEY ROAD
BEREA, OHIO 44017
440-243-1144
www.stpaulbera.org

FIRST CLASS
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



EXPENSES DON'T TAKE OFF FOR THE SUMMER

We need your help for the summer. Expenses for St. Paul do not stop for the summer months. We continue to pay salaries, utilities, and other operating expenses just as we do in the winter, spring and fall. We hope that you will continue with your generous contributions through the summer and consider making your contribution for the entire month at the beginning of the month that you may be on vacation. Thank you for your help and generosity.

With Gratitude,
Dennis Mille, Treasurer

