Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Many of us have experienced those tense and quiet moments where after a disagreement our spouses have turned their face from us and starred out the window. They refuse to engage in a conversation. They refuse to even look in your direction. So in the silence of the car, one can feel the uncomfortable position in which one finds himself.

Once upon a time there was a couple who had a glass set of blue birds sitting on the shelf. If one person was upset with the other, they would turn their blue bird so that it's back faced the other. It was their way of communicating one's feeling about the other. When the other person noticed the other bird's position, they knew something was wrong. They knew it was time to sit down and clear the air face to face.

In Israel's history, this face turning was not an uncommon theme. Isaiah the prophet says in 54:8, "In a surge of anger I hid my face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have compassion on you, says the Lord your Redeemer." Here Israel's painful past is mentioned. The past was a time of shame, disgrace, and derision which gave evidence to the people's apostasy and unfaithfulness. God could gaze on this no longer. Isaiah even goes further back in their history by reflecting on the days of Noah when God flooded the earth and killed all living things that were not spared in the ark.

In our history, as well as in our daily lives, there are those things we need to **confess**. In Psalm 51, David's humble prayer for forgiveness and cleansing after being caught in a scheme of adultery, deception, and eventual murder, pleads his fate before God. Specifically David asks God in verse 9: "Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity." In other words, the Psalmist says God do not see me as I really am – a fallen, disappointing, and even disgusting person, but blot out all my iniquity. David is relying on God's willingness to forgive and restore his servant. His life even depends on God's willingness to forgive and God's ability to re-create sinners.

We too do not want God to see us in our sinful state. Like David we trust in God's willingness to forgive and restore us. We trust that God's love for us is greater than his anger against us. Indeed it is! For God offers to us His forgiveness in Jesus.

Absolution: Isaiah the prophet reveals their determination to endure. He states, "Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame." Luke states in his Gospel chapter 9 verse 51, "As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set (his face to go to Jerusalem) out for Jerusalem. While this journey to Jerusalem is not the one that led to his crucifixion but marks the beginning of a period of ministry in Judea, Jesus' whole ministry was the work of redeeming God's people. Even with his face racked in pain, Jesus pleads, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34) His death on Calvary's cross is God's statement that His love for us is greater than His anger
over our sin.

After confessing our sins in worship, God's servant in our midst pronounces God's forgiveness. In God's command and in Christ's authority the Pastor forgives our sins in the wonderful Baptismal formula spoken over us in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (John 20:23) "If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Benediction: God is not the passenger in our vehicles of life who gazes out the window with His back toward us and sits in silence unwilling to engage in conversation with us. Instead He turns to us and speaks His words of love, mercy, grace, and forgiveness. He imparts to us a blessing. Numbers 6: 22-27, "The Lord said to Moses, 'Tell Aaron and his sons, this is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them: The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace.'"

This love of God removes the tension of conflict and fills our hearts with joy. It lights up our faces and causes us to smile. Though at times His bright face is hidden from us behind life's clouds, we know it has not changed. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Your Servant in Christ,
Pastor Steven K. Benson

There will be a Call Meeting on Sunday afternoon, August 2nd at 3 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Please attend if possible. We will be discussing a prospective pastor and voting on calling that pastor. -Brian Carlson

Lutheran Women's Fellowship

NO REPORT

Board of Education

NO REPORT

Membership Report for July 2026

GAIN

Confirmed +

Baptized +

LOSS

Confirmed -1
Heather Obrien
-transfer to St. Paul

Baptized –1
Jackson O'Brien
-transfer to St. Paul

Communicant =154-1=153
Baptized (not confirmed) =48-1=47
Total baptized souls =200

Financial Report July 2026

Income (Offerings)

Home/Current $6,573.00, Missions Budget $137.00, Loose Offerings $324.00, Special Offering $115.00, Miscellaneous $25.00, Organ Fund $40.00.

Total Offerings $7,214.00

Expenses

Pastor $1,100.00, Payroll $1,246.72, Organist $371.94, Pastoral Expenses $685.52, Ministry Expenses $636.04, Computer/Internet $190.72, Church Supplies $37.45, Water $116.36, Pest Control $42.00, Gas & Electric $764.00, Sanitation $42.80, Property Repairs $1,806.78, Miscellaneous $2,111.22 W/H Tax $198.29, Missions $137.00, Charities $115.00, Advertising $240.00.

Total Expenses	**$ 9,841.84**
Net Income	**$ -2,627.84**

ORGAN FUND UPDATE

Received in 2024	$28,453.15
Received in 2025	$ 6,505.00
2026 YTD Received	$ 1,120.00
Reimbursed to Foundation	$31,000.00
Organ Fund	$ 5,078.15

ATTENDANCE

Sunday	Worship	Communion
7/5	42	
7/12	122	97
7/19	35	
7/26	35	32

AUGUST
Birthdays - Anniversaries

Lydia Fowler –8/4, Rhonda Waddell –8/4, Kaidence Valley –8/7, Tammy Ferry –8/8, Melvin Martinson –8/8, Ervin Claude –8/15, Simon Lindner –8/18, Maxwell Johnson –8/19, Daniel Ball –8/21, Aiden Heistand –8/22, Mary Brown –8/24, Piper Elsberry –8/24, Ethan Vinson –8/25

Kurt & Jill Davis	8/14	22nd
Rusty & Tetyana Hansen	8/20	10th
Robert & Nancy Kuebler	8/31	41st