



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,

Voters' Assemblies are funny things. They often bring out the worst in people. Sometimes we decide to be selfish. Other times we forget what Voters' Assemblies are there for. Both of these things are worsened when we don't know how to play by the rules.

In my experience, most people don't like Voters' Assemblies. How else do we explain why so few people attend? Too often, what is should be a basic, "taking care of business" meeting derails into an hours long roller coaster. People air grievances (real or perceived) in the middle of conversations about totally tangential business. "New business" becomes a time for asking, "What ever happened to...?" and "Why don't we do that anymore...?" All the while, making an actual decision about important things seems nearly impossible.

I don't believe that it has to be this way.

I don't think there is any way to make Voters' Assemblies "fun." But I do believe we can make our business meetings timely, efficient, and about **intentional business**.

*(continued on p.3)*

## Announcements

**The Installation of Pastor Fisk** is this evening at 6:00pm at the Central Site. There will be a light reception in the undercroft immediately following the service. There is also a reception at Prairie Street Brewing Co. at 7:45. Please join us for this very exciting time at St. Paul!

## **Did You Know?**

**Liturgical Assistant Training** - We are working to expand the number of adult men trained to assist in the distribution of the Lord's Supper. A training event will be held Saturday, August 18, from 9:30-10:30am at Northwest Site. If you've already been recruited, please make every effort to be there at this time. If you're interested but not yet been recruited, please speak with Pastor Fisk about this opportunity for spiritual growth and service.

**"We Shall Rally"** day is coming soon. We need help. Sign-up sheets are in the Narthex at both sites. Take a look and sign up. For further questions talk to Dawn Stock (dcharstock@outlook.com) or Lowes Eggert (roloegg2@yahoo.com)

## **In Case You Missed It**

**The Church Office** will be closed from August 10<sup>th</sup> until August 21<sup>st</sup>. If you have any announcements for the bulletin, please see Pastor Fisk before services. Sue will be back in the office on August 22<sup>nd</sup>. Thanks for your understanding!

## **Save the Dates:**

**August 26th** - Rally Day, Special outdoor service at Northwest Site (10:30) with a picnic to follow. Check out the signs in the narthex for more information!

**August 29<sup>th</sup>** – Confirmation Meeting – 6:00pm – Northwest Site

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

This is perhaps the most important point to begin with: you do not need a business meeting involving the entire congregation for 99% of our decisions. (Perhaps you've heard a riff on the old joke: How many Lutherans does it take to change a light bulb? Answer: Seventeen. One to point it out. Three more to come up with reasons why it can't be fixed. Five to complain about change. And Eight more to sit in the dark wondering out loud why visitors never come back.)

Frankly, most things don't need a vote. The life of a congregation should happen **outside** a Voters' Assembly. When St. Paul admonished the Christians in Corinth to see to it that everything is "*done decently, and in order*" (1 Corinthians 14:40), he did not mean they should waste each others' time arguing over things we have no plan or power to change on a Sunday afternoon. He meant that we should handle all our worldly affairs without becoming overly distracted by them. He meant that, above all, we should **work together** to maintain the peace of a congregation committed to the Words and Sacraments of Jesus.

We won't wave a magic wand and suddenly create a Voting culture that does this. But I do believe we can work our way toward 1) eighty percent or more of the weekly attendance also voting at our meetings; and 2) never (or rarely!) have a voting meeting that lasts more than forty-five minutes.

How do I think we can achieve that? It begins by seriously pondering the reasons our forebears commended to us **Roberts' Rules of Order**. General Henry M. Robert was a U.S. Army officer who, in 1876, adapted the rules of congressional debate for use by non-legislative societies. They are a rather marvelous little toolbox to help a group of unique and wonderfully opinionated people stay on task, keep the focus on planned business, prevent things from getting personal, and navigate a host of decisions without wasting everyone's time.

At our meeting last week, learning the elementary steps of these rules was a major focus for us, and that made the meeting longer rather than shorter. But over time, a crawl becomes a walk becomes a run. With practice, taking care of business in good order can and will become something we might even enjoy doing, especially if it always pushes us back to the real focus of standing firm in Rockford on the foundation of our Lord's Words., taking good order seriously in order that we might not be distracted by it, and keep our focus on the Gospel.

Until next time, Pastor Fisk

# Calendar

## Last Sunday

Attendance August 5, 2018: 59/107= 166

Attendance August 6, 2017: 58/80= 138

Attendance Summer Family Sunday School: 67

**Sunday, August 12<sup>th</sup>** **Serving: Elders: Aaron Temple, Scott Sautel, Organist: Dorothy Beck, Ushers: Group 2 & C; Flowers at Central provided by Vicky Hubbard in honor of Pastor Fisks Installation, Flowers at NW provided by Betty Steiner in loving memory of family members. Bulletin supplies provided by Lois Pate in memory of her husband, Duane Pate.**

8:00am – Worship (Central Site)

8:30am - 9:15am - Bell Practice (Northwest Site)

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

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

## Tuesday, August 14<sup>th</sup>

9:00am - Piecemakers (Northwest Site)

## Wednesday, August 15<sup>th</sup>

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

6:30pm – Board of Elders Meeting (Northwest Site)

## Thursday, August 16<sup>th</sup>

11:00am – Knitting Etc. (Northwest Site)

## Friday, August 17<sup>th</sup>

8:30am – Church Grounds Maint (Central Site)

## Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup>

9:30am – 10:30am – Liturgical Assistant Training (Northwest Site)

**Sunday, August 19<sup>th</sup>** **Serving: Elders: Aaron Temple, Scott Sautel, Organist: Bonnie Dickinson, Ushers: Group 3 & D;**

**Scripture Readings:** Joshua 24:1-2, 14-18, Ephesians 5: 6-21, John 6:51-69

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

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

10:30am – Worship (Northwest Site)

**Save the Dates:** August 18, 9:30am – Liturgical Asst. Meeting

August 26, 10:30am - Rally Day/Picnic – NW

August 29, 6:00pm – Confirmation Meeting-NW

## St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church

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[StPaulRockford.org](http://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)*