

Sesquicentennial Anniversary

Our 150th anniversary is fast approaching: September 14, 10:00am. This is an important milestone for a small country church that has survived arson and a denominational split prior to the formation of the ELCA. While younger generations may take Pilot Knob Lutheran for granted, it is only by God's grace that we are here worshiping God and experiencing growth and vitality.

Sunday, September 14 will begin with a 10:00am worship service followed by a catered meal provided by Stevermer Catering out of Brice lyn, MN. The meal's main course is roast beef and fried chicken and will be free of charge. There will be a silent auction of two quilts and serving trays from the chili cook-off the Sunday before.

You are encouraged to invite friends and family, but we must have a head count of all that are staying for the meal. Therefore, you must sign-up by August 31, and record the number of people staying for the meal.

Prior to the anniversary will be our Harvest Picnic: September 7, 10:00am here at the church. This is an opportunity to invite friends, family and neighbors. It will begin with a 10:00 communion service, followed by a chili cook-off. We have twelve people making chili and you will have an opportunity to taste each one and vote on which one you think is the best. Following the tasting we will have our meal, and hot dogs will also be available for those who don't want chili. After the meal there will be games.

Please pray for good weather for both Sundays!



1875



2025

Do you feel stuck in life?

I've often used the word STUCK to describe my current situation. Like I'm trying to run through a pool, I've felt a resistance holding me back from moving forward. I know what I want to do, but I don't do it. In some instances, I've found that resistance discouraging me to the point where I've even given up entirely. My inner thoughts sound like, "Why keep trying if I'm going to keep failing? How can I keep going when everything seems to be getting harder?"

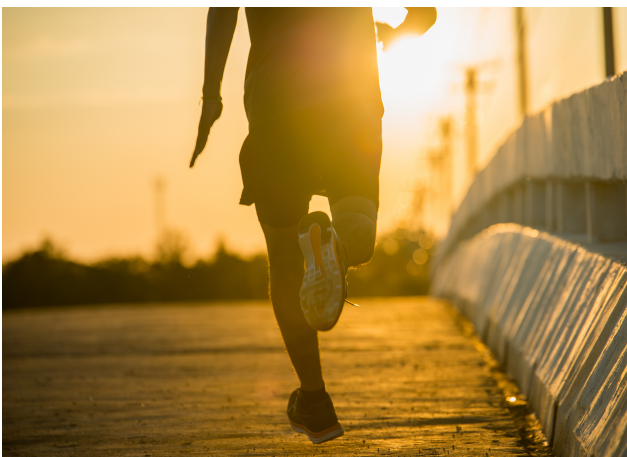
If you feel stuck in the present, I wonder if your obstacle is how you see both the present and the future. Sometimes, it's easier to stay stuck in the present than to face what lies in our future. It may be a risk we'll have to face to move forward. It could be pain that terrifies us. I've even gotten stuck because I wondered if I had enough faith to move towards what lies ahead.



Several years ago, I listened to a pastor named Tom share a fascinating framework explaining why I felt tempted to give up. He called the framework "the lifecycle of spiritual maturity." In unpacking this model, he said, "Healthy things grow, growing things change, change requires risk, risk requires faith, and faith makes you healthy." Like a wheel, this cycle started and ended with the word "healthy." However, the cycle moved through intense territory, including change and risk.

When you think of the words "change" and "risk," what comes to mind? Are there some changes you need to make? Risks you've been putting off? We often feel stuck in the present because of something we're avoiding in the future. While we love the idea of growth and health, we usually don't love the painful path we'd have to walk to get to those destinations.

If anyone knew the kind of pain growth brings, it was the Apostle Paul. In 2 Corinthians 11, Paul lists the many adversities he faced, including shipwrecks, beatings, imprisonments, and other dangers. Paul was well-acquainted with suffering.



While Paul wanted to ensure the Corinthians knew his commitment to Jesus and the church's mission, he wrote in another of his letters about where his focus remained. In Philippians 3, Paul described his many achievements (which mirrored his adversity list in 2 Corinthians 11). However, after listing his glorious past, Paul clarifies that he continues to pursue something he has not obtained.

He wrote, "Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."

Paul never let his past achievements or adversities distract him from the prize before him. He didn't get stuck in the present because he felt God had taken hold of him and was pressing forward to grasp all God had for him.

Have you ever wanted to be excited but couldn't muster enthusiasm?

That's exactly how I felt when I thought about returning to my job as a pastor at the end of my sabbatical. I didn't want to leave my profession, but I wasn't as excited as I expected to be.

It wasn't until I started looking ahead, making plans, setting goals, and asking what God might want to do through me next that my excitement grew into a fire in my heart. A few days before returning to work, I texted a friend, "I'm pumped!" to go back (which was quite a change from the headspace I was in just a few days earlier.)

The final obstacle I've found many people face is a need for more excitement about the future. "Why start over when I don't know what I'm moving towards in the future?" You may ask yourself that question, needing clarification and encouragement about the future. While my experience of starting over included things like making plans, setting goals, and dreaming of possibilities, the most important thing for you and me is first to recognize God's promises to us about our future.

Consider these three truths from the New Testament:

- First, Jesus boldly stated about our lives as His followers in John 14-16. In John 14:12-14, Jesus said, "Whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these." Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would come to His followers, empowering them with a capability that exceeded their expectations. As a follower of Jesus, you can do more than you imagine because of the Holy Spirit.
- Second, the Apostle Paul describes believers with language that explodes insecurity and cements value when he says, "We are God's masterpiece." The Greek word translated as "masterpiece" in Ephesians 2:10 is *poema*, which means the crowning achievement of an artist. You are God's most outstanding work, and Paul says later in the same verse that God planned good works for you to do long ago. Your life is not an accident, and your future is not meaningless.
- Third, later in Ephesians, Paul talks about God's love being beyond our knowledge. Not only is His love beyond our understanding, but His capacity is beyond our comprehension. In Ephesians 3:20, Paul writes that God "is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine." If God loved you more than you comprehend and could do more than you can imagine, wouldn't there be a reason for excitement to move forward into the future?

Starting over is never easy. It doesn't get easier the older you get. It often gets harder - much harder. But, as a man named Benedict once wrote, "always we begin again." God's grace offers us a continual opportunity to overcome our failures and fears. What lies ahead may feel daunting, but the good news is that we don't have to face it alone. We can step into our future with the One who describes it with words that fill our hearts with hope.



August Sermons & Scriptures

• August 3, 2025

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Morning Worship Service

Sermon: David's Faith

OT Lesson: Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-26

Epistle Lesson: Colossians 3:1-11

Gospel Lesson: Luke 12:13-21

• August 10, 2025

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Morning Worship Service & Holy Communion

Sermon: The Word & Righteousness

OT Lesson: Genesis 15:1-6

Epistle Lesson: Hebrews 11:1-16

Gospel Lesson: Luke 12:22-34

• August 17, 2025

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

Morning Worship Service

Sermon: Dr. Cary Larson

OT Lesson: Jeremiah 23:16-29

Epistle Lesson: Hebrews 11:17-31

Gospel Lesson: Luke 12:49-53

• August 24, 2025

Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

Morning Worship Service

Sermon: Emotion & Worship

OT Lesson: Isaiah 66:18-23

Epistle Lesson: Hebrews 12:4-24

Gospel Lesson: Luke 13:22-30

• August 31, 2025

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

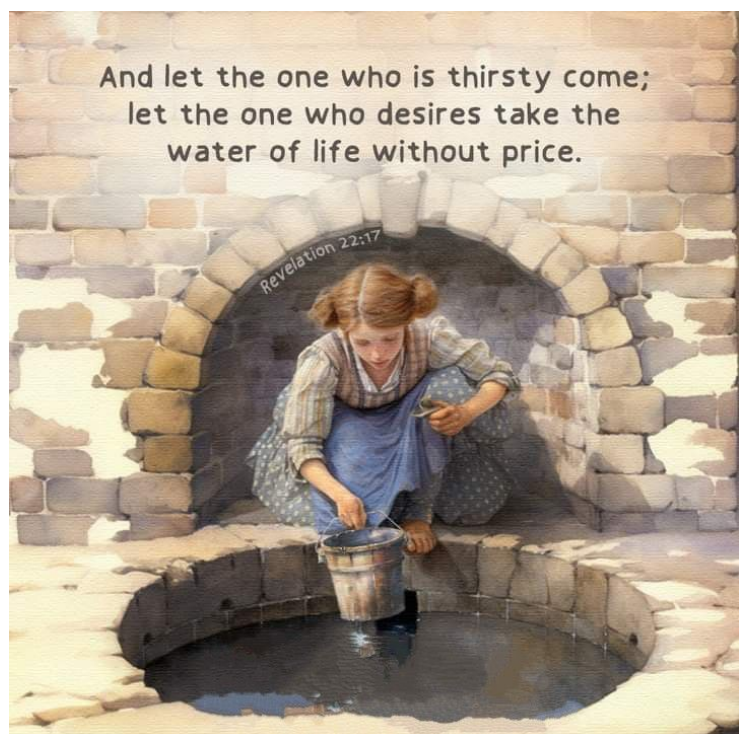
Morning Worship Service

Sermon: Into the Holy of Holies

First Lesson: Proverbs 25:2-10

Epistle Lesson: Hebrews 13:1-17

Gospel Lesson: Luke 14:1-14



August Volunteers

3

10

17

24

31

Communion	Don				
Reader	Angie	Nick	Joel	Jeff	Bina
Greeters	Randy/Deb	Jeff/Donna	Elsie/Marty	Greg/Sherry	Steve/Jan
Ushers	Ben/Nick.....				
Sound	Steve	Devon	Brandon	Matt	Greg
Computer	Dave	Donna	Rachel	Rachel	Dave
Acolyte	Makenna	Kinsley	Ella	Kazra	Emmanuel
Custodians	Angie/Billy.....				
Pianist	Marcia	Sheryl	Sheryl	Val	Val

▣ If you find that you have been scheduled for a ministry time that you are unable to serve, please find a replacement and let pastor know. Thank you!

August 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Greeters: Randy/Deb Reader: Angie Acolyte: Makenna	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Communion Sunday Greeters: Jeff/Donna Reader: Nick Acolyte: Kinsley	11	12 Deacons- 5:45pm Council- 6:30pm	13	14	15	16
17 Greeters: Elsie/Marty Reader: Joel Acolyte: Ella	18	19 Women's Bible Study- 2pm (Ruth 3:8-13)	20	21	22	23
24 Greeters: Greg/Sherry Reader: Jeff Acolyte: Kazra	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 Greeters: Steve/Jan Reader: Bina Acolyte: Emmanuel	<u>Birthdays</u> 11- Deb Stensrud 12- Kazra Swanson 16- Rachel Snitzer 17- Sheryl Albertson 22- Cambrie Cink 31- Briggs Peine, Zade Swanson					