



March

St. Paul News

St. Paul Lutheran Church

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2025

Your Funeral: Are you ready?

By Pastor Neil Wehmas

Lets get this first reality out of the way, unless your name is Elijah or Enoch, or Jesus returns first, we will all one day die. None of us no the time, the day, or the way it will happen. So, the question is, will you be ready? Will your family be ready?

At St. Paul Lutheran Church, our congregation has had its share of funerals to start 2025. The season of Lent is a season that is in part teaching us as the old hymn says: "God's own sacrifice complete. "It is finished!" hear him cry; Learn from Jesus Christ to die." ("Go to Dark Gethsemane" LSB 436). Yes, the season of Lent is very much about preparing ourselves for our own deaths, in hope of our resurrections "Savior, teach us so to rise."

It is with that in mind, that I present you with a few pointers for planning your funeral:

- 1) Don't be afraid to call it a funeral. "It has become fashionable to call a funeral something seemingly more upbeat, such as a "celebration of life." This new term has several problems, but chiefly this one: It puts all our joy behind us, in the past. A celebration of life celebrates what was, but when we gather for a Christian funeral, we celebrate what God has done, what God is doing in the present and what God will do in the future. Christians are not dead, but while their bodies sleep, they eagerly await the resurrection of the dead. They have passed from death to life (John 5:24). All who believe in Christ shall live forever (John 11:25-26). Let it be said plainly: Death is not the end." (Bryan Wolfmeuller, *For the Dead*. Lutheran Witness. September 1, 2021)
- 2) For you the Christian, your funeral is the last chance you get to be of service to your loved ones and your congregation. It is an opportunity to comfort them as they grieve. It is an opportunity to give them the Gospel, including for those who have no faith. Take this opportunity to heart.
- 3) Think about the scriptures that you choose. Pick passages that speak of the hope of the resurrection. Pick scriptures that speak of Jesus. In him alone, do we have hope in the face of death.
- 4) Have congregational singing. The reading, singing, and hearing allows for the congregation to more fully internalize the words. A solo is nice to have, but don't make it your only music. Make sure your family, friends, and well-wishers have a chance to read and sing out words of comfort.
- 5) Pick hymns that clearly confess Christ. If you were to take a survey of Lutheran pastors and ask what most frustrates them in funeral planning, it would be the lack of Christ-centered hymnody. These hymns don't find their way onto the radio, neither are they sung by legendary singers like Elvis Presley or Alan Jackson, so they fall to the way side. Remember, it is your final chance to give your family and friends the opportunity to sing-out, ring-out, and internalize the Gospel message. When picking your hymns ask two basic questions: 1) Is Jesus or Christ mentioned by name? 2) What does it tell about what he has done for us?
- 6) Traditional burial or cremation? Traditional burial is ideal because it gives better closure for those left behind. However, we do not live in an ideal world. There are circumstances where traditional burial isn't possible, or even affordable. For this reason,

ultimately it is up to the family. As long as it isn't motivated by a poor understanding about God or a belief that our body doesn't matter, cremation is not sinful or unchristian. Both are acceptable choices in most situations.

A funeral is never an easy thing to face, but it is something we shall all face some day. Therefore, it is important for us to be ready, for the sake of our loved ones. Jesus prior to his ascension said that the Gospel was to be preached to all of creation. Your funeral will be your last chance to do just this. Whether you are 20 years old or 120 years old, as long as you are breathing, it is never too early or too late to be prepared. May we all take to heart, this final opportunity to proclaim the Resurrection and the Life, who is Jesus Christ, our Lord, and our hope. In Jesus' name. Amen.



9:00AM Worship : Rob Uhl family

March Acolytes are listed on the calendar

COMMUNION ANNOUNCEMENT we will now be adding Holy Communion on the 5th Sunday of a month – which just happens to start this month in March, so it is not a misprint on the calendar

About our Communion Practice

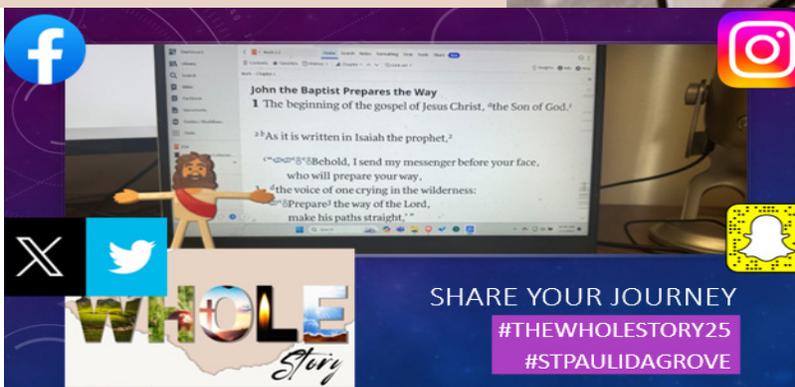
To our visitors and guests: In accordance with the apostolic command and in unity with the unbroken practice of the Church, St. Paul Lutheran practices Closed Communion. If you are not a member of a congregation in fellowship with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod we kindly ask you to refrain from communing. We do so not to offend you, but because the Scriptures clearly teach that those communing together be unified in their confession of the Faith. In this Sacrament we are not only joined to Christ our Head who is present in His body and blood but are also knit together with one another as His Body, in which there should be no division of belief. Should you have questions or concerns about this Biblical and historic doctrine, please speak with our pastor. If this is your first time communing at St. Paul Lutheran Church, please speak with our pastor before the service. If certain factors prohibit you from partaking in regular wine, a non-alcoholic option is available in the center circle of each tray. **If not communing but desiring to receive a blessing, please cross your arms over your chest when Pastor approaches.**

OFFERING BOXES In order to help with the overall flow and length of the worship service. we will be collecting the offering via the offering boxes in the Narthex. The main wooden offering box will still be available on the Welcome Center, there will be boxes available by each door that enters the Sanctuary.



COMMUNITY BASKET DONATIONS for COMMUNITY BASKET DONATIONS for March: Beverages, Coffee, tea, juices, hot chocolate, etc.. Place your donation in the shopping cart in the Narthex or hallway. Any items are appreciated as well, as they can always use donations. The Community Basket is open on Thursdays (except 3rd Thursday), from 2:30-5:30PM. ****They can always use toilet paper, laundry soap, shampoo & conditioner, canned vegetables, canned fruits & canned soups. Mobile Food Pantry will be at the Battle Creek Fire Station on Thursday, March 20 from 4:30-5:30PM.** Its helpful to bring a laundry basket or container for your food items. Volunteers to help carry are always appreciated.

The Whole Story is our Congregation as a group reading the Bible in a year. Suggested Apps below if that is how you like to read **the daily Bible readings and included in this newsletter, on the back of the March Calendar and a print out of the month of March daily readings will be on the Welcome Center,**



When you post on your personal Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or Snapchat Use the #thewholestory25 and #stpaulidagrove

GRAB YOUR FLAT JESUS, they are still available in the Narthex.

We first put Flat Jesus out in December for Christmas Eve and we have encouraged everyone to take and share with family and friends and to date we have ordered over 430 Flat Jesus' !!



FLAT JESUS We encourage everyone (all ages) to take a Flat Jesus and carry Flat Jesus with you, keep him in your car, or at work, etc.. We also encourage you to share Flat Jesus with someone you know, grand kids, other adults. We also encourage you to have Flat Jesus with you as you read through the Bible this next year, which will begin at our New Year's 6:00PM Worship Service. Take him with you any time you're out having lunch, dinner, driving, etc..If you would like to take a picture of him by your Bible, Tablet, computer or at your lunch table, dinner table, or car, etc..Send in your pictures we would love to post them or share them on the screens, with our announcement slides stpaulidagrove@gmail.com



2025 Lenten Midweek Worship Service Schedule

Wednesday, March 5th @6:30pm
Divine Service w/Communion & Imposition of Ashes
Ash Wednesday: Do not forsake the Gathering

Wednesday, March 12th @6:30pm
Surrounded by a Cloud of Witnesses

Wednesday, March 19th @6:30pm
Joseph, The Protector of Jesus

Wednesday, March 26th @6:30pm
What is the Bible?

Wednesday, April 2nd @6:30pm
What is a dead faith?

Wednesday, April 9th @6:30pm
More than Silver or Gold

The only meal we will be having before worship this Lenten season is on Ash Wednesday, which is a fundraiser for the Youth



JR High and SR High Youth

**Will be serving the Ash Wednesday Meal
on Wednesday, March 5 from
5:00-6:15PM**

**Serving Scalloped Potatoes & Ham, Green
Beans, Roll & Bars**

**Free Will Offering Fundraiser
For the Youth Groups**



**Cross Explorations & Catechism Classes
3rd – 5th Grades**

Class Time is 4:00-5:00PM

They can walk up after right after school

There will be snack time

If they need to stay til 5:15PM to wait for a sibling,
an adult will be present with them

6th, 7th & 8th Grades

Class Time is 4:00-5:15PM

On Early Out school day's it will be from

1:30-2:30PM 3rd – 5th grades

1:30-2:45PM 6th-8th grades

Early Outs in March is on Wednesday, March 26. Class will be at 1:30PM.

REMINDER OUR WEATHER CANCELLATION POLICY FOR WEDNESDAY

CLASSES: If school is dismissed early or cancelled it automatically cancels Midweek classes for grades 3rd - 8th grades

Also watch our Facebook page for those announcements as well St. Paul Lutheran Church, Ida Grove, Iowa LCMS

OUR LAST DAY OF WEDNESDAY CLASSES will be April 9 for grades 3rd – 7th, which is also an Early Out that day

FIRST COMMUNION for the 7th Grade Class is during the Maundy Thursday Worship Service on April 17

8th GRADE will have practice for Questioning on Wednesday, April 23 (during normal class time at 4:00PM)

8th GRADE CATECHISM QUESTIONING will be on Wednesday, April 30th, watch for details on time.



SUNDAY 10:15AM-11:15AM

4yr old Preschool – 2nd Grade in Nursery upstairs

3rd & 4th Grade in same classroom as last year on lower level

5th & 6th Grade in same classroom as last year on lower level

7th & 8th Grades are to attend Bible Class in the Fellowship Hall

9th -12th Grades in Youth Room

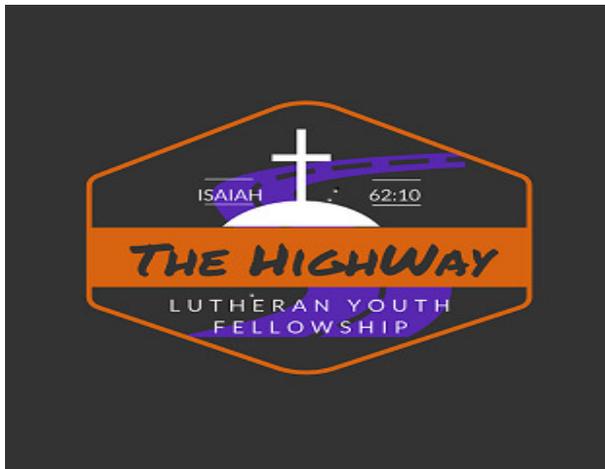
UPCOMING REMINDERS: There will be NO Sunday School on Sunday, April 20 And our LAST Sunday School will be Sunday, April 27

JR High and SR High Youth Pancake Breakfast



The next time the Youth will serve
Pancakes and Bacon will be
on Sunday, March 2, 2025 come and enjoy

FREE WILL OFFERING FUNDRAISER FOR ALL YOUTH ACTIVITIES,
YEARLY GATHERINGS, HIGHER THINGS AND NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING



The HighWay Sr High Youth (9th-12th)
Meets 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 7PM



The MidWay Jr High Youth (6th-8th)
Meets 2nd Wednesday of month 5:15-6:15PM

ASK THE PASTOR – LAST SUNDAYS OF THE MONTH "Have questions to ask Pastor Wehmas? He will attempt to answer a few questions as part of the services, during the last Sunday of the month. Submit your questions in the white box in the Narthex." A good way to get a question answered!!



MARCH

Birthdays

March 1 Teresa Feddersen
Erin Nielsen
March 3 Christine Krager
March 4 Sharlene Osborn
March 5 Chase Miesner
Dean Rath
Dennis Sykes
March 6 Denise Chisholm
Ava Wellendorf
March 8 Zachary Ehrig
Jayne Harrington
Chad Sharkey
March 9 Brent Wessel
March 10 David Groth
March 12 Jaron Miller
Jenna Miller
March 13 Kasey DeVine
March 14 Silvia Buns
Donna Hansen
Elliot Vohs
March 15 Kya Ladwig
March 16 Sandy Sykes

March 17 Byron Godbersen
March 18 Jared Bogue
Brent Rohlk
Wesley Swanger
March 19 Jeanne Bell
Preston Hinkeldey
Trey Riessen
March 21 Angela Goodman
March 22 Julianna Mefferd
March 25 Tood Jepsen
March 26 Madelyne Brimeyer
Dianna Geerdes
Kurtis Krager
Eric Zimmerman
March 28 Tony Bennett
Delores Borchers
March 29 Jennifer Hoffman
March 30 Vicki Gordon
Chris Knudsen



MARCH

Anniversaries

March 6 Ron & Zanet Thies

March 19 Doug & Vickie Linman



The Lenten Desert

During the Lenten season, which begins on Ash Wednesday (March 5 this year), Christians figuratively follow Jesus into the desert. Just as our Savior spent 40 days fasting and facing temptation, we focus on self-reflection and contrition.

In an 1873 hymn, Claudia Hernaman wrote, "O Lord, throughout these forty days, you prayed and kept the fast. Inspire repentance for our sin, and free us from our past."

The desert experience of Lent serves a clear purpose, filling us up rather than depleting us. "This is what Lent is meant to be," writes theologian Ron Rolheiser. "Time in the desert to courageously face the chaos and the demons within us and to let God do battle with them through us. The result is that we are purified, made ready, so the intoxicating joy of Easter might then bind us more closely to God and each other."

Puzzle!



Fill in the blanks with the tiny creatures mentioned in each verse (all NIV). Then search for those words in the puzzle below.

- Proverbs 6:6 _____
- Psalms 78:45 _____
- Matthew 23:24 _____
- Judges 14:8b _____
- Acts 12:23 _____
- Leviticus 11:22 _____
- Leviticus 11:22 _____
- Deuteronomy 7:20 _____
- Exodus 16:20 _____
- 1 Samuel 24:14 _____
- Isaiah 50:9 _____
- Isaiah 59:5 _____
- Leviticus 11:22 _____
- Leviticus 11:22 _____



M	O	T	H	S	G	N	A	T	B	H
A	N	T	A	L	L	C	H	P	E	O
G	R	A	S	S	H	O	P	P	E	R
G	F	C	R	I	C	K	E	T	S	N
O	L	S	P	I	D	E	R	S	B	E
T	E	C	L	O	C	U	S	T	D	T
S	A	E	F	K	A	T	Y	D	I	D
G	F	L	I	E	S	W	O	R	M	S



Answer key: fly, gnat, bee, worm, locust, grasshopper, hornet, maggot, fly, moth, spider, katydid, cicada



FROM WORD TO WORLD

Words are important! God spoke and created all things. What does the psalmist declare about creation?

Directions: Using the word clues, unscramble the letters to complete Psalm 102:25, NIV.

- A preposition: IN _____
- An article: THE _____
- Genesis means this: INNIBSEIGN _____
- A second-person pronoun: OUY _____
- Past tense of to lay: IDAL _____
- An article: HET _____
- A plural noun meaning case: SOOTAINFONUJ _____
- A preposition showing possession: FO _____
- An article: TEH _____
- A concrete noun meaning world: HRTEA _____



Psalm 102:25, NIV

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Puzzle!

Search for and circle all the bold words from Psalm 18:2, which reminds us where we find our strength.

The **LORD** is **MY ROCK**, my **FORTRESS** and my **DELIVERER**; my **GOD** is my rock, in whom I **TAKE REFUGE**. **HE** is my **SHIELD** and the **HORN** of my **SALVATION**, my **STRONGHOLD**.

S	T	R	O	N	G	H	O	L	D	T	S
O	L	O	B	K	I	E	Y	E	J	S	A
R	E	F	U	G	E	I	Y	N	T	V	L
R	O	G	H	A	R	L	Q	R	A	Y	V
S	X	C	T	T	I	M	T	K	K	M	A
H	O	R	N	C	E	Y	R	A	E	D	T
I	G	F	V	L	O	L	K	E	N	S	I
E	N	F	O	R	T	R	E	S	S	G	O
L	T	U	R	G	Q	A	C	K	J	Q	N
D	C	D	E	L	I	V	E	R	E	R	E
K	Y	U	X	O	C	N	O	O	Y	Q	S
X	H	X	A	R	K	L	R	C	N	H	Y
G	O	D	T	D	K	A	D	K	U	D	X

GOD ROCKS!

