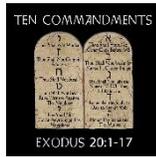


FEBRUARY 2026 St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church Connection

106 S. Maple St. PO Box 357 North Freedom, WI 53951

Message from the Pastor



The Second Commandment

“You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God.” (Exodus 20:7)

A person's name is one of the dearest treasures we own. We like to hear it used in positive moments (“Good job, Robert!”) and to have it honored by others (“Betty Johnson, top student in her class”). How dismayed we would feel if our name gets dragged in the mud or even used as a pejorative.

How do you think the Lord our God feels, then, when we misuse his name? “Oh my God” is treated as a joke phrase; worse still, his name is used in curse words as in “God-d***” and other four-letter words to that effect. What James wrote is true: “Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be” (Jas. 3:10). How could we who believe and honor God use our tongues to curse, swear, or lie by his name?

Lying by God's name is done by those who claim to be teaching God's Word, but in reality are promoting false doctrine. God has this to say about such misuse of his name and Word: “I am against the prophets who wag their own tongues and yet declare, ‘The Lord declares’” (Jer. 23:31). His name is used as a cover for false teaching that leads people away from the Lord.

Martin Luther also warns about witchcraft in connection with this commandment. Though we might think of superstition and witchcraft as make-believe, there are spiritual powers that do not come from God. Don't dabble in things like the occult, horoscopes or mediums; such powers come from the devil, not the Lord!

But there are proper uses for the name of the Lord. Luther tells us what they are: Call on him in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks. Just as we love to hear our name in good contexts, the Lord loves it when we call on his name to pray and to tell others about his wonderful name. For it is by that name, the name of Jesus, that we are saved (Acts 4:12).

At Mount Sinai, the Lord told the first priest, Aaron, to pronounce his name on the Israelites: “The LORD bless you and keep you, the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD look on you with his favor, and give you peace.” He added, “So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them” (Num. 6:24-27). We still use that blessing in church today. May we be eager to use his name correctly, the name of the Lord that blesses us, the name by which he saves us!

--Pastor Timothy Blauert

February Sunday Worship

Sunday, Feb. 1. 4th Sunday after Epiphany. 8:30 a.m. communion service. Theme: Jesus preaches about who are blessed.

Sunday, Feb. 8. 5th Sunday after Epiphany. 7:30 and 10 a.m. worship. Theme: Jesus preaches about who we are.

Sunday, Feb. 15. Transfiguration Sunday. 7:30 and 10 a.m. communion services. Theme: Jesus appears as the Son of God in glory.

Sunday, Feb. 22. 1st Sunday in Lent. 7:30 and 10 a.m. worship. Theme: The Savior we need—A champion for the defeated.

Daily Devotions in February will take us through some of Paul's epistles: Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians. Sunday devotions are on Psalms 120-127. Grow daily in the Word!



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"It Is Finished"

2026 Lent series

Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m., Feb. 18—Mar. 25

Feb. 18 (Ash Wednesday): "Scattered Sheep" (Zech. 13:7-9) Pastor Blauert. Communion will be served.

Feb. 25: "The Truth, the Whole Truth, and Nothing but the Truth" (Zech. 8:14-17) Pastor Dave Karow of Rock Springs.

Mar. 4: "The Kingly Priest" (Zech. 6:9-13) Pastor Conrad Prell of Richland Center.

Mar. 11: "Look at the One Who was Pierced" (Zech. 12:10-13) Pastor Brad Pearson of Prairie du Sac.

Mar. 18: "Return to Me!" (Zech. 1:1-6) Pastor Tim Kuske of Baraboo.

Mar. 25: "What's He Worth to You?" (Zech. 11:7-13) Pastor Steve Neyhart of Reedsburg.

Treats will be served after each service. Please sign up at church for bringing treats.

ASH WEDNESDAY: Feb. 18th

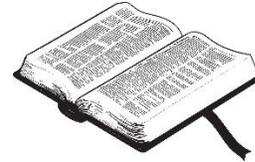


At 5:30 p.m., Feb. 18, we will have a soup supper to start the Lent season. Please sign up at church if you will attend, and what you will bring for the supper.

Our Ash Wednesday service will be at 6:30 p.m., with communion.

BIBLE CLASS

"Elijah: A Prophet on Fire"



Our Bible Class is studying about Elijah this winter. Bible Class time is from 8:45 to 9:45 a.m. on Sunday, Feb. 15 and 22, and after fellowship hour on Sunday, Feb. 1. All adults and teens are welcome to join us!

LADIES' AID

In February, the Ladies Aid will be going out to eat to celebrate Valentine's Day (a few days early). We're going to Log Cabin in Baraboo on Tuesday, February 10 at 5:30 p.m. Ladies, please sign up at church by Feb. 8 if you would like to join us!



GAME NIGHT, Tuesday, Feb. 17th



We'll get together for our monthly game night on Tuesday, Feb. 17 at 6:30 p.m. Bring your favorite board or card game, a snack to share, and a friend!

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CARDS



Mary Klemm is our Sunshine Lady for St. Paul's. If anyone is sick or needs a card of encouragement, please contact her.

ALTAR GUILD

The altar guild sign-up sheet is on the table in the fellowship hall. This is a great way to help with worship at St. Paul's. Please speak with Rose Vertein if you are interested and have questions. Thank you!



Altar Flowers

On the table in the fellowship hall, please sign up to bring altar flowers for a particular Sunday, in honor of a birthday or anniversary, in memory of a loved one, or just on your own. Please refer to the directions in the fellowship hall for caring for altar flowers.

Our offerings and service to the Lord

Dec. 28, 7:30 am Attend.: 27; Offering: \$2,423

10 am Attend.: 14; Offering: \$975

Jan. 4, 8:30 am Attend.: 40; Offering: \$1,814

Jan. 11, 7:30 am Attend.: 31; Offering: \$1,925

10 am Attend.: 14; Offering: \$255

Jan. 18, 7:30 am Attend.: 30 ; Offering: \$5,760

10 am Attend.: 16; Offering: \$360

Average attendance: 8:30 am (combined): 40; 7:30 am: 29; 10 am: 15.

NEWS from the WELS



Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

- On January 9, Rev. Charles Vannieuwenhoven was installed as the administrator for the Board of Ministerial Education. Vannieuwenhoven was most recently dean of students of Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis.
- Lutheran high school enrollment climbed 2.6% for the '25-26 school year, while enrollment of Lutheran elementary schools remained flat and enrollment at WELS early childhood ministries declined slightly, 4.9%. A shortage of called workers has affected some schools. Several early childhood centers have paused their work because they could not get enough workers to staff the centers, and some smaller schools are struggling to get teachers for their schools. WELS Lutheran Schools is encouraging congregations and schools to recruit, retain, and renew.
- There are now 162 total pastoral vacancies in the synod, of which 154 are in congregations. That number is up slightly over the last couple of months. A larger graduating class from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary this spring should help. Keep asking the Lord of the harvest to send out more workers into the harvest field!



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ST. PAUL'S "INFORMATION" PAGE

Pastor: Rev. Timothy Blauert

Church secretary: Elaine Shimniok

Contact us: Church office: 608-522-4493.

Pastor's cell phone: 507-279-8560.

Email: stpaulsnf@hotmail.com or

tkblauert@outlook.com

Website address: www.stpaulslutheran-nf.org

Worship times: Sundays 7:30 and 10 a.m.

First Sunday, 8:30 a.m.

Communion, 1st & 3rd Sundays

Sunday School: Sundays at 8:35 a.m., or after the service on the first Sunday of the month.

Adult Bible study: Sundays at 8:45 a.m. or after the service on the 1st Sunday of the month.

Church Council

Paul Fuller, Bill Page, John Shimniok, Mark Shimniok, Dave Zimmerman and Jeremy Zimmerman. Council positions will be decided at the February 8 council meeting.

Ladies' Aid

President: Elaine Shimniok

Secretary: Kristine Blauert

Treasurer: Elaine Shimniok

Sunshine Lady: Mary Klemm

LWMS Reporter: Linda Ennis

Church organist

Susan Grossenbacher

Church Custodian Vonnie Leifer

Please remember our shut-in members with your prayers and visits

Ellie Schultz

Please let Pastor know if you are sick, in the hospital, or are having any other difficulties. He'll be glad to visit and have a devotion and pray with you, as well as offer communion. His contact information is on the left column of this page.



Happy Anniversary!

(No anniversaries this month)



Happy Birthday to:

Aiden Burrow – January 1

Kaitlyn Ostrowski – February 5

Rylee Zeman – February 8

Andy Shimniok – February 11

Darrell Weiland – February 13

Evelynn Shimniok – February 15

Ruby Schneider – February 16

Sarah Schneider – February 21

Presley Zimmerman – February 21

Linda Ennis – February 22

Hudson Hehenberger – February 27

Carole Ahrensmeyer – February 28

Passage to think about this month: *Romans 5:8. But God shows his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*