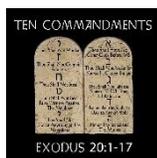


MARCH 2026 St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church Connection

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

Message from the Pastor



The Third Commandment

“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.” (Exodus 20:8)

There’s been a lot of talk about “A.I.” (artificial intelligence) and how it might take over some jobs. Certain office workers and analysts might become expendable. Just ask your chatbot for the information or analysis of a problem. Even some lawyers might see their jobs lost to A.I.

Could such a thing happen to pastors?

Some think it might. Already, many people seem to get their spiritual needs filled by watching church on TV or downloading something inspirational on their phone. And as A.I. increases, some imagine that more people can use Siri or Alexa or any other chatbot for Biblical information and devotional use.

But I don’t think it will, and not just because I’m a pastor. When God instituted the Sabbath Day for Israel, he meant it as a day not just for physical rest, but for spiritual assembly (see Leviticus 23:3). God designed us people for social interaction, not as mere individuals. We have a need to get together as God’s people. In the New Testament, God urges us: “[Let us] not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching” (Heb. 10:25).

God has appointed ministers of the gospel who have been trained thoroughly in the Bible to preach the Word, teach it and lead a congregation in worship. Would we be able to rely on a chatbot, not knowing where Siri is getting its information? Can your compute and

phone give you communion and baptize your daughter or grandson? I don’t think so!

Remembering the Sabbath day still applies to us in our modern world. We need that special time with God. The Sunday service and other special worship days are unique ways to provide it. At church we not only get God’s Word, we also hear the pastor say, “I forgive you in the name of the Father...” We get to sing to God, pray with fellow believers, and receive Holy Communion together. We also get to encourage one another to continue in the faith.

This month, March, we get more opportunity to worship with Wednesday Lent services. Get the most out of your church! Come and worship when it’s offered! For Christ is here, the Lord of the Sabbath who gives us our true rest—rest for our souls (Matt. 11:28,29), the forgiveness of our sins.

--Pastor Timothy Blauert

March Sunday Worship

Sunday, Mar. 1. 2nd Sunday in Lent. 8:30 a.m. communion service. Theme: Jesus: A gift for the world.

Sunday, Mar. 8. 3rd Sunday in Lent. 7:30 and 10 a.m. worship. Theme: Jesus: Water for the thirsty.

Sunday, Mar. 15. 4th Sunday in Lent. 7:30 and 10 a.m. communion services. Theme: Jesus: Sight for the blind.

Sunday, Mar. 22. 5th Sunday in Lent. 7:30 and 10 a.m. worship. Theme: Jesus: Life for the dead.

Sunday, Mar. 29. Palm Sunday. 7:30 and 10 a.m. worship. Theme: Jesus, a humble king who saves us.

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"It Is Finished"

2026 Lent series

Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.

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.



Maundy (Holy) Thursday, April 2

Communion service at 6:30 p.m.

Good Friday, April 3

Worship service at 3 p.m.

Easter Worship: Sunday, April 5

SON-Rise Service: 7 am (with communion)

Easter breakfast: 8 to 9 am

Easter service: 10 am (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, Mar. 15, 22 and 29, and after fellowship hour on Sunday, Mar. 1. All adults and teens are welcome to join us!

LADIES' AID

The Ladies Aid's next meeting will be Tuesday, March 10 at 6:30 p.m. We encourage all women to come to enjoy fellowship as well as discuss plans for serving the Lord at St. Paul's.



GAME NIGHT, Tuesday, Mar. 17th



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

CONGREGATION MEETING

Minutes from the January 11, 2026

Congregation meeting are attached to this newsletter.

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The Church Council will have their next meeting on Sunday, March 8 at 8:35 a.m. (in between the worship services). New council positions for this year are: Dave Zimmerman, president; Paul Fuller, vice-president; John Shimniok, secretary; Mark Shimniok, treasurer; Jeremy Zimmerman, financial secretary; Bill Page, head usher.

LENT BY CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

Sunday, March 1, 2 p.m.

At: St. John's Lutheran, Hillpoint

All ladies are invited to attend this event. The topic is "The Women of Lent," and it will be followed with a light snack. Please let Kristine or Elaine know if you plan to go.



St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Mauston is having a Women's Retreat on Saturday, March 7 from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. The cost is \$25. There is a sign on the bulletin board with a QR code to scan, or you can go to www.stpauls-wels.com to register.



Baby items are being collected for the mission in Malawi. There is a list of needed items on the bulletin board and a box under the table for the collection. Items may be gently used, just no stains or tears. We will collect them until the Spring Rally on April 18.

FOOD COLLECTION

Non-perishable food items are being collected through the Lent season. Items will be given to Baraboo Food Pantry. Gray bin is under table.



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

Jan. 25, 7:30 am Attend.: 29; Offering: \$1,169
10 am Attend.: 12; Offering: \$508
Feb. 1, 8:30 am Attend.: 44; Offering: \$2,772
Feb. 8, 7:30 am Attend.: 33; Offering: \$1,250
10 am Attend.: 18; Offering: \$375
Feb. 15, 7:30 am Attend.: 32; Offering: \$670
10 am Attend.: 21; Offering: \$890
Feb. 18 (Ash Wednesday)
6:30 p.m. Attend.: 31; Offering: \$365

Average attendance: 8:30 am (combined): 44; 7:30 am: 31; 10 am: 17.

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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

President: Dave Zimmerman

Vice-President: Paul Fuller

Head Usher: Bill Page

Secretary: John Shimniok

Treasurer: Mark Shimniok

Financial Secretary: Jeremy Zimmerman

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:

Tim Rathman – March 5

Lori Cook – March 8

Faith Henke – March 8

Elenora Schultz – March 14

Regalle Rathman – March 15

John Bell – March 21

Doug Klein – March 21

Curt Klemm – March 22

Adam Hehenberger – March 25

Axtyn Shimniok – March 30

Passage to think about this month: 2
Corinthians 5:21. *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*