

ST. PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

125 Years



**of God's
Amazing Grace**

St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church | Wisconsin Rapids, WI

January 26, 2025



Welcome To Worship

If you are a visitor to our church, we extend you a warm welcome. We are happy you are here. Please fill out a Connect Card to let us know how we might continue to serve you.

It's encouraging to see parents bring their families to worship the Lord. If your child becomes restless, you can use the Family Room to calm them. Quiet bags and children's bulletins are also available to keep little ones busy. Restrooms are located in the hallways along either side of the worship space. For those with special needs, large print copies of the service folder and listening devices are available from the ushers. One of our ushers can help you find the restrooms or family room and answer any other questions.

Service Notes For This Service

God has truly showered St. Paul's with amazing grace! It is his guiding hand that has brought our congregation through all 125 years of its history. "If the Lord does not build the house, it is useless for the builders to work hard over it" (Psalm 127:1). We have reason to celebrate and give thanks today. As we reflect on our past and look ahead to the future, there is no other conclusion to which we can come—only by the amazing grace of God!

Those Serving in Worship

Liturgist: Pastor Peter Plagenz – Current pastor

Lector: Pastor Lucas Proeber – Served St. Paul's 2018-2024

Preacher: Pastor Carl Schroeder – Served St. Paul's 2006-2009

Blessing: Pastor Norman Paul – Served St. Paul's 1981-1996

Accompanist, Destinee Fiecko

Special Music: Instrumentalists, Joyful Ringers Handbell Choir, Church Choir, Students from St. Paul's Lutheran School

Cover Art: Marcie Oestreich

Acknowledgements

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Anniversary Service

Welcome

Hymn

576 Amazing Grace

Stand

Invocation

In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Opening Responses

Psalm 100

Shout to the Lord with joy, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness.

Come before him with joyful songs.

Know that the Lord is God.

He made us, and we are his.

We are his people,

the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving,

his courtyards with praise.

Give thanks to him and bless his name.

For the Lord is good.

His mercy endures forever.

His faithfulness continues through all generations.

Response

617 Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow
Sung at the original 1900 dedication service.

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all
crea-tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye heav'n - ly host;
praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711. Tune: Trente quatre Pseaumes de David, Geneva, 1551, ed. Louis Bourgeois. Text and tune: Public domain

Confession

Used for three decades in Christian Worship (the red hymnal).

Beloved in the Lord: let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son T and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Response

*640 God's Word Is Our Great Heritage
Sung at 1960 dedication of the new building.*

God's Word is our great her - i - tage and shall be ours for -
ev - er; to spread its light from age to age shall be our
chief en - deav - or. Thro' life it guides our way, in death it
is our stay. Lord, grant, while worlds en - dure, we keep its
teach - ings pure through - out all gen - er - a - tions.

Text: tr. Ole G. Belsheim, alt.; Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig, 1783–1872. Tune: Friedrich O. Reuter, 1863–1924. Text and tune: Public domain

The Word

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you have promised to be with your church forever. We praise you for your presence in this place of worship and ask your ongoing blessing upon those who gather here. Dwell continually among us with your Holy Word and sacraments, strengthen our fellowship in the bonds of love and peace, and increase our faithful witness to your salvation; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Be seated

First Reading

Deuteronomy 7:6–9

The love that the LORD shows to his people and to us as a church is truly undeserved.

⁶For you are a people that is holy to the LORD your God, because the LORD your God has chosen you to belong to him as a people that is his treasured possession, chosen from all the peoples that are on the face of the earth. ⁷The LORD became attached to you by love and has chosen you, not because you were more numerous than all the peoples. Actually you were the fewest of all the peoples. ⁸But because of the LORD's love for you and because he was keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that is why the LORD brought you out by a strong hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

⁹He did this so that you would know that the LORD your God, yes, he is God, the faithful God who maintains both his covenant and his mercy for those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations. (EHV*)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Anthem by the School Children (PreK-8)

Doxology/Oh, Shout for Joy

Second Reading

Ephesians 2:1–10

Just as our congregation's history, our salvation is not by what we have done but by grace.

¹You were dead in your trespasses and sins, ²in which you formerly walked when you followed the ways of this present world. You were following the ruler of the domain of the air, the spirit now at work in the people who disobey.

³Formerly, we all lived among them in the passions of our sinful flesh, as we carried out the desires of the sinful flesh and its thoughts. Like all the others, we were by nature objects of God's wrath.

⁴But God, because he is rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in trespasses. It is by grace you have been saved! ⁶He also raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. ⁷He did this so that, in the coming ages, he might demonstrate the surpassing riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸Indeed, it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹not by works, so that no one can boast.

¹⁰For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared in advance so that we would walk in them. (EHV®)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Choir Anthem

A Choral Benediction

Stand

Gospel

John 17:1, 13–26

By God's grace we are united to the Father through Christ and the apostolic message of the gospel.

¹After Jesus had spoken these things, he looked up to heaven and said, “Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son so that your Son may glorify you.

¹³“But now I am coming to you, and I am saying these things in the world, so that they may be filled with my joy. ¹⁴I have given them your word. The world hated them, because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵I am not asking that you take them out of the world, but that you protect them from the Evil One. ¹⁶They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

¹⁷“Sanctify them by the truth. Your word is truth. ¹⁸As you sent me into the world, I also sent them into the world. ¹⁹I sanctify myself for them, so they also may be sanctified by the truth.

²⁰“I am praying not only for them, but also for those who believe in me through their message. ²¹May they all be one, as you, Father, are in me, and I am in you. May they also be one in us, so that the world may believe that you sent me. ²²I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are one: ²³I in them, and you in me. May they become completely one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

²⁴“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am so that they may see my glory—the glory you gave me, because you loved me before the world's foundation.

²⁵Righteous Father, the world did not know you, but I knew you, and these men knew that you

sent me. ²⁶I made your name known to them and will continue to make it known, so that the love you have for me may be in them, and that I may be in them.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Children's Message

Hymn

Thank the Lord and Sing His Praises

Originally written by Helen Koenig and David Brown in 1999 for the 100th Anniversary, we sing it today for our 125th Anniversary with updated words by Kristi Perry. Please join to sing stanza 4.



4.Lord, we come with hearts u - nit - ed, voic - es sing - ing hymns of praise, for one



hun - dred twen - ty - five years, for Your grace which does a - maze. Keep us



faith - ful to Your pre - cepts and your Gos - pel ev - er true. With our



voi - ces raised in tri - umph, we give glor - y un - to You.

Sermon

Just Look What Grace Has Done!

For out of his fullness we have all received grace upon grace.
- John 1:16

Stand

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Be seated

Prayer of the Church

Holy Spirit, the Christian church is your creation. We give thanks to you that you have established and now preserved this congregation for 125 years. All glory be to God on high! We pray that you will fill us with zeal for your Word and work. Bless our efforts to nourish believers through the proclamation of the forgiveness of sins Christ has won for all. Equip us with the eagerness to never stop inviting guests to the banquet of salvation. Cause our congregation to thrive in years to come, dear Lord, for the glory of your name and the salvation of souls.

We praise you for your amazing grace!

Good Shepherd of the sheep, we thank you for the ministry of our school as its faculty and staff have worked to nurture the hearts, souls, and minds of your precious lambs for 125 years. Bless our school in the future so that students may continue to learn about your amazing grace for years to come. Unify us in our ministry so that our church and school go forward together glorifying your name and proclaiming your gospel.

We praise you for your amazing grace!

Gracious Father in heaven, so often we experience your love and kindness through the people you place around us. This has been the case for 125 years as you have blessed your church through the ministry of dozens of pastors, vicars, principals, and teachers. We offer you our thanks and praise for bringing them to serve you and your people in the public ministry of the gospel. For those still serving, whether here or elsewhere, continue to bless them with an abundance of love for those entrusted to their care and assure them that their labor in your kingdom has great worth in your sight.

We praise you for your amazing grace!

Lord of the church, we thank you for the gospel ministry that you graciously allow us to carry out in this congregation in its 125 years. Now, as we forge ahead in mission and ministry, help us remember the purpose for which you have gathered us together in this place—that we might proclaim your gospel. Bless us with a spirit of humility and gratitude that we always rely solely on your grace.

We praise you for your amazing grace!

Special prayers and intercession

All these prayers we bring to you, our triune God of heaven and earth, in the name of Jesus Christ our mediator.

Amen.

Special Prayers This Week

† For Carol Jackson who is battling cancer

† For Tara Winecki, who we called to serve as a primary grade teacher

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Connect Card and Offering

Please take a moment to fill out a Connect Card. After a few moments, the ushers will come forward to collect the offering. You may place your Connect Card and any offering you brought in the plate as it is passed. Moved by God's love in Christ, we offer him our first and best gifts, purely out of thanks to him. If the gospel message has moved you to give and you would like an electronic option, you can scan this QR code with your mobile phone. It will connect you with our website's giving page.



Musical Offering

Cantad al Senor: O Sing to the Lord

Stand

Prayer

Lord Jesus, you have made us the sheep of your pasture, and we have no more joyous privilege than to enter your gates and sing your praises. When we enter the courts of your house, fill our hearts with sincere thanksgiving for your never-ending grace; for you live and rule with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

Blessing

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 favor and give you peace.
Amen.

Be seated

Hymn

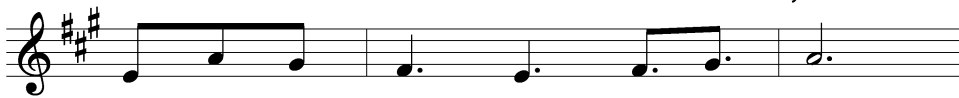
877 Reformation Song



1 Your Word a - lone is sol - id ground,
 2 Thro' faith a - lone we come to you;
 3 In Christ a - lone we're jus - ti - fied;
 4 By grace a - lone we have been saved;



the might - y rock on which we build.
 we have no mer - it we can claim.
 his right - eous - ness is all our plea.
 all that we are has come from you.



In ev - 'ry line the truth is found,
 Sure that your prom - is - es are true,
 Your law's de - mands are sat - is - fied;
 Hearts that were once by sin en - slaved



and ev - 'ry page with glo - ry filled. v. 2
 we place our hope in Je - sus' name.
 his per - fect work has set us free.
 now by your pow'r have been made new.



Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, glo - ry to God a - lone.



Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, glo - ry to God a - lone.

Text and tune: Bob Kauflin, b. 1955; Tim Chester, b. 1967; © 2017 Sovereign Grace Praise, admin. IntegratedRights.com. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 719903



Take Home Questions

Deuteronomy 7:6-9

1. From the little child who can't sleep without his security blanket to the adult who is worried about keeping his job, the whole world is desperately looking for security. Based on these verses, where alone can true security be found?
2. God expresses his love for Israel with special terms like "his people" or "his treasured possession." Can you think of other terms or titles in the rest of Scripture that God gives his people which express his love for them?

Ephesians 2:1-10

3. God loved us, but it was not because he saw anything lovable in us. For what reasons did God love us and shower his grace on us?
4. As you go about your day-to-day life, what truths expressed in these verses do you especially want to remember?

John 17:1,13-26

5. The disciples would face challenging times after Jesus ascended into heaven. Yet, how would God keep them safe in the days ahead?
6. Discuss the unity Jesus prayed for in these verses. With whom are we united? How is this unity possible? Why does God unite us in this way?

Bonus

7. What in your history with St. Paul's leads you to give thanks for God's amazing grace?

News & Announcements

School Book Fair Open to All

Jan. 26 & Feb. 2

St. Paul's Lutheran School is excited to partner with I55 again for our annual Book Fair. I55 is a company "passionate about raising up a generation of inspired readers." Their name comes from Isaiah 55 all of their products are screened through the filter of faith. A portion of the proceeds are banked as "book bucks" for our School to improve and expand our library. The book fair will be open Jan. 26 and Feb. 2 for in-person shopping. You can also shop online at <https://i55bookfairs.com/pages/WI046>.



Primary Teacher Called

Last Sunday, we called Tara Winecke to serve as a teacher in the primary grades of our school. She currently teaches 1st & 2nd grade at St. John's Lutheran School in Waterloo, WI, where she has been serving since 2020. Ms. Winecke is single and enjoys music. Please keep Ms. Winecke and her congregation in your prayers as she deliberates her call.

No Family Bible Hour This Week

With this Sunday's worship schedule being different than usual, both Sunday School and Sunday Bible Study are cancelled. Please join us next week 9:15-10:15 am. Sunday School is open to all children in 3^K through 5th grade. The Sunday Bible Study is held in the cafeteria and is currently looking at 1 Peter.

Nerf Wars Teen Event Tonight

Jan. 26 | 5:45 pm

Tonight, teens from 8th grade to 12th grade are invited to a WELS Youth Night that includes a Nerf War. The Nerf War is like "paint ball" but with nerf guns. Nerf guns and ammo will be provided, but you can also bring your own. Eye protection is encouraged. The event runs from 5:45-8:30 pm at Northland Lutheran High School. Please sign up as early as possible to make sure we have enough nerf gear and food for everyone. Teens are encourage to bring a friend. Register at www.mysaintpeter.org/wels-youth-night



Foundations of the Christian Faith

Feb. 1 | 8:30-12:30

We have a workshop-style class beginning next Saturday. It explains what the Bible teaches about God and your relationship to him. Whether you have been worshipping with us for a while or this is your first visit, we invite you to come Saturday mornings – 8:30-12:30 - on Feb. 1, Feb. 15, Mar. 1 and Mar. 15. If you are interested, please contact Pastor Plagenz at 920-689-3036 or pastorplagenz@stpaulswr.org.

Photo Sessions Begin Soon

Feb. 6-12

Photo Sessions for our new church directory begin Feb. 6. If you have not booked a photo session yet, please do so soon. We'd like to include as many members as possible. You will receive a free professional portrait for participating. You can schedule an appointment by calling the church office, using the link on our website, or scanning the QR code on posters in the Welcome Center.

Greeters Needed: We need volunteers to greet people as they arrive for their photo sessions and assist the photographers with any paperwork. There are over 40 hours of photography taking place, so please consider serving a 2-3 hour shift. See the Ministry Table to sign up or contact Judy Stensberg (715-421-3634).



Event Host Needed for BIC Workshop

Feb. 1

Pastor Plagenz is looking for a volunteer to help with hosting our BIC Workshops. The first session is on Saturday, Feb. 1 from 8:30-12:30. Duties include making coffee, organizing snacks and lunch, etc. Contact Pastor Plagenz to volunteer.

Bible & Brews

Feb. 6

Our Connect Group, Bible & Brews, will be meeting on Thursdays at 6:00 pm during the month of February. They gather at B's Tap House (140 E Grand Ave) to discuss the take-home questions in the bulletin and enjoy a little fellowship. You can just drop in and look for Greg Paul, or contact Greg at 715-424-0449. If that time doesn't work for you, see our calendar for our other bible study meeting times or consider starting your own group. Contact Pastor Plagenz or Judy Stensberg to learn how.

Learn to Run the Sound Board

Feb. 8

The Technology Director from St. Peters in Weyauwega will be here on Feb. 8 to help us learn more about how to operate our sound board. We would like to have a minimum of 5 people who are trained to operate this equipment. If you are interested, please contact either Chris Williams (507-279-0167 ~ cawilliams56@gmail.com) or Veronica Klish (spedbuggy@gmail.com ~ 715-421-3607).

Can Your Group Serve a Fellowship Meal This Lent?



We have a late Lent this year, with Ash Wednesday on March 5. However, it is not too early for your group to consider serving one of the Lenten meals. The freewill offering from the meal can be directed to whatever ministry fund that you choose. There is a signup sheet on the Ministry Table. See Alan Verjinsky if you have any questions.

Sunday	10:00 AM	125th Anniversary Worship Service
	11:30 AM	Anniversary Luncheon
Monday	1:30 PM	Spiritual Health Group at the chapel of WR Health Services
	4:30 PM	Choir Practice in the Balcony
	5:30 PM	Men's Devotional Basketball in the gym
Tuesday	6:45 AM	Men's Bible Study at From the Ground Up Coffee Shop
	9:45 AM	Women Walking in the Word in the Resource Center
	6:30 PM	Stephen Ministers in the Welcome Center
Wednesday	8:35 AM	Principal to Parent Bible Study in the Welcome Center
	8:55 AM	School Chapel Service
	6:30 PM	Bible Book Group in the Resource Center
	6:30 PM	Catechism Class in the Bible Study Room
Thursday	7:00 AM	Men's Small Group at From the Ground Up Coffee Shop
Saturday	8:30 AM	Foundations of the Christian Faith
Sunday	8:00 AM	Worship
	9:15 AM	Bible Study in the cafeteria
	9:15 AM	Sunday School
	10:30 AM	Worship

Attendance Report

Last Week's Attendance: 155

Next Sunday

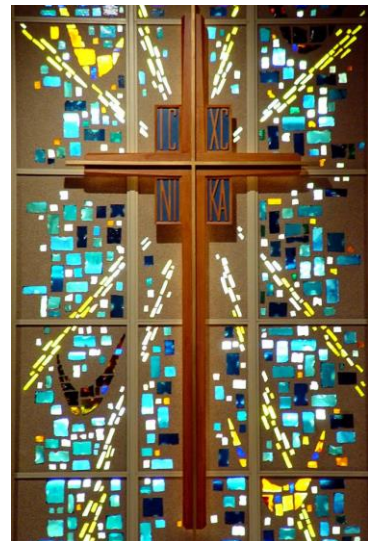
Theme: Popularity Is Not Proof of Success

Readings: Jeremiah 1:4-10; 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5;

Luke 4:38-44

Upcoming Events

- Feb. 1 Foundations of the Christian Faith
- Feb. 5 Evening Compline Service
- Feb. 6 Bible & Brews Begins
- Feb. 6-12 Photo Sessions for New Directory
- Feb. 8 Worship Technology Training Session





311 14th Ave S | Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495 | 715-421-3634 | churchoffice@stpaulswr.org
Pastor Peter Plagenz | 920-689-3036 | pastorplagenz@stpaulswr.org