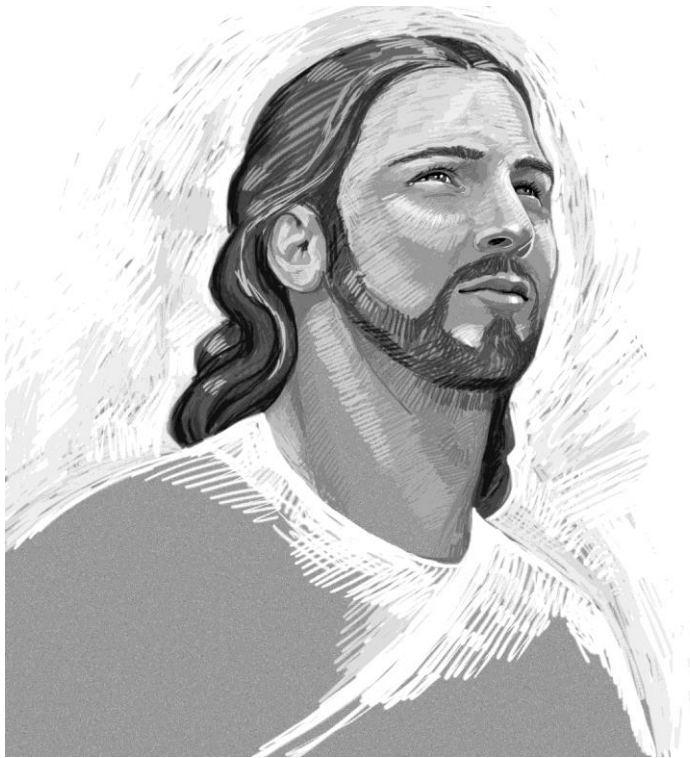


# WELCOME TO WORSHIP!

They said, "What is this?  
A new teaching with authority!"

– Mark 1:27



EPIPHANY REVEALS OUR LIFE WITH CHRIST:

Absolute Authority Is His

*Third Sunday after Epiphany*

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

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January 28, 2024



## 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

Authority is the power to determine what happens, the ability to give direction or even commands. Authority is limited. Authority is limited in duration. Parents have authority over their children until they grow up and move out. Authority is limited in scope. A governor has authority over the people of his state only, not the neighboring state. Authority is limited by levels. A manager has authority over employees unless the company owner—a higher authority—demotes him. Authority is limited in duration and scope. It is limited by higher levels of authority.

This week we see that there is one man—only one!—who has absolute authority. There is no one, not even the demons, who is outside his authority. As the Son of God there is no higher authority than Jesus. And his authority is everlasting. But here is the best part of this epiphany: Jesus graciously uses his absolute authority for our benefit and blessing.

## Those Serving in Worship

Pastor Peter Plagenz; Organist Destinee Fiecko; Offering Music Pastors Duet; the Pre-K-8<sup>th</sup> grade students of St. Paul's Lutheran School

## Acknowledgements

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# Christian Education Sunday

## Welcome

### Hymn

382 *The People Who Walked in Darkness*

While this hymn is unfamiliar, the children loved singing it in December. It recalls many of the amazing names God has given to himself. Please join to sing beginning with the second verse.



1 The peo-ple who walked in dark-ness a - wak - en to  
2 For God has en - larged the na - tion and pros-pered the  
3 The yoke of de - spair and bond-age, the chains and the  
4 For us now a child is giv - en, for all the de-  
5 How vast is our God's do - min - ion! How far truth and



see a great light. The peo - ple who dwelt in the  
fruit of its land. God's peo - ple are blest with the  
slave-mas - ter's rod are shat - tered and scat - tered like  
spised and for - lorn. The rule of com - pas - sion shall  
mer - cy ex - tend. The zeal of the Lord will ac -



land of the shad - ow rise to a star shin - ing bright.  
har - vest of vic - t'ry, gift from a boun - ti - ful hand.  
dust in a wind - storm loosed by the jus - tice of God.  
rest on his shoul - der. God's own Mes - si - ah is born.  
com - plish its pur - pose: jus - tice shall reign with - out end.



*Refrain*

His name is Won - der-ful, Coun - sel - or, Al-might - y God,



Fa - ther for-ev-er, Prince of Peace. Won - der-ful, Coun - sel - or,



Al-might-y God, Fa - ther for-ev-er, Prince of Peace.

Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953. Tune: Sally Ann Morris, b. 1952. Text and tune: © 2009 GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 719903

Stand

In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**Amen.**

## **Confession**

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.  
**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins  
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Holy God, gracious Father, I am sinful by nature and have sinned against you in my  
thoughts, words, and actions. I have not loved you with my whole heart; I have not  
loved others as I should. I deserve your punishment both now and forever. But Jesus,  
my Savior, paid for my sins with his innocent suffering and death. Trusting in him, I  
pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

*Silence for meditation and reflection*

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who  
gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. 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 and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## **Song of Praise**

*Oh, How I Love Jesus*

*The children sing this song of praise at every chapel service; it highlights the name of Jesus and  
what it accomplishes for us. Please join to sing the refrain and the third verse.*

There is a name I love to hear, I love to sing its worth.  
It sounds like music in my ear, the sweetest name on earth.

**Refrain: Oh, how I love Jesus, oh, how I love Jesus,  
oh, how I love Jesus, because he first loved me!**

It tells me of a Savior's love, who died to set me free;  
It tells me of His precious blood, the sinner's perfect plea.

***Refrain***

**It tells of one whose loving heart can feel my deepest woe,  
Who in each sorrow bears a part that none can bear below.**

***Refrain***

## 10:30 - Installation of Leadership Councilmen

*These men are elected/appointed to the various positions of leadership at St. Paul's. Included in their tasks is caring for and supporting Christian education among all members of St. Paul's and those who participate in our school.*

## The Word

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

## Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, look with mercy on our weaknesses, and in all our dangers and needs stretch out the right hand of your majesty to help and defend us; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*Be seated*

## First Reading

*Deuteronomy 18:15–20*

*The LORD would raise up a prophet who would speak with the authority of God himself.*

<sup>15</sup>The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brother Israelites. Listen to him.

<sup>16</sup>That is exactly what you asked from the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly. You said, "Do not let me hear the voice of the LORD my God anymore, and do not let me see this great fire again, or I will die."

<sup>17</sup>Then the LORD said to me, "They have done well by saying what they said. <sup>18</sup>I will raise up a prophet for them from among their brothers, like you, and I will put my words in his mouth, and he will speak to them everything that I command him. <sup>19</sup>Anyone who will not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account.

<sup>20</sup>Any prophet who presumes to speak something in my name that I have not commanded him to speak or who speaks something in the name of other gods—that prophet shall die." (EHV®)

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Hymn

496 Jesus! Name of Wondrous Love

Verses from this hymn conclude every chapel service. It highlights how Jesus has a name that is above all names. *Please join to sing following the first verse.*

- 1 Jesus! Name of wondrous love, name all other names above,  
unto which must ev'ry knee bow in deep humility.
- 2 **Jesus! Name decreed of old, to the maiden mother told,  
kneeling in her lowly cell, by the angel Gabriel.**
- 3 **Jesus! Name of priceless worth to the fallen here on earth  
for the promise that it gave, "Jesus shall his people save."**
- 4 **Jesus! Name of mercy mild, given to the holy Child  
when the cup of human woe first he tasted here below.**
- 5 **Jesus! Only name that's giv'n under all the mighty heav'n  
whereby those to sin enslaved burst their fetters and are saved.**
- 6 **Jesus! Name of wondrous love, human name of God above;  
pleading only this, we flee helpless, O our God, to thee.**

Text: William W. How, 1823–1897, alt. Text: Public domain

## Second Reading

Hebrews 3:1–6

*Moses was great; Jesus is even greater, since he alone has absolute authority.*

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, focus your attention on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. <sup>2</sup> He was faithful to the one who appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in God's whole house. <sup>3</sup> In fact, Jesus is worthy of greater glory than Moses, in the same way that the builder of a house has more honor than the house. <sup>4</sup> For every house is built by someone, and God is the one who built everything.

<sup>5</sup> Moses was faithful as a servant within God's whole house by testifying to the things that would be spoken. <sup>6</sup> But Christ is faithful as a Son over God's house. We are his house, if we hold on firmly to our confidence and the hope about which we boast until the end. (EHV®)

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

Stand

## Gospel Acclamation

Mark 1:22

Alleluia! The people were amazed at his teaching,  
**because he taught them as one who had authority. Alleluia!**

## Gospel

Mark 1:21–28

*Jesus has absolute authority over everything—even the demons.*

On the next Sabbath day, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. <sup>22</sup>They were amazed at his teaching, because he was teaching them as one who has authority and not as the experts in the law. <sup>23</sup>Just then there was a man with an unclean spirit in their synagogue. It cried out, <sup>24</sup>“What do we have to do with you, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”

<sup>25</sup>Jesus rebuked the spirit, saying, “Be quiet! Come out of him!”

<sup>26</sup>The unclean spirit threw the man into convulsions, and after crying out with a loud voice, it came out of him. <sup>27</sup>Everyone was so amazed that they began to discuss this with each other. They said, “What is this? A new teaching with authority! He even commands the unclean spirits, and they obey him!” <sup>28</sup>News about him spread quickly through all the region of Galilee. (EHV®)

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

*Be seated*

## Children's Message

### Hymn of the Day

*639 God Has Spoken by His Prophets*

### Sermon

*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*

### 8:00 - Installation of Leadership Councilmen

## Prayer of the Church

Eternal Father, you have given us your Word that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing we may have life in his name. Enable us to see the wonders of your love in Christ from the beginning to the end of your holy book.

**Help us to see Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.**

Work in all your people, especially in parents, the resolve and patience to teach little children the simple truths about the Savior who loves them. Walk with us as we take our children to the manger, the cross, and the empty tomb. Let them find Jesus in stories, songs, and prayers.

**Move us to bring up our children in the training and instruction of the Lord.**

We thank you for enabling us to provide educational opportunities for the children of our congregation and our community. We pray for the resolve to maintain standards of excellence in all aspects of education. Move us to be generous in our offerings so that teachers may teach and students may learn in fitting surroundings.

**Lead us to provide Christian schools that reflect the immensity of your love.**

Work in us that we may find the lasting value of growing in the grace and knowledge of Christ. Lead us to be faithful in our personal study of the Scriptures and in participating in regular Bible classes. Rid us of all thoughts that Christian education ends in our youth.

**Make us life-long students of your precious Word.**

*Special prayers and intercessions*

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

*Silent prayer*

How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your Word. Even when we are old and gray, lead us to meditate on your decrees that we may delight in your wonderful deeds.

**Do good to your servants, Lord, according to your Word. Amen.**

### ***Special Prayers This Week***

† Elsie Punke is recovering from a serious accident that happened in December.

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†  
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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

### Hymn

910 Lord Jesus Christ, the Children's Friend

*Stand*

Blessed Lord, you have given us your Holy Scriptures for our learning. May we so hear them, read, learn, and take them to heart that, being strengthened and comforted by your holy Word, we may cling to the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you 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*

### Closing Hymn

502 Children of the Heavenly Father

# Installation of Leadership Councilmen

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Dear friends, in Holy Baptism, our Lord Jesus Christ set you free from sin and death and made you members of his body, the church. Through Word and sacrament, the Holy Spirit has nurtured your faith and increased your love.

You have now been appointed to serve our Lord on behalf of this congregation. The Lord has entrusted you with responsibilities that you are to carry out according to his Word. St. Paul wrote concerning service in the church: “We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.”

St. Paul spoke to all who serve the Savior: “It is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.” The Lord has promised to be with you and give you the gifts you will need to carry out the work entrusted to you. As servants of Jesus Christ and workers in this congregation, you are to set aside time for study of the Scriptures so that you may grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. You are to strive to be an example of Christian faith and life so that others may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

So that the congregation may be assured of your willingness to serve, I ask you in the presence of God and this congregation:

Will you diligently and faithfully carry out the work entrusted to you, according to the ability which God gives you? If so, answer: I will, and I ask God to help me.

**I will, and I ask God to help me.**

## Installation

I install you as elected leaders at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Kent Schroeder – President  
Fred Camacho – Vice President  
Chris Jardine – Secretary  
Kevin Meister – Treasurer  
Mike Anderson – Financial Secretary  
Rich Herrmann – Board of Elders Chairman  
Tom Blaes – Board of Outreach Chairman  
*Vacant – Board of Family Ministry Chairman*  
*Al Verjinsky – Board of Fellowship Chairman*  
Chris Williams – Board of Worship Chairman  
Tom Peronto – Board of Lutheran Education Chairman  
Larry Wesenberg – Board of Properties Chairman



The Lord pour out on you his Holy Spirit for the work you have been called to do that you may faithfully carry out all your duties and responsibilities with the Word of God as your confidence and guide.

*The minister speaks to the congregation:*

Brothers and sisters in Christ, I urge you to regard these fellow believers as servants of Jesus Christ and God's gifts to his church. Pray for them and support them in their service so that believers may be strengthened in faith and many others may come to know the Savior and the eternal hope he gives.

*The minister says to those being installed:*

The Lord bless you and make your service a blessing to others.

*Those being installed may return to their places as the minister says:*

We sincerely thank those who in the past year(s) have served the Lord and his people with their time and abilities, especially Seth Kroells as the Board of Fellowship Chair. May the Lord graciously bless you and those you have served.

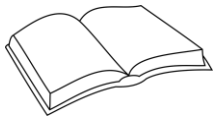
## Take Home Questions

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- 1) God is serious about his Word. In what ways is that seriousness conveyed in these verses from Deuteronomy 18?
  - a) Identify modern mantras that, to one extent or another, disregard this seriousness. In what ways have they affected your thoughts and actions?
  - b) In what ways can we draw comfort from these verses in the face of the “great fire” of God’s holiness?
- 2) Hebrews 3 shines a light on the faithfulness of Jesus. From these verses, in what ways was Christ faithful? In what ways does that impact us?  
(Hint: read vv. 1 and 6.)
- 3) Mark notes that people were amazed at Jesus’ teaching because he was teaching them as “one who has authority and not as the experts in the law.” They were used to rabbis quoting what other rabbis had said about Scripture to convey authority.
  - a) If historical tradition or interpretation was an accepted source of authority, what are accepted sources of authority in the modern world today?
  - b) Self-reflect on your own experience and past. What accepted sources of authority have proven influential over you?
  - c) In what ways is Jesus’s authority different? In what ways is Jesus’ authority far superior?
- 4) This Sunday we are highlighting Christian Education.
  - a) For what reasons is Christian Education itself a blessing?
  - b) As a partner in St. Paul’s ministry, in what ways can you support the work of *OUR* school?
  - c) Write a prayer thanking God for this blessing and asking for his continued grace on our Christian Education efforts

# News & Announcements

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## **Sunday's Bible Study: Meeting the Ups and Downs of Life**

Join us in the cafeteria from 9:15 to 10:15 AM

## **Call Meeting & Voters' Meeting Today**

*Jan. 28*

This afternoon at 12:30 pm, we are holding a meeting to call for vacancies in our school. This meeting will immediately be followed by our regular quarterly voters meeting. Members, if you haven't yet, please pick up the packet of reports that was placed in your mail slot. We hope you will also join us for the lunch and fellowship before the meeting – 11:30-12:30 pm. Chili will be served.

## **Enrollment Opens This Week!**

In connection with Christian Education Sunday, we're excited to announce that enrollment for the 2024-25 school year is opening this coming week. Enrollment this year will be done online through EnrollMe, the enrollment tool for our new student information system, Gradelink. This online program will help gather and organize all essential information on our students. But here's what we want you to know: If you or someone you know is interested in attending St. Paul's next year, great! Please contact us at registrar@stpaulswr.org or call the school office at (715) 421-3634. If you are already part of our school family, you will receive a packet of information on how to enroll or re-enroll your student(s) next week.

## **School Book Fair Open for Shopping**

*Jan. 28*

Come check out the offerings at the book fair in the library this Sunday. The school has partnered with a new company this year, so you will see a different variety of books. Today is the final day of the sale.

## **The Next WELS Youth Night Next Sunday**

*Feb. 4 | 5:00-8:00 pm*

Teens grade 8-12 are invited for a night of free bowling, free food, and fun prizes! Come to the Marathon City Sports Center (1200 S. St. Hwy 107) on Sunday, Feb. 4 from 5-8 pm. WELS membership not required, so invite your friends! A registration link can be found on our website under the What's Happening tab.

## **Marriage Enrichment Workshop in Merrill**

*Feb. 3 | 9:30 am*

“Mysterious Marriage” is on Saturday, Feb. 3, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. This event at Trinity Lutheran Church of the Town of Berlin (located near Merrill, WI) will help you discover the secret to a great marriage. The cost is \$80 a couple and includes snacks, refreshments, and a catered lunch. To register, go to [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com) and search for “mysterious marriage.” If you have any questions, call, text, or email Pastor Andy DeGier (920-471-1770, [pastorandydegier@gmail.com](mailto:pastorandydegier@gmail.com)).

## **Clean Classrooms**

Now that the holidays are over and your plans for 2024 are clearer, please consider volunteering to clean the classrooms at least once during the remainder of the school year. This just involves vacuuming and emptying garbage and recycling. This job needs to be done twice a week, on Wednesday and Friday or Saturday. Your entire family can serve together. Sign up at the Ministry Table.

## **WELS Night at the Herd**

*Feb. 24*

All WELS members are invited out to a night of fellowship at Oshkosh Arena on Saturday Feb. 24 at 7:00 pm. The Herd is the Milwaukee Bucks NBA G League affiliate. There will be some in-game promotions to celebrate WELS. All members will also be invited down onto the court following the game for a group photo and shoot free throws. The Winnebago Lutheran Academy Band will be performing during the game. Get your tickets at [fevogm.com/WELS](https://www.fevogm.com/WELS).

## **Built to Serve**

*Feb. 17*

The 15th annual Men of His Word Conference will be held at the Oshkosh Waterfront Convention Center in Oshkosh on Saturday, Feb. 17. The theme “Built to Serve” is based on Galatians 5:13. The keynote speaker is Pastor Michael Berg; Koine’ will be the worship band; and there are 14 challenging breakout sessions to choose from. Please go to [www.menofhisword.org](https://www.menofhisword.org) to register and get more details.

## **Jesus is the Same**

*March 1-3*

The Pathways to Christ Women’s Retreat will be held March 1-3 in Oshkosh, WI. The retreat begins Friday evening and concludes on Sunday morning, but here are flexible attendance options. The retreat includes food, fellowship, speakers, worship and free time. Learn more at [pathwaystochrist.org](https://pathwaystochrist.org).

## **Upcoming Events**

Feb. 4      WELS Youth Night at Marathon City Sports  
Feb. 14     Ash Wednesday

<b>Sunday</b>	8:00 AM	Worship
	9:15 AM	Bible Study in the cafeteria
	9:15 AM	Sunday School for grades 3K-6th
	10:30 AM	Worship
	<b>11:45 AM</b>	<b>Lunch in the cafeteria</b>
	<b>12:30 PM</b>	<b>Voters' Meeting in the cafeteria</b>
	6:30 PM	Connect Group at the home of Fred & Joyce Camacho
<b>Monday</b>	4:30 PM	Choir Practice in the balcony
	5:30 PM	Men's Devotional Basketball in the gym
	6:30 PM	Connect Group at the home of Carole & John Melso
<b>Tuesday</b>	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
	1:30 PM	Connect Group at Wisconsin Rapids Health Services
<b>Wednesday</b>	8:55 AM	School Chapel Service
	5:30 PM	Handbell Practice
	6:30 PM	Bible Book Group in the Resource Center
<b>Thursday</b>	7:00 AM	Men's Small Group at From the Ground Up Coffee Shop
<b>Friday</b>	<b>4:30 PM</b>	<b>HOME Panthers Basketball Game in the gym</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	8:30 AM	Foundations of the Christina Faith in the Bible Study Room
<b>Sunday</b>	8:00 AM	Worship
	9:15 AM	Bible Study in the cafeteria
	9:15 AM	Sunday School for grades 3K-6th
	10:30 AM	Worship
	<b>5:00 PM</b>	<b>WELS Youth Night at Marathon City Sports Center</b>

## Attendance Report

Last Week's Attendance: 207

## Next Sunday

Theme: Epiphany Reveals Our Life with Christ: He Undoes the Devil's Work

Readings: Isaiah 40:27-31; 1 Peter 5:6-11; Mark 1:29-39



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