



Well, it's out there now. Yes, I am going to retire. My last Sunday will be April 12th. We will be moving up to Waterloo, Iowa near where a couple of our daughters live. No, I am not angry. No, I am not hurt. It is just time, while Scott and I have time, and while we have the ability to enjoy retirement and to go to events for our grandchildren. So, yes, this New Year brings many changes for all of us.

Soon in January, Bishop Busboom or an assistant to the bishop will meet with the church council and discuss going forward in seeking your next pastor. Things will be just a little different this time around since I am not seeking a new call. We can be much more open with each other. That being said, there is still a process going forward that needs to be respected.

St Paul has many, many things in its favor as you move forward looking for your next pastor. First and foremost, you are an RIC congregation! Many pastors are looking for a congregation to serve that is truly welcoming to all people. This will be a major asset for you all!

You are financially **VERY** strong! Trust me, this is not the case in many many churches. This is a huge draw for pastors, to not have to worry about the bills is an amazing gift.

The ministries here are extremely attractive to clergy, in particular the Clothing Closet, the Free little pantry, the playground, the outside groups that use the building, etc... All of these things show acceptance and vitality in a congregation.

The parsonage is of course another asset! Scott and I have loved living in such a beautiful home! We will for sure grieve leaving the kitchen behind!

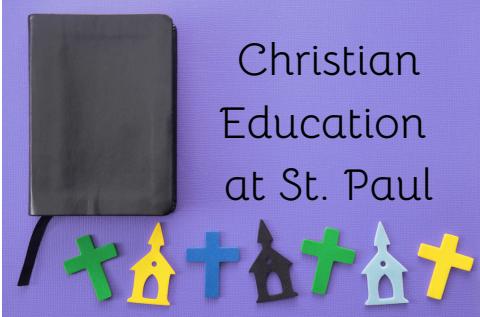
Your absolute love and the way you welcome and care for people who come here to worship is second to none. You can feel the love here as being truly genuine and not something forced or fake!

Finally, another aspect that is truly an asset for St Paul, is the way that so many ministries here are simply run by members of the congregation - the Clothing Closet, serving at East Bluff, the mini-dinner, all are examples of your passion and love for each other and those we are called to serve.

In the meantime, I am still here, and we have work to do! A lot of it! So stay close! Your help is always needed and appreciated! My ministry with you all continues and the Spirit is certainly blowing and active here! Keep attending worship. Be diligent in your prayers! Attend as many activities as you can! We have time together to do God's work and I can't imagine doing God's work with people any better!

Love to you all!

Pastor Lisa



Christian Education at St. Paul



Sunday School

Sunday School is in full swing! We have purchased curriculum that will follow our text that is used during Sunday Services to reinforce learning. If you have any questions or would be willing to volunteer to teach please sign up on the bulletin board or contact Morgan Wertz 309-435-1819

Bible Study to Begin

Pastor Lisa will lead a Bible Study on the Gospel of John. The Bible Study will meet on Monday nights at 6:00 pm and on Wednesday afternoons at 2:00 pm. The Bible study will begin on January 5th and the 7th. Please sign up on the bulletin board so that pastor can prepare materials for everyone.

Confirmation Classes to Resume!

It's time to get back together for Confirmation! We will meet on January 11th and the 18th! On the 18th please plan on our class taking longer! On the 18th we will travel to Art of the Bodega in Washington. At the Bodega the students will each create their own communion cup and plate.

4 Students to be Confirmed!

On March 22nd Pastor will lead 4 students through the Affirmation of Baptism service. The 4 youth preparing to affirm their faith are: Eli Fordham, Joe Gramlich, Aaron Simmons and Anabelle Wertz. We are so excited for these students and so proud of the work that they have done! Please pray for these young leaders and their families as they continue to follow in God's path!



Church Staff

- Rev. Lisa Dietrich, Pastor
- Bev Fordham, Administrative Assistant
- Eric Coffey, Custodian
- Kyle Burkholder, Groundskeeper
- Deborah Garmers, Organist
- Michael Helgeson, Celebration and Praise Music Coordinator

Church Council

- Abigail Williams, President
- Michael Helgeson, Vice President
- Linda Lowery, Secretary
- Penny Post-Freeman, Financial Officer
- Karen Rocke, Service Ministries
- Mary Jane Moder, Worship
- Morgan Wertz, Education/Youth
- Brian Sharp, Property



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



January Women's Event

The Next Women's event will take place on Thursday January 15th at 6:30pm. More information is to come. Any questions contact Mary Conrad (309) 360-8734.

Women's Circle Dates

Quilters: Jan 5th and 12th
JoAnna: Jan 8th
Esther: Jan 20th

Women's Trip!

OK ladies we have heard you ask for another trip! So meet with Pastor Lisa in the sanctuary following worship on January 11th!

Let's travel somewhere a little warmer this time! Mark your calendars now for the week of March 15th! More details to come at the meeting! Oh my goodness this is going to be exciting and so much fun!



Game Night!

Woot! Let's get together and have a card game night! On Tuesday January 20th at 6pm we will join together for a fun evening of eating pizza and playing cards together! I'm sure there will be some kind of fun Pastor Lisa twist to it! Sign up on the bulletin board and come and ready to play!

LGBTQIA+ Support Group

Come and join us as we watch the movie 1946 on Thursday January 8th at 6:30pm. 1946: The Mistranslation that shifted culture is a feature documentary that follows the story of tireless researchers who trace the origins of the anti-gay movement among Christians to a grave mistranslation of the bible in 1946. This event is free but a free will offering will be collected for the River City Rainbow Collective. Any questions please contact Kathy Niu, AJ Dunn or Quincy Johnson.

Worship Assistants

1/4:
1/11:
1/18:
1/25:

Fellowship Treats

1/4:
1/11:
1/18:
1/25:

Birthdays and Anniversaries

1/9: Mary Conrad
1/9: Tillyanne Fordham
1/10: Shanna Heerman
1/12: Pam Connell
1/12: Joe Gramlich
1/19: Jeremy Conrad
1/19: Mary Ehlen-Thomas
1/19: Scott Robinson
1/19: Judy Wertz
1/22: Scott Dietrich
1/25: Harley Hill
1/27: Gale Thetford
1/30: Linda Lowery
1/31: Christian Weiss

Counters

Jan. 4: Brian Sharp and Mary Jane
Moder
Jan. 11: Mike Coffman and Roger
Conrad
Jan. 18: Kyle Burkholder and Amber
Lowery
Jan 25: Scott Lee and Julia Coffman



Church Council Information

Council Highlights from 12-1-2025

The council voted to sell a percentage of the stocks we own in order to diversify our holding.

We have contracted with Advanced Audio and Lighting Systems to buy a new sound system for the church. The company has loaned us equipment for the time being since our old equipment recently failed and is currently out of commission.

Karen Rocke reported that the donations received from Undies Sunday were greatly needed and much appreciated.

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting has been set for January 25th. We will begin with a potluck meal at 11:30 and our meeting will start shortly after noon. Please plan on attending this important meeting. Our primary business will be to approve the budget for 2026. Come and celebrate the work we have done in God's name over the last year and join in the excitement for all that is to come in 2026!

Annual Reports

It's the time of the year to start working on your year end reports. Please submit all written reports by email to the church office no later than Wednesday January 14th. Thank you!

We Pray For:

Shirley Barber, Rob Hackett,
Floyd Rademaker, Andrea
Williams, Susie Ney, Jeff
Williams, Kendra Tallman, Abby
Mundwiller, Shannon Perales,
Jim Chamberlain, Terri
Montgomery, Joe Ferrie, Nina
Marquart, Susan
VanMoorlehem, Boyd Conrad,
Willie Miller, Rachel Jenks and
Steve Rocke.

Our Shut-ins:

Floyd Rademaker, Nina
Marquart, Tom Schreiner, Sam
Kahl and Susan VanMoorlehem

Prayer Chain Contacts:

Cindy Lee 309.635.9691
Eileen Cunningham
309.685.0720

Article deadlines

Please submit articles for the weekly bulletin no later than 10am Thursday mornings.

Articles for the February newsletter need to be submitted no later than 10am on January 19th.

Notification

Please if you are in the building for any reason, or any length of time contact the office so we know who is in the building.
Thank you!