



St. Paul Lutheran

February 2024 NEWSLETTER

From the Pastor:

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

There is no worse feeling than being left without any options. When there's no other way but the most difficult and the most burdensome path, we begrudgingly trod on through. Indeed, it's wise to try out all our options before taking the hardest road. We often say, "Work smarter, not harder." Perhaps, these other options will work. Or maybe they won't. But when only one path remains, we must come to realize no matter how great our reservations, that is the path we're given.

With Lent beginning this month (February 14), we will see our "options" dwindle. Lent will show us that our road narrows when we follow the Christian life. Sin and evil are no longer options to us when we repent and turn towards God. We will be hearing how God calls us to return to him. **"Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love," Joel 2:13.** God does not give us many options in *how* we return. There's one option alone. The road to God is one of repentance and faith.

Consider then the condition of St. Paul. It's no secret that we have been experiencing financial woes. It's not for lack of effort to avert or avoid such conditions either. Leadership has worked tirelessly to lessen our financial strain by cutting back on expenses. We have been pursuing our church partnership which in time may yield help with our struggle. However, we must come to the realization that our options are very limited. If St. Paul is to continue, it will take us all working together and walking the hard road alongside one another. We *can* do this! God is not finished with us yet!

Lent may seem like a depressing and uninviting season. I get it. No one likes hearing how horrible and sinful a person they are. Yet, Lent is so much more than this. Lent is a season that calls us to renew our faith in God. Lent is what strips away our idols and sins so that we may rejoice more greatly at Easter. Just as St. Paul records, **"For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself.** Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead," 2 Corinthians 1:8-9. God limits our options at times to remind us that He alone can save us and raise us from the dead. Such is Lent. It's to renew our focus on our God who shall raise us up to eternal life.

Jesus had only one option. He could not veer off the path set by his Father. Rather, he walks the hard and burdensome road of the cross. By the cross, Jesus dies our death. He pays for our sins. He opens the option for us of faith and eternity! Thus, may we renew our faith this Lent, stripping away our idols, that we may trust fully in God who raises Jesus from the grave and grants to us life everlasting!

Pastor Sorenson



Happy Birthday!



Delores Bethke— 2/4

Richard Beal— 2/16

Bonnie Kaschinske— 2/17

Julianne McGill— 2/20

Adalynn Farnsworth— 2/28

Altar Flowers



February 4- (None)

February 11- (None)

February 18- (None)

February 25- (None)

St Paul Online:

Visit our website: www.stpaulmadison.org



Facebook— @StPaulMadisonLCMS

YouTube— St Paul Lutheran Church
(services and sermons online)



Note: You do NOT have to have an account in order to view these pages.

Contact us

St Paul Office— 608-244-8077

office@stpaulmadison.org

Pastor Sorenson (Cell) 317-690-5204

pastorsorenson@stpaulmadison.org

Serving in February

Altar Guild

Chris Krueger & Berta Nelson

Tellers

Kay Daubenspeck & Chris Krueger

Ushers

February 4-

Rick Van Dusen, Ray Hellmer, & Leo Lakpa

February 11-

Jerry Meise, Jamie Meise, & Dan Dierks

February 18-

Richard Beal, Randy Buss, & Tom Niemczyk

February 25-

Rick Van Dusen, Ray Hellmer, & Leo Lakpa

DATES TO REMEMBER

February 4– Information Meeting

February 14– Ash Wednesday

February 18– Leadership Meeting

February 27– Vets Connect

Lent & Easter 2024

Easter is just around the corner, which means Lent is fast upon us! We will again be partnering with our sister Churches (Immanuel, Monona, and Our Savior) for our midweek services beginning February 21. All services will be hosted here at St. Paul. There will NOT be a meal before service, however, feel free to come early for some extra fellowship! More information on next page...

Easter Flower Sign-up

A sign-up sheet is available in the narthex to sign-up for Easter flowers. There are again multiple varieties available, ranging in price. Deadline to sign up is February 18, 2024.



Clothing donations

Sheep's Clothing Closet is in need of donations of socks. If you have any lightly used or are willing to donate new socks, we would be very appreciative.



Matching Funds Offering

A member of our congregation has offered to make a "Matching Funds" donation of up to \$5,000. This donation is being made to inspire all of us to "match" this \$5,000 by making contributions, totaling another \$5,000, that are above and beyond our usual weekly and monthly contributions.

The "Matching Funds" campaign will run from Ash Wednesday February 14, 2024 to Sunday May 26, 2024. Please prayerfully consider making a "Matching Funds" donation before May 26th.

The offer from a member of the congregation to make a Matching Funds donation of up to \$5,000 is greatly appreciated, as will be all future Matching Funds donations! These donations will help us to continue to spread God's Word in our community.

A CATHOLIC GUIDE TO ASHES

EXTENDED EDITION



Take Note

Please send any items you'd like mentioned in our monthly newsletter to the office at office@stpaulmadison.org, or please call the office at 608-244-8077.

ALL NEWSLETTER ITEMS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE LAST MONDAY OF EACH MONTH.

Thank you for your help!

St Paul Financial Update

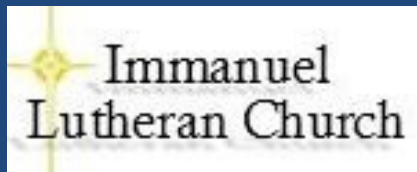
GENERAL FUND INCOME AND EXPENSES

January 2024 Actual Income	\$11,530.00
January 2024 Actual Expenses	\$17,130.04
January 2024 Net	--\$5,600.04

DEBT

Unpaid Balance on Mortgage Loan (1/31/2024) \$163,187.72

LCMS Madison Church Partnership



Lent & Easter 2024

This Lent and Holy Week, we are looking to partner with our sister churches here in Madison. Joint services will be held beginning February 21, here at St. Paul. Our midweek services will feature rotating preachers following our Lent theme, "The Sounds of the Passion."

February 14– (*Ash Wednesday*)– Ripping Cloth
February 21– Clinking Coins
February 28– Crying Tears
March 6– Tramping Feet
March 13– Crowing Rooster
March 20– Shouting Mob

March 28– (*Maundy Thursday*)– Chewing Food
March 29– (*Good Friday*)– Pounding Nails
March 31– (*Easter*)– Scraping Rocks

We are also looking to join together for our Good Friday service during Holy Week to be hosted at Monona Lutheran on March 29. More information to follow.

Information Meeting

We will be having an information meeting following service on February 4th concerning our Church Partnership. Snacks and treats will be provided following service in the Narthex. Join us to hear updates about all the wonderful things that are happening as well as our vision for the future of our churches.

The purpose of this meeting is to work on getting information out to you better and faster as well as clearing up any misconceptions that may be out there. There will be a brief presentation about where we stand now as well as time for questions. We encourage you to attend and bring your questions for the meeting.

We know that this partnership will only work if everyone is involved and informed. We would love to see you stay after service on February 4 to aid us in this endeavor and help us chart a new path forward for the benefit of St. Paul and our sister churches.

Thank you for your consideration!

Upcoming Dates:

February 11 (1:30pm)- Partnership Council
(Immanuel)
February 21 (6pm)- Lent Midweek Services (Begin)
(St. Paul)
March 10 (1:30pm)- Partnership Council
(St. Paul)
April 14 (1:30pm)- Partnership Council
(Monona)

