

The **EPISTLE**

FEBRUARY 2024

Address:

605 S. Center St.
Bremen, IN 46506

Telephone:

1-574-546-2332

E-Mail:

church@stpaulsbremen.org
schools@stpaulsbremen.org

Website:

stpaulsbremen.church
facebook.com/stpaulsbremen
vimeo.com/stpaulsbremen

Church Office Hours:

Monday – Friday
8:00 am – 12:00 pm

Sunday Schedule:

Sunday School: 8:30 am
Worship: 9:30 am

Pastor Neil Wonnacott

Office Hours: M, W, TH & F

From Pastor Wonnacott's keyboard:

Recently we celebrated the birth of Jesus, Emmanuel – God with us. Epiphany followed with the Wise Men coming to worship the Christ Child. Now, February is on the doorstep- what's next? We have one more Sunday of Epiphany, singing and praising our Savior, looking to Him as the Light of the world because there is no darkness in Him. Jesus leads us through the darkness so that we can reflect His light into the world.

We will experience the glorious Sunday of the Transfiguration of the Lord. We'll go up on the mountain with Peter, James, and John to see the glory of Jesus, along with the testimony of Moses and Elijah that Jesus is the Messiah sent to save us all.

But before we get to the mountain remember what Jesus said to His disciples and to us in Mark 8:31-33 *"And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be*

rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days

rise again. ³² And he said this plainly. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. ³³ But turning and seeing His disciples, He rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

Can you relate to Peter who, after hearing those words of Jesus, did not want to leave the mountain, but stay forever in the glory of Jesus? So, after the service on February 11th, we will go down the mountain with the disciples, knowing that the Son of Man must die.

Ash Wednesday falls on February 14th, the night we begin our midweek services with the theme of the St. John Passion, studying the Word of God from John, chapters 18 and 19. Everyone is invited to these midweek services and dinners, and all Sunday services; whether you have been gone for a while, or come every week, let's come together to worship and grow as a family in God's kingdom!

THE DEADLINE FOR THE MARCH EPISTLE IS FEBRUARY 20TH!!! Epistle articles, comments, ideas may be deposited in the epistle box in the Narthex mail slots or e-mailed to Eric Thornton at firemanet@yahoo.com. I appreciate all of your articles, ideas and comments!

OUR OFFERINGS TO THE LORD FROM HIS BLESSINGS TO US

Offerings remind us of the blessings God has given us and are an opportunity to thank Him for what He has done in our lives. Please place your offerings in our Offering Box located in front of the water fountains in the narthex of the church. You may also choose "e-tithing" by having a weekly deposit to St Paul's from your bank account. If you have questions on e-tithing, please contact the Church Office.

LENTEN MIDWEEK SERIES

St. John Passion

Feb. 14	Ash Wednesday:	The Powerless “I Am,” John 18:1–11
Feb. 21	Lenten Midweek 2:	Two Interrogations, John 18:12–27
Feb. 28	Lenten Midweek 3:	What Kind of King Is This? John 18:28–40
Mar. 6	Lenten Midweek 4:	Whom Do We Follow? John 19:1–16a
Mar. 13	Lenten Midweek 5:	Wisdom Has a Friend on the Cross, John 19:16b–27
Mar. 20	Lenten Midweek 6:	Jesus Finishes the Battle for Your Salvation, John 19:28–42

Dinner at 6:00 pm Worship at 7:00 pm

Euchre Party is Friday, February 9th from 7-9:00 pm in the Bethany Room. Anyone 16 and older can join us for fun and fellowship, and please bring a snack to share. Beverages will be provided. Come and bring a friend!

Midweek Lenten Dessert sign-up list is on the “Check It Out” Board by the school secretary’s office. We need your help to supply desserts for our Lenten meals. Please bring yours to the Bethany Room by 6:00 pm on the night for which you signed up.

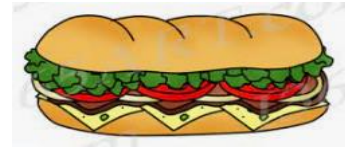
YOUTH BOARD NEWS and NOTES

Upcoming Events

- **PARENT MEETING (February 4th):** We will be holding a meeting for parents of Youth currently in Grades 7 through High School following the church service to discuss plans

for the 2025 National Youth Gathering, possible mission opportunities, and more. Please plan to attend as we make preparations for the next year. Youth are welcome to attend as well.

- **SUPER BOWL SUBS ARE BACK:** The Youth will be offering subs for the congregation / school on **Super Bowl Sunday (February 11th)**. Orders must be placed by February 4th in the Narthex of the Church (forms available) so we can plan accordingly – sub pick up will be after the church service on February 11th. Free will donations will be accepted at that time, with a portion collected going toward a charity designated by the Youth Board and the rest to support future Youth Gatherings and mission opportunities. Contact Andy Wildauer with any questions.
- **MOVIE NIGHT (February 18th):** High School Youth are invited to an evening of fellowship as we gather together to watch a movie. Friends welcome. Time, location and movie to be announced via our GroupMe Youth Group chat – look for more information in the weeks ahead.
- **MIDDLE SCHOOL LOCK IN (Tentatively March 15th- 16th from 7 pm to 7 am):** Plans are underway for annual Lock In. We will communicate more details in the weeks ahead but for now save the date above.



If there are any questions related to the Youth Group, please contact Andy Wildauer at (801) 707-3399.

Epistle- School Corner

We are hosting a Teacher Wish List Tree in the narthex for the first couple weeks of February yet. Ornaments will have items, or wishes, from our day school and preschool teachers, as well as Extended Care, the Athletic Program,

and the library. Please take an ornament for the item you wish to donate and place that item under the tree or at the school office. If you have questions, please contact Jennifer Harman in the school office.

February is Reading Challenge month in the day school. Students are reading for points, to accomplish personal goals and whole school goals. Students will get weekly awards and, if the school reaches 1200 points, they will get to go on a special field trip (TBD). **If you have a child or grandchild in the school, please make sure they are reading or read with them!** Reading

helps your child with comprehension, critical thinking, vocabulary, language skills, benefits mental health, and helps with every single core subject.

Start advertising for St. Paul's preschool and day school! The Preschool and Kindergarten Round-Up is scheduled for March 14th, 5:00-7:00pm. Students will get a chance to meet the teachers, see the classrooms, and experience school. We enroll students from Preschool through 8th grade, and word-of-mouth is our most effective form of marketing. If you know of someone interested in St. Paul's, direct them to the school office, 574-546-2790, or schools@stpaulsbremen.org.

Remember to give to the Lutheran SGO, and you will receive a tax credit and deduction for your donations! You can find several (easy) ways to donate at www.lutheranSGO.org/Donate, or we also have a link on the church website, stpaulsbremen.church, under the school drop-down_menu. Donations can be given through a check, IRA, stocks, Donor Advised Funds, PayPal, credit card, and **NOW electronic giving!** Benefits to you are a 50% state tax credit for your donation and eligibility for a tax deduction. These scholarships make a big difference for our families. If you desire to mail a check to the LSGO, pamphlets with mailing information are available in the tract rack. **(Checks needs to be written to the Lutheran Scholarship Granting Organization.)**

We also continue to take donations to St. Paul's tuition assistance fund. Checks for tuition assistance can be made out to the church.

Mission of the Month

Our Sunday School continues to send \$75.00 each month to a mission.

February Mission of the Month: Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM)

The LHM Mission: *Bringing Christ to the Nations—and the Nations to the Church*

- The Gospel is shared with people around the world through LHM programs, services, or materials more than **195 million** times each week.
- The **Lutheran Hour** airs on more than **1,800** radio stations throughout North America each week.

- Nearly **255,000** individuals were referred last year to local churches and Christian communities for spiritual growth and nurturing.
- Individuals from more than **4,500** congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and Lutheran Church—Canada are using LHM resources.

For more information go to: www.lhm.org

Preschool Postings

We survived the brutal cold and snow of January to arrive at National Lutheran Schools Week, to celebrate the blessings God gives us in our Lutheran schools around the world. We're so thankful for our students and their families, and for the opportunity to share the love of Jesus with them. Last month our students learned about more of Jesus' miracles and of the people to whom He ministered. They also started studying about dental health and made some winter-themed art projects. They're looking forward to Valentines parties and other special days, but they always enjoy spending time together, and so do we!

The Evangelism Board

On Monday, March 11 starting at 4:30 pm St. Paul's will be packing and delivering Welcome Bags to new households in Bremen. We can use your help! We need volunteers to pack and deliver bags. Please pray with us that bags are delivered safely and that God would bless each family that receives a bag in a special way according to His will! Watch for more ways you can help in upcoming bulletins.



It's Time to Spruce Up the Sanctuary!

All men, women, and children (supervised, please) are invited to dust and polish church pews, windowsills, and the sanctuary doors in preparation for

Easter. This is an independent project; come when you can and leave when you must. (You can ring the doorbell to gain access during regular church or school office hours.)

Hymnals and Bibles also need to be cleaned and checked for issues.

There is a record-keeping chart and instructions for both projects as well as supplies in a large tote in the cry room. This project starts on February 1st and the goal is to be finished by Saturday, March 23.

Any questions? Please call or text Linda Tinkey, 574-551-5627.

Thank you for your gift of time and energy for this project.

PTL Fundraisers



Fundraising opportunity Monday February 26, 2024 all day at La Parilla Caliente Mexican Restaurant, 119 W. Plymouth St. Bremen. This is dine in or carry out. This year will also include proceeds from any \$25 gift cards that are purchased.

UPDATE ON REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

Since the Revitalization Program was started, there has been quite a bit of activity involving the various boards, directors of boards and school staff. Some of these activities are as follows>

* Completion of “Connect to Disciple” workshop by day and preschool school staff, directors of all church boards, Pastor Wonnacott and church and school secretaries. The focus on the workshop was recognizing opportunities in our church, school and communities to create disciples...the mission every Christian has been given by Christ.

* Completion of “Shepherding the Strays” workshop by board of Lay Ministry and Pastor Wonnacott. The focus of this workshop was how to work with church members who have decreased their involvement in attending worship services, Bible studies and church activities in order to assist them in the spiritual walk with Christ.

* Establishment of revised and Vision and Mission statements for St Paul's church and school. These statements are as follows:

VISION

From Strategic Planning Session 9/25/23:

“A Christian family of believers, led by the Holy Spirit, going out into the Bremen community and surrounding areas to make disciples of St. Paul's members and the unchurched.”

MISSION

From Strategic Planning Session 9/25/23:

“Through God's saving grace St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church and School will equip its families to develop and grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ so that they may share His good news of salvation.”

* Establishment of Strategic Plan goals that will be completed by the boards of the congregation. These goals and which board is assigned for completion are as follows:

GOALS FOR ST. PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL 2023-2024

1. Get more congregation members participating in school activities (assist with teaching,

grading papers, attending sporting events, etc.) 2023-24 school year.

* assigned to School Board

2. Identify how to integrate “outreach ministry” into present community activities (welcome bags to new community members, hospitality meals, Thanksgiving Day meal, “trunk or treat”, ice cream social, Oktoberfest booth, Firemen's Festival booth, etc.) by November 2023.

* assigned to Evangelism Board

3. Develop a plan for advertising St. Paul's Church and School to Bremen and surrounding communities by June 2024.

* assigned to Public Relations Board

4. Develop a plan for providing a personal financial literacy class/program to St. Paul's, Bremen and the surrounding communities by March 1, 2024.

* assigned to Stewardship Board

5. Make contact and receive responses from all inactive church members by June

1, 2024 and based on responses, update church membership list by October 1, 2024.

* assigned to Board of Lay Ministry

6. Identify talents and abilities of congregation members to match needs of all church boards by March 31, 2024.

* assigned to Stewardship Board; input required from all boards to Stewardship Board that list the needs of each board. These lists to be provided to Stewardship by November 20, 2023.

Sunday School Offerings – January/February

Your New Year’s Resolution, “to daily study God’s Word,” can start right here with Sunday School and Bible Classes! Join us every week, 8:30-9:15 a.m.

Pre-K – Grade 2 (Nazareth Room)

We will learn what it means to be a “disciple” and hear about the amazing authority and power of Jesus! . . . taught by Wendy Coxey

Grades 3-5 (Mrs. Roger’s Classroom)

Learn more about people and events of the Old Testament including – The 12 Spies, The Bronze Snake, the Fall of Jericho, Gideon, Samson, and Ruth. Taught by Jeanette Rettinger

Middle School (Grades 6-8) (Mr. Miller’s Classroom)

Parents/Guardians and youth, join Mark and Heidi Wildauer for a valuable and informative Bible Study entitled, “Launch.” This study is intended to help parents have meaningful conversations about puberty and adolescence, and to encourage our youth to understand God’s plan for them in the relationships they have as they develop from



adolescents to young adults. Contact the Wildauers with additional questions.

High School (Jerusalem Room)

“Christians in a Woke World: A Call to Courage, Confession, and Love” is a study analyzing “woke” ideology from a Biblical perspective and reveals God’s answer to such challenging times in our society. . . . taught by Andy Wildauer

Adult Bible Class (Bethany Room)

a study of I & II Kings

More Opportunities for Bible Study

New Member Class 2.0

Designed for newly confirmed adults (those confirmed since the pandemic) to study “Lutheranism 101,” along with the Catechism. It’s also for members who want to delve deeper into the Catechism. We will meet in the Bethany Room on Thursdays at 7 p.m.

. . . taught by Pastor Wonnacott

Men’s Wednesday Morning Bible Study

Lively discussions every other Wednesday morning at the Bremen Hospital cafeteria
6:30-7:30 a.m.

Thursday Morning Ladies' Bible Study (Jerusalem Room)

Ladies work together to complete the **LifeLight Bible Study: Matthew, Part 1.**
. . . led by Barb Middaugh, 9:30-10:45 a.m.

"Burned Out?"

Romans 8:26 "We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express."

In our society people are expected to be achievers. Sometimes the pressure and competition become too great. A person reaches the breaking point and he or she can't function effectively anymore. We call that burnout.

It's happened before. Moses, the patient leader of Israel, had more than he could take. He said, "I am not able to carry this people alone; the burden is too heavy for me."

Even the great apostle Paul became mentally and physically exhausted. He was so worn out that he could not even pray properly. When he reached the point of utter weariness, Paul knew that God would not forsake him. It was at that moment that the Spirit of God stepped in to pray for him.

Have we reached our breaking point? Do we feel like we can't take it anymore? Like we want to run away from our cares and responsibilities? Like we can't see God through our pain? That's when God's Spirit takes over. The Lord does not abandon us. He will say for us the prayers we can't utter ourselves.

That we can believe. That we can hold on to. That precious promise is ours!

PRAYER: Lord, I spread out my hands to You. When You hide your face, when I have no strength and my soul is full of troubles, I cry to You. Amen.

Charitable Gifting

(Note: This information was extracted from a recent newsletter from Thrivent. It is being presented for informational purposes only).

What constitutes a gift to charity?

A gift to charity is simply a gratuitous transfer of property to a charitable organization. There are several different types of property that can be donated to charity.

How do you decide whether to donate to charity?

The decision to donate to charity is a personal one. The IRS does not require that you have any charitable motivation when you donate to charity. You can do it strictly for the tax benefits.

What are the tax benefits of donating to charity?

Most every charity depends on individual contributions to remain financially solvent. As a result, charitable giving has become interconnected with the tax laws. Congress has set up rules taxpayers who donate to qualified charities need to follow. First, you generally receive an income tax deduction in the year you make the gift. Second, you do not have to worry about gift tax. Third, charitable gifts serve to reduce your taxable estate.

What options do you have for donating to charity?

An outright gift

Split interest gift in trust

CRAT (charitable remainder annuity trust)

CRUT (charitable remainder unitrust)

Pooled income fund

Charitable lead trust

Bargain sale

Private foundation

Community foundation

Donor-advised fund

As you can see, charitable donations are very complicated and require the use of a financial advisor, tax lawyer or your insurance representative.



FEBRUARY

Birthdays & Anniversaries

2024

ANNIVERSARIES

3	Arick & Noelle Cannon	14	Tim & Jennifer Harman
6	Bill & Sharon Latzke		Josh & Lacey Shumaker
		18	Justin & Priscilla Quenan

BIRTHDAYS

1	Matthew Harman Julia Miller	16	Gracie Magyar
2	Kurt Guse	17	Heaven Hicks Matthew Podlin Wayne Spicher
3	Garrett Fox Ellen Haug	18	Bentley Levendoski Gavin Stanifer
7	Anders Brurok Beck Brurok Hannah Goze Dakota Schmeltz	19	Shirley Lakins
8	Brandon Cope Rick Napper	20	Daniel Knepper
10	Diana Rodgers Barbara Stillson	22	Kila Foster Jamie (Hicks) Reed
11	Elizabeth Bowen Lori Cope	23	Lois Schoning
12	Kellan Guse Cathy Chrisman Maddison Sherk	24	Janet Anglemyer Jason Heuberger Violet Levendoski
14	Hunter Cannon Joseph Hughes Bradin Schmitt	26	Virginia Lynch Terry Miller
15	Marilyn Gumz	27	Claire Bickel Carol Lynch
		28	Larry Miller
		29	Bruce Schmidt

St. Paul's Lutheran Women's Missionary League
*As Lutheran Women in Mission, we joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions,
 and equip women to honor God by serving others.* Adopted 2021

LWML: FEBRUARY 5, at 7:00 PM, in the Bethany Room.
 Program will be a Bible study led by Pastor Wonnacott on the hymn,
 “Salvation Unto Us Has Come.”
 Afterward, we will pack “Goodie Boxes” for St. Paul's college students.
**MAKE SURE THE CHURCH OFFICE HAS AN ADDRESS FOR YOUR COLLEGE
 STUDENT. NO address means NO box!** Anyone wishing to contribute
 should bring at least 1 dozen individually wrapped items to the church
 kitchen on February 4. Better yet, come to the Bible study & bring them
 along! All ladies are invited, and guests are welcome.

The Eyeglasses & Eyedroppers ministry for M.O.S.T. is ongoing. Any type, in good condition is needed. Please place in the box beneath the “Bulletin Table.” Thank you.

Psalm 100:2a **“Serve the Lord with Gladness”** *LWML motto*

St. Paul's 178th LITURGICAL YEAR † February 1, 2024 – February 29, 2024

Worship Opportunities To Bless Our Lives

✠ Celebration Of Holy Communion

Sunday 9:30 a.m.

Midweek 7:00 p.m.

Feb 4 4th Sunday after Epiphany

Feb 11 5th Sunday after Epiphany

Feb 18 6th Sunday after Epiphany

Feb 25 7th Sunday after Epiphany

Feb 14 Ash Wednesday

Feb 21 2nd Lenten Wednesday

Feb 28 3rd Lenten Wednesday

February MAJOR Festival: 14 Ash Wednesday (first day of Lententide) ● *MINOR Festivals:*
 2 Presentation of Our Lord/Purification Of Mary ● 11 The Transfiguration of Our Lord ● 24 St.
 Matthias, Apostle ● *COMMEMORATIONS:* 5 Jacob (Israel), Patriarch ● 10 Silas, a.k.a.
 Silvanus ● 13 Aquila, Priscilla, Apollos ● 14 Valentine Martyr ●
 15 Philemon & Onesimus ● 16 Philipp Melanchthon (birth), Confessor ● 18 Martin Luther 1483-
 1546 Doctor and Confessor ● 23 Polycarp Of Smyrna, Pastor & Martyr

The Transfiguration of our Lord: A festival of God the Son, the color is *white*.
 Originating in the Eastern (Orthodox) church, and celebrated on August 6; the Western
 church places it in Epiphany, as this event commemorates the *manifestation* of Christ's
 Divine glory to the disciples Peter, James, and John, just before Jesus began His final trip
 to Jerusalem, and about one week after The Confession of St. Peter --“*You are the Christ,
 the Son of the living God.*” Recorded in Matthew 16:16b, observed January 18.

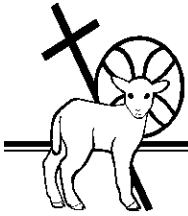
✠ *Transfiguration means to be visibly altered in appearance. “... Jesus took Peter, James,
 and John his brother, brought them up on a high mountain by themselves, and was*

transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light." Matthew 16:28-17:9; Mark 9:1-9; Luke 9:27-36 Peter refers to this event in his epistle: *"For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'* And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain." II Peter 1:16-18

✦ Lententide - Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Time of Easter, the second and central division of the Church Year Calendar. This Time has two *seasons*: Lent (forty days not including Sundays); and Easter, with seven weeks from Easter Sunday, the celebration of The Ascension, and concluding with Pentecost. Lent's forty days stem from the time Jesus spent in the wilderness before His temptation by the devil. Matthew 4:2, Luke 4:2 ✦ In the early church, baptism only occurred, except in emergencies, on Easter or Pentecost; and Lententide was used as a time of instruction for adult candidates. As the church moved away from this practice, Lent began to focus solely on Christ's Passion (a term applied exclusively to Jesus' suffering during the last week of His earthly life, and especially to the crucifixion). Thus Lententide will conclude with the observance of The Anniversary Of Our Lord's Death (Good Friday). ✦ In keeping with the solemn tone of this time, the church proper is usually emptied of any adornments; even flowers are deemed inappropriate for midweek services. In many churches all crosses or pictures are covered or draped in purple or black until Easter Sunday. ✦

"Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Job 42:6 Ash Wednesday takes its name from the mediaeval practice of the Imposition of Ashes. On entering the church, the sign of the cross was made on the forehead in ash, prepared by burning the previous Palm Sunday's processional palms and mixing them with a little oil, while the pastor spoke a Bible verse about human mortality. ✦ You may also notice a change in music and liturgy, as both become more somber in tone. Alleluias and The Gloria in Excelsis (Glory be to God on high...) on communion Sundays will be absent. Lent is a season of repentance, contrite hearts, and meditation on the cost of our Savior's free gift of salvation. For while it is always appropriate to rejoice in the Lord, this restraint will narrow our focus, and make us all the more eager to rejoice and proclaim: Alleluia! Christ is Risen! ✦ Easter falls on one of its earliest dates this year: March 31; The Season of Lent begins 46 days before on Ash Wednesday, February 14 (the 6 Sundays in Lent do not count). ✦ The world sees no difference in these weeks we call Lent. But it

also does not know the joy of Easter. We see and hear that difference, because we know what Jesus has done for us. Come Easter, may the world be unable to miss our shout of joy in Jesus. Alleluia! will resound.



“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him



up for us all, how shall He not with Him

also freely give us all things?” Romans 8:32



WISE MEN STILL SEEK HIM!

