

*“I am the vine, you are the branches.
He who abides in Me,
and I in him, bears much fruit;
for without Me you can do nothing.”*

John 15:5



*St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church LCMS
605 South Center Street
Bremen, Indiana 46506
574.546.2332
stpaulsbremen.church*

This is National Lutheran Schools Week Sunday.

This year's theme is "Connected to Jesus," which comes from the Gospel reading for today. John 15: 5 Jesus said: "*I am the Vine; you are the branches.*"

We welcome today all our brothers and sisters in Jesus.

The Lord's Supper is a very special privilege God gives to His people. Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because the Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive this sacrament, are asked first to speak with the pastor or an elder. If you are not partaking of the Lord's Supper but would like to receive a blessing, please come up to the communion rail when sent by an elder, kneel, and cross your arms over your chest. The Pastor will then know that you desire a blessing.

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.

In Matthew 19:14 Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." We welcome children and all the joy and little chatter that comes with them. If for any reason you want to take your little one out, there is a Nursery (Cry Room) available for use, located just outside the sanctuary.

Why a Lutheran Education? "Above all, **the most important and most usual teaching, in both the universities and the lower schools, ought to be concerned with the Holy Scriptures** . . . Oh! how unwisely we deal with our poor young folk, whom we are commanded to train and instruct [Prov. 22:6]! But we shall have to give a serious account of our stewardship, and explain why we have not set the Word of God before them . . . We fail to notice the present pitiful distress of the young people. Though they live in the midst of a Christian world, they faint and perish in misery because they lack the gospel in which we should be training and exercising them all the time." ~Martin Luther 1520 "To the Christian Nobility"~
How much more in this current world today do our children need the Word of God and to be trained through a Christian education?

Opening Hymn "Jesus Is God's Living Vine" (Tune LSB 687)

1. Jesus is God's living vine; *(John 15:1)*
I am His and He is mine.
For my sins were washed away
On my bless'd baptismal day.
2. We're connected to God's vine *(John 15:3-4)*
Of Lord Jesus, Christ divine!
In Him we're from sin set free
For He died for you and me.
3. We are branches on God's vine; *(Matthew 28:18-20)*
We are part of God's design.
We can share God's love with all
Whether they are great or small.
4. As His branch we bear good fruit! *(John 15:5)*
We're connected to the root
Who from all God's blessings run –
Jesus, God's most precious Son!
5. In God's love we all shall grow *(John 15:8-9)*
And to others we shall show,
In the things we say and do,
How Lord Jesus loves them too.
6. Jesus said, "My joy is yours!
I'll be with you through the years!
Your joy will be full and free
As you live and trust in Me!" *(John 15:11)*
- △7. Praise to God the Father sing;
To Lord Jesus praises bring;
Praises to the Spirit be!
Praise the Holy Trinity!

✠ CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION ✠

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. *(Matthew 28:19b)*

C Amen.

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. *(1 John 1:8-9)*

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

Children's Choir "Holy Forever"

A thousand generations falling down in worship
To sing the song of ages to the Lamb
And all who've gone before us and all who will believe
Will sing the song of ages to the Lamb

Your name is the highest
Your name is the greatest
Your name stands above them all
All thrones and dominions
All powers and positions
Your name stands above them all

And the angels cry holy
All creation cries holy
You are lifted high, holy
Holy forever

If you've been forgiven and if you've been redeemed
Sing the song forever to the Lamb
If you walk in freedom and if you bear His name

Sing the song forever to the Lamb
We'll sing the song forever and amen

And the angels cry holy
All creation cries holy
You are lifted high, holy
Holy forever

Hear your people sing holy
To the King of kings, holy
You will always be holy
Holy forever

Your name is the highest
Your name is the greatest
Your name stands above them all
All thrones and dominions
All powers and positions
Your name stands above them all

And the angels cry holy
All creation cries holy
You are lifted high, holy
Holy forever

Hear your people sing holy
To the King of kings, holy
You will always be holy
Holy forever

You will always be holy
Holy forever

Songwriters: Jason Ingram, Brian Johnson, Chris Tomlin, Phil Wickham, Jenn Johnson.

✠ SERVICE OF THE WORD ✠

Introit

Psalm 113:1-2, 4, 7-8; antiphon: v. 3

- P** From the rising of the sun to its setting,
- C** **the name of the LORD is to be praised!**
- P** Praise the LORD! Praise, O servants of the LORD,
- C** **praise the name of the LORD!**
- P** Blessed be the name of the LORD
- C** **from this time forth and forevermore!**
- P** The LORD is high above all nations,
- C** **and His glory above the heavens!**

- P** He raises the poor from the dust
- C** **and lifts the needy from the ash heap,**
- P** to make them sit with princes,
- C** **with the princes of His people.**

All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

- P** From the rising of the sun to its setting,
- C** **the name of the LORD is to be praised!**

Kyrie ~ Lord, Have Mercy (Mark 10:47)

LSB 152

- P** In peace let us pray to the Lord.



- C** Lord, have mer - cy.

- P** For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.



- C** Lord, have mer - cy.

- P** For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.



- C** Lord, have mer - cy.

- P** For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.



- C** Lord, have mer - cy.

- P** Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



- C** A - men.

Gloria in Excelsis ~ Glory to God in the Highest

LSB 154

(Luke 2:14; John 1:29)

P Glory to God in the highest, and peace to His people on earth.



C Lord God, heav-en-ly king, al-might-y God and Fa - ther:



We wor-ship You, we give You thanks, we praise You for Your glo-ry.



Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God:



You take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



You are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther; re-ceive our prayer.



For You a-lone are the Ho-ly One, You a-lone are the Lord,



You a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

(2 Timothy 4:22)



C And al - so with you.

P Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, mercifully look upon our infirmities and stretch forth the hand of Your majesty to heal and defend

us; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



Psalm

Psalm 22:25–31

- ²⁵From You comes my praise in the great congregation;
My vows I will perform before those who fear Him.
- ²⁶The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek Him shall praise the LORD!
May your hearts live forever!
- ²⁷All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the LORD,
and all the families of the nations
shall worship before You.
- ²⁸For kingship belongs to the LORD,
and He rules over the nations.
- ²⁹All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship;
before Him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
even the one who could not keep himself alive.
- ³⁰Posterity shall serve Him;
it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation;
- ³¹they shall come and proclaim His righteousness to a people yet
unborn,
that He has done it.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual

Psalm 117:1-2a; 96:8

P Praise the LORD, all nations!

C **Extol Him, all peoples!**

P For great is His steadfast love toward us,

C **and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever.**

P Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name;

C **bring an offering, and come into His courts!**

Epistle

1 John 3:18–24

¹⁸Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

¹⁹By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before Him; ²⁰for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and He knows everything. ²¹Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; ²²and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do what pleases Him. ²³And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as He has commanded us. ²⁴Whoever keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in them. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Alleluia and Verse (John 6:68)

LSB 156

C Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Holy Gospel

John 15:1-8

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fifteenth chapter.

C Glo - ry to You, O Lord.

¹Jesus said "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch of Mine that does not bear fruit He takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. ⁵I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not abide in Me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be My disciples."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



C Praise to You, O Christ.

Apostles' Creed

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

And 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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence 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.

Hymn 685 "Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus"

Sermon Text

John 15:1-8

Sermon "We Are Connected by Jesus"

1. Jesus calls us _____ on His vine.
2. What happens if we neglect _____ ?
3. We are fertilized branches _____ .

Hymn 411 "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light"

Prayers

Lord's Prayer (*Matthew 6:9-13*)

C Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us

our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Benediction *(Numbers 6:24-26)*

LSB 166

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and † give you peace.



C A - men.

Closing Hymn "In Christ, We Are Forever Grafted" *(Tune LSB 811)*

1. In Christ, we are forever grafted; *(John 15:3)*
We are the branches, He the vine.
All who abide in Him are crafted
Into a branch with fruit divine.
Apart from Jesus none will bear *(John 15:5)*
Fruit that is righteous, true, and fair.
2. In Christ all faithful are connected *(John 15:1-2)*
To God the Father who takes care
Of His creation, though infected
By Satan's sinful, tempting snare.
Yet, we abide in Jesus' vine
To bear the fruits of God's design. *(Galatians 5:22-23)*
3. Apart from Christ we can do nothing. *(John 15:5)*
Yet in Him, through the Spirit's show'r,
We are connected to the wellspring
Of all God's gifts, His grace, His pow'r! *(Eph. 2:8-9; 1 Cor. 12:4-11)*
Baptized in Christ, we died to sin, *(Romans 6:3-4)*
And each day we new life begin.
4. We are connected to each other *(Ephesians 2:19-22)*
And Christ who reigns o'er all the Church.
And with our Lord – as sisters brothers –
United in baptismal birth.
As God's bless'd children we proclaim
Grace to each other in God's name.

5. As Jesus loved His gracious Father, *(Matthew 28:18-20)*
May we so love all others too.
When we share Christ's love with our neighbor
Through ev'rything we say and do,
We shall reach people with God's grace
Till Christ's confessed by ev'ry race.

△6. Praise to the Father, God Creator;
Thanks to Jesus, God's own Son;
Hail to the Spirit, our Father-Bringer;
We praise the Holy Three-in-One!
With saints and angels we employ
Our songs and thanks of endless joy! *(John15:11)*

Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting One from Lutheran Service Book

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The flowers that adorn the Altar are given by Nathan, Beth, Evelyn, and Andrew Miller in praise and thanksgiving to our gracious Savior, Jesus Christ, for Josephine's 5th birthday.

A HUGE THANK YOU to all who donated to Mission Haiti during our "Haiti Art Sale" this past month. Through your loving generosity we were able to raise \$1,115 for the Lutheran School teachers in the Jeremie District, enabling them to continue to teach the children about Jesus as well as give them a much needed education. (If you missed out, there are still a few pieces in the church office. Please see Terry or Janet Miller if you are interested.) May He bless all of you and to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, be all the glory!

Altar guild will meet Tuesday, January 30, 6:30 pm, at Elaine's house.

2024 Church and School Ministries Budget

Copies of the 2024 Church and School Ministries Budget, approved by voters in the November 2023 voters meeting, can be found on the table in the Narthex next to the Offering Box should you desire a copy.

From the church office – the secretary will be out of the office on Thursday mornings for the next 3 weeks. Normal office hours will resume on February 12th. Thank you for your understanding.

Calendar of Events

TODAY – Lutheran Schools Sunday January 21st, 2024

Sunday School & Bible Classes..... 8:30 am
Worship Service..... 9:30 am
Voters’ Meeting-Bethany Room..... After Worship Service
Adult Basketball..... 2:00-4:00 pm
Bell Choir Practice.....5:00 pm
Adult Choir Practice6:00 pm

MON: ~ National Lutheran Schools Week ~

Day School Chapel - Daily (except Wednesday) 11:00 am

TUES:

Pastor Wonnacott @ the Whitlock.....2:00 pm

WED:

Men’s Breakfast Bible Study 6:30 am
Day School Chapel 8:05 am

THURS:

Thursday Morning Ladies Bible Study 9:30 am
8th Grade Public School Confirmation5:00 pm
New Member Class 2.0.....7:00 pm

FRI:

Day School/Preschool Chapel..... 11:00 am

NEXT SUNDAY January 28th, 2024

Sunday School & Bible Classes..... 8:30 am
Worship Service with Communion..... 9:30 am
Bell Choir Practice.....5:00 pm
Adult Choir Practice6:00 pm

LWML will be packing “Goodie Boxes” for St Paul’s college students, who have their addresses turned into the church office, on Monday, February 5, after our meeting. The program is a Bible Study on the hymn, “Salvation Unto Us Has Come.” Anyone wishing to contribute to the boxes should bring 1 dozen individually-wrapped items to the Church kitchen on Sunday, Feb. 4, or to the meeting. All ladies are invited, and guests are welcome.

Altar flowers: if any donor needs help in ordering or arranging flowers, the altar attendants are willing to assist in any way they can. Please contact the attendant for the month (listed on left side of Flower Chart & the Epistle calendar), and let them know by the **SUNDAY BEFORE** your flowers are to be displayed.

Special Concerns:

That we as a church and school continue to grow in the Vine, Jesus. Connected to His love, forgiveness, and peace, we continue to grow into a family of believers!

For Pastor Rafael & Jamielynn Flores and Pastor Micah Wildauer and their work in foreign missions.

For the Lord's guidance in calling a new Administrative Pastor.

That the Lord would bless our offerings that we give today.

For our country and her leaders.

We pray for all Christians suffering from trials and persecutions in this world. That their light would so shine before men to glorify Jesus.

YOUTH NEWS

Ice Skating (Sunday, January 28th): For Youth in Grades 4 through High School, we have rescheduled our ice skating outing at Iron Works in Mishawaka for January 28th. We will meet at church at 1 pm and return by approximately 4 pm. Cost remains \$5/attendee. **Those who plan to attend must sign up on the Youth bulletin board by Wednesday, January 24th.** If you have any questions, please contact Andy Wildauer.

Parent Meeting (Sunday, February 4th): We will be holding a meeting for parents of Youth currently in Grades 7 through High School following the church service on February 4th 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 (February 11th): Once again the Youth Group will be making Super Bowl Subs for anyone interested. Orders can be placed following the church services beginning today through February 4th - sandwiches will be available for pick up following the church service on Sunday, February 11th. There is no cost for the subs. Free will offerings will be accepted in support of future Youth Gatherings and mission opportunities.

SCHOOL CORNER

Thank you, students, for singing today to kick-off National Lutheran Schools Week!

There are several fun activities planned to show our St. Paul's spirit this week: Students will have dress-up theme days every day; Camp Lutherhaven will visit Chapel; Students will share "play-time" with the

Preschool; Thursday, students will have muffins/donuts with parents; and Friday, students will get pancakes for lunch, courtesy of the PTL.

In addition, Wednesday, the students will be going bowling to raise money for the **Lutheran Church Charities Comfort Dog Program**. The comfort dogs are working Golden Retrievers, trained to bring care and comfort to those experiencing crisis or disaster in over 27 states. **Students will be collecting donations and pledges the next few weeks, or donations can be given at the school office, if you would like to donate to this worthy cause.**

We celebrate our Lutheran School and Preschool with fun and enthusiasm, but are seriously thankful for the opportunity to educate these children in a Biblically-based setting, in knowledge of the Scripture, and of Christ's sacrifice for us. **Thank you, for all you do, to support the ministry of St. Paul's Lutheran School (and Church)! Thank you, Teachers, for your dedication and continual work to make that happen!**

Speaking of thanking the teachers: **Please notice the Teacher Wish List Tree in the narthex.** If you would like to gift the teachers with an item for their classrooms or volunteer time, take an ornament from the tree and sign your name beside the corresponding item on the list. Items can be brought to the school office or placed under the tree. Thank you for your donations!

Thank you for all the end-of-the-year donations to the Lutheran SGO and Tuition Assistance!

Our goal is to make a Christian education affordable, so please continue to give, and receive the tax credit and deduction for your donations! **Now, there is a link to donate to the LSGO on the church's website under the School drop-down menu.**

You can also find several (easy) ways to donate at www.lutheranSGO.org/Donate. 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. Please contact Jennifer Harman, in the school office, if you have questions.

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

Servants for Today's Worship January 21, 2024

Rev. Neil Wonnacott (574-546-2332 or 574-301-9291)

Organist: Anita Eichinger

Ushers: Larry Britt & Jim Mitchell

Acolyte: Reuben & Colton Napper

Elder: Dennis Sienicki

Video Streamer: Tyler & Dakota Schmeltz

Servants for Next Sunday's Worship January 28, 2024

Rev. Neil Wonnacott (574-546-2332 or 574-301-9291)

Organist: Anita Eichinger

Ushers: Austin Nielsen & Tyler Schmeltz

Acolyte: Abby Wildauer

Elder: Bill Rogers

Communion Assistant: Terry Miller

Video Streamer: Paul Wonnacott