



January 8, 2023 Baptism of our Lord

Saturday March 11th Centennial Lent Event

We are excited to announce a **Centennial Lent Event** for you to put on your 2023 calendar! On **Saturday, March 11th**, we will welcome Dan Frachey to Anamosa.

From 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., he will lead us in community building through reflection, prayer, songs, food, videos, sharing, and activities. The event is entitled, "**Legacies: Stories of Gratitude and Gifting.**" We will consider the heart of Christianity's legacy, our individual legacies, and our community legacy as disciples of Christ. All ages are welcome. More details will come! Mark it in your calendar now!



Super Bowl Subs February 5th

The Mission Trip youth and families are excited to announce that we are taking Sign-Ups for Subs "To Go" for **Super Bowl Sunday, February 5th!** The cost will be \$7 and you will have your choice of a Ham or Turkey sub with cheese, lettuce & condiments, a bag of chips and a cookie. Please sign-up at the back of the vestibule or when you first walk into the C.E. building. Be sure to write your name and the # of meals you are purchasing and if you have paid. We also ask that you put down whether you are coming to pick up after the First service or Second so we can make sure they are ready to go. If you write a check please make it payable to St. Paul Lutheran Church and write Missions Trip Subs in the memo line. If you have any questions, please reach out to Kaileen Weaver. Thank you for helping our youth be able to carry on our Mission here at St. Paul!

Deadline is: Monday, January 30th @ 2pm to be guaranteed a Sub

A Six Part Series of Information on the Meaning of Hell and Satan

At Jesus' baptism and subsequent temptation in the desert, we hear references to angels and the tempter and the devil and Satan, depending on the Gospel being used. These terms can be spark points for controversy and misunderstanding. I'd like to present a few thoughts on these terms for your consideration.

The word *satan* usually evokes an immediate visceral response in people often associated with fear and vulnerability. This can be moderated with a little knowledge and some prayerful reflection. The title, *satan*, is the English transliteration of a Hebrew word that means "adversary." The figure of *satan* is found in only three places in the Old Testament and all of these are after the Babylonian exile that ended in 539 BC: Job 1:1-2, Zechariah 3: 1-2, 1 Chronicles 21:1. Notice that *satan* is not created by God or mentioned in the Pentateuch (first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures). In the first two instances, *satan* is depicted as a member of God's court whose basic duty it was to accuse human beings of wickedness and folly. He is clearly not at this point an enemy of God and the leader of the demonic forces of evil as he becomes later. In the Hebrew text there is no definite article with the noun *satan* and the word is probably best translated simply as "AN adversary, not THE Adversary." It is likely understood as an adversary of humanity, not God. In either case, the figure in 1 Chronicles is not yet the embodiment of evil. It should be noted that the serpent of Genesis 3 is never in the Old Testament identified as Satan. The serpent is the metaphorical embodiment of human's cunning and egoistic decision making. It is not the personification of cosmic evil. It also is not yet the snake which becomes the ever-present fear that comes from the human inability to handle free-will in a faithful way.

Family Night @ LCC

Join us for our 2nd Annual Family Night @ the LCC Saturday, January 21st from 6-8pm. We will have Crafts, Board Games, Basketball, Volleyball, Corn hole & Dodgeball (I think we need to do another parent vs. kids battle to end the night)

There will be cookies and juice as a light refreshment throughout the night. Please feel free to reach out if you have Any questions!

2nd Sunday Baptism of our Lord

Romans 8: 14-19 NIV

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “*Abba, Father.*” The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed.

“The [Holy] Spirit gives witness *with our spirit* that we are children of God.” Paul describes how a Spirit-filled person can successfully negotiate this earthly existence being directed by the life-giving force of Jesus’ Spirit. The self-centered, ego-driven person leads a life that results in [premature] death experienced as an absence of the joy connected to a personal relationship with God. In this case, pain which is part and parcel of human life often leads to a hopeless sense of sadness, emptiness, despair, or anger (suffering). In contrast, the person who submits to the guidance of Holy Spirit and willingly suffers like Christ with those who cannot avoid suffering finds hope-filled life and peace. At the end of the day, we believe that the indwelling Spirit of God who raised Jesus from the dead will also raise us in the resurrection to new life. This is incredibly good news!

Psalm 2:7-8

I will proclaim the LORD’s decree: He said to me, “You are my son; today I have become your father. Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.

Matthew 3:1-17 NIV

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea² and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”³ This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

“A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”

John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” In order to prepare for a coming event, it is helpful to have someone make us aware of its possibility. John the Baptist was the immediate precursor to the salvation event experienced in Jesus the Christ. His was not an easy message to deliver, but he did it wholeheartedly and in keeping with the ancient tradition of the prophet.

Keep in mind, Matthew seems to be writing his gospel for a heavily Jewish audience living in Antioch, Syria about fifty years after the Jesus event. He is trying to convince them that those who acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah will inherit the Kingdom of God already present in their midst. This is shortly after these same Jews saw their Temple in Jerusalem destroyed by the Romans, some having fled for their lives to other regions of the Empire. Their king was gone; the Temple was destroyed, and they had been driven from the city of Jerusalem, their mother. They had to be wondering how God would be with them now. “Who would be *Emmanuel?*”

One of the devices Matthew used to show them the identity of Jesus was to recall Jewish stories and Scripture. Today, as we will frequently experience in the coming year, Matthew recalls the prophecy of Isaiah (40:3ff). In this instance, Isaiah was proclaiming the glorious return of the Jews from their exile in Babylon. He is referring to an angel when he says a voice cries out in the desert “Prepare the Way of the Lord,” but really the voice relaying the message is his own. Like Moses whose voice was heard before the Exodus out of Egypt, Isaiah proclaims the new Exodus. And, like Isaiah or Elijah, John the Baptist proclaims the next Exodus to freedom found in following Jesus. Even geographically, John fits the mold because he is in the desert preaching; most likely the same desert the Jews traversed in their return from Egypt and Babylon. Matthew has struck a powerful image in the minds of his listeners as John proclaims, “The Kingdom is at hand!” {Place your arm out in front of you and see how close

the Kingdom is. In the second half of the gospel passage, a group of Pharisees and Sadducees have come out to edge of the desert and present themselves for baptism by John. John is calling for a baptism that follows public acknowledgement of sin, i.e. a lack of righteousness. He knew what Jesus knew, that these religious leaders were anything but humble. They wouldn't easily admit that they were breaking the Mosaic Law or God's covenant because they had been raised up to these places of honor. Most likely they just wanted to protect their public image and their status in the community by confronting this shrill voice who called the people to turn their backs on the hypocritical and ego-driven leaders in Jerusalem. The reality was that John's baptism asked something very radical from those he "dipped" in the river; they had to pledge to change their lives in order to "show fruits of repentance," by being more God-fearing, more aware of the poor, more generous, more faithful to worship, and less distracted. John was skeptical that either group of religious leaders would be willing to do that so he calls them a "brood of vipers" (those who eat their young)! This insult aligns them with the children of the devil, the cunning serpent deceiver of the Genesis story. These leaders came to the water claiming rightful respect as children of Abraham, but John points out publicly in front of many kinfolk that they are in fact deceivers who rely more on themselves and their heritage than God. John goes on to tell them that the Messiah will baptize (dip them, cover them) with two other elements they considered to be liquid: God's Spirit/breath, and fire. Like water, they purify! Like a winnowing fan, they separate the worthless shell from the valuable seed.

Taking in home:

Have you heard any "good news" recently? Have you shared any "good news" lately?

When you hold the cross and imagine the world through Jesus' eyes, what suffering do you see? What forgiveness do you pray for? Describe a time recently when you have suffered with Christ for others.

Where can you see new life emerging these days?

In the sacrament of Baptism the child is *claimed* for Christ while the parents are *commissioned* to teach as Christ did. Talk about the ways you teach the love of Jesus and show that love is with you always. Parents are the first and primary teachers of this truth to their children: the WD4, VBS, and the faith community exist to support that effort.

Mindfulness

(set aside three minutes. Breathe. Read slowly. Which words or ideas hold energy for you? What images emerge in you?) "Many of the fathers of the church believed in an actual ontological, metaphysical, objective union between humanity and God, which alone would allow Jesus to take us "back with him" into the life of the Trinity (John 17:23-24, 14:3, 12:26). This was how real "participation" was for many in the early church. It changed people and offered them their deepest identity and form ("trans-formation"). We had thought our form was merely human, but Jesus came to tell us that our actual form is human-divine, just as he is. He was not much interested in proclaiming himself the exclusive or exclusionary son of God, but he went out of his way to communicate an inclusive sonship and daughterhood to the crowds." — **Richard Rohr, Immortal Diamond: The Search for Our True Self**

Mark your calendar!! St Paul Lutheran Church's 100th Anniversary Meal & Games Event

On Sunday, January 15th from 11:45-2, we will be hosting a meal consisting of maid rites and hotdogs, chips and drink for a free will donation. We will also be playing bingo with one adult prize and one child prize. Come join us and have great fun and fellowship!

100th Anniversary Directory

Please keep in mind the photo deadline for the 100th Anniversary Photo Directory is Sunday January 29th. Send them in to singzalot76@aol.com

*Please note, professionally taken photos need a release from the company to be able to be printed in our directory. Your personal photos are greatly appreciated!



Scripture Study Gatherings

Each Tuesday, a group of people interested in the Scriptures gather for conversation on a Zoom call from 1:30-3:00 p.m. We discuss the current week's Narrative Lectionary readings. If you are looking for some respectful, friendly, and provocative exploration of the Bible, feel free to join us at this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2391467917> or contact Pastor Rodney for more information.



A Weekly Men's Scripture/Book Study is meeting at 8:00 A.M. on Wednesday mornings in the lower level of the CE building. All are welcome.

Dinner With Friends

Note: Date change from original discussions!!

Anyone up for some delicious local Mexican cuisine?



Please join your St Paul friends at Casa Las Brasas, 300 W Main Street, Anamosa, on Thursday, January 26th at 5:00 p.m.

Hope to see you there!!

Any questions, please call Sherri Evans at 319-981-0283



Collecting Pill Bottles

We are now collecting only amber colored pill bottles with no labels that are clean and dry for the Community Free Clinic in Cedar Rapids. Drop them off in the back of the church in the box underneath the table.



the nine key teachings of Jesus

- radical **love**
- lavish **generosity**
- extravagant **forgiveness**
- inclusive **hospitality**
- compassionate **action**
- selfless **service**
- a passion for **justice**
- creative **nonviolence**
- simple **living**

Kurt Struckmeyer, An Unorthodox Faith

FOLLOWING JESUS

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CHURCH COUNCIL

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Treasurer & Visitation Ministry:

Nancy Lyon Douglas
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Reminder of our Church Envelopes

Your church envelopes were ordered a few months ago, but the company we use has been behind all year because of insufficient help. They are working 12 hour days trying to get them done as soon as possible, but they don't guarantee that we will have them before the first of the year. Sorry for the inconvenience. You will be notified as soon as we receive them.



Viewing of the Chosen, Season Two will continue between services and will be shown on the following Sundays: January 8, 15, 22, 29, and February 5. Thanks to Scott Chrisman for facilitating this opportunity and for leading the discussion.

The chosen is a drama series created and directed by American filmmaker Dallas Jenkins. Jenkins' intention was not only to dig deeper into the people who encountered Jesus and to see Jesus through the eyes of those who met him, but also to show him in a way that is more "personal, intimate, and immediate." The series writers made use of a consultation team that included a Rabbi, a Catholic priest, and an evangelical theologian to assist in the authentic portrayal of Jesus as a first century Jewish man in the Roman Empire.

Time to Update Your Information

Before we print the new directory, we need any new/different information that you need updated in our system. This could be a new address, add or delete a phone number, etc. We want to make sure all the information we have on you and your family is current. Please send any updates to me, Kathy Brunssen at: stpaul Lutheran@gmail.com or call me at 319-462-4841. Thank you in advance!!

Please Pray for the Following

(Why people want prayers isn't important, *the prayers are!*)

We pray for all who need healing, strength or comfort. For peace in our nation & world, for safety in our schools and communities and for those seeking a safe home. To add a name call or email Kathy at 462-4841/stpaulanamosa@gmail.com. Names will be listed for 4 weeks and may be renewed.

Next Week's Readings

January 15, 2023

Matthew 4:1-17

Psalm 91:9-12

GriefShare is available upon request. Please contact Nancy Douglas if interested 319-551-3358.

AA meets in the lower level of the CE building on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 pm.

Jones County Food Bank: Urgent help is needed at the Jones County Community Food Bank - food and funds have fallen critically low. For the last few months, the number of families and individuals requesting foods has been increasing and the shelves are almost bare. Funds are also being diminished by the demands of purchasing food at higher prices.

To donate money, checks may be written to Jones County Community Food Bank and mailed to 105 Broadway Place, Anamosa IA 52205. Items needed this week: Peas, pancake mix and syrup, canned tuna, Mac & Cheese and personal care items. **Please place items in the back of the church for collection by St. Paul volunteers OR call the Food Bank to make delivery arrangements (462-4343)**



Bread Bakers:

January: Darla Algoe

February: Valerie Lambertsen

March: Staci Sullivan

Deliver Food to Food Bank:

January: Barb Kleis

February: Ralph & Sandy Andresen

March: Myra Powell

Wednesday, January 4

***8:00am Men's scripture/book study LL CE**

***6:00pm Service**

Comm Prep: Darla Algoe

Greeters: Darla Algoe

Reader: Darla Algoe

Prayers: Darla Algoe

PowerPoint: Darcie Tenley

Comm server: Darla Algoe

Sunday, January 8

***8:00 am**

Comm Prep: Jeff / Kristi Fortune

Greeters: Mike / Nancy Bickford

Reader: Barry Anderson

Prayers: Barry Anderson

PowerPoint: Lois Ocenosak

Comm servers: Jeff / Kristi Fortune

***10:30am**

Comm Prep: DJ/Donna Condry

Greeters: DJ/Donna Condry

Reader: Kathy Dornbusch

Prayers: Kathy Dornbusch

PowerPoint: Simon R.

Livestream: Sebastian G.

Comm servers: DJ/Donna Condry

Wednesday, January 11

***8:00am Men's scripture/book study LL CE**

***6:00pm Service**

Comm Prep: Marlene Serbousek

Greeters: Marge Bohlken

Reader: Beth Hora

Prayers: Beth Hora

PowerPoint: 7th/8th WD4

Comm server: Kaileen Weaver

Sunday, January 15

***8:00 am**

Comm Prep: Ed Gertz/Susan Koppenhaver

Greeters: Ed Gertz/Susan Koppenhaver

Reader: Virginia Danielson

Prayers: Virginia Danielson

PowerPoint: Grant Lubben

Comm servers: Ed Gertz/Susan Koppenhaver

***10:30am**

Comm Prep: Barb Wilson

Greeters: Dan/Marilyn Lambertsen

Reader: Dan Lambertsen

Prayers: Sally Clapp

PowerPoint: Addi Dales

Livestream: Ingrid Vaughn

Comm servers: Dan Lambertsen/Sally Clapp

Wednesday, January 18

***8:00am Men's scripture/book study LL CE**

***6:00pm Service**

Comm Prep: Ken/Pam Humpal

Greeters: Ken/Pam Humpal

Reader & Prayers: Sara Chrisman

Comm Server: Ken Humpal

PowerPoint: Beth Hora

Mailing Address:

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Please call us if we can be of assistance.

PLEASE leave a message if we cannot answer. We will return your call ASAP.