



Dear Parents, We would love to work with you to bring your children to communion with Christ when he/she is hungry and curious to know the love of Jesus in this way. We rely on you to present your child to us when he/she expresses the desire to participate in communion with some understanding of why it is significant.

Soon, we will be preparing students to receive First Communion on Maundy Thursday or the Sunday following Easter by gathering with you for a mini-retreat on either Thursday, March 26th or Thursday, April 2nd in which we will talk about Christ's presence in the Eucharist, make a personal banner, and bake communion bread as an act of service for the whole community. If you have a child you feel is ready or would like more information, please contact Kaileen Weaver by March 25th at (319) 480-6031 or cyfmstpaulanamosa@gmail.com

Sunday, February 23rd

- * 8:30am Worship
- * 9:30am Coffee Hour
- * 10:30am Worship
- * 12:00pm Adult Initiation Meeting
- * 4:30pm Confirmation
- * 5:45pm Men's Craft Night

Tuesday, February 25th

- * 1:30pm Prayer (Drumming for Healing) in Prayer Chapel
- * 2:30pm R & R - in Prayer Chapel
- * 6:00pm Grief Support—LL CE
- * 8:00pm AA—LL CE

Wednesday, February 26th

- * 7:00am Good Guys Bible Study—McOttos
- * 8:00am Lutheran Men in Mission
- * 12:00 noon—Worship
- * 6:00pm Worship
- * 6:00pm WD4 @ Worship

Thursday, February 27th

- * 10:00am Friend to Friend

Church Office Hours: Typically church staff are in the building Monday - Friday. **Lois' office hours** are: Mon. & Th 9-2; Tue. 12:30–5:30; Wed. 9-4; Fri 9-12. Outside these hours call ahead to see if someone is here.

St. Paul Phone: (319)462-4841
 Office: 103 E. Cedar Street, Anamosa, IA 52205
 Website: www.stpaulanamosa.com
 Church Secretary email: stpaulanamosa@gmail.com

Wednesday, February 19th

Ushers: WD4 Students
Reader: WD4 Students
Comm Prep: Darla Algoe
Comm Server: WD4 Students
PowerPoint: WD4 Students

Sunday, February 23rd 8:30 a.m.

Ushers: Ed Gerst/Susan Koppenhaver
Reader: Virginia Danielson
Comm Prep: Jan Allaire/Karen Biere
Comm Server: Virginia Danielson, Colin & Carol Stiffler
PowerPoint: Conor Fortune
Video: Linda Kenny

Sunday, February 23rd 10:30 a.m.

Ushers: CJ Sullivan Family
Reader: Gary or Carlene Vavricek
Comm Prep: Barb Wilson
Comm Server: Staci Sullivan, Gary & Carlene Vavricek
PowerPoint: Victor Chalstrom
Video: Sean Hollett

Wednesday, February 26th Ash Wednesday

Noon Greeters: Ken & Pam Humpal
Noon Reader: Lois Ocenosak
Noon PowerPoint: Darcie Tenley
6:00 pm Greeters: WD4 Students
6:00 pm Reader: WD4 Students
6:00 pm PowerPoint: WD4 Students

Sunday, March 1st 8:30 a.m.

Ushers: Tom Sabotta & Sherri Evans
Reader: Tom or Sherri
Comm Prep: Dee Ihlenfeldt
Comm Server: Jeff & Kristi Fortune, Dee Ihlenfeldt
PowerPoint: Conor Fortune
Video: Linda Kenny

Sunday, March 1st 10:30 a.m.

Ushers: Shaun Lambertsen Family
Reader: Paula Sisler
Comm Prep: Serge & Paula Sisler
Comm Server: Fred Austin, Greta Vaughn, Paula Sisler
PowerPoint: Dean Lambertsen
Video: Eli Lambertsen

Sunday, February 23



Transfiguration

Liturgy setting one can be found on pages 57-74 in the green Lutheran Book of Worship and grape juice. The inner ring of the tray is grape juice. If in doubt, please ask the distributor. Gluten free hosts are available; please notify an usher before service begins.

All Are Welcome to commune with Christ in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. We serve the fruit of the vine under two forms: wine

At the beginning of worship you will be invited to turn to another person and complete the statement, "This week, I encountered God...." Today's festival is a bridge between the Advent-Christmas-Epiphany cycle that comes to a close today and the Lent-Easter cycle that begins in several days. On a high mountain Jesus is revealed as God's beloved Son, echoing the words at his baptism. This vision of glory sustains us as Jesus faces his impending death in Jerusalem. We turn this week to Ash Wednesday and our yearly baptismal journey from Lent to Easter. Some churches put aside the alleluia at the conclusion of today's liturgy. This word of joy will be omitted during the penitential season of Lent and will be sung again at Easter.

Prayer Concerns: Sharm Sisler, Betty Lubben, Bob Hefflefinger, Leslie Swartz, and Bobbie Gersdorf. (Names will be removed from the prayer list after four weeks unless there is a change in the person's condition. Requests need to be made by an immediate family member.)

Lenten meals are starting again March 4, 2020.

Please use the sign up sheet to help in the kitchen or to bring bars or cookies. High school students who need silver cord hours just bring your sheet with you. Thank you so much to all of you who step up every time I call. Lori R

Next Dinner with Friends Fri., Feb. 28 at 5 pm:

Please join us in the old Subway area, party room at Tapken's. A variety of pizzas will be ready to share. \$5 per person to share the pizza cost. Grab your favorite non-alcoholic beverage and delicious Ashby's ice cream on your own. Soups and other foods are available for purchase.

Seeking Congregational Leaders: If you would like to raise up the name of a person from our faith community you believe could be a leader, please share her/his name with me so I can invite him/her into a time of discernment. Thank you, Pastor Rodney

St. Paul Lutheran World Relief quilt work

begins on Monday, March 2 at 1:00 pm. We will continue to tie quilts each Monday through April 6. As our mothers would say, "many hands make light work." If your hands are free, come work with the quilters.

Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper

Tuesday, February 25,
5:30 to 7:00 PM

United Methodist Church

Serving Pancakes, Sausage, Cinnamon Rolls, Kolaches, Coffee, Milk and Juice

Everyone is welcome! Free Will Offering Accepted.

Congratulations to Ben Coyle and Angie Thomas

united in bans of marriage at St. Paul Lutheran Church on Friday, February 20, 2020.

Financial Peace University! Teresa Hackenmiller and Jim Collier are offering this class again at the Hiawatha office Education room starting March 8th. For more information follow this link to see full class schedule and register:

FPU.COM/1103976 We encourage people to bring family/teens - and encourage people "on the fence" to attend the first class FREE and register if they continue. We do ask for RSVP, because we cancel if we do not have at least 10 in the class. RSVP with Teresa cell 319-826-4272 Email: teressa.hackenmiller@thrivent.com or Jim Collier - cell: 319-350-3484 Email: jeshbr@msn.com

RAGBRAI Housing Requests:

- 2 Men, 1 woman—call David at (319) 572-7247

Neighborhood requests—

- team of 15 side by side housing if possible—email Dawn at vanrossum728@hotmail.com
- Lutheran Men in Mission team of 23 in same neighborhood contact Mark at 712-540-1391 mcmjuhl@midlands.net



February 26, 2019

12:00 pm

6:00 pm

First Reading: Exodus 24:12-18 NIV

This first reading helps to establish some themes that run throughout the sacred scriptures and into our gospel for this week.

The people of Israel were troubled. They had been wandering the Sinai Desert for years, wondering about this God who had freed them from slavery and now apparently was pleased to let them die in the wilderness. They squabbled, getting confused and angry when they felt abandoned by YHWH.

Moses takes them to a mountain and announces that he will go up on their behalf to commune with God and receive statutes for living in community in a good way. They hoped God would reveal to them God's presence and power to reassure them in their directionlessness.

When they looked up into the storm raging at the summit of the mountain, they saw the power of the Creator flashing through the clouds/smoke.

When Moses did not return in forty days (the symbolic number to indicate the time it takes for full revelation, conversion, or metamorphosis), they began to think him dead and they turned to their own devices.

Second Reading: 2 Peter 1:16-21 NIV

(no commentary)

Gospel: Transfiguration

Matthew 17:1-9 {NIV}

The story of the Transfiguration is always proclaimed on the last Sunday of Epiphany because it gives all who encounter it the opportunity to glimpse the real promise of Jesus' mission. There are so many layers of meaning in this story it is difficult to do them justice. Here is a brief overview of some of the major ideas.

When Jesus takes the three Apostles up the mountain (Mt. Tabor), he has already spent the better part of three years with them. They had seen him heal lepers, cast out demons, restore sight to the blind, make the lame walk, and call forth life from death's grip. Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of Heaven at hand, and these miracles reinforced the power of God already at work in their midst. Earlier, in Caesarea Philippi, Simon bar Jonah had named Jesus Messiah, and Jesus had blessed him with a new name {from Simon to *Petrus*: Rock} and the promise that this faith would be the foundation for God's reign on earth. But Jesus instructed the disciples not to tell anyone because he knew they were still looking for an earthly king to rise up militarily against the Romans; he did not want his work for justice to be compromised by their misled plans. This point is brought to the forefront when after telling the Apostles that he must go to Jerusalem to suffer and die, Peter protests because that reality didn't fit his image of a Messiah or the future kingdom. Jesus rebukes him and calls him "Satan/

deceiver" and a "stumbling stone," but surprisingly does not abandon him nor cast him out. Still, the disciples are filled with confusion and doubt. In order to confirm the truth of all he has said and done, Jesus takes James, John, and Peter up the mountain. They know from experience that people go up mountains to encounter God. Their anticipation would have been peaked, and the Lord did not disappoint.

The first thing we hear is that they experienced Jesus as transformed to a shimmering white light. You can picture them burying their faces in the ground as Jesus' face became like the sun. In the Hebrew mind, this is the *Shekinah*, the glory of God, shining through him. They are having a direct encounter with God. This means two things: The time of judgment (*Yom Yeshua*) is at hand, and, God's saving reign has in fact manifested itself in this Nazorean. Peter's response is to call Jesus *Adonai*, "majesty of Lords," a usage reserved for Yahweh God. Peter bestows on Jesus the honor attributed to God which serves to dispel the rumors among the Jewish elite that Jesus' power was from the devil. In this sense, those who do not choose to follow Jesus will be judged as having turned their backs on God's activity. Some early Christians claimed that the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE was a result of the Jew's rejection of Jesus; this is not a teaching held by mainline Christian churches.

The second encounter the three have is with Jesus standing between Moses and Elijah. These two represent the Law and the Prophets of Judaism. Recall that one of Matthew's primary purposes for writing his gospel was to show that Jesus was the new Moses and the fulfillment of all that had been predicted in the Old Testament. Jesus' face showed with the presence of God just as Moses' had (Ex. 34: 29) when he descended the mountain with the Decalogue. The members of Matthew's community needed convincing that Jesus' death on the cross was not a sign of shame or a curse. The voice from the heavens proclaiming the baptismal decree: "This is my son in whom I am well pleased," makes Jesus' ministry credible because he is now named and claimed by their Heavenly Father. The three, who represent all followers then and now, were instructed to "Listen to him." He is trustworthy because he has faced temptation, fear and doubt before and overcame them with the Word of God. Jesus didn't cower in the face of the devil, and he surely won't wilt in the presence of the Jerusalem elite whose cunning voices will put him in peril.

Hopefully after this vision, Peter and the others will be able to accept Jesus' Suffering Servant messiahship as authentic. They will have to choose as they descend the mountain: follow Jesus to Jerusalem where he has professed he will suffer and die, or turn around and go home with the marvelous story of their encounter with God shrouded in their hearts. Either way, they are forever changed.

Taking It Home:

--Consider asking the person you currently despise most to join you for lunch or a cup of coffee. Find out more about that person. At least refrain from making a negative comment when given the opportunity.

--For one week, pay attention to how people solve conflicts in the shows you like to watch. Does anyone follow the suggestions of Christ?

--How do you generally respond to insult, hurt feelings, or being asked to do something you don't care to do? If it's different than what Jesus taught, pause and ask for patience/humility/wisdom before responding next time. Could you surrender a bit for the sake of peace or to buy time?

--Identify how Paul's statement that the Christian community is the Temple of God, and the Holy Spirit dwells there, is true. Go to church this Sunday and see how it is true. Invite a friend to join you. Can you identify this truth outside a church community?

--Describe to someone else a time you gave more than had been asked of you. How did you feel? What happened because of your gesture?

--There is a noted trend among college graduates to join "intentional/confessing communities" of service and simplicity. Could this be a modern movement of Holy Spirit enfleshing the teaching of Matthew's Jesus?

Mindfulness (set aside five minutes. breathe and read through three times. Which words or ideas hold energy for you? What images emerge in your imagination?) *Emptying the Cross of It's Meaning* - "Christians are usually sincere and well-intentioned people until you get to any real issues of ego, control power, money, pleasure, and security. Then they tend to be pretty much like everybody else. We often given a bogus version of the Gospel, some fast-food religion, without any deep transformation of the self; and the result has been the spiritual disaster of "Christian" countries that tend to be as consumer-oriented, proud, warlike, racist, class conscious, and addictive as everybody else-and often more so, I'm afraid." Rohr, Richard, *Breathing Under Water, Spirituality and the Twelve Steps*, 2011

A Social Statement on: ABORTION [This social teaching statement was adopted by a more than two-thirds majority vote at the second biennial Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, meeting in Orlando, Florida, August 28-September 4, 1991.]

V. PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES RELATED TO ABORTION The purpose of law is to protect life and liberty, and to provide for the general welfare of society. One of the clearest ways in which a society both expresses its attitudes and values, and shapes them, is through law. Therefore, the church's position on

abortion must include guidance for the political decisions whereby justice is sought in the community, from before the pregnancy to long afterward. What is legal is not necessarily moral, and what is moral should not necessarily be enacted into law. Laws cannot enforce Christian love, but in principle and application they should be just. Christians as citizens and this church as an institution should join with others to advocate for and support just laws and to work to change those, which are unjust. In our attempts to influence the shaping of public policy, we should not disregard the rights of others, but work faithfully through the public processes by which justice is sought for all.

What is the status of this conversation in our local faith community? What words or phrases seem important to you today? What words challenge you?

Interviews to be Conducted

The church council has been meeting with Pastor Erika Uthe of the Southeast Iowa Synod. She is the director for evangelical mission. Pastor Erika works with congregations in helping them find the best ways for fulfilling their mission of sharing the Good News. She instructed the council on techniques that can be used for receiving input from congregational members. As a follow-up to the table talks that were held last year, it was determined that individual interviews would be a good way of receiving additional input. Ten individuals have been trained in the interviewing process. Our goal is to interview approximately 100 members. During the next 8 weeks, you may be receiving a call from an interviewer, wishing to schedule a meeting with you. The interview will be informal and last only 30 to 40 minutes. The following questions will be asked:

Interview Questions

What are the strengths of the St. Paul Community?

What would you like to see develop at St. Paul over the next three years?

What resources are needed to support that vision/development?

If you do not receive a call and would like to be interviewed, please notify the church office and an interviewer will be happy to call you to schedule a visit. Thank you for your participation in this project.