



St. Paul News

St. Paul Lutheran Church
100 7th St.

Ida Grove, Iowa
712-364-2918

www.stpaulig.org

2026

MARCH

When sports and faith collide...
By Pastor Neil Wehmas

On Wednesday, February 18th, we found ourselves in a bit of a dilemma. The OABCIG high school girls basketball team would be playing in the 2nd round of the regional basketball tournament. This date was Ash Wednesday.

This is quite the challenge. When I first became a pastor in 2013, I made it an important point to be present at as many school activities as possible. In smaller communities like Sibley-Ocheyedan or now Ida Grove, I know that the school is a center piece of the entire community. At any given game there are quite a few members of our congregation to be seen.

So, when the girls basketball were having one of their better seasons and playing on Ash Wednesday. It would be good for our community to support the girls of our school district. (Unfortunately, support of girls is sometimes lacking.) Athletics for many reasons are good for kids. It is good for their health, teaches leadership skills, risk-taking, teamwork, relationship skills, and being coachable.

However, as good as these things are, they are not as important as a person's relationship with Christ. A relationship that is built primarily in worship with your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. It is also built in relationships with other Christians through other activities such as youth group or small groups.

The reality is that we are facing an increasingly regular conflict between faith and athletics. AAU and traveling sports and dance are regularly on weekends including Sundays. It saddens me to see how many have completely neglected their faith in the name of various activities. For some it is occasional, for some it has been total neglect.

Whatever do we do? It begins with the students and parents. Parents need to stand against schools, sports unions, rec centers, and dance studios. Tell them, "My son/daughter won't be there on specific days." Or that he/she will not be there at a certain time. You must risk potential consequences. Parents need to stand with their son/daughter when they choose their faith over an activity.

Grandparents can pray for and encourage their children and grandchildren. Encourage them in the activity itself and encourage them to stand up for their faith when necessary.

Until people act, the encroachment upon the faith will not stop. On Ash Wednesday, we hear Jesus himself say, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matt. 6:19-21)

Jerseys are devoured by moth and dust, and outgrown. Balls deflate, puncture, and are thrown to the trash. Trophies cover in dust and rust and become forgotten. The treasures of Christ do not fade.

Choosing worship over the game (even if it means worship in the town of the tournament). Choosing week at a Church camp/gathering/conference over a week at sports camp. Choosing time with your faith family at youth group, Bible study, etc. These choices teach us the valuable lesson that there are parts of our life that are more important than sports and work.

Ideally, we wouldn't have to make a choice, instead we would work together and find a solution for both faith and sports/other activities to be part of our lives. Whether it be high school sporting event, school district homecoming festivities, or something else. May we find a way for both to co-exist.

The fields and courts and studios of activities in which God has placed child, parent, and grandparent, and coaches to serve him and glorify him. They are indeed a blessing to each child. Never at the expense of one's faith. Prayers for all as we continue to navigate these challenges.

In Christ,
Pastor Neil

Saturday Divine Worship @5pm
Lord's Supper Celebrated every 2nd & 4th Saturday
Sunday Divine Worship @9am
Adult Bible Class: 10:15-11:00a
Lord's Supper Celebrated Every 1st, 3rd, & 5th Sunday of the Month

SERVICE TIMES

SPECIAL VOTERS' MEETING - A special voters' meeting will be held Sunday, March 8 at 10:15. The only item will be to vote on whether to approve changing our constitution to combine the Evangelism/Assimilation and Missions/Stewardship boards into one 3-person board and to change the number of elders from 6 to 5 in order to decrease the number of council positions needed.

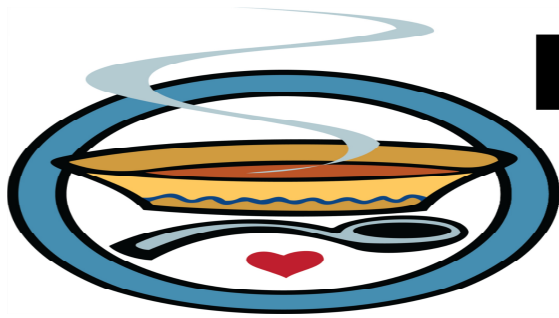
2026 LENTEN MIDWEEK SERIES

Journey of Disciples & Prophets

— Wednesdays • 6:30 PM —
 St. Paul Lutheran Church
 Ida Grove, Iowa

	February 18 † Ash Wednesday: Jonah & Nineveh
	February 25 † Pride, Lust, and Greed — Herod & John
	March 4 † Our Shepherd in the Shadow of Death — Feeding of 5,000
	March 11 † Set Your Eyes on Jesus, Peter — Jesus Walks on Water
	March 18 † God Will Provide a Sacrifice — Abraham & Isaac
	March 25 † Your Soul Will Be Pierced — The Annunciation

All Are Welcome



Lenten Meals

serving from 5:00-6:15PM

- March 4 pulled pork, chips
- March 11 serving taverns (sloppy joes)
- March 18 chicken & rice
- March 25 scalloped potatoes and ham

HOLY WEEK & EASTER
St. Paul Lutheran Church • Ida Grove

Palm Sunday Processional
Saturday, March 28th @ 5:00pm
Sunday, March 29th @ 9:00am

Holy Week Daily Chapel
Monday - Friday @ 12:15pm

Maundy Thursday
Thursday, April 2nd @ 6:30pm

Good Friday - Tenebrae
Friday, April 3rd @ 6:30pm

Easter Vigil w/ Service of Light
Saturday, April 4th @ 5:00pm

Easter Sunday Worship
Sunday, April 5th
6:30am & 9:00am

100 7th Street, Ida Grove, Iowa

He Is Risen!

BOARD OF HUMAN CARE is looking for volunteers to help with visiting shut in's, those in the nursing home, assisted living or other individuals.. If you are interested please let Synda Jepsen or Nancy Schoen know, there is a sign up sheet available on the narrow table in the narthex, please put your name and phone number down and they will contact you.

HUMAN CARE TEAM will meet March 11 at 11:30AM



COMMUNITY BASKET DONATIONS FOR MARCH: Beverages: coffee, tea, juice, hot chocolate, etc.. and any other related items. Place your donation in the shopping cart in the Narthex or hallway. **Any items are appreciated as well, as they can always use donations.** The Community Basket is open on Thursdays (except 3rd Thursday), from 2:30-5:30PM ****They can always use canned vegetables, canned fruits & canned soups. ESPECIALLY CEREAL.**

Also note: they can use outdated items that are within a year of expiration.

Mobile Food Pantry will be Battle Creek Fire Station on Thursday, March 19 from 4:30-5:30PM. Its helpful to bring a laundry basket or container for your food items.

**JR High and SR High Youth Pancake and Sausage Breakfast
Last one til this Fall !**



**SUNDAY, MARCH 1, 2026
SERVING IN FELLOWSHIP HALL FOLLOWING WORSHIP SERVICE
Come and enjoy breakfast ! FREE WILL OFFERING**



Sunday School

Class from 10:15-11:15am
Children ages 4 yr old Preschool-12th grade
6th-8th - Middle School Youth Room
9th-12th - High School Youth Room

Cross

Explorations Wednesdays,
at 4:00-5:15pm for 6th/7th/8th grades
and 4:00-5:00pm for 3rd-5th grade

School Early Out March 25 Class at 1:30PM



WEDNESDAY CROSS EXPLORATIONS REMINDER as winter weather inches closer, we remind parents that when school gets dismissed early due to weather, or there is no school it automatically cancels Wednesday, Cross Explorations. We try our best as well to put the word out via our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/StPauldaGrove>
We also encourage parents to fill out an information sheet and put in the white box, so we have cell phones for weather related cancellations or emergencies.

MIDWEEK SNACKS - A donation bucket is available if you would like to donate towards midweek snacks or another idea is a FoodPride gift card to help with the purchase of items or the following snack items are appreciated. **Prepackaged items you know your kids will eat is appreciated as well.**

A reminder if school is cancelled or dismissed early due to weather, it automatically cancels Wednesday, Cross Explorations/Catechism. It will also be posted on Facebook

LWML LADIES BIBLE STUDY MARCH



Lutheran Women
in Mission

RUTH (2) will meet on **March 5** will meet at noon at Zimmy's and will have Bible study following at 1:00PM. Linda will be BSL. We had 11 present for our February meeting.

LOIS (3) will meet on **March 5** in the Conference Room at 1:30PM. Judy S. will be hostess and Judy W will be BSL. We had 7 present for our February meeting. We cleaned kitchenette next to the Conference room.

EUNICE (10) will meet on **March 5** at Willowdale Nursing Home, Battle Creek at 2:00PM. Shar will be hostess and Karen will be BSL. We had 5 present for our February meeting.

JOHANNA(12) will meet **March 5 at 7:00PM**, at the Church in the Fellowship Hall. Marge will be hostess and Ann will be BSL.

LWML BIBLE STUDY LEADER'S MEETING on Tuesday, March 17 at 1:00PM

LWML ZONE PRAYER SERVICE on Thursday, March 19 at St. Paul, Ute.
9:00am Coffee, 10:00AM Prayer Service, 11:00AM Board meeting

LWML Exec. Board Meeting on Tuesday, March 24 at 4:30PM

THE LARGE LWML MITE BOX that is on the table in the narthex will be highlighted and along with the Mission Mite of the month, on the second Sunday of each month. For March the Following Mission Grant is #29 Camp Restore Detroit, Michigan — \$81,313 About This Mission Grant Camp Restore Detroit (CRD) is a ministry serving in the northeast corner of Detroit. Their goal is to partner with the community to restore neighborhoods and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They have established and seen growth in programs that focus on combating issues around poverty, homelessness, abuse, and broken families. There is also a focus on comprehensive youth mentoring and a training initiative. Overall, Camp Restore works to offer a safe, supportive environment where youth and young adults can transform their lives through mentoring, vocational training, life skills education, and spiritual care. Specifically, the next step is to create a comfortable dedicated space where youth can receive tutoring, participate in Bible studies, plus access essential resources like laundry facilities and showers.

This grant will be used to renovate a building, cover construction costs, and purchase furniture for this next phase of outreach in the community.

If God Had Voicemail

Have you ever wondered what would happen if God used voicemail to handle all our prayers?

Let's imagine it for a moment.

I had just finished gossiping and wanted to confess, so I got ready to pray—or rather, to “call.” Immediately, a voice answered:

“You’ve reached the throne room of Heaven, the Prayer Department. All of our representatives are currently assisting other callers. Your call is important to us, and we want to help you. Please stay on the line, and your request will be answered in the order it was received.”

Soft music plays. Then another message comes on:

“Listen carefully to the following options and press the appropriate number.

Press 1 for prayer for a loved one.

Press 2 for prayer for your church.

Press 3 to give thanks.

Press 4 to confess sins.

Press 5 for salvation.

Press 6 for physical needs.

To repeat this menu, press 9.”

Since I had a sin to confess, I pressed 4.

Another voice responded cheerfully:

“We’re so glad to help you with your confession of sins. Please select from the following options:

If you cursed, press 1.

If you yelled at your spouse or another family member, press 2.

If you gossiped, press 3...”

The list went on and on.

About then I decided to hang up and keep on gossiping. But then I remembered what the Bible says about God and how he attends to our needs. He doesn't route our prayers through a heavenly call center or put us on hold. We don't get busy signals, menus or automated voices.

Instead, our Father listens instantly, personally, and lovingly. Instead of a voice mail system, he says, “Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear.” (Isaiah 65:24, KJV)

Name: _____

Date: _____



GIANT SPRING WORD SEARCH



- Ants
- Bees
- Beetle
- Biking
- Birds
- Bluebird
- Breezy
- Budding
- Butterfly
- Camping
- Caterpillar
- Cherry
- Cherry blossom
- Climbing
- Cloudy
- Coconut
- Cricket
- Daffodil
- Daisy
- Dew
- Dragonfly
- Ducklings
- Fireflies
- Flowers
- Fresh
- Frog
- Grass
- Grasshopper
- Green
- Growth

R	P	C	A	M	P	I	N	G	H	B	L	U	E	B	I	R	D	H	V	M	G
S	E	A	D	O	A	Y	G	J	S	G	E	G	N	I	B	M	I	L	C	I	N
L	F	D	L	G	R	A	S	S	E	N	R	F	I	R	E	F	L	I	E	S	I
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B	O	E	D	O	H	R	E	V	N	L	C	I	U	B	D	O	O	P	N	P	W
I	P	Q	L	O	Y	L	F	R	E	T	T	U	B	A	M	R	O	F	E	S	O
C	H	E	R	R	Y	B	L	O	S	S	O	M	I	C	A	L	A	L	F	R	L
T	U	N	O	C	O	C	G	N	I	R	P	S	H	L	C	N	I	C	B	A	F
C	C	S	Y	H	Q	P	R	E	N	O	Y	W	L	Z	T	G	M	L	J	D	D
B	U	D	D	I	N	G	O	T	S	E	N	I	I	S	L	E	W	R	A	T	R
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G	N	I	G	G	O	J	T	P	E	R	U	T	A	N	D	I	H	B	T	B	G
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K	I	T	E	N	E	C	V	E	Q	H	Y	W	R	X	A	E	I	G	P	N	L
K	D	I	E	N	D	U	C	K	L	I	N	G	S	C	U	L	R	N	D	G	Y

- Hiking
- Jogging
- Kite
- Ladybug
- Leaves
- Lightning
- Lilac
- Mango
- Misty
- Nature
- Nest
- New
- Orchid
- Petals
- Picnic
- Pollen
- Rabbit
- Rainbow
- Raindrops
- Robin
- Rose
- Skating
- Soccer
- Spring
- Squirrel
- Sunshine
- Swallow
- Swing
- Tadpole
- Thunder

- Tulip
- Windy

