

THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL



JANUARY 25, 2026

**ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH (LCMS)
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AS WE GATHER- GOD'S ENEMIES ARE CONQUERED BY THE REVELATION OF GRACE IN CHRIST- Christ brings about a great reversal in St. Paul. "He who used to persecute us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy" (Gal. 1:23). The enemy of the Gospel becomes its foremost preacher, and the last of the apostles becomes the first (Matt. 19:30). Paul is God's "chosen instrument ... to carry [His] name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel" (Acts 9:15). The conversion of Paul is only a more dramatic example of what God does in revealing Christ to us. The bondage of our sin makes saving faith impossible. "I believe that I cannot ... believe" (Small Catechism, Third Article of the Creed). But even this is no obstacle for our Lord's grace in Christ and the Holy Spirit's power through the Gospel. Baptized, filled with the Holy Spirit, and hearing the Word of Christ, our ears are opened and our spiritual blindness is lifted (Acts 9:17-19). It is dangerous to be a traitor to Christ's enemies — "I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name" (Acts 9:16) — but everything that is left behind is "rubbish" compared to "the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:8) and the eternal life that we, with St. Paul, will at last inherit (Matt. 19:29).

DIVINE SERVICE SETTING I

P. 151-166

PRESERVICE MUSIC "DAYS OF ELIJAH" SUN. SCHOOL GR. 1-6 10:30 AM

OPENING HYMN "BY ALL YOUR SAINTS IN WARFARE" vs. 1,10,12,3 909

✠ CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION ✠

P. 151

✠ THE SERVICE OF THE WORD ✠

INTROIT PSALM 89:1,5,15-16; ANTIPHON: PSALM 119:46

I will speak of your testimonies before kings, [O Lord,]
and shall not be put to shame.

**I will sing of the steadfast love of the Lord, forever;
with my mouth I will make known your faithfulness to all
generations.**

Let the heavens praise your wonders, O Lord,
your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones!

**Blessèd are the people who know the festal shout,
who walk, O Lord, in the light of your face,
who exult in your name all the day
and in your righteousness are exalted.**

**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.**

I will speak of your testimonies before kings, [O Lord,]
and shall not be put to shame.

KYRIE

P. 152-153

HYMN OF PRAISE “THIS IS THE FEAST”

P. 155

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

[P] The Lord be with you.

[C] And also with you.

[P] Let us pray.

Almighty God, You turned the heart of him who persecuted the Church and by his preaching caused the light of the Gospel to shine throughout the world. Grant us ever to rejoice in the saving light of Your Gospel and, following the example of the apostle Paul, to spread it to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

[C] Amen.

FIRST READING

ACTS 9:1-22

¹But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ²and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴And falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” ⁵And he said, “Who are you, Lord?” And he said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ⁶But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.” ⁷The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. ⁸Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ⁹And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank. ¹⁰Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, “Ananias.” And he said, “Here I am, Lord.” ¹¹And the Lord said to him, “Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying, ¹²and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.” ¹³But Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. ¹⁴And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name.” ¹⁵But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a

chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. ¹⁶For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.” ¹⁷So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” ¹⁸And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized; ¹⁹and taking food, he was strengthened. For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus. ²⁰And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.” ²¹And all who heard him were amazed and said, “Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem of those who called upon this name? And has he not come here for this purpose, to bring them bound before the chief priests?” ²²But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL

EPHESIANS 4:8B, 11, 12B; 2:19A, C

When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men. He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, for building up the body of Christ. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but members of the household of God

EPISTLE

GALATIANS 1:11-24

¹¹For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man’s gospel. ¹²For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹³For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it. ¹⁴And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. ¹⁵But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, ¹⁶was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with anyone; ¹⁷nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. ¹⁸Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and remained with him fifteen days. ¹⁹But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord’s brother. ²⁰(In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie!) ²¹Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. ²²And I was still unknown in person to

the churches of Judea that are in Christ. ²³They only were hearing it said, “He who used to persecute us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy.” ²⁴And they glorified God because of me.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

ALLELUIA AND VERSE

P. 156

HOLY GOSPEL

MATTHEW 19:27-30

P The Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew, the nineteenth chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

²⁷Then Peter said in reply, “See, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?” ²⁸Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name’s sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life. ³⁰But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ

APOSTLES’ CREED

P. 159

HYMN OF THE DAY “CHIEF OF SINNERS THOUGH I BE”

611

SERMON

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P Lord, in your Mercy, **C** Hear our Prayer.

<u>In Our Prayers:</u>	
+ Scott Christenson	+ Darian Litzau
+ Andy Birkholz	+ Robin Lueck
+ Dan Gueningsman	+ Karen Strei
+ Maya Radtke	+ Hillard Klaustermeier
+ Jeremy Radtke	+ Angela Litzau
+ Call Process for Associate Pastor	

INSTALLATION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

OFFERING

OFFERTORY “O MORNING STAR, HOW FAIR AND BRIGHT” vs. 2 395

✠ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT ✠ P. 160-164

The Sacrament is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that our Lord, as He says, gives not only bread and wine, but His true body and blood to eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, to repentant, reconciled believers in Christ. Our Lord Jesus invites to His table those who trust His words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He forgives and loves us (Matt. 26:26-28; 1Cor. 11:23-29; Matt.6:15).

We practice closed communion. Why? (1 Cor. 10:16-17). Because our Lord says those who eat and drink His body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm. If not yet instructed, in doubt, or holding a confession differing from that of the LCMS, you are lovingly asked not to commune at this time. Pastor is happy to make an appointment to discuss adult catechesis or questions you have regarding the Sacrament of the Altar.

Examination Questions: Please prepare by asking yourself — Am I sorry for my sins? Do I believe in Jesus Christ as my Savior from sin? Do I believe that I am receiving the body and blood of Christ along with the bread and wine? Will I try, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to live a more God-pleasing life?

Prayers for “Before communing” and “Thanksgiving after receiving the Sacrament” are printed on the front cover of the hymnal.

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

“O CHRIST, OUR TRUE AND ONLY LIGHT”	839
“HAIL, O SOURCE OF EVERY BLESSING”	409
“BY GRACE I’M SAVED”	566

POST COMMUNION CANTICLE **P. 164**

COLLECT/BENEDICTION **P. 166**

CLOSING HYMN **“JESUS SHALL REIGN”** **832**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Attendance Last Week

Sunday: 168

Bible Study: 23

Sunday School: 31

Organist:

Lynn Mueller

Scripture Reader:

Jen Thiry

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. THANK YOU- A special thanks to Amy Bettcher, Angie Christen, Beth Foust, Addisyn Lind, Mike Lee, Mike Foust and Don Hoof who came to help the LWML take down the Christmas decorations. We always appreciate help from the congregation. – LWML ladies and LaJean

2. THANK YOU to everyone who has served in our scripture reader program at St. Paul. We appreciate your willingness to share your time and talents with the congregation. After reviewing the program, the decrease in the number of people willing to serve, and in light of calling an associate pastor, we have decided to bring the scripture reader program to a close. We are filled with hope and look forward to what God is doing among us.

3. THANK YOU to everyone who helped the Board of Education with Ellie's baby shower. Thank you also to everyone who attended. We appreciate all of you. ~Board of Ed

4. 2026 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM: Details for the 2026 scholarship program are being reviewed. Please watch for more information in the lamplighter and church bulletins.

5 NERF WARS!- Saturday, January 31st from 11a.m.-2p.m.—Attention all youth and families ages 5 and up. Come to church with your favorite nerf guns, eye protection, and friends! We will have lunch, nerf battle, and spend time in God's Word. Please sign up on the sheet on the desk in the Upper Narthex to bring a side and/or dessert, so that we can prepare lunch for everyone!

6. MISSION TRIP FUNDRAISER- Last day to order pizzas from the ACT Fundraiser is February 1st. Pizzas will be delivered Sun., February 8th.

7. POTLUCK UPDATE- We made a major fumble! Due to a national event involving football, snacks, and loud cheering, our church potluck has been rescheduled to Sunday, February 8 at 11:30 (after second service). Ovens will be on warm if you would like to drop food before attending service. Tableware and drinks will be provided, so just bring your favorite dish to share. We look forward to a time of good food, great conversation, and meaningful fellowship—we hope you'll join us.

8. LWML PRAYER SERVICE- The congregation is invited to the LWML Prayer Service, P.R.A.Y.E.R. (Praise, Remember, Ask, Yield, Excitement, Rejoice), on February 2 at 6:30 p.m. This service is dedicated to Shirley Dibb who served the Lord with unwavering faith and a devoted heart.

9. PRE-SCHOOL MUSIC CLASS will be held ALL THURSDAY evenings in February from 6:30-7:00 p.m. in the St. Paul's music room. Please join us for some music-making fun, and invite a family from the area to join us too! Babies through age 5 are welcome! Questions? Contact Jane Holasek.

10. MEAL TRAIN- A meal train has been set up for the Schulteis Family. What is Meal Train? There are times in our lives when friends and family ask, "What can I do to help out?" The answer is usually to help them with a meal. When many friends provide support through a meal, Meal Train keeps everyone organized. Please use this link to visit the meal train sign up for the Schulteis family:

<https://mealtrain.com/8nzeg4>

11. DIRECT DEPOSIT OPTIONS-The church web site stpaulip.org has an online giving tab with 3 options for direct deposits. *Online giving for a one-time donation *Mobile app giving where regular account withdrawals can be set up from your account *Direct deposit form - print, complete and return to Amanda for direct deposits. On this form is an option to no longer receive a box of envelopes.

12. SCHEDULE- February 1: Ushers: 1st Service- Darian Litzau, Paul Logelin, Jim Hoof; 2nd Service: Brad Ernst, John Lange, Doug Hecksel, Nathan Ide; Acolytes: 1st Service- W. Schauer, J. Barlau; 2nd Service: A. Dawson, I. Foust Greeters- 1st Service: Larry & Jeanette Hoof; 2nd Service: Shadd & Julie Dial; Flowers: Patsy Schauer; Altar Guild: Angela Christen/Debbie Bahr; Worship Bags: Elaine Peterson

Calendar of Events

Sun. Jan 25	8:00 a.m. 9:15 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	WORSHIP WITH CONT. LINE COMM. Sun. School/Adult Bible Study/ACT Sun School Grades 1-6 Sing WORSHIP WITH CONT. LINE COMM.
Mon. Jan 26	3:00 p.m.	Release Time Classes Anchor Point (Gr. 7-12)
Tues. Jan 27	7:30 p.m.	Dartball Home vs. Hollywood
Wed. Jan 28	Noon	Deadline for Bulletin Release Time/Confirmation Classes
Sat. Jan 31	11:00 a.m.	Nerf Wars
Sun. Feb 1	8:00 a.m. 9:15 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	WORSHIP WITH COMMUNION Sun. School/Adult Bible Study/Act WORSHIP WITH COMMUNION Last day to order pizzas for ACT