



ST. PAUL

LUTHERAN MINISTRIES

302 N. Morrison St. Appleton, WI 54911

March 2025

True Love Found Only in Christ

Each February, the world turns its attention to love. Hearts, flowers, chocolates, and greeting cards fill store shelves. Couples celebrate their affection, and Valentine's Day becomes the highlight of the month. Few, however, realize that this modern celebration has roots in an ancient Roman festival called Lupercalia. Held in mid-February, Lupercalia was a pagan celebration of fertility and purification. It involved rituals that, by today's standards, would seem strange and even crude. Men would run through the streets striking women with strips of animal hide, believing this would promote fertility and ensure healthy childbirth.

Over time, as Christianity spread throughout the Roman Empire, the church sought to transform cultural practices. Pagan rituals like Lupercalia were gradually replaced with celebrations focused on God's love and Christian virtue. By the Middle Ages, February became associated with Saint Valentine—a Christian martyr who was said to have defied Roman authorities by secretly performing marriages for Christian couples. His actions reflected a higher love—a love rooted in self-sacrifice and faithfulness.

Today, Valentine's Day carries little of its ancient history. It is often reduced to sentimental gestures and fleeting emotions. While there is nothing wrong with celebrating romantic love, the Bible teaches us that true love is far greater and deeper than what the world offers.

True Love is Found in Christ

Scripture reveals that the purest expression of love is found not in human romance, but in the person of Jesus Christ. The Apostle John writes, "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us" (1 John 3:16). God's love is not based on our performance, beauty, or worthiness. It is unconditional and sacrificial. While human love often falters, God's love remains steadfast.

In a world that often confuses love with passion or desire, Christ shows us a love that endures suffering, bears burdens, and seeks the good of others—even at great personal cost. On the cross, Jesus demonstrated the

ultimate act of love by taking upon Himself our sins and offering us forgiveness and eternal life.

This love transforms us. It frees us from seeking fulfillment in temporary pleasures. It reminds us that our worth is not found in the approval of others, but in being children of God. Christ's love moves us to love others—not merely those who are easy to love, but also the difficult, the broken, and the hurting.

Living in True Love

As we reflect on the themes of love this month, let us look beyond fleeting emotions and cultural traditions. The world will always celebrate love in its own way—whether through ancient festivals like Lupercalia or modern Valentine's Day cards. But as Christians, we are called to something greater.

Let us anchor our hearts in the unchanging love of Christ. Let us love our families, neighbors, and even our enemies with the same grace and compassion that we have received. And may we always remember that the truest and deepest love is not found in the world, but in the One who gave Himself for us—Jesus Christ.

— *Pastor Justin Shrum*

In this Issue:

Worship Schedule	2
Official Acts	2
God's Instruments, God's Stewards	2 - 3
Financials	3
School News	3
Spiritual Growth Opportunities	4
LWMS News	4
What's New with Women's Ministry?	5
Spring Break Office Closure	5
Lent Meal Opportunities	5
Request from the Sunshine Club	5
Help 4 Homeless Hygiene Drive	5
St. Paul Wish List	5
FVL News	6

Worship Schedule

Sunday services: 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

Monday evenings: 6:00 p.m.

Midweek Lenten services are 3:30 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.

Our 8am Sunday services are on YouTube and can also be heard on WNAM 1280 AM.

Theme for Lent: 'Open Door

Policies': When a wayward child wanders far from home, how does a

loving parent pursue them without driving them further away? One thing that parent does is let the child know that there is an ongoing open-door policy. The child knows they will always be welcomed back home. Likewise, when we wander from God, he always keeps his door open for us. But God doesn't just passively wait for us to return. He lovingly pursues sinners in ways that make them long for home. In the Church Year, we have come to the season of Lent. The word Lent comes from an old English word for spring: "lengthen," when the days grow longer. For over 1400 years the Church has set aside the 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter as a time of repentance and renewal. In this 40-day journey to the cross and tomb, we will see the surprising strategies our heavenly Father uses for getting sinners back home, close to him and the loving care he offers.



Midweek Lent Theme: 'Reflections on

Repentance': "The Lord is not slow to do what he promised... Instead, he is patient for your sakes, not wanting anyone to perish, but all to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). Luther began his famous debate theses noting that Scripture's

call to repentance is intended as a way of life. Using David's great penitential Psalm 51, penned following his affair with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah, this series of Lenten reflections explores the depths of our sinful depravity, the brokenness of our relationship with God, our dire need for rescue, and the good news of forgiveness, cleansing, and rejoicing in our restored relationship with God and the promise of eternal life through Jesus our Savior.

3/2, 3/3	Glory is hidden in order to be revealed
3/5	Recognizing Against Whom We Sin
3/9, 3/10	One Stands; Everyone Else Sits
3/12	Realizing Our Need for Repentance
3/16, 3/17	No Detours Allowed
3/19	Remembering God's Perfect Demands
3/23, 3/24	Always Present, Always Patient
3/26	Revealing our Sinful Nature
3/30, 3/31	Grace instead of Condemnation

Official Acts

Forever with the Lord:

Jerry Schultz departed this life on February 8, 2025 at the age of 78 years, 9 months, and 26 days.

Transfer In:

Shayna VandenHuevel and children

Transfer Out:

Wendy Hall and child

Brynnlee Jefferies

God's Instruments, God's Stewards

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Eph. 2:10)

Some pastors refer to these words as "the most forgotten words in the Scriptures." They are forgotten because they follow the familiar and critical words before it. The preceding two verses that overshadow Ephesians 2:10 are words of justification: "*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this is not from yourselves; it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast*" (Eph. 2:8-9). These are words preached regularly. They are assigned as confirmation verses. They carry with them the very heart of what it means to be a redeemed child of God!

Precisely because the previous verses are so central to salvation, they often overpower our practice of stewardship! We have been saved by grace. This is certain and sure because of Jesus. Works play no role in our salvation. No credit taking for us! Grace is freely given. Faith is miraculously created by the Spirit and joyously received. This truth is so wonderful and so encompassing that we often miss out on WHY we are redeemed.

The grace of God revealed in Jesus calls us to faith. But St. Paul doesn't stop with grace and faith. He continues to the logical conclusion. Just like the creation declares the handiwork of God, the redemption of sinners like you and me declares His greatest handiwork! Redeemed stewards are created to reflect the grace and mercy God showers on us to others.

As Lutherans, we understand that good works flow from faith in Jesus Christ. They are the fruit of the tree of salvation into which we have been grafted by grace. Sanctification and stewardship are both on-going and active confessions of what the Lord has done in us. These works are not always spectacular. Many times, they are simply parents showing Jesus to their children. They are compassionate actions that live out the truth of the Gospel to co-workers and even complete strangers. While they can be grand endeavors, more likely they are simple, beautiful works which highlight what Jesus has done in us.

These works aren't random either. They have been planned by God. God planned to use you as a faithful steward as you walk the road that leads you through your daily life. There are no chance encounters or coincidences. They have been planned by the Lord of the universe for the benefit of His creation. Good works are what point to God's greatest work: Jesus!

He calls you and me to walk in this faith, which flows from this grace, which has been poured out on us in Jesus. But even this is not to our credit. We are simply called to be faithful stewards of God's grace so that we may share it with those who need it as much as we do. God's Spirit carries us along in this. We are just the steward — the instrument in His hand to accomplish His plan and glorify Him!

Ministry Funding Plan Financials through January 31st, 2025

	Jan.	YTD
Income	\$ 137,594	\$ 1,634,150
Expense	\$ 203,825	\$ 1,616,140
Deficit	\$ -66,231	\$ +18,010

School News

Mission Statement:

Using God's Word as our guide, St. Paul Lutheran School will raise up future generations of Christians in our community by assisting parents in the Christian teaching of their children and by striving for excellence in all areas of instruction.

Call Updates: **Mr. Jason Dutcher** accepted the call to serve at St. Paul Lutheran School as 4th grade teacher for the 2025-2026 school year. Please keep Holy Cross Lutheran School in your prayers as they seek to fill the vacancy at their school. **Mrs. Dina Dietzler** received a call to serve as K & 1 teacher and assist with school music at St. Lucas Lutheran School in Kewaskum, WI. Please keep her in your prayers and reach out to her via [EMAIL](#) as she deliberates this call. **Mr. Jason Kelley** received a call to serve as principal at Christ-St. Peter in Milwaukee, WI. Please keep him in your prayers and reach out to him via [EMAIL](#) as he deliberates this call. **Mrs. Alyssa Kelley** received a call to serve as 3/4 grade teacher and assist with school music at Our Savior's Lutheran School in Grafton, WI. Please keep her in your prayers and reach out to her via [EMAIL](#) as she deliberates this call.

i55 Book Club is a Christian-based book company that organizes book fairs for schools. They provide spiritual and secular books for purchase. **St. Paul's book fair will take place in the School Learning Center from March 28 through April 2.** 40% of your purchase will go towards credit for school and ECC libraries. We would love parent volunteers. If you can help, please speak to Mrs. Schwerin. The fair will be open the following times:

Friday, 3/28 3:15-6:00

Sunday, 3/30 20 minutes following both services

Monday, 3/31 3:15-4:00

Tuesday, 4/1 3:15-4:00

Wednesday, 4/2 3:15-6:00

2025-2026 School Registration Time: We will be registering current students for the 2025-2026 school year during the month of February. Any members not currently enrolled wanting more information regarding school enrollment can contact the office or Principal Kelley (jkelley@stpaulappletonwi.com).

The Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP) offers families the opportunity to have their St. Paul tuition fully funded. The application period for WPCP is opens February 3rd at 8am! Visit this [LINK](#) for more information on qualifying, or email Mr. Mike Schulz (mschulz@stpaulappletonwi.com).

Spiritual Growth Opportunities

New Sunday Morning Bible Class: Two things are true about evangelism. First, we need not agree on how to tell others about our Savior. The opportunities are too many and too personal to demand a one-size-fits-all program. Second, we don't need guilt to motivate us to tell others about Jesus. After all, Jesus came to set us free from guilt. Our witness to this truth is prompted by joy. God will, by his grace, bring to himself in heaven everyone he has chosen. What a thrill to think he might use us to do it!

Our next Sunday Morning Bible is titled, ***Lifestyle Witnessing***. This 8-session class begins on **Sunday, March 2nd** in the church basement at 9:15 a.m. This Bible Study will help you think about your role as witnesses of God's good news. It will look into the subject of evangelism, giving encouragement and practical advice along the way.

New Thursday Morning Bible Class: Our next Thursday Morning Bible Class is titled, ***The Meaningful Life***. It will begin on **Thursday, March 6th** at 9:15 a.m. in the church basement. This class will use the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes as a framework for talking about where to find meaning in life. Lessons in this study include:

1. Everything Is Meaningless (an introduction to Ecclesiastes and the topic of the meaning of life)
2. Wisdom Is Meaningless
3. Pleasures are Meaningless
4. Work Is Meaningless
5. Human Life Is Meaningless
6. Everything Is Meaningful

You can register for this class by using the **Groups** tab on our Church Center app.

LWMS News

Mark your calendars for our next ***LWMS meeting on Thursday, March 20, 2025, at 6:30 PM*** in the church basement. All confirmed women of St. Paul are invited to attend. We will be discussing our new Befriend a Missionary (BAM) assignments, the upcoming Spring Rally in April, and other great topics. Please consider joining us! Contact Tammie Beitz if you have any questions about LWMS at 920-840-5585 or beitz@athenet.net.

LWMS Paperland Circuit ***Spring Rally is scheduled for Saturday, April 5, 2025***, at Martin Luther Church in Neenah. Plans are already taking shape for this semi-annual event involving 32 congregations in our Paperland Circuit. Please join us for a morning of prayer, singing, mission updates, and discussions regarding future mission work. More information to come in the church bulletin later in March.

NEW Befriend a Missionaries (BAM) for 2025-2026! LWMS circuits are assigned World and Home missionaries to support with prayers, cards, gifts, etc. for two-year time periods. More information about these missionaries will be posted on our LWMS bulletin board in the church basement. Our World Missionary is Pastor Timothy Matthies II and family, a professor on the Asia One Team. He and his family are stationed in Hong Kong. Our Home Missionary is yet to be assigned.

A message from World Missionary Elise Gross, Academia Cristo, Quito, Ecuador:

On Sunday mornings, in a bright living room in Quito, Ecuador, you will find a church gathering taking place. It may look a little different than your own Sunday morning worship. A group of women, many in their colorful traditional dresses, stand to sing together; they open their Bibles together; they confess their sins and rejoice in absolution together. One mom reads a section of Scripture to the others with a baby on her lap. They listen attentively to Pastor Henry Herrera from Columbia who has shared his sermon with them via WhatsApp. They pray and discuss life, and then they usually eat some fantastic food.

In 2016, Lizbeth Guaman discovered Academia Cristo and eagerly began attending classes. Slowly, faithfully, and full of Spirit, Lizbeth worked her way through 2 years of the Church Plant program and began gathering a group in her home under the guidance of an Academia Cristo advisor. This modern-day Lydia heard the gospel and immediately could not wait to give all that she had to share it with others. Her joyful perseverance has led to confirmations, baptisms, and other family members studying with Academia Cristo.

The funny thing is that this faithful group is continuing to worship together this year without Lizbeth who is currently studying in Sydney, Australia. When asked if she was nervous about leaving her group for a while, Lizbeth confidently responded, 'This is good for the group! Worship is not about me; it is about God. He is all we need.'

The Holy Spirit working through the Word moved Lizbeth to plant the gospel in her community and now He moves her sister Dayana through the same gospel to water those seeds of faith.

Some plant, others water, but God makes the harvest grow. Who can you gather in your living room around the Word of life? *'Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.' Matthew 9:37-38*

Home Missionary Elise Gross,
Academia Cristo, Quito, Ecuador

What's New with Women's Ministry

Our regular meeting was held on February 11. The meeting was run by the Vice President, Carol Rehberg, since the president position is currently unfilled. Pastor Holtz began with a devotion.

Women's Ministry voted to donate \$25 to the radio broadcast in memory of Jerry Schultz, who was called suddenly home by our Lord and Savior. He was the spouse of our member, Kathy. Our thoughts and prayers are with Kathy and family.

We then went on to review the events the Women's Ministry does in a year followed by a discussion of our By Laws and Standard Operating Procedures. The group would like to see regular meetings reduced to a minimum of four per year with the option to hold additional meetings, if needed.

As the yearly events were reviewed, the group was asked who would like to take the lead, thereby relieving the pressure on the group's president. Volunteers spoke up and we hope to get things accomplished in 2025. However, we need to change our By Laws and Standard Operating Procedures to comply with these changes. A meeting in March will be held to finalize changes and hopefully, find a volunteer to serve as president.

Pastor Shrum ended the meeting with special prayer requests and Carol led us in the Lord's prayer.

Our bulletin board area, just outside the church kitchen, has pictures displayed from our Fall Festival, Pastor Frey's retirement and our Winter Gathering dinner. Please stop by and take a look. Maybe you will find yourself or a family member.

We invite all women of our church, from 18 years+, to join with us in serving the Lord and our congregation and schools. **Our next meeting will be March 11 at 6:30pm.** Also March 11 at 2:30pm we meet at Rennes for the residents' birthday party for some singing and cake. Everybody is invited for this.

Spring Break Office Closure

The St. Paul office will be closed during the week of spring break (3/17 – 3/21). If you have a health emergency, please contact one of the pastors:

Pastor Holtz: 970-576-1154 mholtz@stpaulappletonwi.com

Pastor Shrum: 920-512-4318 jshrum@stpaulappletonwi.com

Lent Meal Opportunities

Only one Lent meal remaining – grab it while you can! Meals are served in the church basement between the 3:30 & 6pm Wednesday services, beginning on 3/5. A freewill donation is typically taken to benefit your group of choice. If you or your group are interested in hosting a meal, please contact the office. Availability is as follows:

3/5– Women's Ministry serving brats and BBQ pork

3/12 – Cheer Team menu tbd

3/19 – OPEN (Spring Break)

3/26 – Fellowship Group serving spaghetti, bread, & salad

4/2 – PTO serving white chicken chili & salad

4/9 – 8th Graders menu tbd

Request from the Sunshine Club

Sunshine Club is wondering if you have any Christmas tins that we can use for our annual December cookie distribution to our St Paul shut-ins? We need medium sized tins that are about 2 inches tall and measure 8-10 inches across. If you have some you won't be using, please drop them off in the church kitchen. No rush as we won't be needing them until December 1. Thank you!

Help for the Homeless Hygiene Drive

We are collecting NEW hygiene and cleaning items for local crisis agencies through The Family Radio's 'Help for the Homeless Hygiene Drive' from Feb. 23

through March 10. Please place your donations in the *Help for the Homeless* collection box located in the church basement by March 10, or make a secure financial donation for the purchase of supplies at thefamily.net. Hygiene and cleaning products are not covered by Wisconsin FoodShare (food stamps). Some of the most urgently needed items are bathroom tissue, cleaning supplies, dental care, deodorant, diapers/baby care, face/bath soap, feminine care, hair care, laundry detergent, paper towels, razors, and trash bags. **Your donations will remain in this community.** More information available at thefamily.net or 800-236-9364. Thank you!



St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church and School Project Wish List

1. Debt Retirement \$141,976
Any donations (large or small) given toward the item(s) is greatly appreciated. For a closer look as well as giving options, please follow this link: [Wish List Giving](#).

FVL News

8th Grade Course Scheduling is Wednesday, February 26 (submit your enrollment application at fvlhs.org/enroll to be able to schedule your appointment).

An **International Host Informational Meeting** is scheduled for Wednesday, February 26, at 6:30 PM. If you have ever considered hosting and/or have questions about hosting international students, plan to attend! For information go to fvlhs.org/hosting or contact Monica Uhlenbrauck (muhlenbrauck@fvlhs.org). This is a wonderful ministry opportunity for your family!

Youth Sports Opportunities including Cheer Camp (March 29, register by March 15 to guarantee a bow), Softball Clinic (April 12, register by April 9), and Fox Valley Saints Football (beginning in August) are shared on fvlhs.org/youth-sports. Summer Camp registration opens March 3, at 9:00 AM.

Registration is open for the FoxFest Dinner Auction which will be held on Friday, April 11! Join us at the Hilton Appleton Paper Valley for an evening of friends and fun supporting FVL's Tuition Assistance Program and Operations. The RSVP deadline is March 26. Visit fvlhs.org/foxfest for more info and to register.

Financial aid application windows are open for the 2025-26 school year. Information and application links for **Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP), FVL's Tuition Assistance Program, and the Ladies Guild Memorial Scholarship** are on the FVL website (fvlhs.org/tuition-help).

FVL is holding a Summer Job Fair for FVL students on Tuesday, March 11. Interested local businesses are invited to register to attend. Go to fvlhs.org/job-fair for details.

Ticket sales are open for our spring musical, Tarzan. Performances are March 7 & 8 at 6:30 PM and March 9 at 2 PM. Go to fvlhs.org/tarzan for details

Student Art Exhibition is in the small gym Friday through Sunday, March 7 (3:30-9:30 PM), March 8 (5:30-9:30 PM), March 9 (1:00-4:00 PM). See over 100 pieces of art created by FVL students.

FVL's Open House (with Activities Fair, tours, and a presentation) is Monday, March 10, from 6:00-8:00 PM. Info and registration are at fvlhs.org/open-house.