

St. Paul's Lutheran

From the desk of Pastor Rohde:

Address:

605 S. Center St.
Bremen, IN 46506

Telephone:

Church:
1-574-546-2332
School:
1-574-546-2790
Preschool:
1-574-546-2848

Fax:

1-574-546-3242

E-Mail:

church@stpaulsbremen.org

Website:

stpaulsbremen.org
facebook.com/stpaulsbremen

Church Office Hours:

M,W,Th, F 8:30 – 11:30 am

Sunday Schedule:

Worship: 8 & 10:30 am
Sunday School & Adult
Bible Class: 9:15 am
Unity Sunday: 9:30 am with
Sunday School following

Pastors:

Rev. Roger Rohde
Office Hours:
M & Th 8:30 – 11:30
1-574-546-2236 (H)

Rev. Neil Wonnacott
Office Hours:
W & F 8:30 – 11:30
1-574-546-4181 (H)

My wife and I were driving home from our God-blessed time with our entire family at the condos in French Lick, Indiana. We stopped for lunch on Christmas Eve at a MacDonald's to enjoy a bite to eat. As we sat there we overheard a conversation between a local couple and an employee from MacDonald's. The couple said that they had just come from worship services that morning. Their congregation had moved their Sunday morning services to Saturday morning so that families could enjoy Christmas Day with their families. That decision by that congregation stirred some self-evaluation on my part.

I realize that there is no required day God gives us where we are to be attending worship services. He tells us very clearly in Colossians 2:16-17, "Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration, or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ."

Yet, this situation led me to think of how often I live my life scheduling things to have Christ fit into my life at my convenience, rather than to have Christ shape and mold my life to His will and purpose.

The fact of the matter is – how much do we really sacrifice for the sake of Christ and the Gospel? Do we let Christ shape, mold, fill, and use us, or do we seek to determine how we will be shaped, when we will be filled, and how we will be used?

When the Lord calls us to be His disciples, He says: "If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the Gospel will save it" (Mark 8:34).

May one of our prayers for 2012 be the words of the spiritual song, Have Thine Own Way:

Have Thine own way, Lord, have Thine own way!

Thou art the Potter; I am the clay.

Mold me and make me After Thy will,

While I am waiting, Yielded and still.

Have Thine own way, Lord, have Thine own way!
 Hold o'er my being, Absolute sway!
 Fill with Thy Spirit, Till all shall see
 Christ only, always, Living in me!

Lessons in Stewardship:

The Stewardship of the Gospel

St. Augustine, an early church father, wrote: "For God made us for Himself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in Him." We were created to be in unity with God, and when that unity with God was broken because of man's sins, man encountered a life of misdirection, unrest, and terror of God.

Our life is restored with God, given meaning and purpose, as we behold the Christ of Calvary. The Apostle Paul wrote: "God reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation" (II Corinthians 5:18). Jesus' death on the cross and His resurrection from the grave paid the debt of our sin and assured us of new life in His name.

This new life provides us with meaning for our day to day living. The Methodist missionary E. Stanley Jones wrote: "Christianity that does not begin with the individual does not begin, but Christianity that ends with the individual ends." The Gospel message starts with God so loving the world that He gave His only-begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16). The Gospel message continues as we, who have been blessed by it, go forth and share it with others.

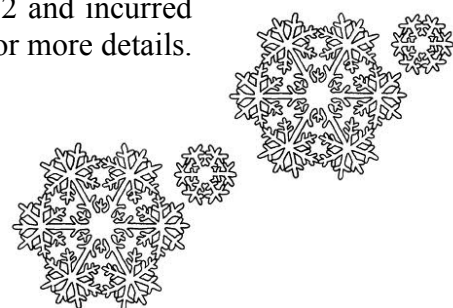
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Baptized Membership.....	534
Average Worship Attendance.....	180
Average Sunday School & Bible Class Attendance.....	122

	<u>Giving</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Difference</u>
December 18	\$10,351.25	\$12,541.00	-\$2,189.75
December 25	\$10,237.77	\$12,541.00	-\$2,303.23
January 1	\$13,324.10	\$12,935.00	+\$389.10
January 8	\$15,337.30	\$12,935.00	+\$2,402.30
January 15	\$10,259.10	\$12,935.00	-\$2,675.90

THE DEADLINE FOR THE MARCH EPISTLE IS FEBRUARY 20TH!!! Epistle articles, comments, ideas may be deposited in the epistle box in the Narthex mail slots or better yet e-mailed to Deb Burcham at dburcham@stpaulsbremen.org. I appreciate all of your articles, ideas and comments!

Did you know? Indiana House Bill 1003 authorizes a \$1000 Indiana income tax deduction for 2011 per dependent who was enrolled in a private school in grades K-12 and incurred costs for tuition, fees, and/or school supplies. See your tax professional for more details.



Some Bible Study Opportunities!

Come Join the "Feast" !!!



Then Jesus declared, *"I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty."* John 6:35



Every two weeks, a group of men from St. Paul's meet for breakfast and Bible study at Bremen Community Hospital in the cafeteria conference room. The conversation and fellowship make this a great way to start a day by feeding our physical and spiritual needs.....it's been rumored that laughter and friendship have been carried from the breakfasts ! Come, join us and bring a friend along. We start at 6:30 AM and finish at 7:30 AM. The schedule for 2011 is as follows.

February 1 st , 15 th , 29 th	July 11 th , 25 th
March 14 th , 28 th	August 8 th , 22 nd
April 11 th , 25 th	September 5 th , 19 th
May 9 th , 23 rd	October 3 rd , 17 th , 31 st
June 6 th , 20 th	November 14 th , 28 th
	December 12 th

If you have questions, feel free to contact Dave Burcham (574-546-4262) or if you need a "wake up call" so you can make it to the breakfast. The breakfast will only take 0.3% of your time from a two week period....not a very big sacrifice when you think about it.

Keep that New Year's Resolution to spend more time in God's Word. **The Ladies Encouragement Group has begun a new Bible study!** The study is entitled: "Coffee with the Savior" and is written to help us see Jesus as our best friend. Published by Concordia Publishing House, it promises to dig deeply into God's word and show us the qualities of true friendship. We meet the first and third Sunday evening of each month at 7:00 pm in the Jerusalem Room. All ladies are welcome and encouraged to join us! You may contact Joanna Fox to get a copy of our study guide, or for further questions at 546-2446 or 248-0549.



Ladies Encouragement Group
Moving our feet, shining our light!



Midweek Lenten Schedule – Dinner at 6:00pm and Worship at 7:00pm

The theme of this series is God's gift of forgiveness. The sermons in this series expound on the nature of sin as seen in the psalms, the devastating effects it has on the soul and the conscience, and what we receive through God's gift of the forgiveness of sins in our Lord Jesus Christ.

- Feb. 22nd Ash Wednesday**
Meal by Board of Christian Education: Lasagna
Free-will offering for Bremen Food Pantry
Psalm 6 "Save Me Because of Your Unfailing Love"
- Feb. 29th Midweek Lenten 2**
Meal by LEG: Leapin' Legs (Chicken Legs)
Free-will offering for Preschool Programs
Psalm 32 "Hiding from God or Hiding in God?"
- Mar. 7th Midweek Lenten 3**
Meal by Stewardship: Salad and Sandwiches
Free-will offering for Mission Trip
Psalm 38 "Make Haste to Help Me"
- Mar. 14th Midweek Lenten 4**
Meal by PTL: Sloppy Joes
Free-will offering for Haitian Latrine Project
Psalm 51 "Against You and For Me"
- Mar. 21st Midweek Lenten 5**
Meal by Youth: Baked Potato Bar
Free-will offering for Hope Ministries
Psalm 102 "But You, O Lord, Are Enthroned Forever"
- Mar. 28th Midweek Lenten 6**
Meal by Public Relations and Evangelism: Chili and Cornbread
Free-will offering for Hope Ministries
Psalm 143 "Teach Me to Do Your Will, For You Are My God"
- April 5th Holy Thursday**
Psalm 116 "Delivered"
- April 6th Good Friday**
Psalm 130 "Divine Forgetfulness"

Cookie bakers wanted! We need people to make cookies for the midweek Lenten meals beginning Feb. 29th. Please sign up on the check-it-out board outside the offices. Bring your 3 dozen cookies to the church kitchen before 6pm on the date you selected. Thank you for your help!

ATTENTION THRIVENT MEMBERS!!

You have the opportunity to contribute your Thrivent Choice Dollars to either St. Paul's Lutheran Church or St. Paul's Lutheran Schools. At this writing, St. Paul's Lutheran Church has received \$2408 and St. Paul's Lutheran Schools have received \$1242. Last year we collected a total of \$1054. You have until March 2012 to designate your funds. Go to www.thrivent.com to find out if you qualify and how to access get started!

Check out the new booklets from Lutheran Hour Ministries in the revolving rack in the narthex. Their titles include "Forgiveness is a Choice," "The Conflict at Home" (dealing with PTSD), and "What Happens when I Die?" Some other booklets you might find interesting or helpful are "The Mystery of You," "Parents of Prodigals," and "HERE: You are Here in God's Plan." Feel free to share them with your family or friends.

Month of February 2012 Special Celebrations

Birthdays - 90 and over:

Evelyn Trefun	Feb. 1, 1916	96 years
Otis Bowen M.D.	Feb. 26, 1918	94 years

Weddings - 50 and over: None for the month of February.

We celebrate God's goodness in the life of these members and pray that He would continue to keep them in His loving care!

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

1	Matt Harman		Diane Rodgers		Hal Hackett
	Evelyn Trefun		Barbara Stillson		Jason Heuberger
2	Randy Walter	11	Betsy Bowen	26	Otis Bowen
3	Paige Fox		Lori Cope		Virginia Lynch
	Garrett Fox	13	Rob Lawton		Terry Miller
	Ellen Haug	14	Hunter Cannon	28	Larry Miller
	Jennifer Madlem		Joe Hughes	29	Bruce Schmidt
	Fern Nettrour		Bradin Schmitt		
5	Joe Blakley Sr.	15	Marilyn Gumz		
	Jason Dobbins		Tyler Neuendorf		
	Caroline Kline	16	Zachery Russell		
	Ellen Lawton	17	Heaven Hicks		
7	Anders Brurok		Matt Podlin		
	Beck Brurok		Wayne Spicher		
	Rachel Hall	18	Gavin Stanifer		
	Justin Kemker	19	Shirley Lakins		
	Dakota Schmeltz	20	Dan Knepper		
8	Brandon Cope	22	Jamie Hicks		
9	Tammy Venable	23	Lois Schoning		
10	Bob Fox	24	Janet Anglemyer		

God's blessings to all our February Birthday



SCHOOL NEWS AND NOTES

School Office phone: 546-2790; or e-mail: schools@stpaulsbremen.org

For February 2012

Our theme for the 2011-2012 school year:

“Securing Each Child’s Future - Equipped”: Based on 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Please join us in prayer for our families this year.

OUR SPECIAL CHAPEL emphasis for January & February is Seminarian Support. Our offerings will go to support our congregation’s adopted seminarians; plus we donate \$20 per month to our Tuition Aid Fund. If you would like to donate to this project please contact St. Paul’s School office.

PLEASE NOTE: Achievement testing will be done during the morning hours on Feb. 6-10 in the Bethany & Jerusalem Rooms. Sorry for the inconvenience!

LIBRARY NOTE: We have numerous DVD’s of the Worship for Shut-ins program for all seasons of the year. These are great for homebound friends and relatives. These programs include a sermon as well as musical performances by area choirs and universities. Please check them out and make use of them.

VOLUNTEER THIS YEAR! We could use your assistance. We welcome one- time helpers, as well as those of you who would like to become regulars. Some tasks involve working directly with children; some are clerical in nature. If you would like to join our volunteers please contact us.

THE TUITION AID FUND seeks your contributions to help those who desire a Christian Education for their children but who need a little help to meet the costs. Many families are seeking aid from this fund this year. Your generosity will greatly benefit the cause of Christian Education for both members and non-members. NOTE: We are also seeking donors who would like to SPONSOR a child or family directly, either in whole or in part. If you are interested in this opportunity to help, please contact Mr. Russell.

PTL: Please save ALUMINIUM CANS. These cans may be deposited in the shed on the south end of the parking lot. If you have other aluminum items to donate, call the school office at 546-2790. Also please save the small logo printed on the labels or the lids/caps of CAMPBELL LABELS items. Thank you.

NOTE: Contact Mr. Ken Eichinger, the Building Use Coordinator, if you have questions concerning scheduling the use of any of the facilities.

BOARD BRIEFS

Christian Ed:

Sunday School Mission of the Month –Lutheran Hour (\$50.00)

Board of Church Properties:

Due to age, the photocopier in the school workroom and the Risograph (duplicating) machine in the church secretary workroom need to be replaced. Anco Office Products in Plymouth has been contacted and photocopier options were discussed. The model of the photocopier is yet to be determined. This copier will be shared between church and school. We have price quotes and would like authorization from the congregation for some of the funding. **The following motion was made at the January 23rd Voters Meeting:** The Board of Church Properties is authorized to use \$3500 from Church Special Needs and \$3500 from School Special Needs. The balance of the cost of the new machine will come from Board of Church Properties budget. The motion was seconded and passed.

Parish Fellowship Activity: Euchre Party is Friday, February 10th, from 7-9:30pm in the Bethany Room. Anyone 16 and older can join us for fun and fellowship, and please bring a snack to share. Please bring cards and a card table if possible. Beverages will be provided. This evening is sponsored by Parish Fellowship. Come one, come all!

Public Relations and Evangelism News: Two pictures are hung in the narthex right next to the church secretary's office. One is a picture of some of our new members and one is the mosaic picture of our congregation. Check them out next time you're at church!

Next Parish Planning Committee Meeting: March 26

2012 Voters' Assembly meetings: April 23, June 25, August 27, November 26

January 23rd Voters Meeting:

Nominations for Lay Delegate and Alternate Delegate for this summer's Indiana District Convention (June 28-29) are as follows: Dan Knepper was elected as Lay Delegate and Dennis Sienicki was elected as Alternate Delegate.

Altar Guild: Attendants for February are Andy and Theresa Heuberger.

Altar Flowers in February	5	Goldie Buckner
	12	Shirley Lakins
	19	
	26	

The Altar Flower Chart for the 2012 Liturgical Year is hanging in the Narthex (North side), just outside the altar guild room door. Please look it over and sign up for flowers.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

We put the FUN in FUNdraising!

Please join us for this special event!

Date: February 7th, 2012
Time: 5:00pm-7:00pm
Place: Bremen Dairy Queen



Dairy Queen will be donating 10% of their sales
to St. Paul's PTL who are raising funds
to be used during National Lutheran Schools Week!

Showcase of Fine Arts and Crafts - April 20th - Watch for info!

Getting Acquainted!

Eric & Angela Allen - Angela writes;

Both Eric and I were raised in Nappanee where we now reside. When we first got married, we lived in South Bend. But, after a while, we both realized that if we had kids, we wanted them to be raised in Nappanee. We have 2 kids. Emilie is 8 and likes to read, read, read. She also enjoys playing with her friends. Owen is 6 and likes to keep busy. His favorite question is, "What are we doing today?" Both kids play basketball in the winter, baseball in the spring, and soccer in the summer.

Eric is a Social Studies teacher at Goshen High School. He likes to collect baseball cards, spend time with his family, and watch his favorite sports teams.

I am an Itinerant Deaf and Hard of Hearing Teacher working with Joint Services, which serves both School City of Mishawaka and Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporations, in Mishawaka, IN. Notice that Eric's sentence is $\frac{1}{4}$ the size of my sentence! My title and job description is impossible to condense!

I like to spend time with my family and friends along with reading. I, also, enjoy watching my favorite sports teams. We recently had tickets to the IU vs. KY game where KY was ranked #1 and expected to beat the Hoosiers. Instead, IU won! Eric and I were worn out after the game, even though we didn't play. We stood almost the entire time and screamed out hearts out! It was wonderful to experience such an electrifying atmosphere!



I grew up at St. Paul's with my parents, Dennis and Peggy Swanson. Once Eric and I married, he took catechism classes with Pastor Rohde and became a member.

Favorite Bible Passage: Ps 37:4 - This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Marriage and Religious Freedom: Fundamental Goods That Stand or Fall Together

Religious Leaders Join Together in Support of Marriage, Religious Liberty (Jan. 12, 2012)

WASHINGTON—Leaders of some of the largest religious communities in the United States have joined together in an open letter to all Americans to voice their shared concern for marriage and religious freedom. Signatories include leaders from Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Evangelical, Jewish, Lutheran, Mormon, and Pentecostal communities in the United States.

Dear Friends:

The promotion and protection of marriage—the union of one man and one woman as husband and wife—is a matter of the common good and serves the wellbeing of the couple, of children, of civil society and all people. The meaning and value of marriage precedes and transcends any particular society, government, or religious community. It is a universal good and the foundational institution of all societies. It is bound up with the nature of the human person as male and female, and with the essential task of bearing and nurturing children.

As religious leaders across a wide variety of faith communities, we join together to affirm that marriage in its true definition must be protected for its own sake and for the good of society. We also recognize the grave consequences of altering this definition. One of these consequences—the interference with the religious freedom of those who continue to affirm the true definition of "marriage"—warrants special attention within our faith communities and throughout society as a whole. For this reason, we come together with one voice in this letter.

Some posit that the principal threat to religious freedom posed by same-sex "marriage" is the possibility of government's forcing religious ministers to preside over such "weddings," on pain of civil or criminal liability. While we cannot rule out this possibility entirely, we believe that the First Amendment creates a very high bar to such attempts.

Instead, we believe the most urgent peril is this: forcing or pressuring both individuals and religious organizations—throughout their operations, well beyond religious ceremonies—to treat same-sex sexual conduct as the moral equivalent of marital sexual conduct. There is no doubt that the many people and groups whose moral and religious convictions forbid same-sex sexual conduct will resist the compulsion of the law, and church-state conflicts will result.

These conflicts bear serious consequences. They will arise in a broad range of legal contexts, because altering the civil definition of "marriage" does not change one law, but hundreds, even thousands, at once. By a single stroke, every law where rights depend on marital status—such as employment discrimination, employment benefits, adoption, education, healthcare, elder care, housing, property, and taxation—will change so that same-sex sexual relationships must be treated as if they were marriage. That requirement, in turn, will apply to religious people and groups in the ordinary course of their many private or public occupations and ministries—including running schools, hospitals, nursing homes and other housing facilities, providing adoption and counseling services, and many others.

So, for example, religious adoption services that place children exclusively with married couples would be required by law to place children with persons of the same sex who are civilly "married." Religious marriage counselors would be denied their professional accreditation for refusing to provide counseling in support of same-sex "married" relationships. Religious employers who provide special health benefits to married employees would be required by law to extend those benefits to same-sex "spouses." Religious employers would also face lawsuits for taking any adverse employment action—no matter how modest—against an employee for the public act of obtaining a civil "marriage" with a member of the same sex. This is not idle speculation, as these sorts of situations have already come to pass.

Even where religious people and groups succeed in avoiding civil liability in cases like these, they would face other government sanctions—the targeted withdrawal of government co-operation, grants, or other benefits.

For example, in New Jersey, the state cancelled the tax-exempt status of a Methodist-run boardwalk pavilion used for religious services because the religious organization would not host a same-sex "wedding" there. San Francisco dropped its \$3.5 million in social service contracts with the Salvation Army because it refused to recognize same-sex "domestic partnerships" in its employee benefits policies. Similarly, Portland, Maine, required Catholic Charities to extend spousal employee benefits to same-sex "domestic partners" as a condition of receiving city housing and community development funds.

In short, the refusal of these religious organizations to treat a same-sex sexual relationship as if it were a marriage marked them and their members as bigots, subjecting them to the full arsenal of government punishments and pressures reserved for racists. These punishments will only grow more frequent and more severe if civil "marriage" is redefined in additional jurisdictions. For then, government will compel special recognition of relationships that we the undersigned religious leaders and the communities of faith that we represent cannot, in conscience, affirm. Because law and government not only coerce and incentivize but also teach, these sanctions would lend greater moral legitimacy to private efforts to punish those who defend marriage.

Therefore, we encourage all people of good will to protect marriage as the union between one man and one woman, and to consider carefully the far-reaching consequences for the religious freedom of all Americans if marriage is redefined. We especially urge those entrusted with the public good to support laws that uphold the time-honored definition of marriage, and so avoid threatening the religious freedom of countless institutions and citizens in this country. Marriage and religious freedom are both deeply woven into the fabric of this nation.

May we all work together to strengthen and preserve the unique meaning of marriage and the precious gift of religious freedom.

Sincerely Yours:

Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison
President
Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

(Along with 38 other signatures)

"Mom used to quote Isaiah 64:4 about waiting on the Lord. It doesn't mean being complacent. It means understanding that he has a plan, and that we're not the ones in control. In the meantime, we need to strive to use our gifts and abilities fully.

Heisman winner and NFL quarterback Tim Tebow
from his book, *Through My Eyes*

FEBRUARY DEVOTION: "Knowing Hereafter"

John 13:7 "Jesus replied, 'You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.'"

There is a Hebrew legend that tells of a rabbi journeying on a mule through a wild country. His only companion was a rooster whose shrill crowing at sunrise awoke him to his devotions. He came to a small town at nightfall and sought shelter, but the inhabitants turned him away. Outside the village he found a cave in which to sleep. He lit his lamp before retiring, but a gust of wind blew out the light. During the night a wolf killed his rooster and a lion devoured his mule. Early in the morning he went to the town to see if he could buy some food. To his surprise he found no one alive. A band of robbers during the night had plundered the settlement and killed all the inhabitants.



"Now I understand my troubles," said the rabbi. "If the townspeople had received me, I would now be dead. Had not my rooster and mule been killed, their noise or the light of my lamp would have revealed my hiding place. God has been good to me." In similar manner, the troubles and reverses of life are intended to direct you and me to put full faith and trust in the Savior, whose redemptive work secured our eternal good.

PRAYER: All-knowing Lord, help us to trust You in all circumstances of life, even in those we do not now understand. Amen.