

JULY 2024 St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church Connection

106 S. Maple St. PO Box 357 North Freedom, WI 53951

Message from the Pastor



Christ and the Nation

*Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD.
(Psalm 33:12a)*

Do not put your trust in princes (Ps. 146:3a).

“Christian nationalism” is a phrase that pops up in the news these days. What exactly it means differs, depending on the news source. But generally, Christian nationalism is the idea that our nation was founded as a Christian nation and that church and state should work together to reestablish Christianity as the U.S. official religion and basis of our laws.

On the surface that sounds great. Didn't the psalmist write, “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord”? And didn't the Declaration of Independence talk about us being “created equal” and refer to God as Creator?

But on closer examination, our nation really wasn't established as a “Christian” nation. Many of our founding fathers held more to deism than the theology of the Bible. (Deism, the teaching that God created the world, then let things go on its own, was in vogue among upper society then.) Thomas Jefferson, for example, even cut sections out of his Bible that his reason didn't agree with (such as Jesus' miracles and the resurrection).

When our country was established, the framers of the constitution made sure that there would be freedom of religion. The First Amendment reads, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...” The state will not interfere with our right to worship. But the

state is forbidden to “establish” religion. All faiths, not just Christians, enjoy freedom of religion.

Let's imagine that the state legislature or Congress passes legislation making Christianity the official religion, that prayers must be said in school by the teacher, etc. What if the teacher is a Mormon, or a Jew, or a Catholic who includes prayers to Mary? Could we Lutherans join in such a prayer? Or suppose that the government declares that prayers and references to God be a generic “God,” no mention of Christ so as not to create offense. That would not give glory to Christ, who says, “He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent me” (John 5:25).

Many Christian nationalists mean well. But their ideas are bad for both the state and its citizens. Christians who are intrigued by the idea of Christian nationalism should keep in mind another passage from the Psalms: “Do not put your trust in princes.” We have one Leader, and one alone, whom we follow: Christ. And his kingdom “is not of this world,” as he said to Pilate (John 18:36). Jesus did not come to make the United States his personal kingdom. Let's be good citizens, but instead of putting our trust in Biden, or Trump, or Evers as our Savior, let's put our trust in Jesus alone.

--Pastor Timothy Blauert

Worship themes in July

July 7 (7th Sun. after Pentecost): The Prophet, rejected.

July 14 (8th Sun. after Pentecost): The Lord provides ministers.

July 21 (9th Sun. after Pentecost): The Lord provides rest.

July 28 (10th Sun. after Pentecost): The Lord provides for physical needs.

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Congregational Meeting: July 7th
9:30 a.m.

Our next quarterly meeting will be on Sunday, July 7th following the 8:30 a.m. communion service. Once again we invite all members of the congregation to stay for the meeting to get informed about the church. We welcome your input!

Following the meeting we will have fellowship hour at church—on our new carpet! (The carpet was installed June 24-26.)



Bible Study

Revelation: The Distant Triumph Song
Sunday morning Bible Class

In July we hope to conclude our study of Revelation. We will not have class on July 7th due to the congregational meeting and fellowship hour. On July 14th, 21st and 28th we'll meet in between the services from 8:45 to 9:45 a.m. All adults and teens are welcome to join us!

Church Council and Ladies' Aid Update:
Neither the council nor the ladies will meet in July. The next council meeting will be Sunday, August 11 at 8:30 a.m.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
AUGUST 12 to 15



Vacation Bible School is planning to have classes, Monday, August 12 through Thursday, August 15. Our theme is "Ready, Set, Gold!" (Olympic games theme).

We plan to have registration at 9 a.m. on Monday, August 12. Classes will go from 9:15 to 11:30 a.m. each day. Bible lessons, activities, snacks, recess, singing and crafts will be a part of each day.

We are inviting all children ages 4 through 13 to join us. Friends, neighbors, and relatives are welcome to join us. If you'd like to help in any way, please call Pastor Blauert at 507-279-8560. Thank you!



Game Night: Mon., July 15, 6:30 pm
Bring a snack to pass, a beverage and a game and join us for an evening of fun and fellowship! Bring a friend too!

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ALTAR GUILD

The altar guild sign-up sheet for 2024 is on the table in the fellowship hall. This is a great way to help with worship at St. Paul's. Please speak with Rose Vertein if you are interested and have questions. Thank you!

the beautiful flowers at home and/or gift some to a friend or family member.

- We appreciate your consideration in providing altar flowers. TO GOD BE THE GLORY!

LADIES' AID/ LWMS Update

LWMS (Lutheran Women's Missionary Society) is requesting pill bottles which will be sent to Malawi. They must have labels removed and be washed. Please see the bulletin board for information on the size of bottles needed. Any questions, speak to Linda Ennis. We'll collect them until the Fall Rally in October.

CARDS



Mary Klemm is our Sunshine Lady for St. Paul's. If anyone is sick or needs a card of encouragement, please contact her.



GLORIFY GOD with Altar Flowers!

Thank you to those who have brought flowers to church in memory of loved ones or to honor anniversaries, weddings, etc. We invite all our members to sign up on the sheet in the fellowship hall. Please also refer to the sheet that gives directions for giving flowers.

Here are a few suggestions to spark celebration ideas: new baby/ grandbaby, birthdays, weddings, anniversary, retirement, new job, holidays, baptisms, confirmations, graduations, health recoveries, or good health, faith, family and friends.

So, thank you for bringing flowers!

- When you intend to provide flowers, please sign up at least the Sunday prior.
- Call Mary Klemm 608-434-0650 or Kristine Blauert 507-460-2928 if you would like to provide but not arrange flowers, or for any other questions. Afterwards, you can enjoy

OUR GIFTS to the LORD May 26—June 23

	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Offering</u>
Sun., May 26: 7:30 am	31	\$1,015
10 am	9	\$267
Sun., June 2: 8:30 am	47	\$1,559
Sun., June 9: 7:30 am	28	\$1,885
10 am	24	\$900
Sun., June 16: 7:30 am	22	\$635
10 am	11	\$260
Sun., June 23: 7:30 am	25	\$825
10 am	22	\$1,345

Average attendance: 8:30 am (combined), 47; 7:30 am, 27; 10 am, 17.

Vacation

Pastor Blauert and Kristine will be gone July 30 through August 4 on vacation. If there is a pastor emergency during that time, please call Pastor Dave Karow of Rock Springs, 608-228-5745.

Pastor Charles Iles will be doing the service on August 4th.

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INFORMATION ABOUT ST. PAUL'S:

Pastor: Rev. Timothy Blauert

Church secretary: Elaine Shimniok

Contact us: Church office: 608-522-4493.

Pastor's cell phone: 507-279-8560.

Email: stpaulsnf@hotmail.com or

tkblauert@outlook.com.

Website address: www.stpaulslutheran-nf.org

Worship times: Sundays 7:30 and 10 a.m.

First Sunday, 8:30 a.m.

Communion, 1st & 3rd Sundays

Sunday School: Sundays at 8:45 a.m., or after the service on the first Sunday of the month.

(We are not having classes in the summer.)

Adult Bible study: Sundays at 8:45 a.m. or after the service on the 1st Sunday of the month.

Church Council

President: Jim Dohner

Vice-president: Dave Zimmerman

Secretary: Paul Fuller

Treasurer: Mark Shimniok

Financial secretary: Jeremy Zimmerman

Head usher: Roy Schneider

Ladies' Aid

President: Elaine Shimniok

Secretary: Lynn Zimmerman

Treasurer: Elaine Shimniok

Sunshine Lady: Mary Klemm

LWMS Reporter: Linda Ennis

Church organist

Susan Grossenbacher

Church Custodian Vonnie Leifer

Please remember our shut-in members with your prayers and visits

Linda Faivre (at home)

Gary Meske (at home)

Ellie Schultz (at home)

Please let Pastor know if you are sick, in the hospital, or are having any other difficulties. He'll be glad to visit and have a devotion and pray with you! Contact information for him is in the left column of this page.



Happy Anniversary to:

Joe & Linda Gray – July 4, 1987

Jeff & Susan Grossenbacher – July 9, 1988

Jim & Sarah Ahrensmeyer – July 15, 2000



Happy Birthday to:

Sandy Nehring – July 1

John Shimniok – July 1

Lori Hehenberger – July 2

Anna Zimmerman – July 3

Jerry Leifer – July 6

Madeline McLaughlin – July 8

Larry Ahrensmeyer – July 14

Jeff Grossenbacher – July 16

Tonya Klemm – July 16

Dan Filip – July 24

Tanner Klingemeyer – July 27

Jeff Dodge – July 29

Richard Galston – July 29