



The Word “E-edition”

The Newsletter of St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Church

The Scriptures are Clear

Volume 2026, Issue III

March 2026

Historic Lutherans follow a manner of biblical interpretation that forces us to deal with the text of the Bible and not our own reason or extra-biblical testimony. This is really challenging at times because it often leaves us with things that we don’t know. Where the Bible doesn’t speak, we must be silent. However, where the Bible does speak, we must be bold and confident.

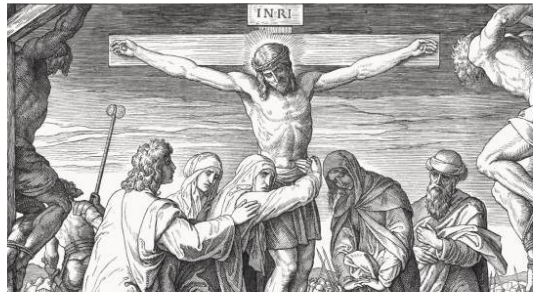
Many people are stirred up at the historic warfare and present political turmoil within Israel and the Middle East. “What does this mean?” they ask. Of course, millions of people offer answers. Answers that are many and are varied. Many people ask me, “What do you think Pastor?” Here is my response:

I am a Lutheran pastor. In my ordination vows I promised that my teaching and preaching would be in conformity with “The Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions as contained in the Book of Concord.” As pastors in our church body, we don’t get to teach or preach something unique to us. Rather, we preach and teach what we believe as it has already been objectively presented in times past.

In relation to the current warring in the Middle East, Pastor Frank and I, as LCMS pastors, must speak to you objectively, in light the Scriptures and our Confessions. We present neither a personal faith testimony nor a political opinion. We preach a timeless, Lutheran message.

The Scriptures are Clear

One of the classic teachings within Lutheranism is the clarity of Scriptures. Lutherans have always believed that “The clearer passages of Scripture interpret the less clear passages.” That is to say that the literal, formal statements in the Bible, with sufficient precise details, must interpret less clear passages. Less clear passages may be symbolical or poetical and may be



The center of biblical teaching for the historic Lutheran is “Justification by God’s grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.” All biblical teaching flows to Jesus, rests with Jesus and looks back to Jesus.

connected to dreams, visions and/or prophecies. For example, an end times vision of Daniel may be less clear than Jesus’ own words on the end times as recorded in one of the Gospels. For Lutherans, we will always rely on the clearer texts to explain a given subject than a less clear text.

Beyond that, Lutherans also believe that it is only the clear passages of Scripture that can establish a doctrine. We believe that a Church doctrine cannot be derived from a symbol, vision or unclear prophecy alone.

Lack of Clarity Leads to Confusion.

Present day opinions about the physical land of Israel and the Middle East, its people and places, are often based on popular opinions and/or misinterpreted biblical texts. Much of American

Evangelical Christianity has been taught a “Premillennial/Dispensationalist,” theology. This theology is greatly based in visionary and symbolical biblical texts popularized by the teachings of John Nelson Darby and later formalized in the Scofield Reference Bible. One of the teachings of Dispensationalist theology is that the establishment of physical Israel is part of God’s end times plan. They point to the creation of the political state of Israel in 1948 as a sign of the beginning of these events. Thus, current events regarding Israel, the “Jews” and the Middle East are viewed with great importance to the Dispensationalist, leading to Israel having the support of the dispensationalist at every turn...no matter what.

But Wait...Isn’t it All About Jesus?

Lutherans take an “A-Millennial” approach to end times theology specifically due to our position on the clear texts of Scripture. When read this way, we rejoice with the Apostles in the New Testament who make clear that salvation is for the whole world and that no one has the upper hand on another, Israel has no preference, and OT prophecy is chiefly fulfilled in **Jesus Christ.**

Paul clearly states in Galatians 3:28,

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

See page two for more definitions as related to this subject. God’s blessings!

+Pastor Sherrill

What is “The Millennium?”

The Millennium is the “thousand years” mentioned only in Revelation 20, described to be the period of time when the people of God reign with Christ. Different views of the end times are often based upon different understands of what this period is and when it takes place. See the differences between Lutheran Theology (A-Millennial Theology) and “Premillennial/Dispensationalist Theology” below as it relates to Rev. 20.

A—Millennial Theology (As taught within Lutheranism)

1. The 1,000 years, as mentioned in Revelation 20, is a *figurative number* of completeness depicting the reign of Christ in and with His Church. This reign began at His birth, and will be fully revealed at His second coming.
2. Lutherans read the book of Revelation in keeping with the historical grammatical nature of all biblical interpretation. That is, the Bible contains many genres. Where a writing is unclear and/or there is no parallel connection to a more clear text, the interpreter leaves it be. Lutherans see the book of Revelation, in large part, symbolically, presenting various “scenes” in a repeated and escalated fashion.
3. Lutherans interpret the book of Revelation in light of the clearer passages of Scripture which are presented, outside of Revelation, in such books as the Gospels.
4. Formal doctrines within Lutheranism are largely connected to the teachings of Jesus. The historic creeds most clearly state end time theology through formulations such as are expressed in the Apostles Creed, “...Jesus sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead...We believe in...the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.”

Premillennial/Dispensationalist Theology

1. This is a *literal* 1,000 years in which the believers reign over the earth with Christ.
2. A literal reading of Rev. 20 and all of Rev. creates a “straight line” interpretation of events, leading to the idea of 7 “dispensations of time.” The 7 dispensations are as follows:
 - a. Innocence (before the Fall);
 - b. Conscience (the Fall to Noah)
 - c. Human Government (Noah to Abraham)
 - d. Promise (Abraham to Moses)
 - e. Law (Moses to Christ)
 - f. Grace (the Church)
 - g. The Kingdom (the millennium).
3. The “Dispensations,” drawn initially from a symbolical text, supported by other symbolical texts, leads to a variety of biblical interpretations and present day speculation. Rather than focusing on clear biblical texts, “dispensationalists” often see present day events as part of God’s sovereign plan. Such theologies have led to many end times predictions of Jesus return and other related events.
4. Dispensational theology leads to political prerequisites. Whereas Lutherans believe that OT promises are fulfilled in Christ and the Church, often, dispensationalists see OT promises fulfilled in physical Israel. This means that OT Israel must be preserved in order to receive God’s promises. This misunderstanding causes them to be “pro-Israel” without reservation.

Important Upcoming Dates

March 2026

- March 4, 2026
5pm
6:30pm
Wednesday
Christ Academy 1st Wed. Potluck Dinner
Mid-Week Lenten Worship Service
- March 11, 2026
5pm
6:30pm
Wednesday
Christ Academy
Mid-Week Lenten Worship Service
- March 18, 2026
5pm
6:30pm
Wednesday
Christ Academy
Mid-Week Lenten Worship Service
- March 25, 2026
5pm
6:30pm
Wednesday
Christ Academy
Mid-Week Lenten Worship Service
- March 29, 2026
8:00am & 10:45am
Palm Sunday
Divine Worship Services

April 2026

- April 2, 2026
7pm
Maundy Thursday
Divine Worship Service
- April 3, 2026
7pm
Good Friday Tenebrae Service
- April 4, 2026
7pm
Saturday
Easter Vigil w Divine Worship Service
- April 5, 2026
8:00am
9:30am
10:45am
Easter Sunday
Divine Worship Service
Easter Breakfast
Divine Worship Service
- April 12
12:00pm
Special Voters Meeting
Immediately after
10:45am Worship Service
- April 19, 2026
8:00am
10:45am
3:00pm
Sunday
Divine Worship Service
Worship Service & Rite of Holy Matrimony
Rebecca Heinicke & Daniel Monarrez
Frank Studio Spring Recital
- April 26, 2026
8:00am
10:45am
12:15pm
Sunday
Divine Worship Service
Rite of Confirmation
Confirmation Luncheon

St. Paul's Music Conservatory —March News

Something to Practice For: The Council Bluffs National Federation of Music Clubs Festival is scheduled for **Saturday, March 28** at St. Paul's. Piano, organ, and string students at SPMC are busy learning their pieces! In most cases, each participant is to memorize two pieces and to play them for a judge on the day of the Festival. Each student then receives a rating as well as constructive comments. After three years of performance, students have the opportunity to begin earning "gold cups." The process is helpful for both students and teachers in maintaining a steady progression through the years. **The Council Bluffs Music Federation thanks St. Paul's for being the local host site again this year!**



Practice, Practice, Practice! Pictured is every student's favorite practice device, the metronome! Well, maybe not every student...! Truth be told, practice with a metronome can be a bit trying, as it forces one to play strictly in time. However, practice with a metronome can be very beneficial, as it helps one develop a correct sense of rhythm. The metronome reminds us that part of refining music involves discipline and commitment, skills that are essential in other areas of life as well. Careful, consistent practice pays off in the long run, as our participants in Festival realize (above) or as our alumni grow to appreciate (below). If you hear one of our students perform, encourage them to **keep up the good work!**

Practice Pays Off! Two music conservatory alumni, **Bradley Adams and Matthew Waggoner**, were recently awarded the opportunity to play in the University of Iowa Honor Band. They rehearsed on Saturday, February 21 and performed on Sunday, February 22. Pictured are Bradley (left), as well as Bradley and Matthew along with participants from Abraham Lincoln and Thomas Jefferson High Schools (right). Great job, Bradley and Matthew!



St. Paul's Center — March News

At the 2026 St. Paul's Annual Meeting, St. Paul's Voters approved the creation of St. Paul's Center. The St. Paul's Center is the new name for our second location at 1500 N 16th St, Council Bluffs, IA 51501. St. Paul's Center will house several Christ-Centered Organizations that align to St. Paul's Christian beliefs. The largest tenant at St. Paul's Center will be St. Paul's Lutheran Early Childhood Center. SPLECC will continue to operate from St. Paul's Center. One small change will be the elimination of the Tuesday & Thursday sessions. SPLECC will still continue to be open Monday—Friday, and still have M-W-F classes.

The SPLECC Summer Program is in pre-registration currently. There are a limited number of openings available. You may visit the SPLECC Summer Program weblink at: <https://splecc.org/summer-program/>. You may also see the back page of the newsletter for more information on this years Summer Program.

The SPLECC Easter Program will be Wednesday, April 1st, beginning at 11:00am.

As part of the changes at St. Paul's Center, the SPLECC office will be converted into a community room. The Community Room will house the Summer Program, along with new partners at The Center. Work will begin in late March and April to clear out the current SPLECC office and move into rooms at the back of the Center. Plans also call for a teacher work area, and moving of the library to a new room. Volunteers will be need in the coming weeks to help clear out the SPLECC Office and rooms to make way for the new changes at The Center. Announcements will be made when the work days are set.

There will be a few staff description changes associated with the changes at The Center. The SPLECC Board is working on updating job descriptions and position changes. Those changes will be announced through the Church Council minutes once approved by the SPLECC Board, and Council.

A new website for the St. Paul's Center has been created. Trey Stickler is working on setting up the website. An announcement when the site goes "live" will be sent out.

Pastor Sherrill is working with several interested organizations that would like to use the new Community Room for their programs. Pastor, Trey, and Bob are working on setting up agreements with the organizations to use The Center.

St. Paul's Center will also be made available to the Public for events (meetings, birthday parties, family reunions). All parties interested in using St. Paul's Center will be screened and approved. A policy and procedure document is being created for both member and non-members of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

St. Paul's Center is your Local Mission at work. We see this as a "Hub" for Christian Growth and Outreach into the Community.

Look for more information in the April newsletter.

The Word - St. Paul's Mission - David's Harp +

2025 HIGHLIGHTS



22

Conservatories

Supported 22 conservatories, with 5 new conservatories established this last year.

460+

Students + Teachers

Engaged 400+ students and over 60 instructors in music programs across supported conservatories.

100+

Online Resources

Expanded our unique digital resource library to 100+ to better serve the David's Harp Family and beyond.

1,000+

Music Books

Provided over 1,000+ music books, sharing sacred music resources with congregations, schools, and individuals worldwide.

+4

Printed Music Resources

Produced and distributed new sacred music resources, including **Hymns of the Season Vol 5**, **Easy Piano Preludes Vol 5** **Easy Organ Preludes Vol 5** and **The Catechism Hymns**.

1000+

People Reached at Events

Participated in a wide range of impactful events around the country, and even internationally!



ST. PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

239 Frank St
Council Bluffs, IA 51503

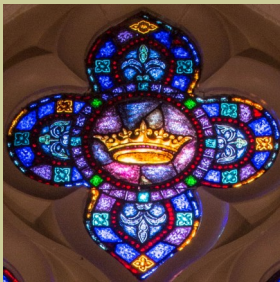
Phone: 712-322-4729
E-mail:
splccboffice@splccb.org

We're on the web
stpaulsCouncilbluffs.org



St. Paul's Congregation
by the numbers

YouTube Subscribers	226
Facebook Followers	1,008
Instagram Followers	14
X Followers	9
Congregation Members	563
Households	255



St. Paul's Lutheran Early
Childhood Center
by the numbers

Students	42
----------	----

**St. Paul's Lutheran Church Statistics
February 2026 St. Paul's Dashboard**

February 2026 Attendance 8:00	441
February 2026 Attendance 10:45	318
February 2026 Attendance Seasonal Services	296
February 2026 Total In-Person Attendance	1,055
February 2026 Sunday Facebook Views	2,243
February 2026 Sunday YouTube Views	500
February 2026 Seasonal Facebook Views	979
February 2026 Seasonal YouTube Views	192
February 2026 Total Online Views	3,914
Total February 2026	4,969

**St. Paul's Lutheran Church
February Income & Expense***

St. Paul's	February 2026	2026 Year to Date
Total Income	\$ 35,864.97	\$ 95,101.22
Total Expenses	\$ 41,482.82	\$ 84,029.74
Income Less Expense	\$ 5,617.85	\$ 11,071.48

**St. Paul's Music Conservatory
February Income & Expense***

St. Paul's MC	February 2026	2026 Year to Date
Total Income	\$ 4,289.09	\$ 13,868.01
Total Expenses	\$ 4,047.72	\$ 9,235.40
Income Less Expense	\$ 241.37	\$ 4,632.61



**St. Paul's Lutheran Early Childhood Center
February Income & Expense***

SPLECC	February 2026	2026 Year to Date
Total Income	\$ 36,228.67	\$ 72,543.03
Total Expenses	\$ 43,501.21	\$ 85,348.71
Income Less Expense	\$ 7,272.54	\$ 12,805.68

* This is a snapshot of the income and expense report to as of 28-FEB-2026.

April 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Holy Week						
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
8a Divine Service	9a Music w/All	9a Chapel @ SPI ECC	NLSW - Recognized	SPI ECC Closed	9a Men's Bible Study	
9:30a Education Hour	6p Bell Choir Rehearsal	11a SPI ECC Easter Program	9a Chapel @ SPI ECC	7p Good Friday Tenebrae Service	9a Women's Bible Study	
10:45a Divine Service			9:15a Parish & ECC Admin Meeting	7p Maundy Thursday Divine Service	7p Easter Vigil Divine Worship Service	
4p Bethany Lutheran Home Afternoon Worship						
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
8a Divine Service	Church Office Closed	6a Men's Bible Study	9a CB Circuit Pastors Meeting	9a Chapel @ SPI ECC	9a Music w/All	
9:30a Easter Breakfast	SPI ECC Closed	6p Elder's Meeting	9a Chapel @ SPI ECC	6:30p Council Meeting		
10:45a Divine Service	9a Music w/All		5p Christ Academy			
			5p First Wednesday Potluck			
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
8a Divine Service	9a Music w/All	9a Chapel @ SPI ECC	9a Chapel @ SPI ECC	9a Chapel @ SPI ECC	9a Men's Bible Study	
9:30a Education Hour	6p Bell Choir Rehearsal	5p Christ Academy	9:15a Parish & ECC Admin Meeting			
10:45a Divine Service	7p High School Choir Practice		11:30a Women's Bible Study			
12p Special Voters Meeting			6p SPI ECC Board Meeting			
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
8a Divine Service	9a Music w/All	9a Chapel @ SPI ECC	Newsletter Articles Due	9a Music w/All		
9:30a Education Hour	6p Bell Choir Rehearsal	5p Christ Academy Quiz Bowl & Closing Program	9a Chapel @ SPI ECC			
10:45a Heintze - Monarrez Wedding & Worship	7p High School Choir Practice					
3p St. Paul's Music Conservatory 2025 Spring R						
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
8a Divine Service	9a Music w/All	9a Chapel @ SPI ECC	9a Chapel @ SPI ECC		9a Men's Bible Study	
9:30a Education Hour	6p Bell Choir Rehearsal	11a Muffins with Mom			9a Women's Bible Study	
10:45a Divine Service & Rite of Confirmation						
12:30p Confirmation Luncheon						

Historic  Christ - Centered  For You

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 239 Frank Street, Co Bluffs, Iowa 51503 – 712-322-4729 – www.stpaulscouncilbluffs.org - Facebook - YouTube
 St. Paul's Lutheran Early Childhood Center, 1500 N 16th Street, Co Bluffs, Iowa 51501 – 712-322-3294 – www.splecc.org - Facebook
 St. Paul's Music Conservatory, 239 Frank St, Co Bluffs, Iowa 51503 – 712-322-4729 - www.stpaulsmusicconservatory.org - Facebook

March Recipe of the Month

Eggplant Parmesan

While most Lutherans today do not follow the strict Lenten fasting rules of Martin Luther's time (no meat or meat fats, no dairy, no eggs), some give up meat on Fridays. This month's recipe can be used as a meat substitute for a meal or as a side dish. While this dish contains nearly all the forbidden foods, what we really want to remember is what lies at the root of giving something up for Lent. We remember what Jesus gave up for us – his life – and why He did so – for our reconciliation to God. Without His suffering we would be lost forever, without hope. Let such remembrance bring about change in our hearts and lives to lead holy lives pleasing to God and to anticipate Easter with Great Joy and Praise.



- | | |
|---|--|
| 2 eggplants, about 3 lb. total | ½ cup grated parmesan cheese |
| 1 tsp. salt, plus more for seasoning | 1/2 tsp. ground black pepper |
| 1 cup all-purpose flour | 3 cups marinara/tomato sauce |
| 3 eggs | 2 cups shredded low-moisture mozzarella cheese |
| ½ cup milk | 20 basil leaves, plus more for serving |
| 3½ cups panko breadcrumbs with Italian seasoning (can use plain bread crumbs) | 8 oz. fresh mozzarella, sliced |
| | Vegetable oil, for frying |

1. Cut the eggplant into 1/2-inch thick slices. Line two large sheet trays with paper towels and lay the slices on top in a single layer. Season with a light sprinkle of salt all over both sides of the eggplant. Set aside for 45 minutes, then pat each slice dry with a paper towel.
2. Meanwhile, place the flour on a plate. Using wide shallow bowls, whisk together the eggs and milk in one and in another, combine the breadcrumbs, parmesan cheese, remaining 1 teaspoon of salt and 1/2 teaspoon of black pepper.
3. Heat a large skillet filled with about 1/4 inch of vegetable oil over medium-high heat until very hot (about 350°). Working 2 to 3 eggplant slices at a time, dredge in the flour to coat completely, dip in the egg mixture then coat in the breadcrumb mixture. Cook slices in a single layer until golden brown on each side, about 3 minutes total. Remove from the oil and transfer to a wire rack lined with paper towels. Continue to fry the eggplant slices, adding more oil as needed to the skillet.
4. Preheat the oven to 375°. Add ¾ cup of marinara sauce to the bottom of the casserole dish and spread to coat the bottom. Top with a third of the eggplant. Sprinkle with 1 cup of shredded mozzarella. Tear 1/3 of the basil leaves into smaller pieces and sprinkle all over. Repeat with another layer of sauce, eggplant, cheese and basil, two more times, topping the final layer with slices of fresh mozzarella. Drizzle the top with ¾ cup more of tomato sauce.
5. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, until the center of the casserole is hot and the cheese on top is melted and golden brown in spots. Let rest 10 minutes before serving topped with more basil.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Holy Week Worship Service Schedule

Holy Week			
Sunday	March 29	Palmarum	Divine Worship Service 8:00a.m. & 10:45a.m. Education Hour @ 9:30a.m.
Wednesday	April 1		No Christ Academy
Thursday	April 2	Maundy Thursday	Divine Worship Service & Stripping of the Altar @ 7:00 p.m.
Friday	April 3	Good Friday	Tenebrae Service @ 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	April 4	Easter Vigil	Easter Vigil Divine Service @ 7:00 p.m.
Eastertide			
Sunday	April 5	The Resurrection of Our Lord	Divine Worship Service 8:00a.m. & 10:45a.m. Easter Breakfast & Fellowship 9:30 a.m.

Please join your St. Paul's Family, for Easter Sunday Worship at 8am & 10:45am, on Sunday, April 5th. Between Worship Services, please join us for Easter Breakfast in the Church Undercroft at 9:30am. The Hospitality Team is going to be serving Egg Casseroles, milk, orange juice, coffee, and water. Everyone is asked to bring their favorite breakfast pastries, or breakfast cakes. Tableware will be provided. We look forward to seeing you there.

Special Voters' Meeting

Sunday, April 12, 2025

(Following 10:45 a.m. Divine Service)

Location: Undercroft (Fellowship Hall)

Items on Agenda for Consideration, Discussion, and Approval:

Recognition of New Voters from February 1, 2026, Annual Voters' Meeting.

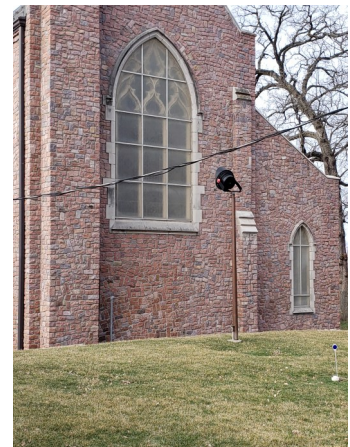
Request for new voting members, motion to approve new voting members (Reminder, members requestion to become voting members are not allowed to vote at this meeting.)

Approval of Minutes from Previous Voters Meeting (February 1, 2026)

Motion One: Accept bid from Willet-Stained Glass Studios of Winona, MN of \$286,545.00 to repair the existing stained-glass windows at St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church and replace the existing Lexan with Klear-flo[®] Protective Coverings and add additional expense cost of minimum \$110,000.00 for a total cost of \$396,545.00.

Motion Two: Use the Dedicated Accounts: Capital Improvement, Stained-Glass, and Organ Fund to reduce the \$396,545.00 cost.

Questions or Comments may be directed to Bob Finke, Vice President or Church Council.



CAMP OKOBOJI Quilt Auction

Saturday, June 20, 2026

Auction starts at 12:30 p.m.

CAMP OKOBOJI | 1531 EDGEWOOD DRIVE | MILFORD

Craft Fair

Lunch | 11:00 a.m. – Free Will Donation

View the quilts online at www.campokoboji.org

or on site Friday, June 19 from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

or Saturday from 9:00 a.m. - Noon.

Services donated by Todd Hattermann (Paullina)

**Proceeds
will go to the
purchase
of new twin
mattresses**

CAN'T MAKE IT?

Proxy bidding is available
by calling the camp office
at 712-337-3325

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH & MUSIC CONSERVATORY

2025-2026
MUSIC SERIES
PIPE ORGAN
DEDICATION
SUNDAY MAY 3RD
4:00PM



Featuring Kantor Paul Soulek,
St. John's Lutheran Church, Seward, NE
A Program of varied repertoire highlighting the
beauty of St. Paul's organ renovated by
The Bedient Pipe Organ Company
Reception following in the Church Undercroft

For more information:
www.splccb.org

239 Frank St., Council Bluffs, IA
+712-322-4729

A SUMMER OF FAITH, FUN, & FRIENDSHIP!

SPLECC 2026 SUMMER PROGRAM

Christ Centered Summer Program
for Ages K-4th Grade



SCAN TO REGISTER TODAY

Register Today at:

<https://splecc.org/summer-program/>

Early Registration Deposit \$50.00



God's Creation
& Exploration



Creativity
& Expression



Biblical Values
& Character

May 26th - August 2nd, 2026 | Mon - Fri 8:30am - 3:30pm (Extended Care Available)

St. Paul's Lutheran Early Childhood Center

1500 N 16th Street
Council Bluffs, IA 51501
Ph. 712-322-3294