



January 25, 2026 – The Conversion of St. Paul

AS WE GATHER

There are times in the church year where the lectionary gives us the option of continuing with “business as usual” or celebrating the work God accomplished in the life of a particular saint. This morning, we celebrate the conversion of St. Paul, the apostle. God did a mighty and grand work through him, transforming him from one who persecuted Jesus to one who proclaimed Jesus boldly. In our service, we will sing the hymn, “Chief of Sinners Though I Be,” which is based off of St. Paul’s proclamation in 1 Timothy 1:15, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.” We will speak responsively *Luther’s Small Catechism’s* explanation of the third article of the Creed on the work of the Holy Spirit, who brings about conversions. All of this is so that we, too, may be strengthened in our faith for the work God has set before us.

WELCOME

HYMN *LSB 688, “Come, Follow Me, the Savior Spoke”*

OPENING VERSICLES

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: This is the day which the Lord has made;

People: **let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

Pastor: From the rising of the sun to its setting,

People: **the name of the Lord is to be praised.**

Pastor: Better is one day in Your courts than a thousand elsewhere;

People: **I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.**

Pastor: Make me to know Your ways, O Lord.

People: **Teach me Your paths.**

Pastor: Sanctify us in Your truth.

People: **Your Word is truth.**

Pastor: From the rising of the sun to its setting,

People: **the name of the Lord is to be praised.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: I will go to the altar of God,

People: **to God my exceeding joy.**

Pastor: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

People: **who made heaven and earth.**

Pastor: When we examine our hearts and consciences,

People: **we find nothing in us but sin and death, from which we are incapable of delivering ourselves.**

Pastor: Therefore, let us confess our sins to God our Father, imploring Him for the sake of His Son Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness. We take a moment of silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

Pastor: O almighty God, merciful Father,

People: I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.

Pastor: God be merciful to you and strengthen your faith.

People: Amen.

Pastor: Do you believe that the forgiveness I speak is not my forgiveness but God's?

People: Yes.

Pastor: Let it be done for you as you believe. In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful.

People: Amen.

HYMN *LSB 611, "Chief of Sinners Though I Be"*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: 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.

People: Amen.

FIRST READING *Acts 9:1-22*

¹ But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ² and 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. ³ Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. ⁴ And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" ⁵ And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." ⁶ But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." ⁷ The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. ⁸ Saul 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. ⁹ And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank. ¹⁰ Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." ¹¹ And 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, ¹² and 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.”¹³ But Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem.”¹⁴ And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name.”¹⁵ But 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.”¹⁶ For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.”¹⁷ So 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.”¹⁸ And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized;¹⁹ and taking food, he was strengthened. For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus.²⁰ And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.”²¹ And 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?”²² But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Christ.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE READING *Galatians 1:11-24*

¹¹ For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man’s gospel.¹² For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.¹³ For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it.¹⁴ And 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.¹⁵ But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace,¹⁶ was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with anyone;¹⁷ nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia, and returned again to Damascus.¹⁸ Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and remained with him fifteen days.¹⁹ But 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!)²¹ Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.²² And I was still unknown in person to the churches of Judea that are in Christ.²³ They only were hearing it said, “He who used to persecute us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy.”²⁴ And they glorified God because of me.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL READING *Matthew 19:27-30*

Pastor: The holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the nineteenth chapter.

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

²⁷ Then Peter said in reply, “See, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?”²⁸ Jesus 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.²⁹ And 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.³⁰ But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

CATECHISM

Pastor: As we consider the conversion of St. Paul, we reflect on how faith is given through the work of the Holy Spirit. We confess in the Apostle's Creed:

All: I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Pastor: What does this mean?

All: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true.

HYMN *LSB 578, "Thy Strong Word"*

SERMON *"The Conversion of St. Paul"*

APOSTLE'S CREED

All: I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

OFFERING

HYMN *LSB 783, "Take My Life and Let It Be"*

PRAYER

Pastor: In peace let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For ... let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: Finally, for these and for all our needs of body and soul, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

All: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

COLLECT FOR THE WORD

Pastor: Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and take them to heart that, by the patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

BLESSING

Pastor: Let us bless the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

People: **Amen.**

HYMN *LSB 685, "Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus"*

CLOSING

Pastor: Go in peace and serve your neighbor!

People: **Thanks be to God!**

Service adapted from Prayer and Preaching (LSB 260-267) and Corporate Confession and Absolution (LSB 290-291). Excerpt from *Luther's Small Catechism* from LSB 323.



ANNOUNCEMENTS for Week of January 25, 2026

Grace Lutheran Church 1120 S. Park Ave. Aurora, MO

Church: 417-678-3603 Pastor Daniel Heitshusen

Cell: 832-727-3135 pastor@gracelutheranaurora.com Pastor's Day Off; Friday

**Family for the Week: Harold & Gwen Lampe & Homebound Families
St. Andrew, Stockton**

Prayers of Peace and Comfort:

Family of Bob Bramer on his passing - (David Lampe's friend)

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Prayers for Health and Healing:

Sara Drewianka - (friend of Gwen Lampe – health and healing from accident)

Janet - (Darlene Lampe's son-in-law's mother)

Complete Prayer List:

Temporary

Bruce Banks – (friend of Teri Ediger)

Becky – (daughter of Diane and Bill Thompson)

Jeannie Bennett – (relative of Teri Ediger – health and healing)

Pat Bricco – (friend of Grace – health and healing)

Treasa Bussey – (friend of Pam Bowling – health and healing)

Joyce Campbell – (friend of Wanda Thompson – health and healing)

Bonny Gray – (sister of Cynthia Swoyer-Wolf – health and healing)

Pastor Hagen – (health and healing)

Zana Haley and baby Veda – (Cathy Munden's granddaughter)

Jeeper Meyer – (health and healing from cancer)

Bill Parsons – (Joanne Michel's brother – health and healing)

Suzanne Parsons – (friend of Sue Doss – health and healing)

Joe Pennington – (brother-in-law of Bill Michel – health and healing)

Billy Schmells – (friend of Cheryl Lile – health and healing)

LC Stalcup – (relative of Gladys Bauer – health and healing)

Tim Tucek – (relative of Gladys Bauer – peace and comfort)

Dayton Wheeler – (grandson of Wanda Thompson – surgery)

Long Term

Doug Bernard – (Cathy Munden's cousin – health and healing)

Jill Bode – (niece of Rachel Sanford – health & healing, cancer)

Kathy Browne – (friend of Kathy Holle – health and healing)

Pastor Gary Griffin – (health & healing from cancer)

Robbie Krueger – (friend of Kathy Holle)

Marybeth Lamp – (friend of Pam Bowling – health and healing)

Mary Ann Campbell – (friend of Harold Lampe – peace and comfort)
 Jackie Clark – (Micki Gettman's friend – healing from a broken-hip)
 Dorthea Dennis – (health and healing)
 Glenda Enlow – (health and healing)
 Lois Gaddy – (friend of Gwen Lampe – health and healing)
 Gary Gardner – (health and healing)
 Betty Gordon – (health and healing)

Mitzie Lorenz – (friend of Harold Lampe – peace and comfort)
 Pat Michel – (Bill Michel's sister-In-Law – health & healing)
 Margaret Seburn – (cousin of Joanne Michel – health and healing)
 Ruth Stoddard – (health & healing)
 Larry Swart – (friend of Bill Munden – health and healing from cancer)
 June Winger – (Sharon Barlow's mother – health & healing)

THIS WEEK

Sunday	January 25th	Happy Half Hour – 9:00 am Fellowship – 9:30 am Service – 10:00 am
Monday	January 26th	NO Braille
Wednesday	January 28th	Bible Study – 6:00 pm
Thursday	January 29th	Confirmation - 5:30 pm
Friday	January 30th	Pastor's Day off
Sunday	February 1st	Happy Half Hour – 9:00 am Fellowship – 9:30 am Service with communion – 10:00 am Voters Meeting
Monday	February 2nd	Braille - 9:00 am & 1:00 pm LWML at Freistatt - 1:30 pm

Birthdays: Jan. 28-Matthew Springer; Jan. 30-Charlie Chambers
Anniversaries: Jan. 28-Harold & Vonnie Suelter

	January	
25: Bill & Joanne Michel		25: David Lampe
	February	
01: Charlie & Edee Chambers		01: Mitch Littler



Sheltering Hope is an organization here in Aurora. They recently voted to form the following committees in 2026 to meet their goals: Jobs committee, Mentorship committee, and Transportation committee. If you are interested in learning more about Sheltering Hope and/or serving on one of the committees, please see Pastor Heitshusen for more details.

Wednesday Evening Bible Class: We will be meeting for Wednesday Evening Bible class starting Wednesday, January 21st, at **6:00 pm**. We will continue going through the Gospel of John. Come and join us!

Thank you! Dear members of Grace Lutheran Church, Thank you so much for the generous Christmas gift. It means a lot to us. We are blessed to be part of God's people here at Grace, and I am honored to be your pastor. We pray the Lord continues to bless each of you this new year. - The Heitshusens

LWML will meet February 2, 2026, at 1:30 pm in the chapel at Trinity in Freistatt. This is our annual prayer service, so please join us. There will be no business meeting.