



SPRING PRAIRIE LUTHERAN CHURCH

February 2026

Pastor Rick Bursh

N509 CTH C

DeForest, WI 53532

office: (608) 846-4178

www.springprairie.org

email: splc@centurytel.net

www.facebook.com/springprairie

Located at the corners of Hwys DM and C in Keyeser



“Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.” - (Luke 25:36-37)

We are all familiar with the story of the Good Samaritan. Most of us we first heard it for the first time in Sunday school. It was taught to us then to reinforce our morals in helping those in need; an important lesson for children to learn. The mercy shown by the Good Samaritan towards the victim of the robbery is exemplary. The Samaritan doesn't just help the victim in the moment, he continues to help him until he is fully healthy and able to continue with his life. It is a commitment that goes beyond what even the average person might do.

But when we revisit the story, it tells us an awful lot about how we see the world, and it gives us insight into who we are. Jesus introduces the idea that even the highly respected members of the church do not necessarily follow and do what God would have them do. We can only surmise that they used the convenient excuse of how busy they were to mask their unwillingness to help. Coupled with this is the idea that the Samaritan, an outsider, is the one to show mercy in contrast to what their preconceptions are about Samaritans. Jesus is making a powerful statement that we need to listen to. All people, regardless of their faith, or their nationality, or any of a thousand things that can differentiate us, are beloved children of God made in God's image. And we are all called to act as God would have us act for our siblings. We are called to be God's action in the world.

That call is not easy; it was never meant to be easy. To sacrifice for each other is to put someone else's needs above our own. We do this out of love. We do this as an expression of God's grace that is freely given to us, grace that we cannot earn. It is not transactional, we ask nothing in return for the things that we do for others out of God's love. That is what it means to be a Christian.

Many people are experiencing a feeling of isolation in the world right now. Our faith is being challenged in ways we never thought possible. We never felt that we could be defined by the things that differentiate us. When we hear others proclaiming a different message it can cause us to reexamine our understanding of who God is. But a gospel that turns away from the very basic teachings of Jesus is no gospel at all.

But there is always hope. When we are baptized, we are baptized into a community of Christ. We are sealed with the sign of the cross forever and joined to all in community. Individually, our voices and our actions may seem insignificant. But when we come together, and share in God's love, we can shine a light into the world that the darkness cannot overcome. That is what it means to be a church. That is what it means to live out the gospel. The good news of Jesus Christ doesn't need to be “inflicted” on anyone. That is not our calling, it was never our calling, because the good news speaks for itself. It speaks not in words but in our actions...

It doesn't proclaim a kingdom; kingdoms are of this world. God works through each of us to care for and love our neighbors as ourselves. God binds us through the Holy Spirit, and through that connection we can change the world.

May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Pastor Rick

Pictures from our 2026 Breakfast Worship & Annual Meeting



Annual Meeting

This past Sunday we had our annual meeting and reported that the mission of the church is thriving and that we are in solid financial position moving into the future. It is overwhelming to think of all the people that have come together to carry out God's mission and to enact it in our congregation.

We discussed three capital projects for the future. The first is the renovation of the bathroom at the church Parsonage. This bathroom has been inoperative for years and the congregation made the decision to contract to have it renovated and repaired. The funds for this project will be allocated directly from memorial donations.

Secondly, a fund has been created to repair or replace the church bells which also have been inoperative for many years. The opportunity exists for individuals to contribute to this fund as they feel called to do.

Finally, a fund was created for the installation of air conditioning in the sanctuary. The basis for this was a generous contribution made of almost \$6,000 which will serve as the basis of the fund. Future donations will account for the balance of this project. Approximate total cost for the project is \$35,000.

Folks of Spring Prairie Lutheran Church,

I have been elected President of Spring Prairie Lutheran Church Council. I will do my best for each of you. I invite you to contact me for any reason, at any time, about anything on your mind.

I try to impose a purpose on things that I do. Life is too short just to flitter it away on peripheral non-essentials. The question becomes: why do I attend church on Sunday mornings, particularly at Spring Prairie Lutheran Church? To answer this question, I researched scientific studies on this topic.

Research scientists discovered the following eight reasons why a person may benefit from regular church attendance.

1. Regular attendance at church services is linked to lower rates of depression and anxiety. Studies suggest that community support and a sense of belonging can improve mental health.
2. Some research indicates that people attending church services regularly may have lower blood pressure, a stronger immune system, and a lower mortality risk. This is not only due to the stress-reducing effects of religious practices but also to the inspiration and motivation to lead healthier lifestyles that church attendance can provide.
3. Churchgoers often benefit from a strong social network, which can provide emotional support, reduce feelings of loneliness, and increase overall life satisfaction.
4. Attending church can offer individuals a profound sense of meaning and purpose, which is associated with greater life satisfaction and resilience against life's challenges.
5. Regular church attendance can reinforce a sense of moral and ethical guidance, providing a strong foundation for better decision-making and personal behavior, making individuals feel guided and supported.
6. Being part of a religious community often encourages volunteerism and charitable activities, improving mental health and providing a sense of fulfillment.
7. Regular church attendance may increase a person's hope and positive energy toward life.
8. A person's faith in a higher power can positively affect overcoming addictions and physical sickness.

These benefits can vary based on individual experiences and the religious community involved. In my opinion, there is no better place than the Spring Prairie Lutheran Church to experience these eight benefits to a healthy life.

I don't go to church on Sunday morning to fulfill a duty, a social responsibility, to make a public acknowledgement, to drop a check in the church box, or to order my favorite bagels. No, I go to church on Sunday morning because it is good for me. It is healthy for me. And because it is healthy for the people I love. I especially like the part about "a lower mortality risk" in item 2. In fact, if everyone took these eight reasons to attend church seriously, it would be SRO every Sunday morning, and what a wonderful world it would be.

See you Sunday!

Dan Biddick

608-217-2199

dbiddick1@gmail.com



Thank you Spring Prairie!

The family of Wayne Sharpee would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Spring Prairie Lutheran Church community for your support as we found our way.

Thank you to all who brought food and served a delicious lunch. Thank you to Pastor Rick and Jenny for your time and patience. Thank you all for your kind words and thoughts - you made us remember and smile.

Mary Lou, Katie and Carey



PRAYERS

† Prayers of comfort to the family and friends of Bob Harm over at United in Christ in Morrisonville. Bob passed away the week of January 18th. He was the Council President and an integral part of their church leadership and missed by many across our synod.



† Continued prayers of healing, strength, pain relief, and peace especially for Mike & Cathy Plyman, Gloria Rortvedt and Robert Bredeson.

† May the love of Christ guide us as we seek out ways to ease the conflict in the world. May that love help us to see all human beings as our siblings, deserving of our love. May we be compelled to extend the grace and mercy that God shows us with all humanity.

**** If you or a loved one are in need of prayers and would like to be added to our prayer listing, please let Pastor Rick or Jenny know.*



Financial Update

The end of the year annual report showed we finished the year in a good financial position. We were able to pay all our end of year bills, and had a good cash reserve on hand. Thank you to all who have made this possible. The winter brings challenges with the cold and snow, such as lower attendance and more erratic giving. Our heating and electric bills are significantly higher, just like for many of you as well. Please continue to support Spring Prairie with your regular contributions.

Dave Mickelson

Treasurer

Bagel Breakfast is Back!!

Our budding tradition of Bagel Breakfast is back for 2026!

SAVE THE DATE ->>> Sunday, February 8th

Serving begins at 9:00 AM

Enjoy your favorite flavored scrumptious bagel while visiting with friends in our Spring Prairie faith community. Followed by a meaningful and spirit-filled worship service led by Pastor Rick. Sunday morning come on down! It doesn't get any better than this!



If bagels are left over, you are welcome to take them home with an additional donation to the church.

Spread the Good Word and spread the Bagel Breakfast word. Bring a friend and neighbor!

See You Sunday,
Dan Biddick



Prairie Coffeehouse with Ed Ford



Friday, February 20th, we will welcome **Ed Ford to Prairie Coffeehouse!** Ford has over 15 years of experience teaching and performing music of multiple genres and styles. As a singer songwriter, his influences include John Prine, Johnny Cash and Townes Van Zandt. He has performed with Wisconsin's premier professional choir, Madison Choral Project, since it's start in 2013. Proficient on multiple instruments, Ford teaches guitar, piano, voice and ukulele! **Doors open at 6:00 pm.** Come enjoy lots of delicious snacks and refreshments before and while **Ed performs from 7:00 - 9:00 pm.** As always, admission is FREE and good-will offerings are kindly accepted to help support our performers.



Ash Wednesday Services - February 18th

- 1:00 pm at United in Christ (Morrisonville)
- 6:00 pm at Spring Prairie Lutheran Church



Wednesday Lenten Soup Suppers

Again this year, we will hold soup suppers during the following five Wednesdays of Lent - February 25th and March 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th. Our Soup Supper will begin each evening at 6pm followed by a brief Lenten Worship Service at 7pm. Sign up sheets for bringing soup, bread or dessert are on the table. Please join us!



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE



March 29th	Passion (Palm) Sunday Service	10:00 am
April 2nd	*Maundy Thursday Service <i>at Christ Lutheran Church in DeForest</i>	6:30 pm
April 3rd	Good Friday Service	7:00 pm
April 5th	Easter Sunday Service	10:00 am



Special Joint Maundy Thursday Service

This year we will again be joining together with Burke Lutheran, Norway Grove, Christ Lutheran, and United in Christ for Maundy Thursday service. We will be combining worship leaders, musicians, and choirs. The Bishop Joy Mortensen-Weibe from the South-Central Synod office will be preaching. This year the service will be held at Christ Lutheran Church in DeForest and is open to all. Worship will be **April 2nd at 6:30 pm** with an opportunity for fellowship as well. Watch for more details to come!



GREETINGS FROM JJ'S FELLOWSHIP CORNER!

I hope you and your loved ones are able to stay warm during this cold snap. Given how cold it was, I was pleased to see so many members at our Pancake Breakfast and Annual Meeting—thank you for coming, sharing your opinions and helping us prepare for 2026. We welcome your feedback and encourage you to continue to contact any council member with suggestions or concerns. Special thanks to all who helped cook, serve, and clean up! We served about 57 people and a lot of pancakes and sausages! A huge shoutout to Barb Mickelson for running home and bringing more supplies, hopefully no one went home hungry! And a big thank you to Ben and Cheyenne Johnson for quickly handling the kitchen sink leak cleanup during the meeting. Let's pray that it will be a simple repair.

January was an active month. On the 11th, we hosted our bread fellowship and welcomed 40 guests. The bread we sampled was delicious! I'm interested in organizing more events like this—feel free to share any suggestions.

We had the privilege of participating in the baptism of Chloe on the 18th and served approximately 38 guests. This brings the total number of individuals we shared food and fellowship within January to approximately 185 people! Looking forward to February, we have 2 more baptisms, which of course means cake. So don't start your 2026 diet just yet!

Reminder: I am working on plans for a craft fair/sale at SPLC in May. Please send me your suggestions—any advice is welcome as this is my first time organizing! Volunteers are needed to assist with setting up the day prior to the event as well as with post-event cleanup. Those who want to sell and who volunteer to set up will have the advantage of being able to set up their booths the day before! What a perk! I will share more details as planning progresses.

May God's love and peace be with you,



Pics from Chloe's Baptism & First Communion January 18th



December 11th, 2025

Opening Items:

Members Present: Pastor Rick Bursh, Trish Kienitz, Kayden Meyer, Josh Achterberg, Gina Lee, Bob Henze, Laura Pingel, Dan Biddick, Julie Johnson, and Dave Mickelson were present.

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 6:01 pm.

Approval of minutes: first – Bob Henze; second by Josh Achterberg; all approved

Devotion: Provided by Pastor Rick from Psalms that we say to the Lord: you know me and my ways, you lead me and I praise you,

Financial Review: Dave Mickelson reported that we are close to last year. A motion for a synod payment of \$2,000 in December made by Gina Lee and Bob Henze provided the second, all approved. Bob Henze made a motion to put the \$100,000 due to mature in December into a six-month CD, Laura Pingle provided the second, all approved. Julie Johnson motion to approve financials, Laura Pingel made the second, all approved.

Pastor's Report:

Pastor had four funerals, three at Spring Prairie and one at Our Saviors Lutheran in Sun Prairie. Pastor attended Boundaries Training, and a collaborative with the five area Churches with Dan Biddick representing SPLC. The next joint meeting will be on January 26th at 5:30 pm to see the status of each of the five area churches' thoughts on moving forward. There is the Norwegian Baking Day, the Choir Concert and Carol singing coming up on December 13th, followed by our Christmas Program and Christmas Eve service here at Spring Prairie.

Council Committee Reports:

Music/Worship: Coffeehouse for the month of December will be the Choir Concert and Carol singing which will feature light refreshments upstairs at intermission. There will be no Coffeehouse event for the month of January, however, it will resume in February and continue in March and April 2026. We need to inspire more members to participate in Sunday services with Confirmation students throughout the school year.

Outreach/Faith in Action: Dan's proposal for the Prayer Partners is moving forward, the interest has been minimal, he is looking to put together a meeting in January to help bring light to all who participate as the benefits to not only the individuals we pray for but to the individuals who participate in the group. In home communion will be starting in January 2026. Dan is proposing the next Bagel Breakfast will be on February 8th. 2026.

Property: A new 100-amp box installation on December 4 to support the 2 G/F outlets by garbage disposal in the kitchen. The kitchen fan is a work in progress. Solar motion lights installation to the front of the Church for safety reasons. The Christmas tree was a combined effort by Dave and Barb Mickelson and Bob and Kim Henze. The Outside decorations completed by Bob and Kim Henze, thank you all for your amazing efforts to help our church shine this Christmas season!

Stewardship/Participation: Laura shared on December 21 we will be having our Ugly Sweater Day event, fellowship after church will have various cookies, coffee, white and chocolate milk to celebrate this special event.

Christian Education/Youth: Kayden is proposing that we do another Pancake breakfast with the service held downstairs at the Annual meeting at Spring Prairie on January 25, 2026.

Technology/Communication: Josh is working with Best Defense out of Waunakee to complete the installation of the elevator phone. We will need to replace the telephone in the Elevator as that one is no longer functioning, the cost is \$757 with a monthly fee of \$45 which is still less than Brightspeed, the previous provider. Julie Johnson made a motion, and Gina Lee made the second. All approved. The Sound System installation is complete with minor adjustments we will be live streaming on Dec. 21, Josh received quotes for the Air Conditioning proposal. There would be two units, one on each side of the church, in the front.

Fellowship: Julie shared there were thirty-five in attendance for Norwegian Banking and Yule Log event. There will be light treats served at intermission on December 13 between the program and carol portion of the evening. On January 11th, we will be having a Bread fellowship, where you bring your favorite bread to share and you sample other members favorites for fellowship following church. and twenty attended for the Boo Bash.

New Business:

We are looking into updating the tables in the upstairs meeting area. Trish Kienitz provided further ideas/options at the December meeting. Three Council Members' three-year terms are up; Trish Kienitz and Bob Henze will be leaving. Gina Lee will be staying on, and Laura Pingel will be on for either a two- or three-year term. Information for the Annual Meeting and the budget will be compiled at the January meeting to share with the Congregation in January 2026.

Old Business:

There is no old business.

Next Council Meeting: Our next meeting will be on January 13, 2026, at 6:00 pm. Trish Kienitz will provide the devotion.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned with a motion by Dan Biddick; seconded by Kayden Meyer at 7:16 pm; approved by all and ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Submitted by: Gina Lee, Council Secretary



Quilting Ministry

Come join our Quilting Ministry!

They meet every 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month downstairs in our fellowship hall from 9:00 am to Noon.

No experience is necessary!

Worship Participants for February

Sunday, February 1st

Reader: Kim Henze

Communion Assistant: Carl Skalitzky

Ushers/Greeter: **Volunteers Needed**

Sunday, February 8th

Reader: **Volunteer Needed**

Communion Assistant: Missy Bredeson

Ushers/Greeter: Jo Odegaard & Gayle Parker

Sunday, February 15th

Reader: Missy Bredeson

Communion Assistant: Deb Sharpee

Ushers/Greeter: Robert & Daniel Mickelson

Sunday, February 22nd

Reader: **Volunteer Needed**

Communion Assistant: **Volunteer Needed**

Ushers/Greeter: Missy Bredeson & Ralph Pulver

****If you are unable to do your assigned date, please find a replacement & let us know.*



February Birthdays

2/1 Brad Mickelson	2/16 Lorre Paulman
2/2 Megan Mickelson	2/17 Annabelle Voubou
2/3 Skylar Rodriguez	2/19 Jody Funches
2/8 Parker Kvalo	2/20 Jeff Henze
2/9 Brenda Lainberger	2/22 Mary Lou Sharpee
2/9 Emma Henze	2/22 Audrey Mickelson
2/12 Alivia Horstmeyer	2/24 Doug Bindrich
2/13 Kelly Mickelson	2/28 Jace Laitinen
2/15 Craig Buske	2/28 Chrissy Pingel

● Church Office

● **Pastor Rick Bursh**

● Church: 608-846-4178

● Cell: 262-475-6407

● rbursh@gmail.com

● ****Please call the church office before you call Pastor Rick's cellphone. Thankyou.*



● **Jenny Achterberg**, Church Office Administrator

● splc1847@gmail.com, 608-846-4178

● **Office hours:** Mon - Thurs 9-2, (may vary)

● **Dave Mickelson** - Treasurer

● **Deb Sharpee** - Financial Secretary

● **Dorie Bindrich** - Asst. Fin. Secretary

● **Doug Bindrich** - Custodian

● **Josh Achterberg** - Cleaning

● **Shirley Clemons** - Funeral Lunches

● Church Council

● **Dan Biddick** - President

● **Julie Johnson (JJ)** - Vice President

● **Gina Lee** - Secretary

● **Josh Achterberg**

● **Kayden Meyer**

● **Laura Pingel**

● **Ralph Pulver**

● **Ami Bliefernicht**

● **Rick Bursh** - Pastor

● ****Ministry Chairs will be decided at the February Council Meeting*

Happy Birthday





February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Worship Service 10:00 am	2	3	4 Bible Study 10 - 11:30 am	5	6 Church Office Closed	7
8 Bagel Breakfast 9:00 am Worship Service 10:00 am	9	10 Church Council Meeting 6:00 pm	11 Bible Study 10 - 11:30 am Confirmation 6:00 - 7:30 pm	12	13 Church Office Closed	14 Quilting Ministry 9:00 am - Noon
15 Worship Service 10:00 am	16	17	18 NO Bible Study Ash Wednesday Service 1pm @ UC Ash Wednesday Service 6pm @ SPLC	19	20 Prairie Coffeehouse w/ Ed Ford 6:00 - 9:00 pm	21
22 Worship Service 10:00 am	23	24	25 Bible Study 10 - 11:30 am Confirmation 6pm Lenten Soup Supper 6pm Worship 7 - 7:30 pm	26	27 Church Office Closed	28 Quilting Ministry 9:00 am - Noon

2026

Spring Prairie Lutheran Church Calendar

Phone: (608) 846-4178

Email: splc1847@gmail.com

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Spring Prairie Lutheran Church
N509 County Highway C
DeForest, WI 53532

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Return Service Requested

growing in faith ... reaching out in love

FEBRUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER



Friday, February 20th

ED FORD
PRAIRIE COFFEEHOUSE

Guiding Principles

- Jesus is Lord
- Everyone is welcome and valued
- We are called to be loving, compassionate, and just
- We strive to forgive, as we are forgiven
- We strive for open, honest, and respectful communication
- We practice faithful stewardship of God's gifts



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.