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DAD OF ALL DADS THE FIRST DAD

June 4, 6, and 7, 2026

Let's begin with something honest. There are moments in caregiving when you feel completely unqualified. You look around and wonder if everyone else received a manual that you somehow missed. Some of you are biological dads. Some are stepdads. Some are grandfathers stepping in. Some are single moms carrying both roles. And some feel like you're barely holding it together. Here's where we start: you are not here by accident. The God who created families is not surprised by yours. The child in your home — or the child who looks to you — is not random. Before you were ever a caregiver, you were called. Called into a relationship with your heavenly Father. Today we meet the First Dad — the One who fathers us before we ever father anyone else.



WELCOME TO ST. PAUL'S – CONNECTION CARD

Thank you for joining us in worship. Please complete a Connection Card, sharing any questions or prayer requests you might have. You can fill out the card online and find other resources by scanning the QR Code.

CHILDCARE EVERY SUNDAY 8:45 – 11:45 am in the Kids hallway to your left as you leave the sanctuary and enter the Commons..

SUNDAY KIDS CLUB FOR 3K – GRADE 5 September – May. Register online at stpaulmuskego.org/kidsclub.

ACCESSIBILITY A hearing loop system and large-print worship folders are available.

QUESTIONS OR NEED ASSISTANCE? Visit the Welcome Center in the Commons where a greeter will be happy to assist.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR GOSPEL MINISTRY You may place your offering in the box in the lobby or scan the QR code to give using Venmo. Thank you for helping us share the peace and joy we have in Jesus.



CONGREGATIONAL HYMN SING

BELLS AND WELCOME

OPENING – RED HYMNAL 238, vv. 1-4

1 Oh, bless the Lord, my soul!
Let all within me join
And aid my tongue to bless his name
Whose favors are divine.

3 'Tis he forgives my sins;
'Tis he relieves my pain;
'Tis he that heals my sicknesses
And makes me young again.

Oh, Bless the Lord, My Soul

2 Oh, bless the Lord, my soul,
Nor let his mercies lie
Forgotten in unthankfulness
And without praises die.

4 He fills the poor with good;
He gives the sufferers rest;
The Lord has judgments for the proud
And justice for th' oppressed.

M The grace of our Lord (†) Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

C **And also with you.**

M We pause today to honor those who care for children— not because we have perfected the role, but because God is the one who calls us to it. Whether we are biological parents, adoptive parents, stepparents, grandparents, spiritual mentors, teachers, or single parents carrying multiple roles—we stand under the same truth:

C **We belong first to our Father in heaven.**

M Before we lead, God leads us. Before we comfort, God comforts us. Before we correct, God has corrected us in grace. We approach him now with honest hearts.

All **Merciful Father, we admit we often fail in our calling to love, guide, and serve. We have been impatient, distracted, and self-centered. We have spoken without listening, corrected without compassion, and neglected those entrusted to our care. We have tried to parent, mentor, and serve in our own strength—and have failed.**

M Hear the good news. God does not call the equipped—he equips the called. Though we fail, our Father never does. Hear his Word: "The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities." (Psalm 103:8–10) "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) Because of Jesus Christ—your perfect Savior, the Son of the perfect Father—your sins are forgiven. You are called. You are equipped. You are loved.

C **Amen. Thanks be to God**

M In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

**His wondrous works and ways
He made by Moses known
But sent the world his truth and grace
By his beloved Son.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M Let us pray.

Almighty God, you are the source of all life, the Creator of heaven and earth, and the Father of all your people.

C **You formed us with care, named us as your own, and called us into relationships of love and service.**

M We confess that we often forget whose children we are. We carry the weight of caregiving as if it rests on us alone.

C **Today, remind us of your fatherhood. Teach us to trust your design. Give us courage to live as image-bearers and caregivers who reflect your love.**

M We pray through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now

C **and forever. Amen.**

FIRST LESSON

Genesis 1:26-31, Bible page 2

God creates humanity in his image, blessing them and calling them to care for creation.

VERSE OF THE DAY

C: Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

These words are writ - ten that we may be - lieve that

Je - sus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

GOSPEL

John 21:15-17, Bible page 1089

Despite Peter's denial on the night his Jesus' arrest, our Savior entrusts him with the task of feeding his sheep.

After the reading of the Gospel, the congregation sings:

C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

CONFESSION OF FAITH

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there 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.

HYMN OF THE DAY – RED HYMNAL 500, vv. 1-3

For Christian Homes, O Lord, We Pray

For Christian homes, O Lord, we pray,
That you might dwell with us each day.
Make ours a place where you are Lord,
Where all is governed by your Word.

We are the children of your grace;
Our homes are now your dwelling-place.
In you we trust and daily live;
Teach us to serve and to forgive.

United in a bond of love,
We lift our eyes to you above.
From you we gain the strength to live,
The wish to share, the joy to give.

SERMON

Genesis 1:26-31, Bible page 2

Pastor Frank Italiano (Thursday and Sunday)

Pastor Pete Panitzke (Saturday)

After the sermon, the congregation sings:

Protect us and our loved ones dear
From pain and sorrow, want and fear;
Yet when we must our burdens bear,
"Your will be done" shall be our prayer.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M Eternal Father, you are the Creator of all life, the One from whom all caregiving flows.

C **Teach us to remember that we are your children first, before we care for anyone else.**

M You have made us in your image—to reflect your love, your truth, and your grace.

C **Strengthen those among us who carry heavy responsibilities—fathers, mothers, guardians, mentors, and spiritual caregivers.**

M Give them wisdom when they feel uncertain, patience when they feel stretched, and hope when they feel inadequate.

C **And remind them that you never leave them to do this alone.**

M We also remember those who have been wounded by caregivers—those who feel abandoned, neglected, or unloved by those who should have protected them.

C **Heal their hearts, Lord. Show them your fatherhood in unexpected places. Let them know they were never forgotten.**

M Bless the relationships you have placed in our care—our children, grandchildren, students, neighbors, and those who call us "dad" or "mom" in name or in spirit.

C **Help us point them not to ourselves, but to you—the First Dad, the perfect Father.**

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

M Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer.

M You created us, called us, and continue to guide us.

C **May we live as people who are loved and sent. Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

CLOSING – RED HYMNAL 501

Our Father, by Whose Name

Our Father, by whose name All fatherhood is known,
In love divine you claim Each fam'ly as your own.
Bless mothers, fathers, guarding well,
With constant love as sentinel,
The homes in which your people dwell.

O Christ, yourself a child Within an earthly home,
With heart still undefiled You did to manhood come.
Our children bless in ev'ry place
That they may all behold your face
And, knowing you, may grow in grace.

O Holy Spirit, bind Our hearts in unity,
And teach us how to find The love from self set free.
In all our hearts such love increase
That ev'ry home by this release
May be the dwelling-place of peace.

CLOSING PRAYER

- M Let us pray.
Lord God, heavenly Father, you formed us with your own hands and called us to care for one another.
- C **We came today feeling unqualified, uncertain, and sometimes overwhelmed.**
- M But you have reminded us: we are not the first caregivers. You are. We are not the source of strength. You are.
- C **So send us back into our homes, our neighborhoods, and our relationships not in our own power—but in yours.**
- M You are with us now and always.
- C **Amen.**

BLESSING

- M The Lord bless you and keep you
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and (†) give you peace.
- C **Amen.**

ST. PAUL'S CONNECTION