

Phone Call Transcript — Pastor Paul Van Noy & [Caller]

Cleaned, formatted, and anonymized. Timestamps are continuous across all segments.

Segment 1 (00:00 – 10:00)

00:00 – 00:40

Pastor Paul Van Noy: Law is not being enforced evenly because the current administration is letting people come through. That leaves us vulnerable. If these people are militias or jihadists preparing for an uprising, we're in serious trouble — potentially facing internal conflict.

00:40 – 01:30

[Caller]: It seems like there needs to be a forensic audit of the sheriff's department and the county — to see where the money is going and whether resources are being used properly, especially if funds are being hidden.

01:30 – 02:25

Pastor Paul Van Noy: I can tell you authoritatively — we are not bringing people here illegally. The sheriff's hands are tied because these individuals aren't proven to be illegal. If an official investigated and found that those questioned all had legal status, that's the kind of limitation we face.

02:25 – 03:20

Pastor Paul Van Noy: The county commissioners control the budget. The sheriff must request funds, and they decide what to approve. If they suspected misappropriation, they would have to order the forensic review.

03:20 – 04:10

Pastor Paul Van Noy: If illegal or unethical activity is happening, it will eventually come to light. But can I ask — are you advocating for Dan Wilson?

04:10 – 05:10

[Caller]: I am. I think there are facts that may not be widely known, and that's why I wanted to talk about this further.

05:10 – 06:00

Pastor Paul Van Noy: My schedule is packed, but what's really needed is a public, mediated debate between the sheriff and Dan.

06:00 – 07:00

Pastor Paul Van Noy: Everyone who knows law knows Dan doesn't; everyone knows the sheriff does. The sheriff may have made statements that raised suspicion, but proving wrongdoing is another matter.

07:00 – 08:00

Pastor Paul Van Noy: If Dan accuses the sheriff, the sheriff can say, "Prove it." If Dan promises to "get rid of all illegals," the sheriff can ask, "How?" and there's no realistic answer. It's like when Trump said Mexico would pay for the wall — we ended up paying for it.

08:00 – 09:00

Pastor Paul Van Noy: Bob Norris isn't a close friend, but he is my friend. We've spoken directly. He's never let me down, and everything I've asked of him, he's done. So he has my support.

09:00 – 10:00

Pastor Paul Van Noy: Every politician meets with me; Dan never has. He sent one short email — that's not how you reach me. In our church, people support both candidates, and I'm letting the chips fall where they may.

Segment 2 (10:00 – 23:00)

10:00 – 10:40

Pastor Paul Van Noy: My voice carries in this community. I'm sure he would have offered to buy me dinner — not just send a quick email with contact info.

10:40 – 11:15

Pastor Paul Van Noy: It was maybe a sentence or two: "This is Dan Wilson. If you'd like to talk about the race, here's my number." I deleted it — no offense.

11:15 – 12:00

[Caller]: Dan recently requested a debate. If a neutral venue was needed, would Candlelight host?

Pastor Paul Van Noy: Probably, yes.

12:00 – 12:50

[Caller]: Not sure how to find a neutral moderator.

Pastor Paul Van Noy: I contacted someone I thought would be neutral. He declined, saying, "Bob is a good, imperfect sheriff, and Dan cannot win — it would be a waste of time."

12:50 – 13:40

Pastor Paul Van Noy: I think the sheriff feels the same way. Bob sees Dan as more of an antagonist than a competitor. Dan's campaign focuses on attacking Bob instead of presenting what he can offer.

13:40 – 14:20

Pastor Paul Van Noy: That approach doesn't encourage dialogue. If someone attacks me publicly, I ignore them. But if they come with respect and reason, I'm open to conversation.

14:20 – 15:10

[Caller]: If both agreed to a debate, could I reach out to you about hosting?

Pastor Paul Van Noy: Yes, but both would have to agree. I haven't asked the sheriff if he'd participate publicly.

15:10 – 16:00

[Caller]: There have been town halls but no structured debate.

Pastor Paul Van Noy: A fair, moderated debate would help the public understand both sides.

16:00 – 17:00

[Caller]: Finding someone neutral would be tough.

Pastor Paul Van Noy: Very. Even someone from outside the county I asked wasn't neutral.

17:00 – 17:40

Pastor Paul Van Noy: He told me, "Bob is your guy — imperfect, but a good sheriff." That surprised me.

17:40 – 18:40

[Caller]: After your upcoming schedule, would you consider a short meeting?

Pastor Paul Van Noy: I'd consider it. I'd want one witness present with legal understanding.

18:40 – 19:30

[Caller]: Someone to mediate or help with questions?

Pastor Paul Van Noy: Exactly. Someone who could clarify what's legal or realistic — I may not know all the laws.

19:30 – 21:00

Pastor Paul Van Noy: For example, Dan's proposal to deputize civilians and build a reserve force isn't legally possible. Every deputy must be insured, and the county would be liable for their actions. It's simply not feasible.

21:00 – 21:50

Pastor Paul Van Noy: Our church spends around \$20,000 a year insuring just 22 staff members. Insuring a force of volunteers would cost hundreds of thousands, if not more.

21:50 – 22:30

[Caller]: You're aware that Bob deputized Commissioner Bruce Matari?

Pastor Paul Van Noy: Yes — and I don't like it. That's a conflict of interest. He's also pulled deputization cards from Spirit Lake PD. I'm friends with those officers and support them, though I'm not sure Bob does.

22:30 – 23:00

Pastor Paul Van Noy: All of that runs deep — politics, relationships, and decisions. It's complicated.

Segment 3 (23:00 – 28:15)

23:00 – 24:00

Pastor Paul Van Noy: I'm in an awkward position. Mike Morland and Eric Reid are members of Candlelight, and I support them fully. There have been big issues between the sheriff's department and Spirit Lake PD. This falls under the category of "Bob has made some mistakes."

24:00 – 24:50

[Caller]: Does Bob attend church locally?

Pastor Paul Van Noy: He doesn't attend Candlelight. He calls me his pastor and often seeks counsel, but we're not close friends — it's a professional relationship. I don't believe either Bob or Dan regularly attend a local church.

24:50 – 25:50

Pastor Paul Van Noy: I've heard that Dan was once evangelical and active in ministry but later felt hurt by the church. My impression is that both men's Christian experience is surface-level; they're on similar footing there.

25:50 – 26:40

[Caller]: How should someone reach out to request a meeting?

Pastor Paul Van Noy: Email me at pastor@candlelight.org and request an hour. You can copy my secretary at liz@candlelight.org as well — she's part-time during summer, so I handle some scheduling directly.

26:40 – 27:30

[Caller]: Understood, I'll follow up if needed.

Pastor Paul Van Noy: That's fine. I care deeply about our community and want what's best for it.

27:30 – 28:15

[Caller]: What are your thoughts on ranked-choice voting?

Pastor Paul Van Noy: You should oppose it. The claim that it "returns the vote to the people" is misleading. It's a process-of-elimination system that can remove good candidates based purely on numbers. It's more democratic than republican in structure and not good for us. Look at who supports it — mainly moderates and Democrats; conservatives understand the risks.