



St. Paul News

May 2023

St. Paul Lutheran Church

*The Lutheran Church -
Missouri Synod*

1050 10th Avenue
Granite Falls, MN 56241

Rev. Jonathan Varns
Pastor

860 11th Ave
Granite Falls, MN 56241
218-235-8493

shepherdofthecross@gmail.com

Church office
320-564-2221

stpaulgf@embarqmail.com
www.stpaulgf.org

Chairman
Brad Christensen
320-981-0014

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of
St. Paul Lutheran Church
is to promote the
worship of the Triune God
as revealed in Holy Scriptures,
by teaching the Gospel of
Jesus Christ and administering
the Sacraments, in order to
equip people for Christian
life and service

Pastor's Message

On occasion, I cross paths with a social media post making the point that a person doesn't need to go to church to be a Christian. For the record, this is not only a tired statement but also a theologically lazy one. The simple Biblical fact is that Christians go to church. God mandates such fellowship. If you disagree, that is, if the Jesus you confess teaches it's okay to be apart from Him and the gifts He gives in holy worship, then you're following a false Christ.

I could go further with this, but I don't want to. As I said, it's a tired and lazy position. There's bunch of Bible verses that refute this claim that you don't have to go to church as a Christian. But I give you something that goes a lot further into the Christian life than worship attendance.

James 1:22-25 "Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing" (James 1:22-25).

Do you know what the "perfect law, the law of liberty" is? Just know that whatever it is, James is not only insisting that we persevere in it but that such determination is somehow born from hearing it and then results in living according to it.

Maybe the best way to figure out what James means is to begin with the words he uses, namely, the word he employs for "perfect." This word is equally translated as "complete." In other words, the completed law—the totally accomplished law—establishes a standard for freedom. Variations of the same word are used in other places throughout God's Word. But there is one crucial instance where it fully intersects with James' understanding of the Law. It happens in John 19:30. It's there the Lord announces from the cross a single word which is typically rendered as "It is finished." Although, it's just as accurately interpreted as "All is complete."

By "perfect law, the law of liberty," James has in mind Christ's absolute fulfillment (completion) of the Law on our behalf. By His work, we have been set free, not only from sin and death but from the Law's crushing burden as the only way of escaping eternal condemnation. In other words, instead of needing to keep the Law for salvation, which all of the apostles affirmed was impossible, we're free to live in and according to it. It becomes a law of liberty, not one of bondage.

James is saying that whoever keeps as one's heading the Gospel of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ—whoever believes and perseveres in it—will become a "doer," someone desiring to keep the Ten Commandments, not for salvation but out of love for Christ. These doers will do. And they will be blessed, not because they're performing the Law, but because they've been set free in Jesus.

cont. on page 5

Items of Interest

Graduates

Our congratulations to the following high school graduates from our congregation: Nolan Hildahl, Brayton Hammer, Logan Hoff, Kyra Kvam, Kaitlyn Luepke, and Katelyn Luepke. There will be a special recognition for our graduating high school seniors following the worship service on May 21st. The congregation is invited to attend.



Church Council

Thank you to Brad Christensen, Dan Enninga, and Jim Rigge for their past service on the council and welcome to our new member Tom Edman. The installation for June 2023 - May 2024 council members will be Sunday, June 4th during the service.

Church Council Members June 2023 - May 2024

Chairman: Larry Cuklanz

Vice Chairman: Open

Secretary: Mary Hammer (1st term/2nd yr)

Treasurer: Anne Brown (2nd term/3rd yr)
(Anne is finishing Theresa Luepke term)

Board of Elders

Mike Brown (1st term/3rd yr)

Dave Guertin (1st term/2nd yr)

Jason Hoff (1st term/3rd yr)

Loren Petersen (1st term/2nd yr)

Gene Stengel (1st term/2nd yr)

Board of Trustees

Tom Edman (1st term/1st yr)

Travis Luepke (1st term/3rd yr)

Dennis Smith (1st term/2nd yr)

May Birthdays

- May 1 Mike Betker, Mark Reinke, Shannon Ryer
- May 2 Sarah Guertin, Kylie Ramirez
- May 3 Norma Just
- May 4 Darlene Reinke
- May 6 Jenelle Donner, Kathy Korhuis, Craig Timm
- May 7 Doug Schmidt Jr, Gene Stengel, Logan Van Sickle
- May 8 Bradley Uttermark
- May 11 Lennon Anderson
- May 12 Pastor Dennis Schultz, David Skjefte
- May 13 Merlin Buchholz, Jim Rigge
- May 14 Ashley Kirschbaum
- May 15 Lucas Canatsey, Nick Hustad, Victoria Patterson
- May 18 Dorian Gatchell, Mason Hegna
- May 20 Andrew Lubrant
- May 21 Noah Christensen, Parker Hjelle, MacKenzie Kotek, Madeline Varns
- May 22 Linda Hildahl, Lisa Ryer, Daphne Timm
- May 23 Danica Anderson
- May 24 Clifford Anderson
- May 25 Laura Betker, Garrett Cunningham, Kyra Kvam
- May 26 Wesley Anderson, Andrew Beyer, Bobbi Reinke
- May 27 Sean Steffen, Lindsey Varns
- May 28 Shirley Hempel
- May 29 Steve Reinke Jr, Carol Rude

Birthday Blessings to you all.

Please contact the church office if we missed yours.



SAC Groups will be our greeters and ushers. If this is your month to serve, please prayerfully consider where you are able to and willing to help.

Group 4

Serving for May

Banken, Jim and Janine
 Baumann, Jayne
 Bruss, Margie
 Canatsey, Kristin
 Donner, Jenelle
 Donner, Jessica
 Ebel, Colton and Emily
 Edman, Tom and Tammy
 Gabbert, Don and Jeanne
 Hildahl, Dan and Valerie
 Holtan, Marie
 Hoyer, Lanny
 Jeseritz, Tanya
 Johnson, Mark
 Keller, Katie
 Kling, Verlyn and Barb
 Kvam, Carrie
 Kvam, Gordon
 Kvam, LeRoy and Debra
 Luepke, Mike and Pam
 Meyer, Greg and Jackie
 Meyer, Larry and Karla
 Petersen, Loren and Marci
 Reese, Tom
 Rude, Odell and Carol
 Schultz, Dennis and Phyllis
 Skjefte, Dave and Val
 Smith, Dennis and Lu-Ann
 Steffen, Kerry and Julie
 Timm, Craig and Susan
 Timm, Daphne
 Timm, Lee
 Twedt, Charles and Kari
 Wilking, Larry
 Yeager, Dave and Darlene

Group 1

Serving for June

Berends, Anthony
 Berends, Chris
 Buchholz, Merlin and Sylvia
 Christensen, Brad and Maria
 Christensen, Rachel
 Doose, Chad
 Doose, Greg and Susan
 Doose, Mike and Kristi
 Erickson, Wes and Sue
 Gabbert, Dennis
 Gatchell, Dorian and Melanie
 Guertin, Dave and Nancy
 Hammer, Nancy
 Hammer, Tracy
 Hempel, Tim and Jody
 Hildahl, Eric and Teresa
 Johnson, Matthew
 Klassen, Jim
 Klassen, Kristin
 Luepke, Travis and Jenn
 Markgraf, Kevin
 Phinney, Katie
 Putnam, Charlie
 Rode, Judy
 Ryer, Lisa
 Ryer, Shannon
 Schulte, Richard and Kelly
 Saab, Tyler and Tara
 Steffen, Don
 Stengel, Gene and Pam
 Stengel, Rob
 Syring, Melodee

LWML Happenings

Thanks to all who contribute to our monthly "Noisy offerings." In April \$150.12 was donated. This money will go toward LWML mission projects.

Sunday, April 23, was the Spring Rally at St. John's in Sparta. Judy Rode, Mary Hammer, Mary Kelly, Nancy Cuklanz and Sue Erickson attended that event. Pastor Kent Borglum and Pastor David Tilney had devotions. Guest speakers were Tim Kohlei and Marvin Garbe informing us about the new VA Manor being built in Montevideo. Our society donated \$25 towards this project. Teresa Klatt, the Regional VP of Lakeland 11, gave a report on the LWML MN North District. 46 members/guests attended this Spring Rally. Everyone enjoyed the Patriotic Theme to honor our veterans and also singing 5 patriotic songs!

The LWML Biennial Convention will be held in Milwaukee from June 22-25. Judy Rode, Mary Hammer and Sue Erickson plan to attend. Watch for the tote in "coat room" to drop off items for "Gifts from the Heart". A list is provided which you may take and shop for items that you'd like to donate. These items will be taken to the Convention.

Our next fund raiser is the Summertime Pie Social. That will be held on Wednesday, July 19. Watch for more information in the summer newsletter and to sign up for food donations and helping for this event.

Boxes or individual greeting cards, including confirmation and graduation, are available for purchase at any time. They are located in the coatroom.

Thanks to Jayne Baumann for organizing the Easter Breakfast this year! It was well attended with about 50 attending.

Vital Statistics

Attendance and Finance Report for April

<u>Date</u>	<u>Attend</u>	<u>Comm</u>	<u>Offering</u>
Sun, Apr 2	62	54	\$3,071.00
Thu, Apr 6	58	51	\$637.00
Fri, Apr 7	54	---	\$651.00
Sun, Apr 9	160	---	\$4,661.00
Sun, Apr 16	46	33	\$465.00
Sun, Apr 23	101	70	\$2,820.00
Sun, Apr 30	N/A		

(2023 Budget Income needed each Sunday - \$3,542.00)

FREE: The runner that was in the back of sanctuary and the one from the narthex are free for your taking. They would make good runners in the garage or shop and can be cut easily to any size. Please see a board member if interested.

Financials as of 4-26-2023

Year to Date Actual Contributions	\$52,326.50
Year to Date Contributions Needed	<u>\$58,804.16</u>
Difference	(\$6,477.66)
Year to Date Actual Expenses	\$65,702.15
Year to Date Budgeted Expenses	<u>\$58,804.16</u>
Difference	(\$6,897.99)

St. Paul Lutheran Church
Quarterly Voter's Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2023

(Covers period from Dec 11 to present.)

1. Meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman, Larry Cuklanz with 32 members in attendance.
2. Opening prayer led by Pastor Varns.
3. Minutes from December's meeting were reviewed. Motion made to approve by Jim Rigge, 2nd by Jim Wegner. Motion passed.
4. Financial/Designated reports from February were reviewed with no additions/corrections noted.
 - There was a question on our Thrivent dollars and what to use these for. Explanation by Anne that it is used for whatever we need to cover expenses as approved by Council.
 - Noted that insurance has increased. Insurance for others has risen also.
 - Questions raised on the West Entrance. This is for a vehicle drive up proposal and is on hold waiting for an estimate from Fagen's.
 - The front Brick Planter: Kerry Steffen had information from Don Hempel that there is about 40 bricks saved in the shed for the front planter so it can be repaired. Kerry will share this information with Avis Freitag and Paul Hinz who donated for this planter.
 - Men's Choir money is \$110 and there is no Men's Choir at present. Phyllis made a motion to move this money to the General Fund. Molly Hoff 2nd the motion. Motion carried.
 - Anne noted we exceeded the snow budget at this time. Hopefully, no more huge snowstorms! In the new budget next year, the snow removal will move from lay people to actual maintenance.

Motion made to approve the Financial/Designated reports by Mike and 2nd by Jayne. Motion passed.

5. Pastoral Report

- Regular activities - Sunday morning worship service, recorded, edited, and uploaded; Sunday morning Bible Study, Monday morning 8:00 am men's Bible Study, Thursday morning 9:30 am women's Bible Study, Midweek and confirmation classes 5 pm to 8 pm, pastoral homebound visitations.
- Irregular activities: Christmas services and Lenten midweek services at 6 pm Wednesdays, funeral for Don Hempel.
- Confirmation this year has only one student, Dane Hildahl. He will be confirmed when he is ready due to some absences this month. This will be possible sometime this summer.

6. Membership Report

- Death: Donald Hempel died February 20, 2023 – funeral March 2, 2023.

7. Board and Committee Reports

7.1 Board of Elders

- Ash Wednesday Service February 22 was cancelled due to weather.
- Cancelled service on Sunday March 5 due to Pastor's illness.
- Last Tuesday's Council meeting, March 14 was cancelled due to another snowstorm.
- Midweek Lenten service at 6 pm
- Maundy Thursday - April 6 at 7 pm, Good Friday - Apr 7 at 7 pm, and Easter Sunday - Apr 9 at 9:30 am

7.2 Board of Trustees

- Dishwasher drain is good.
- Bathroom floor drains have been cleaned out.
- Exit light by kitchen entrance. Trustees will see if one is even needed, and Carol Gabbert mentioned there are glow-in-the dark signs available. This might be an option as the wiring for the light was used for the push button entrance.
- Dan E, Dennis S, Gene S, Travis L, & Pastor were acknowledged and thanked for all their work on the stripping and waxing of the floors in the back of the church, narthex, and Parish Hall.
- Jim W. said that the light bulb by the sidewalk needs replacing.

7.3 Special committees

- SAC – Nancy Cuklanz and Carol Podratz have agreed to take on the duties of setting up for funerals, finding workers, and ordering food. Request was made for people to step up for events coming up, such as Easter Breakfast rather than having one person responsible for SAC. A big thank you from the Council to the ladies working for Don Hempel's funeral.

8. Old Business

- Registered voters Larry C. and Pastor have been approved for the Synodical voting for President. This is done every three years.
- Kerry S. commented on the landscape project for the courtyard. A new water meter will be needed, and that is an extra expense we are planning for. \$8,000 has been pledged but he would like to get another \$2,000. A plaque was mentioned for the courtyard for money given/memorials. This can be done for a part of it, such as benches, trees, but not for the whole project.

9. New Business

- Election for open council positions: Vice Chairman, Elder, Trustee and Secretary. (These jobs according to Larry, do not take lots of time.) No nominations for Vice Chair. Elder Jim Rigge is going off and no candidate for this position so there will be only 5 Elders. Trustee Dan Enninga is going off. Tom Edman has volunteered for Trustee. Motion made to approve Tom was made by Dan E and 2nd by Dorothy Ims, motion approved. Secretary Mary will be continuing. If anyone is interested in any of the open positions, they can contact either Larry or Brad.
- Training for the new AED. The council will watch the DVD that came with the new AED at an upcoming meeting and then show it to those interested after church at fellowship.
- Jim Rigge made a motion to accept, 2nd by Jim Wegner, motion passed to make the yearly donation of \$600 to missionary Rev Jastram. This will come out of Thrivent Choice.
- Don Hempel family is looking for ideas for the memorial money. Ideas given were for the courtyard expenses, secretary's office cabinets and desk, benches for the courtyard, or funding for the west entrance and Anne mentioned it could be also unrestricted. Pastor will relay this information to Shirley.
- 125th Anniversary planning (100th was July 1999). Speaker needs to be contacted early, also a possible pictorial directory. Members for the committee so far are Sue Erickson, LuAnn O., Judy Rode, Pastor Varns, and also Joyce Cruser is interested.
- Paper Shredder truck planned for Sept 9 from 9-12. Thrivent is covering the \$1,000 fee for it. We're planning for an hour just for St. Paul members and then opening it to the public. They won't come weekdays; only Saturdays from 9-12. Phyllis, Jayne, Kathy E., Mary H., and LuAnn volunteered to be on a committee to go through the safe and see what should be kept or shredded.

10. Announcements

- Next Board of Elders and Council meetings – Tue, April 11th
- Next Quarterly Voter's meeting Sunday Jun 25 at 10:45 am

Motion made to adjourn by Jim W., 2nd by Rolland. Motion approved.

Close with the Lord's Prayer and the common table prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Hammer, Secretary

(Unapproved by the Voter's - ok'd to publish by Church Council)

cont. from page 1

This freedom moves them to desire faithfulness to Him. Faithfulness results in works. This is why James goes on the say: "What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." (James 2:14-18)

James' point here is that saying you have faith is not the same as a faith that compels you to love and service. So it's not about just saying you have faith. It's about "doing" your faith also. But not for salvation. "Doing" instead as a result of your faith. Luther catches onto this when he says: "God does not need your good works. Your neighbor does."

So back to the original question: Do you have to go to church to be a Christian? How about this instead: genuine faith moves a Christian to desire to be in worship with his Lord.

+God's Peace+

Pastor Jonathan Varns

Daily Bible Readings for May

<u>Day</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Morning Study</u>	<u>Evening Study</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Morning Study</u>	<u>Evening Study</u>
May	1	I Kings 1,2	Luke 22:54-71	May	17	II Kings 18,19	John 6:22-44
May	2	I Kings 3,4,5	Luke 23:1-26	May	18	II Kings 20-22	John 6:45-71
May	3	I Kings 6,7	Luke 23:27-38	May	19	II Kings 23-25	John 7:1-31
May	4	I Kings 8,9	Luke 23:39-56	May	20	I Chron. 1,2	John 7:32-53
May	5	I Kings 10,11	Luke 24:1-35	May	21	I Chron. 3-5	John 8:1-20
May	6	I Kings 12,13	Luke 24:36-53	May	22	I Chron. 6,7	John 8:21-36
May	7	I Kings 14,15	John 1:1-28	May	23	I Chron. 8-10	John 8:37-59
May	8	I Kings 16-18	John 1:29-51	May	24	I Chron. 11-13	John 9:1-23
May	9	I Kings 19,20	John 2	May	25	I Chron. 14-16	John 9:24-41
May	10	I Kings 21,22	John 3:1-21	May	26	I Chron. 17-19	John 10:1-21
May	11	II Kings 1-3	John 3:22-36	May	27	I Chron. 20-22	John 10:22-42
May	12	II Kings 4,5	John 4:1-30	May	28	I Chron. 23-25	John 11:1-17
May	13	II Kings 6-8	John 4:31-54	May	29	I Chron. 26,27	John 11:18-46
May	14	II Kings 9-11	John 5:1-24	May	30	I Chron. 28,29	John 11:47-57
May	15	II Kings 12-14	John 5:25-47	May	31	II Chron. 1-3	John 12:1-19
May	16	II Kings 15-17	John 6:1-21				

Our thanks to those who donated a flower for the Easter garden.

Mike and Anne Brown in memory of loved ones

Merlin and Sylvia Buchholz in memory of loved ones

Larry and Nancy Cuklanz in memory of loved ones

Tammy Edman in memory of Orwell and Ruth Podoll

Wes and Sue Erickson in memory of loved ones

Marlue Folkens in memory of loved ones

Avis Freitag in memory of my Mom and Dad

Mary Hammer in memory of Merle and our parents

Jason and Molly Hoff in memory of loved ones

Dorothy Ims in memory of Paul Ims and others

Mary Kelly in memory of Barb Benson

Ken and Carol Podratz in memory of our parents

Pastor and Phyllis Schultz in memory of our parent

Valerie Skjefte in memory of Calvin and Harriet Ulferts

Al Timm in memory of Mavis Timm and Curt Timm

Jim and Eileen Wegner in memory of loved ones

