



St. Paul News

February 2025

St. Paul Lutheran Church

***The Lutheran Church -
Missouri Synod***

**1050 10th Avenue
Granite Falls, MN 56241**

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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

Brothers and sisters in Christ at St. Paul, I count it a blessing from God that I am able to return to Granite Falls to serve as your vacancy pastor. In the newsletters, I wish to share with you some of the teachings of our church as I did six years ago. However, in this newsletter, I want to share with you my view of the office of "vacancy pastor." In the February 2019 issue of the Lutheran Witness, an article was written about me entitled, "The Blessing of the Vacancy Pastor." I am still a little uncomfortable about that title. Vacancy pastors may be a blessing to the Church, but I consider it a blessing of God to be able to serve the Church. So I want to share with you in this newsletter the contents of that Lutheran Witness article which I have hanging in my office as a reminder of how blessed I've been by God to be able to serve.

"Most articles in this part of the Lutheran Witness are submitted by members of congregations and organizations that wish to highlight something that the Lord is doing in their settings. The information presented in this article was requested by the editor to try to highlight a part of how the Lord does His work in our Minnesota North District. When the called pastor is absent from the congregation for a brief time, for vacation, or when a congregation's pastoral office is vacant, someone is needed to fill in.

We are blessed with men who help out in these times. Typically, they are men who have retired from full-time ministry or are at the moment without a call. Rev. Don Polege is one of the men who serves the church in this capacity in our district, and has done so since he retired in May 2012. He has served six churches, (currently sixteen in his ministry), in times of pastoral vacancy. He has also served in 17 churches, (currently over twenty in his ministry) by preaching and leading worship (often called pulpit supply) when the called pastor was absent.

What is that like? Polege noted that while each congregation has its own specific traditions and worship spaces, the liturgical order of our churches maintains a similarity among them. Particularly, when just filling in for one Sunday, there is a challenge of not really knowing the people that one is trying to minister to. Polege tries to use time before and after service to get to know the people he is with each week. When called to serve in a vacancy, the situation is different. 'In a vacancy, the pastor has the opportunity to develop a pastoral relationship with the members and determine much better their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, Polege said.'

Polege stated that he feels much better able to serve the people the more he gets to know them. However, he knows that the Spirit will do His work right from the beginning. The Scriptures are meant for all people and apply to all equally. Therefore, God's work is done even when the pastor does not yet know well the lives of the members. Vacancy pastors typically end up involved in many of the same areas of congregational life that the called pastor would. Polege noted that he personally enjoys getting to preach and teach the faith to all ages and in all settings of pastoral ministry. Serving in this way does mean being gone from one's home congregation quite often and can mean always being away from one's family as well. Polege's wife remains very active in their home congregation but does travel at times with him when he is standing in the pulpit.

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Items of Interest

Lent

Lent is a season of preparation leading up to Easter. It is the forty days plus the six Sundays before Easter. For centuries, it has been observed as a special time of self-examination and penitence. Lent is a time to recognize what we truly need, and to prepare for the joy of Easter. It is NOT a time to punish ourselves.

Pastor Dave Tilney from St Luke Lutheran, Wood Lake will be leading the Midweek Lenten Services on **Thursday** evenings and Pastor Don Polege will be doing Holy Week.

LWML News

Thanks to all who contribute to the "Mite Box" and to the monthly "Noisy offerings". In January \$20 was donated and this money will go toward LWML mission projects.

On January 20, twelve of our LWML members came to our quarterly meeting in spite of it being 11 below outside! The Spring Rally will be held on Sunday, April 27 at Nicolai in Canby. The theme is "Grace in God's Garden". Registration will begin at 1:30 with a \$5 registration fee. Watch for flyer to be posted on our bulletin board soon.

Mary Hammer will again be heading up a fund raiser with the "Go, Set, Ready" coffee sales. Watch for information in the bulletin this spring. Sue Erickson has a Thrivent Card to get supplies to repair our hymnals that need new ribbons. If you would like to help with this project, please contact Sue.

The LWML Convention is in Omaha from June 26-29. A bus will transport those from MN North and also members from ND will be riding with us. Judy R, Mary H and Sue E plan on attending. Let them know if you'd like to attend this uplifting experience!

The executive board decided that the fundraiser that is usually held on Ash Wednesday will be held on Sunday, March 2 this year. More details will be found in upcoming bulletins. We will also have an Easter breakfast before our Easter service on April 20.

The Blood Mobile food volunteers this past January were: Soups by Judy R and Sue E, veggies by Nancy G and brownies and crackers by Mary H. Thanks for your help!

On July 27 at 2:00 at St. Paul in Montevideo, there will be a planning meeting for the Fall 2025 Regional LWML Rally. The Montevideo Zone will be hosting it this year. This event will be held in October. More information to follow.

February Birthdays

Feb 2	Anne Johnson
Feb 3	Michelle Guza
Feb 5	Maddison Johnson Jasmine Petersen Jennifer Schmidt
Feb 6	Bentley Krueger David Skjefte Jr Eileen Wegner
Feb 8	Carley Redepenning
Feb 11	James Ryer Jerrad Ryer Kerry Steffen
Feb 13	Tammy Edman Lucas Granfors
Feb 14	Joseph Anderson Heath Kirschbaum Cheyanne Schmidt
Feb 15	Chase Kernnitz
Feb 20	Gage DeVries
Feb 22	Seantae Read
Feb 23	Kathy Johnson Jan Peterson
Feb 24	Preston Berends
Feb 26	Allen Stengel
Feb 27	Katie Phinney Lennox Stengel
Feb 28	Donna Hustad
Feb 29	Jackson Staab

Birthday Blessings to you all.

Please contact the church office if we missed yours.

Snow Policy

If Sunday Worship Service is cancelled, all other events for the day are also cancelled. If YME School classes are cancelled due to the weather, all church events for that day are also cancelled. The closing can be heard on KMGM-FM (105.5), KKRC-FM (93.9), KDMA-AM (1460) and also will be posted on Facebook. In regards to worship services during the winter season, please remember to **use your best judgment** in terms of going out in wintry weather. If it is unsafe for you to be out (even in your own driveway), don't go out. Although Pastor is glad to visit you in the hospital, he would rather visit you in your home! So, be safe; missing church due to weather is not an offense to God; remember how much he cares for you too.

SAC Group 3 will be our greeters and ushers for February. Please prayerfully consider where you are able to and willing to help.

- Baker, Lisa
- Cuklanz, Larry and Nancy
- Duenwald, Karley
- Freitag, Avis
- Gabbert, Carol
- Galow, DuWayne and Karen
- Hegna, Rolland and RaeAnn
- Hewitt, Loretta
- Hildahl, Linda
- Hoff, Jason and Molly
- Ims, Dorothy
- Iverson, Pam
- Johnson, Jennifer
- Just, Wes and Norma
- Kelly, Mary
- Kvam, Curtis
- Nelson, Carol
- Olson, LuAnn
- Peterson, LeRoy and Jan
- Quintal, Teresa
- Reinke, Darlene
- Rigge, Anita
- Rush, Barb
- Schmidt, Deven and Jill
- Schmidt, Douglas Jr. and Darla
- Steffen, Boyd
- Streich, Eugene
- Streich, Linda
- Trotter, Donnie and Jodi
- Ulven, Lorna
- Van Sickle, Eric and Jane
- Winters, Kelly

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The church is blessed by men like Polege, who are willing to continue serving and sacrificing time at home and in their congregation to serve our congregations when the called pastor is not present. Polege shared one particular blessing he had recently when a grieving widow expressed her thanks to him. 'She told me that my sermon had completely changed her outlook on life to a comforting and happy one,' he said, "I told her that I didn't deserve the credit and that God was speaking to her through my words, assuring her of a joyous reunion in heaven."

While there are many challenges in doing this type of work, it always has its particular blessings as well. This type of work allows those serving in it to see the true nature of the body of Christ – which extends way beyond congregational lines – more fully than for others who are in the same congregation week after week. Polege said of those he has been blessed to serve: 'They are my brothers and sisters in Christ. Just as I enjoy being with my biological family, I enjoy being with my spiritual family and leading them in worship.' God's people should always remain thankful for men like Polege. May God sustain them in their service."

May God bless you always,
Rev. Donald Polege



Daily Bible Readings for February

Feb 1	Genesis 41 Psalm 32 Luke 23:1–25	Feb 8	Genesis 49–50 Psalm 39 Heb. 4:14–6:12	Feb 15	Exodus 13–14 Proverbs 5 Hebrews 11:1–22	Feb 22	Exodus 25–27 Proverbs 12 Matthew 4
Feb 2	Genesis 42 Psalm 33 Luke 23:26–56	Feb 9	Exodus 1–2 Psalm 40 Hebrews 6:13–20	Feb 16	Exodus 15 Proverbs 6:1–7:5 Hebrews 11:23–40	Feb 23	Exodus 28–29 Proverbs 13 Matthew 5:1–20
Feb 3	Genesis 43 Psalm 34 Luke 24:1–12	Feb 10	Exodus 3–4 Psalm 41 Hebrews 7	Feb 17	Exodus 16–17 Proverbs 7:6–27 Hebrews 12	Feb 24	Exodus 30–32 Proverbs 14 Matthew 5:21–48
Feb 4	Genesis 44 Psalm 35 Luke 24:13–53	Feb 11	Exodus 5:1–6:27 Proverbs 1 Hebrews 8	Feb 18	Exodus 18–19 Proverbs 8 Hebrews 13	Feb 25	Exodus 33–34 Proverbs 15 Matthew 6:1–18
Feb 5	Gen. 45:1–46:27 Psalm 36 Hebrews 1	Feb 12	Exodus 6:28–8:32 Proverbs 2 Hebrews 9:1–22	Feb 19	Exodus 20–21 Proverbs 9 Matthew 1	Feb 26	Exodus 35–36 Proverbs 16 Matthew 6:19–34
Feb 6	Gen. 46:28–47:31 Psalm 37 Hebrews 2	Feb 13	Exodus 9:10 Proverbs 3 Heb. 9:23–10:18	Feb 20	Exodus 22–23 Proverbs 10 Matthew 2	Feb 27	Exodus 37–38 Proverbs 17 Matthew 7
Feb 7	Genesis 48 Psalm 38 Hebrews 3:1–4:13	Feb 14	Exodus 11–12 Proverbs 4 Hebrews 10:19–39	Feb 21	Exodus 24 Proverbs 11 Matthew 3	Feb 28	Exodus 39–40 Proverbs 18 Matthew 8:1–13

St. Paul Lutheran Church
Quarterly Voter's Meeting Minutes
December 15, 2024

(Covers period from Sept 15 to present.)

1. Meeting to order by Chairman DuWayne Galow, 50 members were in attendance.
2. Opening prayer led by Pastor Dennis Schultz
3. Minutes from the September meeting were reviewed. Motion to approve by Carol Podratz, 2nd by Jim Rigge. Motion passed.
4. Financial Report from Nov and Sept to Nov Designated Projects
 - From the Thrivent fund, \$13,000 was transferred to pay bills. Currently, the Thrivent fund is at \$1,171.11.
 - There was \$3200 donated to the 125th Anniversary Fund and it was not needed for that and, as requested, this was put in the General Fund.
 - The Anonymous donation of \$13,000, \$3,000 requested into the Altar Guild fund for new paraments and \$10,000 to Missions.
 - The West Entrance project has been discontinued. A donor family has requested that \$500 go to the General Fund and \$500 go back to them. The second donors have not decided on their donation.
 - As noted by our treasurer, by passing the offering plate loose offering amounts are up about 50% over leaving a plate at the back of the sanctuary.

Motion to approve by Jim Wegner, 2nd by Dave Guertin. Motion passed.

5. Membership Report

- Baptisms: Willow Jo Walls born January 8, 2024 – baptized October 6, 2024
Everly Ann Lindstrom born September 1, 2024 – baptized October 27, 2024
Kepler Jon Anderson born September 18, 2024 – baptized November 24, 2024
- Transferred out: Gene and Pam Stengel to St John's Montevideo, MN
Pastor Jonathan Varns and family to Zion Lutheran, Browns Valley, MN
Craig Baumann to Redeemer Lutheran, Dickenson, ND
- Released: Travis and Jenn Luepke and children Kaitelyn and Mason to Living Word
Lutheran Church, Marshall, MN
Jayne Bauman
Mike and Anne Brown
Paden Strutz
Loren and Marci Petersen and family Tom, Noah, Jasmine
Dennis and Lu-Ann Smith

6. Board and Committee Reports

6.1 Board of Elders

- Larry Cuklanz reported there was no Elders meeting last month.
- Resignations received from Mike Brown, Loren Petersen, and Gene Stengel.

6.2 Board of Trustees

- Resignation of Dennis Smith
- Carol Gabbert reported for Tom Edman, who is ill today. It is noted that a claim is in for hail damage to the church roof this fall with The Glacier Companies.

6.3 Special committees

- 2025 Proposed Budget presented by Carol Gabbert.
 - a. Pastor's salary: the budget committee went from District guidelines to make this. From a pastor with a 4-year degree & a 4 year with a master's degree and estimated from there for the noted amount.
 - b. We'll have higher mileage with Pastor Polege while he is here as interim. Options for housing for him were presented. Possibilities are Merlin & Sylvia Buchholz's,

- c. DuWayne and Karen Galow's, or the Scenic Valley Motel. Benefits are 20% of the salary, typically.
- d. There is an increase for secretary and organist.
- e. Janitor: money will be put into account, and we are looking into a local cleaning company or volunteers. Also, an outdoor yardman.
- f. Vacation Bible School: Lutheran Island Camp does not do VBS anymore, but we can do it ourselves.
- g. Natural gas: planned for an increase.
- h. Insurance: Property insurance is increasing. Our deductible will go from \$1,000 to \$5,000. Our insurance policy is up for renewal in February and Tom Edman, trustee, is looking into rates locally.
- i. MN North District-Synod, Missions is decreasing from \$12,000 to \$6,000. Our income is behind and this year we had non typical sources such as our 125th Anniversary donation and our Thrivent funding. This time of year, we must pledge to MN North for the year. We can also give more at any time if we have the funds.
Motion by Brad Christensen to approve 2025 Budget, 2nd by Jim. Approved
- The audit committee to review 2024 Financials are Mary Kelly, Sue Erickson, and Kathy Enninga.

Motion to approve committee reports made by Jim R.; 2nd by Cindy R. Motion passed.

7. Old Business

- Volunteers to update "Guidelines for Using Parish Hall." are Nancy C., Sue E., & Phyllis S.

8. New Business

- Pastor Varns accepted the call to Zion Lutheran Churches in Browns Valley, MN and Claire City, SD. His last service was December 1st. Pastor Dennis Schultz will fill in for December and Pastor Don Polege will be our vacancy pastor starting January.
- MN North District Convention is February 23-25th, 2025 in Grand Rapids, MN. St. Paul gets 1 pastoral delegate and 1 lay delegate. Please talk the Pastor Polege in January.
- Election for open council positions:
 - a. Jim Rigge resigned as Vice Chairman. Motion to accept Jim's resignation made by Mary K, 2nd by Kathy Enninga. Motion passed. Brad Christensen volunteered to serve as the Vice Chair position. Motion to approve by Tyler Staab, 2nd Nancy Guertin. Motion approved
 - a. Several Elder positions are needed. Dave Yeager, Jim Rigge, Dave Guertin and Jason Hoff for the 5-month term volunteered for Elders. Motion to accept by Phyllis S., 2nd by LuAnn. Motion passed.
 - b. Trustees: Otto Luepke and Tyler Staab volunteered to serve. Motion made to accept by Nancy Guertin, 2nd by Kathy Enninga. Motion passed.
- 125th Anniversary loose offering of \$327 will be moved to the General fund. Motion by Avis, 2nd by Jim W. Motion passed.
- Common cup for communion: Discussion on communion every week or twice a month. Altar Guild is having difficulty getting people to serve every week for the entire month. It was for COVID this was started in the first place. Cody O. spoke up on the common cup continuing. LCMS guidelines accept either common or individual cup. It is a Congregational decision. Kristin Canatsey, nurse, doesn't recommend common cup due to germs passing. When Pastor Varns started it, there was no congregational discussion. It was just done as an option. Voters chose to vote by paper ballot on this issue and the vote was to discontinue the common cup. It was accepted and approved.
- As to the number of times communion would be offered monthly the congregational approval was requested. Voting by ballot. Results were 28, no and 20, yes. "No" is not having communion every Sunday. Since it was relatively close, it is noted that our Bylaws state decisions are made by 3/5th of the people at a properly held meeting. Note: this will start in January 2025. (As previously planned by Pastor's Schultz and Polege, there will be no communion in December the next two Sundays.

- A letter was received from Pastor Finnern, President of MN North. Dave Guertin read it regarding an apology for the lateness in getting back to us. Finnern requests a couple visits to finish the process with Pastor Varns first and then to help with the new pastoral call. The delay was in waiting for Varns to make his decision. The group was told not to share any information with the congregation during this time. Dave made an apology for this, but we followed what we were told by the district. Jackie Janiszkeski asked for the procedure on complaints for anything. She indicated the congregation was not informed and says there should be more information shared with all. It was mentioned that the Council should be contacted with questions, either at a meeting or individually. Anyone can attend Council meetings.

9. Announcements

- Board of Elders and Council meetings are Jan 14

Motion to adjourn and closed with the Lord's Prayer and Dinner Prayer

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Hammer

Council Notice

At the upcoming March Quarterly Voter's meeting we will be holding election for open positions on the board. They are for vice chairman, secretary, Elders, and a trustee. If you would like one of these positions or know of someone please let one of the Elders know. Also we are looking for a janitor and an outdoor person (these are paid positions) please contact Tom Edman.

Financials as of 1-28-2025

Year to Date Actual Contributions	\$8,573.72
Year to Date Contributions Needed	<u>\$14,168.83</u>
Difference	(\$5,595.11)
Year to Date Actual Expenses	\$14,084.45
Year to Date Budgeted Expenses	<u>\$14,168.83</u>
Difference	\$84.38

Vital Statistics

Attendance and Offering Report for January

<u>Date</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Offering</u>
Sun, Jan 5	57	\$3,777.00
Sun, Jan 12	48	\$1,362.00
Sun, Jan 19	50	\$1,695.00
Sun, Jan 26	63	\$1,405.00

2025 Budget Income needed each Sunday - \$3,270.00)



February Acolytes

Sunday 2	James Luepke
Sunday 9	Lucas Canatsey
Sunday 16	Madelynn Staab
Sunday 23	Sara Canatsey

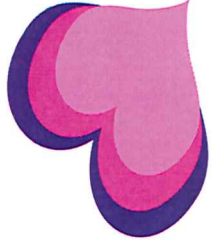
LWML Meal

Sunday, March 2, 2025

11 am - 12:30 pm

Menu will be a variety of soups,
breadsticks, desserts, and beverage.

Free-will offering with a portion of
proceeds going to the
California wildfire victims.



FEBRUARY

2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<u>Acolytes</u> Sunday 2 James Luepke Sunday 9 Lucas Canatsey Sunday 16 Madelynn Staab Sunday 23 Sara Canatsey	<u>Elders</u> Dave Guertin and Jim Rigge	<u>Altar Guild</u> Mary Kelly and Carol Podratz				1
2 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Time 10:45 am K-3rd gr Sunday School 11 am Adult Bible Class 1 pm Confirmation Class	3	4	5 6 pm Handbell Practice 7 pm Mixed Choir Practice	6 9 am Bldg Bridges Choir 1:30 pm Bible Study	7	8
9 9:30 am Communion Service 10:30 am Coffee Time 10:45 am K-3rd gr Sunday School 11 am Adult Bible Class 1 pm Confirmation Class	10	11 6 pm Board of Elders 7 pm Church Council	12 6 pm Handbell Practice 7 pm Mixed Choir Practice	13 9 am Bldg Bridges Choir 1:30 pm Bible Study	14	15
16 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Time 10:45 am K-3rd gr Sunday School 11 am Adult Bible Class 1 pm Confirmation Class	17	18	19 6 pm Handbell Practice 7 pm Mixed Choir Practice	20 9 am Bldg Bridges Choir 1:30 pm Bible Study	21 Newsletter Articles Due	22
23 9:30 am Communion Service 10:30 am Coffee Time 10:45 am K-3rd gr Sunday School 11 am Adult Bible Class 1 pm Confirmation Class	24	25 St. Paul Lutheran Church delivers	26 6 pm Handbell Practice 7 pm Mixed Choir Practice	27 9 am Bldg Bridges Choir 1:30 pm Bible Study	28	