

# 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St. Paul Lutheran Church

621 West Main Street, Pipestone, MN

Still Faithful in the Word | 1892 – 2017

## Introduction

Our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary theme: “Still Faithful in the Word!” tells us that Jesus comes to us through the Word. By this life-giving Word, centered in the cross of Jesus Christ, God has touched our lives and recreated us into His redeemed and believing children. In other words, God is the One doing the action of saving us. We are simply the recipients of His grace and mercies and respond to His unconditional love by faith with acts of mercy that are directed toward our neighbor.

The founders of St. Paul Lutheran Church held to the expectation that the pastors of our congregation will faithfully proclaim the Word of God and administer the Sacraments according to Christ’s institution. Much like our ancestors, we realize that we also must hold to this expectation and search the Scriptures with the greatest intent and test with the Holy Bible and the Lutheran Confessions all that our spiritual leaders teach so that that which is taught in our church family is in agreement with them.

It is by the Word and sacraments of Christ that we are blest as a Lutheran congregation and the hope of eternal life is sustained in our hearts. By using these means, the Spirit enables us to believe in Christ and share the Good News of Christ in all of our ministries as well as in our daily callings as His disciples.

As one looks back at previous histories of our congregation, we see that our short history of 125 years is one of an imperfect people who realized by faith that they have a perfect Savior who loves them perfectly and who forgives their sins completely. The common thread of our life together at St. Paul has always been tied to the Good News of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. His Story which is one of a crown of thorns, a rugged cross, nail-pierced hands and feet, a gaping hole in His side, and a tomb that could not hold Him in its icy grip of death has forever changed our story for the better and enables us to declare it to others and look forward to the future with hope as His redeemed and forgiven people.

Visitors will discover soon that the gospel of our Savior finds a prominent spot in all the ministries of our congregation. It is the very means by which God the Spirit creates, sustains, and nourishes our faith in Christ and equips us for acts of mercy that benefit our neighbor and give glory to our Father in heaven.

Rejoice in your Lord Jesus Christ with us on this day of celebration and know by His grace through faith in Christ that God is Still Faithful in the Word!

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## A Brief Synopsis of the Past 125 Years at St. Paul Lutheran Church

What follows in the pages below is a list of servants and a list of acts that God performed as His story of redemption in Christ was shared by them at this place. You will also find in the pages below pictures of these humble servants who were not ashamed of the cross of Christ. Many of them have received their crown of glory and now dwell in heaven. Others are still in their earthly pilgrimage and look forward to their heavenly home with longing eyes of faith. You will not find, however, faded pictures or read lists of acts by the majority of the members of St. Paul Lutheran Church – the men, women, and children who bowed their knee before Christ, worshiped Him in this House of Prayer, and called it their home – for

they are not listed in our 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service of Celebration folder. Yet we want you to know that their names and faces are known to God and, yes, they are held warmly in our hearts as brothers and sisters of Christ. It is because of them, along with their sacrifices and service to Christ, and that of our professional church workers, that we still gather in this place known to us as St. Paul Lutheran Church in AD 2017 to hear the glorious news of Jesus' cross, baptize our babies, confirm our youth and adult confirmands, grow in our faith and knowledge of Christ, feed on His body and blood in Holy Communion, live as Easter Christians, study His Word, do acts of mercy in this fallen world, and intentionally share the hope of God's forgiveness and tell of His gifts of life and everlasting salvation.

Above all, we proclaim the deeds of the Lord of the Church at St. Paul Lutheran Church. He alone is the One who made possible these 125 years of ministry at this place in Pipestone, MN.

We hope you will enjoy this brief synopsis of the past 125 years. We also invite you to regularly join us in worshiping the Lord at this place and join us in telling everyone what He has done, for "Christ is Still Faithful in the Word!" And this, my Christian friends, is something for us to declare from the house tops!

*"If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples,  
and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:31–32).*

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## **Pastors and Lay Workers of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Pipestone, Minnesota**

### *Pastors of the Congregation*

**H. C. Brinkman (1892-1894)** served as missionary-at-large to Luverne, Hardwick, Jasper, and Pipestone from 1890–1894. Under his guidance, a group of ten organized our congregation on June 5, 1892.

**H. B. Kohlmeier (1894-1899)** was called to serve the congregations in Jasper and Pipestone. He was furnished with a buggy, a harness for the horse and a fur coat by the District Mission Bd. He started mission stations at Trosky, Woodstock, Cazenovia, and Edgerton.

**H. C. Siegert (1899-1902)** served Pipestone, Woodstock, Lake Wilson and Cazenovia. He borrowed \$600 from his family to purchase lots on West Main Street, where our church building sits, and our first church structure was constructed in 1899.

**W. G. Bernreuther (1902-1906)**, while serving in Pipestone, obtained a pulpit and altar for our congregation from a sister church in NE.

**William Becker (1906-1912)** served three congregations (Pipestone, Cazenovia and Woodstock) and was noted throughout the synod for his knowledge of the Hebrew language and his commentary on Psalms.

**Herman Bohnhoff (1912-1923)** introduced English language services in the congregation and oversaw two additions to the church structure. During his tenure, the congregation officially joined the LCMS and the Young People's Society became part of the Walther League.

**J. C. Steinmeyer (1923-1955)** has the longest pastorate at St. Paul. The current church building was constructed during his tenure, the membership expanded numerically, mission services became an important part in the life of the church, a history of our first 45 years was written, and a parish worker

served along side of him in our congregation. After his resignation, a group from our church family formed a sister-congregation, Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Pipestone.

**Clarence Langhans (1955-1959)** served as a healing bridge after the long tenure of the previous pastorate. Boys of confirmation age served as acolytes, the Order of Matins was introduced to the congregation, and plans for expanding our facilities were developed.

**E. H. Schmiede (1959-1966)** oversaw the construction of the educational wing, worship services were broadcast over the radio, elders received permission to assist in the distribution of Holy Communion, a deaconess was called, and plans for the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the congregation were begun.

**Willard Koch (1967-1974)** is warmly remembered by church members for his pastoral care. During his tenure, the radio broadcast continued to be well-received and many hearers responded by mail and in person thanking the congregation for its messages. The congregation celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary with former pastors and deaconesses in attendance. The first associate pastor, Charles Boeder, was called to serve our congregation.

**Charles Boeder (1972-1992)** served two years with Pastor Koch. During his long tenure, the constitution of the church was updated and church members at age 18 were able to participate in voters assemblies, associate pastors served alongside of him, a colloquy student from the seminary served his vicarage at St. Paul, and a history of the congregation was written for the centennial of our congregation.

**Thomas Part (1974-1980)** served as associate pastor in our congregation. He is remembered for his pastoral heart, good sermons, and a wonderful sense of humor.

**Keith Wachter (1980-1983)** served as associate pastor and his sermons always had a good "show and tell" aspect for congregational members to grasp and to take the message home with them.

**Mark Nordman (1987-1991)** urged and saw the start-up of our Preschool; he is warmly remembered by our congregation and impacted our church family with his foresight, home visits, and pastoral heart.

**Larry Giff (1994-1995)** arrived after a long vacancy in our congregation and helped us bridge the transfer of leadership after a long pastorate. He is remembered for his knowledge of the Bible and his preaching and teaching skills.

**Lawrence Cain (1997-1999)** served as an additional bridge during that period of adjustment.

**Jeffrey Lee (2003-2007)** recruited laity to see the importance of renovating our church facilities, and in so doing, awakened the possibility of what it would mean for the future mission of our congregation.

**Clifford Adair (2008-Present)** preaches, teaches, makes visits in the community, and broadens our vision to participate in missions.

#### *Synodical Lay Workers of the Congregation*

**Egon Banke, parish worker (1954-1957)** served our congregation as Pastor Steinmeyer's long tenure at St. Paul was coming to an end and Pastor Langhans' ministry was just beginning. He was an important servant of the Lord and provided the newly arrived pastor vital insights into the congregation.

**Ernest Huedepohl, parish worker (1957-1959)** is remembered for his faithfulness and working together with his wife as a team ministry in our congregation.

**Gladys Noreen, deaconess (1960-1964)** served as our first deaconess. She, along with Pastor Schmiege, were instrumental in having three national Walther League caravaners visit our congregation to encourage greater participation of our youth in the life of the congregation.

**Nancy Brandt, deaconess (1965-1967)** worked with the youth and children during the public school's "release time" to churches.

**Diane Jawort, deaconess (1967-1970)** worked with the youth and served faithfully in the life of our congregation.

**Joann Underwood, deaconess (1970-1972)** implemented the program of having shut-ins communed monthly in the chapel and arranging a time for them to enjoy fellowship with each other, the pastor, and her afterwards.

**Alan Estby, DCE (1974-1976)** was our first DCE and served two years among the youth.

**Mariah Thiessen, DCE (2015-Present)** leads our Jr. and Sr. S.P.Y. groups, equips parents to serve as youth counselors, offers guidance to youth, helps the Sunday school department, provides Jesus' Time at the Preschool and teaches the little children. In conjunction with our 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, she will lead a group consisting of seven teens and three adults on a mission trip to Jamaica, performing acts of mercy and extending hope in the name of Christ to the people of this impoverished island nation.

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### **St. Paul Preschool: An Outreach Ministry of Our Church to Children and Young Families**

The congregation has operated a Preschool since 1989. Over the years, numerous children have passed through its doors. During these years, we have employed several women to teach and serve as administrators of our preschool. The first teacher-administrator was Diane Nordman. Other teacher-administrators, include Martha Fick, Pat Cain, Betsy Lorenzen and Cindy DeZeeuw.

Assistant teachers at St. Paul Preschool are too numerous to mention individually by name, but they are remembered by God and the students whom they served; currently Diane Johnson and Linda Winter serve in this capacity. Truly, we are thankful for all of our preschool teachers and gratefully acknowledge their important contribution to the success of our preschool.

Today, we are still blessed by dedicated teachers, an exceptional Preschool Board that oversees its operation, and church members who generously support this outreach ministry to children in our community. Many students who attended St. Paul Preschool at its very beginning are now sending their children to our preschool. What a testimony, from its beginning until now, to the excellence of the education and the Christ-centered teaching provided by our teachers at St. Paul Preschool.

We express our thanks to the Lord for all of the blessings that arise from our Christ-centered preschool ministry, owned and operated by St. Paul Lutheran Church, and beseech God's continued blessing on it as little ones attending our preschool gain social graces, are prepared emotionally and mentally for kindergarten, and grow spiritually in their faith and learn more about Jesus in our classes.

## **Sunday School, Youth Activities, Adult Bible Studies, and Fellowship Opportunities**

Weekly Sunday school classes for all ages and youth activities for children and teens are available through the doors of St. Paul Lutheran Church. Seventy-four children are registered for Sunday School and instructed in their Bible lessons by lay teachers from our church family.

The children sing quarterly in our Sunday services and continue the long tradition of putting on the annual Christmas Service to tell the Story of our Lord's Nativity. Recently, the education committee decided to hold an annual Spring Sunday School Program, whereby our children may proclaim the Gospel in song and story to the congregation. The education committee also holds an annual summer VBS for the children of our congregation and the surrounding area.

A senior youth group and a junior youth group meet separately on Wednesday and Sunday nights. They enjoy Bible studies, fellowship opportunities, perform service projects, and enjoy fun games. They also hold Family Fun Nights, where parents join them. Our youth participate in the triennial LCMS National Youth Gathering and perform acts of mercy, such as serving dinner for the disadvantage at "The Banquet" in Sioux Falls, serving fellow members at church, and participating in short-term mission trips to share the Good News of Christ. Our youth are outward focused, inviting friends to church events. Many of their peers in the community attend our youth activities at St. Paul.

Guidance and direction for youth activities are provided by our Director of Christian Education, Mariah Thiessen and our lay youth leaders. We are blessed by dedicated parents who support the spiritual formation of their children and assist with outreach activities.

We have two adult Bible classes at St. Paul. One is held Sunday mornings and the second is a breakfast Bible class held at a local restaurant. Adult Bible classes strengthen attendees' faith, increase participants' knowledge of the Bible, provide fellowship and strengthen friendships. Short-term mission trips are available to interested church members. In our anniversary year, a new senior group is planned to provide additional fellowship, Bible study, and service opportunities at St. Paul.

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## **Choirs and Special Music at St. Paul**

Music has always played an important part in the life of the Lutheran Church. It is only natural, then, that St. Paul would have an adult choir that sings weekly from the Fall of the year to the Spring. The musical selections of the choir enhance the Divine Services and give glory to our Father in heaven.

The choir rehearsals provide opportunities for friendships to blossom between choir members and offer wonderful opportunities to encourage and show concern for one another.

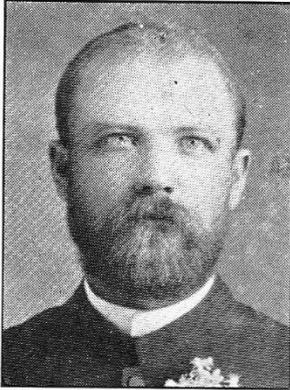
The adult choir is directed by Pam Kruse and is accompanied on the piano by Bonnie Folkerts.

The children of our congregation regularly sing at our church services under the direction of Carrie Radloff and Theresa Whipple. The children perform various types of music and often provide preservice music on special days.

We are expanding this aspect of our children's ministry. The children will put on a Spring program of music, recitation, and story for the congregation. We thank the young mothers of our church family for their creativity in expanding these opportunities for our Sunday school children.

**Photos of the Lord's Servants at St. Paul Lutheran Church  
1892-2017**

**Pastors**



**H. C. Brinkman  
(1892-1894)**



**H. B. Kohlmeier  
(1894-1899)**



**H. C. Siegert  
(1899-1902)**



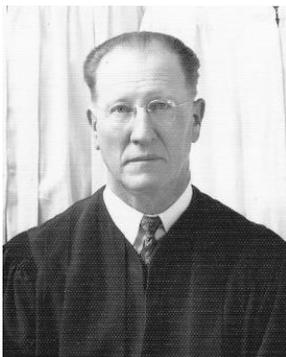
**W. G. Bernreuther  
(1902-1906)**



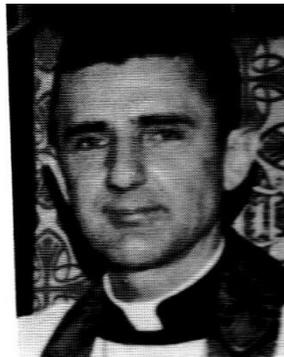
**William Becker  
(1906-1912)**



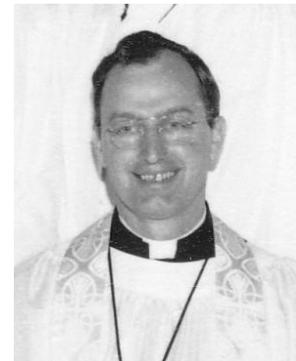
**Herman Bohnhoff  
(1912-1923)**



**J. G. Steinmeyer  
(1923-1955)**



**Clarence Langhans  
(1955-1959)**



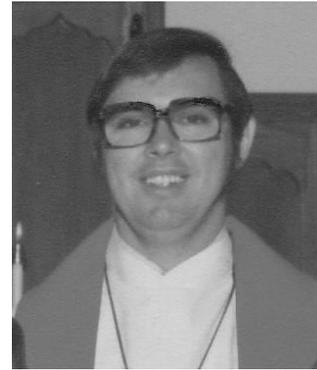
**E. H. Schmiede  
(1959-1966)**



Willard Koch  
(1967-1974)



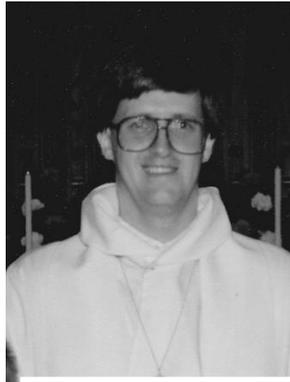
Charles Boeder  
(1972-1992)



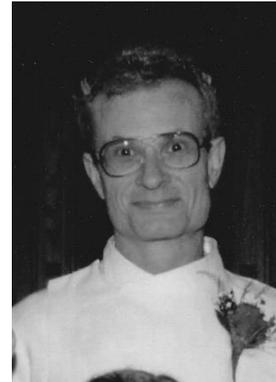
Thomas Part  
(1974-1980)



Keith Wachter  
(1980-1983)



Mark Nordman  
(1987-1991)



Larry Giff  
(1994-1995)



Lawrence Cain  
(1997-1999)



Jeffrey Lee  
(2003-2007)



Clifford Adair  
(2008-Present)

Deaconesses



Gladys Noreen, Dcs.  
(1960-1964)



Nancy Brandt, Dcs.  
(1965-1967)



Diane Jawort, Dcs.  
(1967-1970)

No photos of Joann Underwood, deaconess (1970-1972), were found in our church records.

Directors of Christian Education



Alan Estby, DCE  
(1974-1976)



Mariah Thiessen, DCE  
(2015-Present)

Administrators/Head Teachers of St. Paul Preschool



Diane Nordman  
(1989-1991)



Martha Fick  
(1991-1997)



Pat Cain  
(1997-1999)



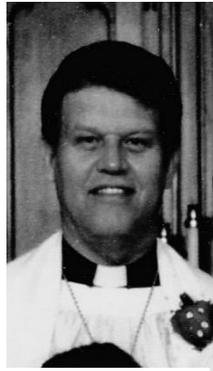
Betsy Lorenzen  
(2000-2012)



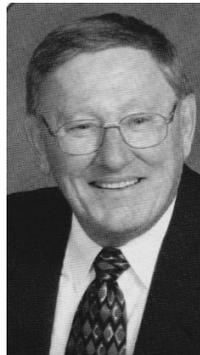
Cindy DeZeeuw  
(2012-Present)

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Long-term Vacancy Pastors



Peter Sestak  
1992-1994



Evan Schiller  
2001-2003

Two circuit pastors served our congregation during long-term vacancies in the 1990s and early 2000s. Pastor Peter Sestak and Pastor Evan Schiller, while serving full-time at their own congregations, fulfilled the role of “interim pastor,” although not officially called to that position, and directed us to Christ with a faithful Word and Sacrament ministry during those trying days.

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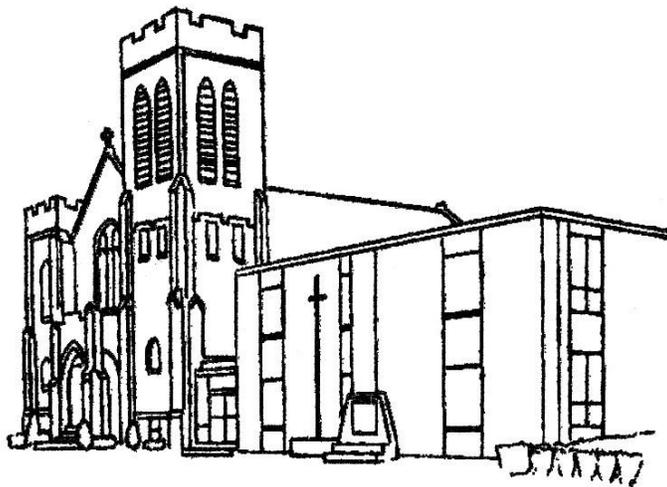
**Concluding Thought for Our 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

The Christ-centered work which the Holy Spirit accomplished at St. Paul Lutheran Church during the past 125 years could not have been done without our called church workers and lay members working hand-in-hand together. As we celebrate our 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, we give thanks to God for what He accomplished by His Word and Spirit through our ancestors and spiritual leaders who humbly stood under the shadow of the cross together to establish this House of Prayer, that we might hear the

glorious news of Christ crucified, know that He is still faithful in the Word, and that He is the One who provides faithful servants to His church – both lay and pastoral – who labor side-by-side here at St. Paul Lutheran Church to fulfill the Great Commission.

Our risen Lord says, *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age”* (Matthew 28:19–20, ESV).

To God alone – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – be the glory and praise forever!



### St. Paul Lutheran Church

621 West Main Street  
Pipestone, MN

Still Faithful in the Word! | 1892 – 2017

### Acknowledgments

Historic information is gleaned from 45<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> anniversaries history booklets and conversations with church members.

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