



January

St. Paul News

The Newsletter of
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Ida Grove, Iowa
712-364-2918

www.stpaulig.org
stpaulidagrove@gmail.com

2024

The Year of 2023 in Review

By Pastor Neil Wehmas

The 2023 year has come to an end. It has been a year of change for our congregation. Pastor Richard Salcido along with Sue after 15 years of dedicated service, retired at the end of July. At the beginning of 2024, we will conclude the call process for a sole pastor.

When this comes to completion, I pray that you prayerfully consider and think about the future of our congregation. Consider just how, we as the saints gathered at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Ida Grove, are called to serve Christ and the world. What does that look like in 2024? Where is God leading all of us as a congregation? Where is God leading you individually?

Hopefully, we will begin the process of re-developing our vision and mission statement as a congregation. As we journey through this process, I pray that all will find ways to serve the congregation and our community. I very much thank everyone for their time and effort through this year in many different ways. It is noticed, and greatly valued.

However, as we think upon these things, here are a few highlights of where God has led me to serve during 2023 (My 10th year of ministry, 6th year in Ida Grove):

- In the Community:
 - I continue to attend many activities at home and away for the OABCIG school district. The goal being to create a visible presence for youth, parents, family members, and others of our community. In 2023, I attended 48 school activities.
 - Also, I do try to find a few ways to serve in Ida Grove outside of the church. I've volunteered through Kiwanis (Soccer Concessions, Meals on Wheels, etc.), Key Club (Advising the group, Father-Daughter Dance, Christmas Ball, etc.), and the movie theater. (Approx. 40 volunteer activities)
 - As part of the Ida County Ministerial Association, I serve as the treasurer. This involves tasks of providing financial aid to specific situations in our town.
- Teaching:
 - Prior to Pastor Salcido's retirement, I taught the High School Bible Class on Sunday mornings. I've held an ongoing Bible Study at Subway as well.
 - Following Pastor Salcido's retirement, I also took up the Wednesday Morning Bible Study, Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study, and the LWML Bible Study leaders group. (68 Bible Classes taught in 2023)
 - In the first half of 2023, I taught only one grade at a time for Catechism/Confirmation classes. Now, I teach 7th & 8th grade separately. Total Classes: 41
 - I also, taught for Vacation Bible School at the end of June.

- Youth Ministry:
 - Throughout the year, both the high school and middle school have taken part in various youth activities. Such as bowling, sledding, DropZone, Mercy Meals, etc.
 - This fall, the High School began a twice-a-month youth night on Wednesdays, which has done well so far.
 - Both the High School and Middle School youth attended District Youth Gatherings this fall.
 - I organized, led, or attended 26 Youth Ministry activities in 2023
- Visitation Ministry
 - I continue throughout the year to bring communion to our members at Willow Dale and Golden Horizons. I also make visits on people in the hospitals and commune various in-home shut-ins.
 - For those whose spouses or children have died in the last 12 months, I send Grief Booklets (15 in 2023).
 - Every 6th-12th Grade youth whose baptism birthdate I have, has received a baptism birthday card in the last year from me. This totals 48 baptism birthday cards.
 - As elders, we pray for various members of the congregation at the end of every meeting. These individuals receive cards letting them know that we prayed for them and are thinking about them.
- Worship Ministry:
 - Until the end of the July, myself and Pastor Salcido split worship duties.
 - Since the end of July, a few things have been tweaked to fit a sole-pastor setting, and adjust to the loss of our main organist and the praise team. This has lead to us alternating between praise band and organist music. We've also made use of the Concordia Organist-digital system.
 - From September through October, we journeyed through the Red Letter Challenge. At the start of December, we began to follow the 1-Year, Historic Lectionary. For Advent, we explored the lives of Christians: St. Nicholas of Myra, St. Lucia, and Katharina von Bora Luther.
 - In 2023, I preached 84 worship services, plus 10 funerals.

I give thanks and glory to God for the blessings of serving our congregation, and being a part of Ida County. I look forward to where God is leading us into 2024. A blessed 2024 to all of you.

In Christ,
Pastor Neil Wehmas



Baptism: Maverick Mosier

Death: Alberta Kautsch, Dorene Miller, Richard Jordan, Donald Grap

COMMUNITY BASKET NEEDS FOR JANUARY:



for January: Baking items: flour, sugar, baking soda/powder, brown sugar, cake mixes/frosting, etc. place your donation in the shopping cart in the Narthex. *All items are appreciated as well, as they can always use donations.* The Community Basket is open on Thursdays (except 3rd Thursday), from 2:30-5:30PM. **The mobile food pantry will be on January 18, at the United Methodist Church, Ida Grove from 4:30-5:30PM. If you're able to help, with sorting or carrying a box, it would be appreciated, watch for more details.**



COFFEE AND FELLOWSHIP Coffee & Fellowship on Sunday mornings at 10:15AM is in the Fellowship Hall. Come and join us! If you would like to help or provide, please let Deb Clausen or Kathy Edsen know.

The High School Youth will provide & serve on the 1st Sunday's of the month and the Junior High Youth will provide & serve on the 3rd Sunday of the month.

WEDNESDAY EARLY MORNING BIBLE CLASS meets at 7:00AM at Jimmy's

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS meets from 9:30-10:30AM in the Conference Room in the lower level.

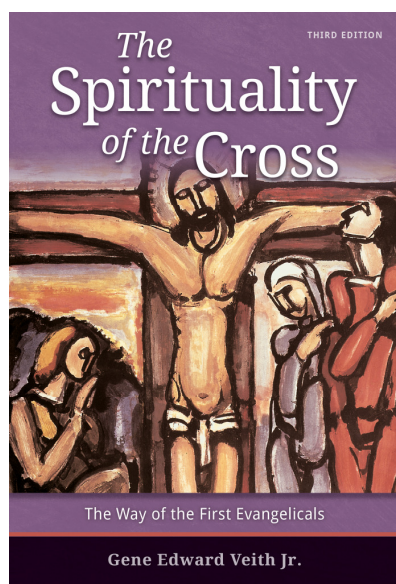
THURSDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY: MORE THAN BREAD BIBLE STUDY AT SUBWAY will meet at 6:00PM

SUNDAY MORNING HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH in the youth room from 10:15-11:15AM

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT BIBLE CLASS join us in the Fellowship Hall 10:30-11:15AM



Bible Studies w/Pastor Neil	
<p>the CHRISTMAS story</p>	<p>REVELATION</p>
Wednesday's @9:30am	Sunday's @10:30am



Spirituality: the lived, vital, personal dimension of Christianity. The topic of spirituality in Christianity is muddled with mysticism rather than the mysteries of Christ: the Sacraments and His resurrection. With the rise of people identifying as "spiritual but not religious" and moving away from "institutional" religion, this book offers a bridge to bring people to Christ. More importantly, *Spirituality of the Cross* brings people to Lutheranism and its teachings of the cross and Christ's sacrifice for our salvation. Gene Veith has guided thousands to Christianity through this best-selling CPH book, and the revised third edition will help you in learning about the faith. In this edition, Veith digs into a new topic called Christology in the Lutheran faith, along with updating much of the language and examples to reflect contemporary issues. Finally, some additional material adapted from *Authentic Christianity* is now in the pages to speak to a more modern audience. *Spirituality of the Cross* also offers an updated list of resources to help further your understanding of Lutheran spirituality. This list covers many different topics within Lutheranism to help make it easy for you to find where to go next to grow. Topics covered: Justification, Means of Grace, Theology of the Cross, Christology, Vocation, Living in Two Kingdoms, and Worshiping God. Also available on Audible and Kindle



Lutheran Youth Fellowship January 2024

Highway on Wednesdays

Will meet on Wednesday, January 10th & 24th. We will also be meeting on February 7th, prior to the start of the Lenten season.

Higher Things in Concordia University-Wisconsin (June 25-28)

Registration Deadline is January 3rd, due to near capacity.

Deposit: \$175 Who: 7th-12th Grade

Youth E-Blasts

Follow and pay attention to the Youth E-blasts that are sent out throughout the week in order to keep up-to-date of High School and Middle School youth happenings/activities.

LWML LADIES BIBLE STUDY FOR JANUARY

RUTH (2) will meet on January 4 at Jimmy's at noon and meet at the church for Bible Study at 1:00PM.. Linda will be BSL. We had 11 present for our December meeting. We had an awesome turn out for the month long Nativity Display open house and we look forward to doing it again.

LOIS (3) will meet on January 4 in the Conference Room at 1:30PM. Judy will be hostess and Nancy will be BSL. We had 8 present for our December meeting.

EUNICE (10) will meet on January 4 at the Willowdale Assisted Living, Battle Creek at 2:30PM. Lois will be hostess and Karen will be BSL. We had 6 present for our December meeting.

JOHANNA(12) will meet on Jan 4 ? at 7:00PM, in the fellowship hall.

LWML MITEBOX CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2024

At the November 2023 meeting of the LWML Executive Board a decision was made about how the LWML Mite box contributions for 2024 would be distributed.

The Executive Board decided to designate the funds from each quarter would go to the National LWML Mission projects and local mission projects in our community. The distribution of each quarter's funds will be one-fourth to the National LWML Missions and three-fourths of each quarter's contributions would go to local missions.

For 2024 the local mission distribution will be as follows:

1st Quarter will be supporting the Ida Grove Ambulance

2nd Quarter will be supporting the Community Basket

3rd Quarter will be supporting the Ida Grove Fire Department

4th Quarter will be supporting the Ida Grove Orphan Grain Train

Your coins will make a difference on the national level as well as in Ida Grove in 2024! Please drop your coins in the large Mite Box located in the Narthex whenever you visit our church!



A year that whispers Jesus

For author Nancy Tichy, a small holiday gift once sparked big-picture thoughts about Christian living. One December she received a kitchen towel with the message “I want a Christmas that whispers JESUS.” That prompted thoughts of what it’s like to have an entire year that whispers Jesus. For starters, that involves daily quiet time, devotion and prayer. “Sometimes I wake with the thought of a person on my mind,” writes Tichy. “I’m quiet with this impression, interceding for the family member or friend until it has lifted. Could this be a whisper from our Savior?”

Many other daily occurrences are “worthy of [Jesus’] whispered response of love,” Tichy points out. That’s true whether we’re distracted by tasks and troubling thoughts or buoyed by encounters with contentment and joy. “For me,” she writes, “whispering is part of intimacy, and that is what I want to make a hallmark of the coming year. I want closeness with our Savior that enables me to hear from him, even when he whispers.”

Making the most of ordinary time

In liturgical churches, more than half of the church-year calendar is labeled as Ordinary Time. Although that merely means the weeks are designated by ordinal numbers (*First Sunday after the Epiphany*, etc.), people may assume that “ordinary” means not special, or not a church holiday. Ordinary gets a bad rap, but it represents the bulk of daily life. Not all days contain mountaintop experiences that warrant Facebook posts. Yet “simple, consistent, sometimes boring faithfulness” can lead to out-of-the-ordinary results, according to blogger Karl Vaters. “When you’re following God’s will for your life and you string a bunch of ordinary but necessary actions together, extraordinary things can happen,” he writes at ChristianityToday.com.

Likewise, although Christians may strive to be radical, out-of-the-ordinary followers of Jesus, everyday discipleship leaves a powerful legacy. In *The Ordinary Christian Life*, pastor Michael Horton extols the value of “the regular preaching of Christ from all of the Scriptures, baptism, the Supper, the prayers of confession and praise, and all of the other aspects of ordinary Christian fellowship.” He says the result of participating in “the ordinary life of the covenant community” is quite extraordinary: “steady maturation in Christ.”

—adapted from *The Wired Word*

JANUARY
Birthdays

January 1 Kandy Ehrig
Hannah Schmidt
January 2 Faith Johnson
Kynleigh Rohlk
Stephanie Vohs
January 3 Heather Sweeden
January 4 Frank Collins
DeWayne Krayenhagen
Nick West
January 5 Channing Miesner
Donna Rasmussen
January 6 Greg Steenbock
January 7 Janet Brinkman
Wilhelmina Edsen
January 8 Lorne Miller
January 9 Shawn Cadwell
Michael Stehr
January 10 Daniel German
January 11 Malia Lansink
Karen Petersen
January 12 Charlie Miller West
January 13 LuAnn Smith
January 15 Amber Benner
Judy Schimmer
January 16 Coleen Russell

January 17 Nathan Arbegast
Allyson Iversen
Beth Wolterman

January 18 Joan Petersen

January 19 Chance Buns

January 21 Aaron Hoffman
Evenlyn Miesner

January 23 Jon Devitt

January 25 Mary Bennett

January 26 Brynn Ernst

January 27 Marilyn Dose
Keith Hausman
Janelle Moser

January 28 Alex Bogue
Creighton Cadwell
Anna Hoffman
Ella Hoffman
Julie Kollbaum

January 29 Karen Frank
Jack Gilbert
Linda Kruse
Sheila Redenius

January 30 Sophia Buns

January 31 Arielle Wolterman

JANUARY

Anniversaries

January 5 Wesley & Claudia Swanger
January 21 Jim & Cindy Hausman
January 24 Dale & Sandy Ullrich

January 27 Jon & Robyn Devitt
January 31 Bret & Linda Warnke

[illegible]

UPDATING INFORMATION:

As we begin a new year, we always ask to update our records with any new addresses, even if its been within 6 months – year, any changes in phone numbers, etc.

We also like to make sure we have all correct information of birthdates and anniversaries. Also if you would not like your birthday or anniversary publicized in the weekly bulletin or the monthly newsletter please let the church office know. stpaulidagrove@gmail.com or 712-364-2918

Monthly newsletters and calendars are always available to be picked up at the church in the narthex. If you would like to view online our website is www.stpaulig.org
If you would like it emailed to you please contact the church office, email us or fill out the “update our information form”

Copies of the form to update information is available on the Welcome center and can be placed in the wooden offering box

WEATHER RELATED CANCELLATIONS will be notified via local tv stations (NBC, ABC & CBS/FOX, Sioux City) and also our Facebook page, St Paul Lutheran Church Ida Grove, IA LCMS (it has a profile picture of the front door/tree and a cover photo of Communion) to help with any confusion as to other St. Paul Lutheran Facebook pages.