

# St. Paul's Epistle—

January 2025



## Church Council Minutes—December 5, 2024

Those present: Tim Anderson, Richard Christie, Leanna Hasbargen, Leonard Morrison, Stephanie Morrison, Dave Wright, Tony Lucek, Sally Batdorf and John Hopkins

Chairman Tim Anderson called the meeting to order and gave the opening prayer.

The Minutes and Treasurer's reports were reviewed and approved.

Briefs: 1) A motion was made to move forward per Joint Council Agreement to call Pastor Vincent Moore from Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta. 2) An itemized proposal from NLFX Professional, Bemidji, was reviewed and discussed. The majority of the cost will be covered by the family of Doris Schattschneider in her memory, and the church will pay for additional speakers for the basement. The motion was carried to have NLFX install the new sound system. The estimated date for installation is late January. Upon completion, NLFX will provide 2 hours of training for members interested in the operation of the system. 3) Election of Officers will take place on December 15th. 4) A Christmas Eve lay led service will be held at St. Paul Lutheran on December 24th at 5 p.m. 5) Life in Christ Lutheran Church, Grand Marais, requested a donation toward their new church building. After discussion it was agreed to send \$2000.00 6) Budget Committee will meet on December 15th at 4:30 p.m. 7) It was decided to purchase a VISA debit card for Pastor Moeller as a Christmas gift. 8) A donation will be sent to the Salvation Army to help purchase food baskets for needy families.

There were no membership changes. The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Submitted by ~ Sally Batdorf, Secretary

**NEXT CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 9th, 2025.**

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## Annual Meeting

Our Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 19th at 4:30 p.m.. Please have reports turned into the church office by Wednesday, January 15th. There is no potluck.



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## THANK YOU!



*A heartfelt thank you is extended to:*

- The Altar Guild for all the work done behind the scenes to beautify our church and enhance our worship services.
- Everyone who gives of their time on the Church Council.
- The LWML for their faithful service.
- To the members on the Joint Council with Church of the Lutheran Hour and their efforts to Call our next Pastor.
- To our money counter who is here faithfully every Monday to count our offering, and to help with music during our worship services.
- The Christie family who put up and take down our Nativity set each Christmas.
- To all members who quietly help with building projects, maintenance and give of their time, talents and treasures to keep things running smoothly. **YOU ARE ALL VERY APPRECIATED!!!**

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### New Sound System

Thanks to a generous donation in memory of Doris Schattschneider by her family, our church will be installing a new sound system! NLFX Professional of Bemidji will be installing the system hopefully by the end of January. After the system is installed, they will be offering a training session on how to use the system. A date will be posted for the training and everyone is encouraged to attend.

### Pastoral Call Update

Pastor Kyle Whaley of Polson, MT has declined our Pastoral Call.

The next Pastoral Candidate on our list that was voted on is Rev. Vince Moore from Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta. Call Documents are on the way to him. Please include Rev. Moore and his family in your prayers as he contemplates our Divine Call.

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### Birthdays

*Happy Birthday to these friends celebrating their special day in January!*

*January 1st: Monica Cash*

*24th: Liz Hams*

*2nd: Audrey Winger*

*26th: Cale Wright*

*3rd: Dianne Kelly*

*31st: Julia Quast*

*4th: Phyllis Kennedy*

*8th: Asher Hart*

*17th: Courtney Kelly*

*21st: Meredith Kittleson*

*22nd: Jenica Whitbeck*



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# Connected in Christ

Written by Emily Hatesohl

My three-year-old and one-year-old had just thrown F5-level meltdowns for the first fifteen minutes of church (some of it in the pew, some of it in the nursery, some outside ... you get the picture). We somehow rallied and stumbled back to our tornado of a pew.

**Comfort in God's Word** Despite all the cereal and busy bags and toys from home, what soothed my children most was when my toddler sat on Daddy's lap to flip through the hymnal and my baby stood up to hold the lady's hand behind us for the rest of the service.

They were feeling disconnected, and they were soothed by connecting to God's Word through the hymns we sang and connecting to God's church through the hand of a fellow sister in Christ.

**Disconnected** Do you feel disconnected sometimes? I know I do. If you google statistics about loneliness, you'll find that there are many people who feel isolated, misunderstood, and alone. That may look like a new mom who desperately needs a nap, a shower, and a conversation with another adult. Or a church visitor who doesn't know anyone. Or a couple praying to find good friends for their family. Or a widow in a nursing home hoping that someone would come visit.

It might look like you and me in our daily lives, staying busy yet somehow feeling a disconnection from a loved one, a friend, or even from our church. We may even feel disconnected from Jesus, if we're honest.

**Christian Connection** When you feel disconnected, remember that God has not disconnected from you. Jesus says, "I am the vine; you are the branches" (John 15:5). He grafts us into Himself through His life, death, and resurrection. We are baptized into Him, and He is always near to us, whether we feel it or not. He shows up where He promises to be—in **His Word and Sacraments**. He will never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5).

He also connects us with other brothers and sisters in Christ to lift us up. He promises to be there "where two or three are gathered in My name" (Matthew 18:20). He tells us to "bear one another's burdens" (Galatians 6:2) and to "encourage one another and build one another up" (1 Thessalonians 5:11). As Martin Luther once said, "Everything is less burdensome if you have a brother with you."<sup>1</sup>

In short, as Christians **we are connected in Christ**. And that is a powerful thing—the kind of thing that soothes our loneliness and makes the devil run scared.

**New Year, New Connections** Christ connects us to one another. And He calls us to reach out our hand, like my little one did in church. Reach out in Christian connection to fellow believers who will pray for you, encourage you, and just be with you. Reach out to bring someone a meal after their surgery, invite a family from your child's class over for dinner, or reconcile with someone you've felt disconnected to for a long time. Reach out, knowing God will be with you.

My prayer for this new year is that it is one of **connecting to others**, so that we can point one another back to the one who makes us whole: our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. "And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful" (Colossians 3:15).

1 Quotation from Martin Luther is from *Luther's Works*, American Edition, vol. 2, *Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 6-14*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan and Daniel E. Poellot (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1960), 335. Scripture: ESV®.

