

Addendum to  
*A Century  
of Blessings*



Continued History  
of the Congregation

1983-2008

### **The 125<sup>th</sup> (Quasiquicentennial) Committee**

Rev. Anthony Bertram, Chairman; Nancy Gellert, Treasurer; Lee Ann Backstrom, Richard & Kathy Eyerly, Kathy Fosness, Carol Fuhrman, Greg Gellert, David & Lois Johnson, Marty & Virginia Krause, Karen Norman, Lorraine Thomas, Harold & Avis Wagner

### **Acknowledgements**

At the request of the Committee, Dennis Wedel agreed to construct a model of the church for use in local parades. A one-inch equals one-foot scale model of the church was built. Those who worked on the scale model and trailer include Dennis Wedel, Harland Wedel, Peter Malecha, Merle Boesch, Duane Rieland, Mark Hanson, Kandice

Petsche, Brandon Rosenberg, Richard and Kathy Eyerly, Mary Schmitt and Lois Johnson. The church model and float were used for the first time in June of 2008. In addition, we wish to express our special gratitude to Mark Hanson. Not only did



Parade Float

he take photos of our stained glass windows to enhance the scale model church float project, but he generously contributed to the upkeep and restoration of the priceless stained glass windows in St. Paul Lutheran Church. In addition, he published an excellent book entitled *The Light of the St. Paul Lutherans*. This beautiful coffee table edition includes wonderful photography that highlights the treasures of our church and which will be enjoyed by all who possess it. Mark is a son of St. Paul Congregation and has continued to demonstrate his love for his home church. Our committee is grateful for all that he has done. The youth group and its leaders, Mr. and Mrs. Scott Fuhrman arranged for an original painting of the church to be made. The purchase of this work of art included the rights to make as many prints as needed.

## **Addendum to A Century of Blessings**

### **Continued History of the Congregation, 1983-2008**

The first one hundred years of the history of our congregation was researched and published in 1983 and titled A Century of Blessings. Since that book was a thorough account of our history and is owned by many members of our church, the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee decided to include only the years 1983-2008 in this addendum. It encouraged those who own the previous publication to keep these documents together.

The Centennial year, 1983, featured monthly events in celebration of the centennial theme. In addition to those scheduled occasions, the life of the parish continued with the usual rhythm of the Church Year and the various Boards making decisions regarding matters at hand. On January 9<sup>th</sup>, 1983, Holy Communion was available for the first time at both services on Sundays when the Sacrament was offered. Previously, the Lord's Supper was held either at early service or at late service. On the second Sunday of the month the individual cups were used exclusively. The Common Cup was the only choice on the last Sunday of the month.

In 1982, a year before the congregation's centennial, Rev. Douglas Janetzke was installed as pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church. One of his first goals was to introduce our congregation to Lutheran Worship, the hymnal published by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in 1982. After several months of trying various portions of the liturgy and some of the hymns, a survey was conducted in April of 1983. A majority of the people responding (63%) preferred to continue using The Lutheran Hymnal, so Lutheran Worship was never adopted here. One voter stated, "We haven't even sung all the songs in the old book yet."

At the Council Meeting on June 14, 1983, the Trustees recommended that the balcony be extended. At that time, space was a problem. The Adult Choir had over 50 members, and the upper grades of our parochial school had a large enrollment. In addition, a piano had been moved to the balcony at the request of the Director of Music. A bell choir had been organized, and there was a need for space for its tables. An architect was engaged, and in July a six foot

### **Class of 2006**

Emily Anders, Tyler Benschoter, Kelsey Deling, Alyssa Fuhrman, Jakob Gerds, Desiree Meacham, Katherine Morris, Brandon Splinter, Tanner Thiesse, Megan Winter

### **Class of 2007**

Lisa Behrens, Grace Bertram, Nathan Closs, Jonathan Ellis, Courtney Eversman, Christopher Fast, Tyler Krenz, Braden Kumm, Matthew Northwick, Logan Peymann, Darien Ruschy, Mariah Smith, Kirsten True, Samuel Viesselman, Brooke Wohlrabe

### **Class of 2008**

Wendy Elise Anders, Nicole Marie Boesch, Michalia Elaine Cyphers, Megan Rose Fuhrman, Justine Anne Gerds, Benjamin Dayton Gratz, Austin Scott Lehr, Jacob Lee Liljenquist, Dakota Lee Edward Meacham, Kevin Allen Morris, Elizabeth Mary Mueller, Mariah Lynn Schultze, Emily Christine Splinter, Lastisha Marie Thomas, Katlin Leslie Williams



Confirmation Class of 2008

### **Class of 2000**

Meliss Ackerman, Nathan Behrens, Benjamin Bents, Jessica Brammeier, Erik Eversman, Jeanne Garbers, Aaron Grotzinger, Jason Harris, Becky Janssen, Sheena Jaqua, Tyler Jensen, Jacob Lemke, Vanessa Pomeranke, Brent Rieland, Nathan L. Schmidtke, Christopher Stoneback, Bryon True

### **Class of 2001**

Joshua Abernathy, Darcy Ackerman, Brandon Bassett, Rebekah Breitbarth, Scott Carlson, Scott Chirpich, Allison Clow, Sarah Feely, Kelsey Fuhrman, Erich Kliewer, Emily Morris, Brittany Paskey, Benjamin Post, Erick Robson, Kevin St. John, Leslie Schultze, Elliott Waterbury, Dianna Wilson

### **Class of 2002**

Desiree Bicknase, Ryan Elbert, Adam Eversman, Brittany Grotzinger, Whitney Harris, Forrest Hungerholt, Jessie Kitzerow, Chad Kumm, Tyler Laue, Jonathan Malecha, Mariko Peterson, Emily Sill, Zephania Skow, Jamie Winter

### **Class of 2003**

Joshua Austin, Nicole Hardt, Jacob Harris, Joshua Harris, Cassandra Hungerholt, Britnie Larson, Sarah Peterson, Jacob Peymann, Casey Rabbe, Michelle Schultze, Marcus Taplin, John Wilk

### **Class of 2004**

Nathan Abernathy, Tyson Bassett, Denise Bicknase, Justin Brammeier, Jordan Byers, Dalton Deling, Rachel Emery, Courtney Harris, Jordan Huffman, Christopher Janssen, Kayla Jensen, Mercedes Johnson, Megan Kumm, Dalton Ruschy, Derek True, Allison Waterbury, Brandon Wohlrabe

### **Class of 2005**

Kathleen Bergt, Jennifer Brammeier, Leah Elbert, Nikindra Hungerholt, Derrek Meacham, Connor O'Sell, Bethany Stauffer, Travis Twitchell

extension of the balcony was approved by the Voters' Assembly at a cost of \$12,000 "to be raised above present budget expenses." Originally, the organ console was situated so that the organist faced west while accompanying worship services. The enlargement of the balcony allowed the organ console to be rotated 90 degrees. This enabled the organist to see the altar directly to the left rather than attempting to view the chancel area through a mirror while facing the opposite direction.

On June 30, 1983, Pastor Harley officially retired as full-time pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church. Also in June, enrollment was opened for the first class of Martin Luther High School. Mr. Tim Fabry was the first administrator.

On August 28, 1983, Rev. Samuel Reith was installed as associate pastor in a 3:00 P.M. service. Mrs. Reith was engaged to teach in our pre-school for the 1983-1984 school year. The Reiths were newlyweds when they moved to Fairmont, having been married in her home parish in Michigan earlier in August.

October of 1983 was the month of the main Centennial observances. Our bulletin for October 9th informed us that our congregation was the 115<sup>th</sup> largest in the LCMS and the fifth largest church in the Minnesota South District. On Saturday, October 15, a German service was held in the afternoon. The attendance was 165 even though regularly scheduled German services had been discontinued 14 years earlier in January of 1970. On Sunday, October 16, the main Centennial services were held. There were 952 worshippers in attendance at the two morning services. The afternoon service (held at the local high school) was attended by 402 people.

In January of 1984 the Elders approved a pulpit exchange for the mid-week Lenten services. The pastors of the Fairmont circuit all preached at each church on a rotating basis. In addition, a decision was made to replace the electric candelabra that sat on the pedestal of the altar. New floor model candelabra using real candles and flames were placed at each end of the altar. Also in the 1984, the first mention

of computers appeared in the minutes of the various boards and voters. New technology would eventually change office procedure in both church and school.

According to the Stewardship Board's minutes of February 7, 1984, the balcony extension project was "paid in full". Also in 1984, the final stained glass windows were installed in the church. Both of these are in the staircases leading to the balcony, and were donated by Mrs. Lee Ann Backstrom in memory of her husband.

The organ console was subject to discussion by the Elders in January of 1985. Malfunctions of the pre-set systems and other mechanical failures became more common with the organ through the next several years.

Miss Donna Lichtenberg, who had taught in our lower grades since 1981, resigned her position. The Council minutes of June 12, 1985, informed the group that she would not be returning for the following school year. Another change in the faculty occurred in the 1985-1986 school year when Mrs. Linda Wetzel accepted the Pre-School position.

A "verbal agreement" was reached in July, 1985, regarding the Behrens' property. The house and garage on the lot directly west of the church were eventually removed in the spring of 1986, which increased the playground and parking area considerably.

The ceiling of the church basement became an item of business during the fall of 1985. The minutes of Trustees and Church Council reveal considerable discussion of the project.

In February of 1986, Delores Baarts announced her retirement from the Church Secretary position which she had held for 19 years. According to the Council minutes of March 12, Mrs. Richard (Kathy) Schultz was offered the position. After serving the congregation faithfully and well for over two decades, she retired at the end of May in 2008. Mrs. Lisa Rosburg was hired as her replacement.

### **Class of 1995**

Kimberly Becker, Jodi Bremer, Jonathan Carlson, Jenny Darnell, Jennifer Feely, Crystal Graf, Bonnie Halverson, Emily Harley, Travis Hatfield, Sandra Hillmer, Jamee Hinrichsen, Erin Johnson, Joshua Laven, James Lutz, Brandon Manzke, Inga Meixell, Aric Norman, Grant Pomerence, Angela Rabbe, Jason Scheff, Ryan Schmidtke, Jessica Theobald, Helena Traver, Brenda Wilson

### **Class of 1996**

Kristin Ackerman, Stacie Bulfer, Amanda Dannhoff, Britney Diersen, Rhonda Fischer, Stephen Fosness, Nicholas Hinz, Nathan Grotzinger, Matthew Janssen, Julie Kult, Benjamin Laue, Heather Melinsky, Peggy Olson, Tyler Pomerence, Dustin Rasmussen, Nathan Schmidtke, Jeremy Stauffer, Todd Steuber, Dustin Theobald, Thomas Traetow

### **Class of 1997**

John Abernathy, Aaron Bergt, Nathan Bremer, Benjamin Byers, Carry Cyphers, Jared Donnelly, Joshua Grotzinger, Abby Hale, Daniel Harley, Levi Jessen, Bradley Olson, Colter Plumhoff, Amber Rieland, Justin Robson, Tony Schaefer, Sarah Schmidtke, Chad Smith, Angela Willner

### **Class of 1998**

Diana Bicknase, Brandon Byers, Sally Chirpich, Brandon Clow, Jennifer Danner, Renae Fischer, Ryan Gellert, Callie Graf, Matthew Haack, Joshua Hinrichsen, Robin Johnson, Andrew Kliever, Brady Laue, Derek Laven, Samuel Meixell, Ryan Nelson, Tyler Paskey, Elizabeth Preuss, Chantelle Rasmussen, Laura Schmidtke, Keith Wilson

### **Class of 1999**

Sarah Abernathy, Gena Austin, Jennifer Bents, Michael Breitbarth, Heidi Bulfer, Robin Fischer, Ashley Halverson, Timothy Hardt, Ciara Jessen, Melissa Joeckel, Kellie Krumwiede, Joshua Kitzerow, Ryan Kumm, Crystal Lewis, Matthew Morris, Bryan St. John, Jared Wedel, Justin Wedel, Jenna Wolf

### **Class of 1991**

Brian Benschoter, Jodie Carlson, Keith Diekmann, Karina Fosness, Angela Fritz, Barry Glienke, David Goebel, Heidi Huemoeller, Shelia Johnson, Daniel Maday, Lori Milow, Todd Olson, Jared Pomerence, Andrew Skwiot, Tracy Steuber, Matthew Stockdill, Sherri Stoneback, Corey Survis, Thad Swanson, Jeremy Wedel

### **Class of 1992**

Richard Abrahamson, Jeffrey Beebe, Anthony Bremer, James Bremer, Timothy Bremer, Justin Carroll, Jon Davis, Maria Draper, Andrea Fosness, Aaron Hartmann, Rebecca Hartung, Tracy Hinz, Joshua Janetzke, Jennifer Kahler, Julie Leiding, Justin Maday, Sara Maday, Matthew Rosburg, Jamie Schaefer, Jodi Sheely, Aaron Traver, Sarah Whitehead

### **Class of 1993**

Sarah Alar, Jonathan Bergt, Justin Boyle, April Breitbarth, Benjamin Carlson, Robin Dannhoff, Mae DeWar, Eric Feely, Jessi Henrichsen, Angela Hinz, Nicole Hinz, Jason Johnson, Melissa Johnson, Jeremy Jones, Leah Meixell, Michael Olson, Brent Prochnow, Kerri Roesner, Jonathan Saggau, Eric Schaefer, Scott Sheely, Zachery Skow, Elizabeth Skwiot, Brandi Survis, Torrie Survis, Stephanie Wedel, Robert Wendt, Melissa Wilson, Mark Wolle, Justin Zoch

### **Class of 1994**

Benjamin Austin, Darcy Bicknase, Shannon Boyle, Joshua Bremer, Emily Bulfer, Eric Danner, Erin Danner, Denver Diersen, Melissa Henton, Alanna Hinz, Andrew Janetzke, Matthew Krumholz, Daniel Kult, Todd Lubenow, Adam Malo, Nicholas Melinsky, Melanie Moon, Justin Preuss, Maggie Schaefer, Marcie Schaefer, Garrett Smith, Rebecca Whitehead, Adam Willner, Jayme Wolf

In April of 1986, the Elders accepted Pastor Janetzke's recommendation that the wafer (host) should be placed in the hands of communicants rather than directly in their mouths.

The long-standing practice of ushering people out of church at the conclusion of services (pew-by-pew) was discussed in the winter of 1986-1987. Quite a few people were leaving at their own discretion regardless of the ushers' direction, so it was decided to drop the ushering procedure at the end of worship. After a trial period, the decision was made to return to the traditional practice.

Mrs. Pauline Bergt taught the Pre-School class from 1987 to 1989 until Mrs. Kathy Gratz joined the faculty.

Throughout 1987 there was some discussion of the best use of a \$5,000 bequest received by the church. The donor had stipulated that this be used to air condition the church. Since the \$5,000 was only a fraction of the cost, the focus switched to using this money for padding the pews. Eventually (in January of 1988) this idea was voted down by the Elders, the Council, and the Voters. Ultimately, the money was used for its original purpose by air conditioning the church basement since the amount available was enough for that space.

In 1988, Mrs. Ardis Mathews announced that she would be retiring from teaching our first grade after serving our church for 23 years. Mrs. Mathews was a much-loved and respected teacher who was known for effective instruction, and this congregation was well aware of her competence and grateful for it. At the time, she stated to other faculty members that she wanted to retire "before the congregation wants me to leave". The standing ovation at her retirement observance was evidence that grateful parents and fellow faculty members certainly enjoyed her presence to the very end of her career. Mrs. Terri Prochnow became the new first grade teacher.

By the late 1980s the organ console needed considerable work. It had been built with the technology of the 1950s, and repair was almost always necessary. Several bids were received for the

replacement of the console. In April of 1988, the Church Council accepted a bid of \$23,000 for the replacement of the console. The funds came from money left to the church. The project was not completed until 1989.



Rev. Gregory Schultz

In August of 1988, Pastor Reith announced that he had received a call from Trinity Lutheran Church in Berkeley, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit. In September he accepted the Call. His congregational farewell here was on October 2, 1988. The remainder of 1988 and early 1989 the congregation was occupied with finding a replacement for Pastor Reith. The Voters eventually requested a seminary graduate, and on June 16, 1989, Rev. Gregory

Schultz was installed as Associate Pastor.

In the late 1980s, it became increasingly apparent that the church kitchen was in need of renovation. There were also concerns about handicapped accessibility for church and school. The leadership of the LWML was invaluable for the kitchen project. As promised, the kitchen was completed in time for the school hot lunch program to operate as usual in a greatly improved facility by the time school opened in the fall of 1989. The elevator, which was installed between the two west entrances of the school addition, was not completed until winter of 1989. It passed state inspection early in 1990.

The Altar Guild assumed responsibility for arranging all necessary items for the celebration of Holy Communion in April of 1990. Before that time, the Elders fulfilled this duty. The Elders relinquished this responsibility in January. The intervening months were for the transition of duties to the Altar Guild whose members began training for this new area of service.

The matter of crop donations by farmer members of St. Paul Lutheran Church was discussed in February of 1990. The decision

### **Class of 1986**

Karla Anderson, Amy Atzenhoefer, Wendel Lynn Danner, Karen Goebel, Ryan Hall, Holly Hinz, Lynn Huttemeier, Jeannine Krause, Bradley Lubenow, Bang Ly, Trung Ly, Holly Malo, Michael Schultz, Todd Seidel, Sherri Simmering, Stefany Steffen, Lisa Wedel, Anita Wendt, Michele Wohlrabe

### **Class of 1987**

Gary Beaver, Christopher Beebe, Brian Behrens, James Carroll, Kelly DeNeui, Heather Davis, Tyler Garrison, Stacy Graphenteen, Vicki Gratz, Bradley Harley, Jonathan Hartmann, Jess Hoef, Lisa Huemoeller, Michele Kahler, Nicole Kelly, Ryan Luedtke, Quang Ly, Jeffrey Miller, Tamara Prochnow, Keith Schmoll, Samuel Silverthorn, Wade Williams, Jeremy Wolff, Stacy Wolle, Amy Yahnke, Connie Ziemann

### **Class of 1988**

Mark Bassett, David Bergt, David Bremer, Adam N. Breitbarth, Travis Darnell, Nathan Graphenteen, Benjamin Harley, Christopher Hatfield, Brian Hinz, Ryan Hinz, Trana Jaqua, Stephen Kopeschka, Paul Kubal, Kara Laven, Lori Maday, Mark Milow, Troy Rippentrop, Stephanie Sanders, Reid Schwieger, Zebulon Skow, John Skwiot, Tonia Smith, Mark Westcott

### **Class of 1989**

Beth Anderson, Melissa Atzenhoefer, Jason Becker, Sonja Breitbarth, Naomi Bremer, Christianna Danner, Melissa Draper, Jill Jones, Jill Malo, Nakia Geronsin Paskey, Kristi Roesner, Tracy Sheely, Angela Simmering, Angela Stadler, Steven Steuber, Tabitha Traver, Amy Williams

### **Class of 1990**

Christine Bergt, Jonathan Beebe, Adam K. Breitbarth, Jason Danner, Karla Diekmann, Melissa Hartmann, Matthew Hinz, Kari Howk, Sarah Klopp, Sonja Prochnow, Justin Yahnke

Rosemary Rosenberg, 1991 (PT)  
 Paul Engelby, 1994 – (I)  
 Elaine Royuk, 1995-2002 (K)  
 Wendy Borcharding, 1997-1999 (K)  
 Rebecca (Thurber) Taylor, 2000-2004 (K) (PK)  
 Carla Fast, 2001– (PT)  
 Elizabeth Preuss, 2008 (PT)  
 Kara Closs, 2003 – (PK)  
 Katie Breitbarth, 2004-2005 (K)  
 Kristen Wille 2006 – (K)  
 Elaine Lieder, 2007 – (L)  
 Deb Bertram, 2007 – (PT)

## **Confirmation Classes of the last 25 Years**

### **Class of 1984**

Lisa Basset, Jacki Fellersen, Jodi Glienke, Heather Harley, Jonathan Hinz, Heather Hall, Brenda Hanson, Robbi Hurlburt, David Kopeschka, Joel Krause, Kristen Laffey, Angela Miller, Holly Mueller, Scott Ohm, Nancy Quiring, Lisa Ristau, Angela Saxton, Cynthia Schultz, Dawn Seydel, Carol Stusse, Jennifer Utermarck

### **Class of 1985**

Amy Ella Axel, Jennifer Marie Baarts, Kim Rene Behrends, Karla Marie Behrens, Jason Hale Breitbarth, Jeremy Jay Breitbarth, Marc Alan Brinkman, Stephen James Cone, Lisa Jo Detert, Molly Marie DeWar, Tara Leigh Dittbenner, Chad Christopher Gieseke, Debra Kay Goebel, Jeffrey David Hatfield, Christoph Aaron Hillmer, Dawn Marie Hinz, Darrin Paul Johnson, Chad Allan Klopp, James Darrel Leiding, Barry William Maday, Todd Michael Malo, Amy Leigh Olson, Jillayne Elizabeth Roloff, Rhonda Sue Sanders, Douglas Wayne Schroeder, Kyle Nathan Schultze, Ryan Layne Schweiger, Tisha Lynn Smith, Matthew Paul Spielman, Jarrid Lee Steffen, Eric Thor Tungland, Stephanie Jo Voss, Julie Ann Westcott, Jason James Wetzell, Jerald Gideon Wolff

was made that the Trustees and Board of Stewardship could make arrangements for the sale of such grain and produce that were donated.

The Lord's Supper, and its availability on festival days of the church year, was considered in July of 1990. At the request of Pastor Schultz, Holy Communion was not to be offered at future Good Friday services. However, the Eucharist would be an integral part of certain church festivals. The list of the specific festivals varied according to how each board's minutes were written. Each list stated that Holy Communion would be celebrated on Christmas Day and Easter. Some lists included Epiphany and Pentecost. Ascension Day was never mentioned. Previous to this decision, the Lord's Supper was celebrated at Church festivals only if they occurred on regular Communion Sundays. In August of 1990, the Elders ratified this concept, although the specific festivals were never clearly defined.

In a lengthy Voters' meeting on October 17, 1990, there was a discussion item to "consider" allowing women to vote. The meeting commenced at 7:03 p.m. The suffrage suggestion came late in the evening. Immediately after that suggestion, a motion was made, seconded, and passed to adjourn the meeting. The motion for adjournment passed by one vote: 26-25. The Voters' Assembly adjourned at 10:26 p.m. Thus, the question was avoided for a while longer.

Women's suffrage was allowed by the LCMS as early as 1969. At St. Paul Lutheran Church, this had never been established, although the ladies of the parish were welcome to attend Voters' meetings and did so from time to time, voicing their opinions as they wished. In 1991, a motion was made "to allow looking at a constitutional change to allow women voters". This was followed by a move and second to table the motion. The motion was tabled by a vote of 31 to 26. More years had to pass before this change came to St. Paul Lutheran Church.





Rev. Roger Abernathy

In June of 1991, Pastor Schulz announced that he had accepted a call to a dual parish in southern Iowa. He was granted a peaceful release as of July 14, 1991, after serving here for two years. Once again the congregation began the Call process. After several Calls were declined, the Voters again requested a seminary graduate. Rev. Roger Abernathy, a spring graduate of Concordia Seminary, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, was installed as Associate Pastor on June 28, 1992 at a 3:00 p.m. service.

In the September 1992 minutes of the Church Council it was announced that Pastor Harley would undertake the monumental task of translating all of the German records of the church from the beginning. There were records dating back to 1880 when ministry first began here in Fairmont before the church was actually organized. He translated the book of Official Acts (Baptisms, Confirmations, Marriages, and Funerals) and all minutes of the Voters' Assembly. These English translations have made genealogical and historical research much easier for the current non-German speaking membership.

In October of 1992, the "Minister of Music" title was changed to "Director of Music" at the suggestion of Pastor Abernathy and with the full agreement of the Minister/Director of Music.

Early in 1993 the congregation approved an official statement of this church regarding the situation of cohabitation by unmarried couples. The document made note of the fact that while this had become largely acceptable in the prevailing national culture, God's word had not changed regarding this 6<sup>th</sup> Commandment issue.

In the October 1993 Voters' meeting, there was discussion of making both the common cup and individual cup options available at every service of Holy Communion. The Church Council decided to have a trial period of four Communion Sundays in which both

evening. Four to six helpers devoted their morning hours to peeling and slicing of fruit. These helpers include women (and some men) of all ages. From 1975-2000 Lowell Rost served as chairman of the Fairstand with the able help of his wife, Audrine. Their philosophy was, "Offer good food for a reasonable price". That saying has continued to be the motto of the co-chairmanship assumed by Greg Gellert and Chuck Northwick in 2001. The congregation has continued to be appreciative of the work of the Fairstand and all who have made it successful.

### Teachers of St. Paul Lutheran School

A complete listing of all individuals who taught at St. Paul Lutheran School from its inception in 1895 is on page 77 of A Century of Blessings. Those listed here include people who taught during the 25 year span of 1983-2008. (Some teachers pre-date this era and continued to serve.) The dates are for the year in which the school term began each teacher's years of service at St. Paul Lutheran School. The code is provided for your use. N=Nursery, K=Kindergarten, L=Lower Grades, I=Intermediate Grades, U=Upper Grades, \* = Principal, PK=Pre-Kindergarten, PT=Part-Time

- Barbara Matthees, 1970 – (L)
- Kathleen (Bremer) Eyerly, 1977-2007 (L)
- \*Gerald Bergt, 1978 – (U)
- John Prochnow, 1979 – (U)
- Richard Eyerly, 1981-2007 (U, I)
- Joan Nehrbass Holman Abel, 1981 – (U,I)
- Annette Weiss, Jan.-June, 1983 (U)
- Sylvia Burmeister, 1983 (PT)
- Ann Reith, 1983- 1984 (N)
- Linda Wetzal, 1985-1986 (N)
- Rochelle Franzen 1985-1987 (PT) (PK)
- Terri Prochnow, 1984 – (L)
- Kathy Gratz, 1989 – (PK)
- Pauline Bergt, 1987-1989, 1998, (PK) 1998 – (PT)
- Sandy Beckendorf, 1988 – (PT)
- Kris Fabry, 1990 (PT)

faithfully sew as needed. Quilts and rugs are given to people who have suffered home fires or other disasters. In the year 2000, Pastor and Mrs. Harley made 197 quilts for Charity Club purposes. For the youngest members of our church, more than 1300 baby spoons and spoon/fork sets have been gifts for newly baptized infants. (Older children and adults who were baptized received other Christian gifts.)

By helping young and old alike, the Charity Club continues its mission of charitable endeavor indicated by its name.

### **St. Paul Fairstand**

The Lord has continued to bless the efforts of the congregation's fairstand these past 25 years. Proceeds from the stand have netted over \$189,000 for the church since 1983. Of that impressive figure, 88% was used to fund many congregational projects. These projects include world-wide mission work, the parish's annual Wittenberg Fair, and the Spirit Youth Group. Fairstand monies helped finance the updated heating and cooling system installed in the church as well as the installation of updated technology (computer and telephone systems) in both the church and the school. The maintenance of the pipe organ has received over \$12,000, and a new piano for the balcony was purchased in 2003 at a cost of \$4,200. Other much needed support has enabled improvements to the property in the form of roof repair, tuck pointing and parking lots. Moving expense for the pastors that have come to serve us was paid by the Fairstand treasury. The success of Fairstand projects has been possible because members of St. Paul Congregation have served faithfully and well. Approximately 200 workers have been necessary to fill 18 shifts in the seven days of Fairstand operation each August. Members of all ages have worked together for the church in this way; good fellowship was enjoyed and friendships have been formed through this endeavor. The Fairstand has always enjoyed a fine local reputation for its pies and other food. In 2003 a group of six ladies who called themselves the Food Team volunteered to take over the pie-making aspect of the Fairstand. These efficient women applied impressive organizational and time-management skills to their task and made approximately 320 pies during the week of the fair, with an average of eight to ten helpers per

types of cups would be available. (This had been tried several years earlier at a single Christmas Day service. Those people assisting with Communion on that occasion felt it was too difficult, and the idea of giving both options was dropped at that time.) In December of 1993, the Elders declared the trial period was successful, so both types of cups have been available at every service of the Sacrament of the Altar since then.

Mrs. Laurie Knippenberg Giff left the school faculty at the end of the 1993 school year. One of her former students, Paul Engelby, became the 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher.

In September of 1994, Mrs. Sharron Quiring, long-time Kindergarten teacher at our Day School announced her intention to retire at the end of the 1994-1995 school year. One dream of hers did come true before the end of her teaching career. In January of 1995, the St. Paul Kindergarten changed from a half-day program to full day kindergarten every school day, and Mrs. Quiring had the privilege of instituting this improvement.

In April of 1995, Mrs. Elaine Royuk accepted the Call to become Kindergarten teacher at St. Paul Lutheran School. She planned to move to Fairmont during the summer with her husband, Ron, who would be the new administrator at MLHS.

The schedule for the Lord's Supper was altered at the October Voters' meeting in 1995. Effective in January of 1996, Holy Communion would be celebrated on the first and third Sundays of each month as well as at the various church festival days. For many years, the Sacrament was offered on the second and last Sundays of the month. This had always been confusing for some of the membership. Everyone understood that the second Sunday was a Communion day, but the last Sunday was problematic during the months that had five Sundays. Some members would think the fourth Sunday was a Communion Sunday since it was also the last Sunday in most of the months.

On February 10, 1995, St. Paul Lutheran School was 100 years old! A series of centennial school events was planned, culminating on the last weekend in July with an all-school reunion open house on Saturday. A large choir of former students rehearsed for the special services on Sunday. A noon potluck meal concluded the festivities. Many former students and faculty members were present for the weekend.

In 1996, the Trustees briefly considered shortening the pews that abutted the pillars in the sanctuary in order to provide access to the seating from either the center or side aisles. The idea was dropped at that time, but was reconsidered ten years later.

In order to facilitate Distribution, the Elders voted to try the concept of continuous Communion from Ash Wednesday throughout Lent. The attempt was abandoned after the first Sunday in Lent.

Also in 1996, the Voters' Assembly was faced with deciding the posture of St. Paul Lutheran Church in regard to Martin Luther High School. At the April meeting, Mr. Royuk, administrator of the Christian high school explained that a decision would be necessary by the third quarter Voters' meeting. He explained the commitment necessary for each congregation to become a full member of the High School Association. In the July 24, 1996 meeting, St. Paul Lutheran Church voted to become a full member of the Association. A ballot vote was requested, and the motion passed.

Electronic mail became possible for the pastors and church secretary in the spring of 1997. The Church Council minutes of April 16 report that a modem had been installed for e-mail.

The school had a lot of activity in the summer of 1997. Large enrollment in our all-day Kindergarten resulted in a second section of the class. Therefore, several grades moved to different classrooms in order to have the additional Kindergarten next-door to the original Kindergarten room. Mrs. Wendy Borcharding became the additional teacher. Her husband taught at Martin Luther High School.

### **Prayer Chain**

The Prayer Chain is a group of St. Paul Lutheran Church members which was organized in 1980. The initial beginning was under the leadership of Pauline Bergt and Terri Prochnow. Throughout the years, this group has kept in touch for the purpose of prayer for specific people and situations brought to their attention. Maintaining prayerful privacy and concern has been of utmost importance. Many people, members and non-members, have been prayerfully supported by the petitions of this faithful group.

### **Charity Club**

The Charity Club, first organized April 11, 1921, as the Lutheran Charity Helpers, continued its many charitable endeavors during the past 25 years. The well-organized club maintained committees and chairmen for each club function. Typically, there were two monthly activity days, along with regular meetings on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

It maintained a custom of a birthday box as a method of collecting monies for various missions. In addition, Salad Lunches in the spring and Ice Cream Socials in the fall were held to assist funding. As a result, the Bethesda Lutheran Home received support from the Charity Club. Locally, the ladies supported Martin Luther High School, sponsored a Sunday morning radio broadcast, and provided several baskets for the Pie and Ice Cream Basket Social for St. Paul Lutheran School. Also, the Charity Club donated quilts for auction by the Hospital Auxiliary and Martin Luther High School. The group served as auxiliary support for the Lutheran Retirement Home in Truman until October of 2007 when the home was sold to a private enterprise.

The Charity Club has also collected clothing, quilts and supplies for various Lutheran service organizations including Lutheran World Relief, Orphan Grain Train, and both seminaries of the LCMS. In addition, congregational members residing in nursing homes have received lap robes made by Charity Club members. Furthermore, shut-ins receive floral deliveries during Holy Week each year. The members continue to make rag rugs with the help of ladies who

The group met monthly from its inception. They assumed their duties within the larger Ladies Aid including serving lunches, providing devotions and presenting the program. They also helped with rummage and bake sales and delivered Meals on Wheels to shut-ins of the community. Serving coffee and cookies at Lakeview Health Care Center was always enjoyable. They provided lunch and workers for the Bloodmobile. They served at weddings and funerals with some members providing pickles for these meals and the annual Ham Supper. The group gladly made layettes, health quilts and baby quilts, and sold jewelry from the LWML of Thailand. They bought a new altar cloth; additionally, hymnals were purchased to commemorate a member's wedding anniversary. They sent Christmas gifts for Seminary students, and enthusiastically supported the larger LWML mite-box project. (They usually were the top givers of mites within the LWML.)

These active ladies never had elections for officers within their group. They always took turns and willingly volunteered for offices as needed. In 2007, the fifteen remaining members became honorary members. However, they continued to have monthly meetings with Bible study, and kept volunteering for Meals on Wheels, the Ham Supper, calling and other areas of service. The group described itself as a "very close group-best friends. Some have been together for over 50 years."

### **Members-at-Large**

In 1969 the Members-at-Large group was formed to give an option for women who wished to be part of the LWML but could not commit to a particular Circle. However, in 1984, the group was renamed the Rachel Circle and held quarterly meetings for several years. Then, on January 1, 1989, the Rachel Circle reverted to Members-at-Large status. Although continuing to pay dues, this group was relieved of duties required of other Circles of the LWML. In 1996 the quarterly meetings were replaced with attendance at the main LWML meetings when possible. There were ten Members-at-Large in the 125<sup>th</sup> year of St. Paul Lutheran Church.

In a meeting on August 6, 1997, the Elders adopted a music policy that more closely defined what music is acceptable for use at St. Paul Lutheran Church. Particularly at weddings, some bridal parties were expecting use of music that was not appropriate. The problem became more pronounced as more churches in the community and nation left all decisions regarding choice of music completely according to the wishes of those involved. St. Paul Lutheran Church continued to insist that all music used in the church "make sufficient reference to the Triune God" in whose Name the service was invoked.

The Voters' Assembly once again discussed the question of padding the church pews. In September, Pastor Janetzke had obtained a bid for cushioning pews. On October 22, 1997, the Voters again soundly defeated the concept. The Concordia resource, Acoustics in the Worship Space was a reference for the discussion. A letter from the organ manufacturer and other evidence were cited that explained that congregational singing of the liturgy and hymnody would be adversely affected.

The issue of women's suffrage within the Voters' Assembly continued to be a source of frustration for some members. In 1998, the Church Council invited former Pastor Briel of St. John Lutheran Church in Maple Grove to preach for both services on February 1<sup>st</sup>. At an afternoon meeting, he explained his congregational church structure and constitution to the voters and other interested members. Later that month, a special Voters' meeting formed a Constitutional Committee to revise the old constitution and offer the adoption of a new constitution similar to the one Pastor Briel and his vicar had devised. This constitution would settle the women's suffrage issue and offer some other changes. In addition to allowing women to vote, a Board of Deacons was to be established. It would take the place of the former Board of Elders and Church Council.

Also in 1998, the Elders began discussing Hymnal Supplement 98, a new worship resource offered by the Commission on Worship of the LCMS. It was a book that would precede a new synodical hymnal which was published in 2006. The decision was made to

purchase 321 copies of HS '98 with monies from the memorial funds. The congregation learned to sing the Divine Service of HS '98 quite well, along with a number of new hymns.

The question of offering a Saturday evening worship opportunity was discussed at the October Voters' Meeting in 1998. A decision was made to include a questionnaire in future bulletins and newsletters to learn how much interest there was in this option. The Council minutes of February 17 indicated that the survey results did not warrant adding a Saturday service at that time.

Rev. Janetzke received a Call from St. John Lutheran Church in Midland, Michigan, in January of 1999. He accepted this opportunity and was granted a peaceful release by this church. His final Sunday in Fairmont was February 28<sup>th</sup>.

Since the parsonage was vacant after the Janetzkes left, the Trustees recommended that the Voters get rid of it. There was an attempt to sell the house to be moved, but that did not materialize. By July of 2000, arrangements were made for razing the house. The yard became an extension to the school playground.

In February of 1999, plans were made for the transition into the new constitution which had been approved by the congregation. The decision was made to govern the church under the old constitution through June 30<sup>th</sup>. The new constitution took effect July 1, 1999.

The organ received an addition of a zimbelstern, a set of five bells, in 1999. It was given by Janice Borchardt as a memorial for her mother, Erma. The zimbelstern was used to indicate Trinitarian Doxologies in hymn stanzas and for certain organ literature that would be enhanced by tintinnabulation. The zimbelstern could be set at varied volume and speed.

The first Call under the terms of the new constitution was issued at a meeting of the Congregational Assembly on September 19, 1999. As detailed by the new constitution, the name was selected by lot,

member at the age of 93. One of the many mission projects of the Katie Circle was 400 Day Brighteners Devotional Booklets. The group served Lenten suppers and meals for a variety of groups which met at the church including the Lutheran Laymen's League. The group collected Mite Money for Missions at each meeting, and annually depleted their checking account, using the funds to further support the work of the church. God continues to bless the Katie Circle!

### **Mary Circle**

The Mary Circle, formerly known as Division M of the Ladies Aid Society, was organized May 21, 1947, with the leadership of Mrs. O. F. Krause and Mrs. George Beulke. The charter members were from the farming community northeast of Fairmont. In later years, many of those first members became Fairmont residents. In 1984, at the time the Ladies Aid became the LWML, the group renamed itself the Mary Circle. In cooperation with other Circles, the ladies supported various mission projects and several local organizations. Bible study was always important, and visiting shut-ins was a priority. (In 1972, there were 70 people on the shut-in list.) In December of 1996, after nearly a half-century and with declining membership, the Mary Circle made the decision to disband. A Closure Meeting was held April 24, 1997, in the Church Lounge. Several members joined the Clara Circle, and others became Members At Large. The ladies shared many memories and were grateful for the years they were together.

### **Naomi Circle**

The Naomi Circle organized in 1948 with an initial group of six ladies at the home of Mrs. Gertrude Krause. At that time, these ladies were among the youngest women in the congregation, and they sometimes brought their children to the meetings. Baby showers were quite common, including six in one year for their own members. (They reported that they had trouble getting new members for awhile after that year!)

declined in numbers. The Clara Circle served a Lenten supper for several years. It continues to welcome new members.

### **Eve Circle**

The Eve Circle began informally in the mid-1970s as a group of young mothers who met for monthly Bible study. Some time later, after prayerful consideration, they decided to join Ladies Aid as Division B. (They chose the letter B for “babies” because most of the women were having babies and raising children.) In November of 1983, when the Ladies Aid changed the Division titles to Circles, this group became the Eve Circle. They felt this title was an appropriate choice, since most of the Circle members were women with small children, and Eve was the very first mother in the Bible. Bible Study remained the main focus of the Eve Circle. Originally every one took turns presenting the topic in pairs. Eventually, individuals presented the topics.

Through the years the Eve Circle has done several projects. One of the most popular was the Cookie Walk, which required each member to bring ten dozen cookies. At the December meeting, the entire LWML membership had the opportunity to purchase a decorated container and fill it with their choice of cookies. In 1988 the group redecorated the nursery area in the church basement, an appropriate project at the time, since many of the Eve members were frequent users of the nursery. In 1994 the group made a quilt, which was sold by silent auction at the annual ham supper in September. This Circle of 15-20 members has always required dues, which have ranged from \$5.00 to \$15.00 annually. Meetings are typically held on the second Monday evenings of each month from September through May. New members and guests are always welcome at the Eve Circle!

### **Katie Circle**

The Katie Circle met in homes on the first Tuesday after the first Thursday of each month. The meetings included Bible study, Circle business items and Christian fellowship. The membership ranged from 23 to 6 active members. Frieda Willard was the “Sunshine Lady” for many years until she decided to become an honorary

following prayer. Rev. Thomas Fast’s name was drawn by a member chosen at random by the president of the congregation. In October, it was learned that Rev. Fast had declined the Call. Due to the vacancy, the Deacons decided that Advent services would not be held during December of 1999 due to the increased workload for Pastor Abernathy. The calling process continued.

In March of 2000, the Congregational Assembly met again. Several calls had been declined by this time. Pastor Reimers, Circuit Counselor, informed the Voters that Rev. Fast’s situation in Jacob, Illinois, had changed somewhat. A motion was approved to add his name among the other men being considered. After solemn prayer, Rev. Fast’s name was again selected by a member of the Assembly. This time, Pastor Fast accepted the Call to become Pastor of this congregation. He was installed here July 23, 2000.



Rev. Thomas E. Fast

Also at the March 2000 meeting, the Voters’ Assembly approved a new heating/cooling system for the Church. For the first time, the large beautiful sanctuary would be air-conditioned during the summer months. The work took place throughout the summer. The air-conditioning was functioning about the time it was no longer needed for that season. However, it has been enjoyed and appreciated each summer since then.

In July of 2000, the Church Office was vacated and gutted to allow for complete renovation. Mrs. Schultz, Church Secretary, had temporary headquarters in the small entry room to the south of the main pastor’s office. The various office machines were located on the stage in the church basement. The church office was not completed for two years. During the renovation, windows were blocked to reduce the chronic leakage from the window wells. The perimeter of the room was fitted with drainage tile beneath the floor, and new cabinets and carpet were installed. Early in the project there had been some

discussion of switching rooms with the school library. The practicality of keeping the school library near the students was evident to the faculty, and the change of location did not happen.

Miss Rebecca Thurber (later Mrs. Tom Taylor) of Lincoln, Nebraska, joined our faculty as Kindergarten teacher in the fall of 2000.

The concept of adding a Saturday night service was still appealing to some members. In June of 2001, the Congregational Assembly accepted the recommendation of the Deacons to establish a 5:30 p.m. service for a trial period of one year beginning the second Saturday of September in 2001. According to the minutes, "The pastors and Deacons hope that adding this service will increase the total weekly attendance."

The congregation's worship at funeral services was enriched by a decision of the Deacons in October of 2001. The Board decided that a funeral pall would be purchased with the approval and guidance of the Altar Guild. The funeral pall was to be used in the Remembrance of Baptism rite in funeral services. In memory of their son, Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Krause donated the beautiful pall that now graces the caskets of loved ones as the congregation and families prepare to lay them to rest.

In 2002, a popular project headed by Mr. and Mrs. David Gratz came to fruition. Sufficient funds were raised from the congregation and community to raze the old playground with its aging structures and install all new equipment. It proved to be quite popular with the children of St. Paul Lutheran School and children of the community who also enjoyed access. Any time the weather permitted, children were using the new playground.

Our Pre-School program continued to enjoy an excellent reputation in the community, and it continued to grow. In 2003 Mrs. Kara Closs was hired for the 3-year-old part of the program.

### **Anna Circle**

The main objectives of the Anna Circle have been to edify Christian women's lives through Bible study, serving Christ and His church through special projects, performing services within the congregation such as Altar Guild, LWML, holding offices, delivering Meals on Wheels, and collecting "mites" to spread the Gospel, and enjoying Christian fellowship. The ladies met on the second Thursday of each month with the exceptions of July and August. Meetings were held in the church lounge or in members' homes. In June the ladies met at a local restaurant, and in December potluck meetings were held at a member's home. Each meeting opened with prayer and Bible study led by that month's hostess. The minutes of the LWML meetings were read, which informed the members of any obligations they had: kitchen cleaning, visiting shut-ins, serving LWML meetings or coffee at nursing homes. The Anna Circle served at Lenten suppers, craft sales, auctions and anniversaries. They have had as many as 20 members. At the time of the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of St. Paul Lutheran Church, there were 13 members. Shirley Lemke and Lois Johnson, the only two charter members, have belonged to the Anna Circle for 48 years. God has continued to bless the Anna Circle as sisters in Christ through the fellowship they have enjoyed.

### **Clara Circle**

The Clara Circle, originally known as Division I, was formed in 1939. There were several mother and daughter members. The group specialized in creamed chicken and biscuit dinners. The members gathered at Christine Fenrich's home to process the chickens. It was quite an experience for first-time participants. The profit from these dinners was used to purchase the brown trays that have continued to be used in the church kitchen. In 1970 this group published the St. Paul's Specialties Cookbook. This book was such a success that three printings were necessary. They were sold in various places, including the local mall and also in Mankato. The Clara members cooperated with the Anna Circle on an Easter Bazaar project, and for several years held the Christmas Cookie Walk. In recent years the Mary Circle joined the Clara Circle ladies when its own membership

third octave was donated with memorial monies from Lyle Schlemme, Doris Spectrum, Albert Tenney, Hattie Wagner, William Quade and Ella Pothoff. In 1983, Richard Traver directed the group for a year. Jill (Hovick) Wiebe became the director until 1987, when Marilyn Hovick assumed leadership. She directed the handbells until the spring of 2007. Mrs. Carla Fast became director in September, 2007. Mrs. Fast also began a Tone Chime group with the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades and taught handbells to the school children as well. The first concert in the spring of 1983 was entitled “Spring Ring”. Over the years, the bell choir rang for weddings, community events, at local nursing homes, in parades, at LLL events and for worship serves at St. Paul Lutheran Church at least once a month in addition to festivals of the Church Year.

### **Lutheran Women’s Missionary League Circles**

The Ladies Aid was organized January 31, 1904. During the past quarter century, the group has continued to “aid” the work of the congregation in many ways. Depending on the project, some activities were accomplished by the entire LWML (or Ladies Aid) while other things were done by individual Circles. For many years, the subsidiaries of the group were known as “divisions” and were alphabetically named. In the Executive Board meeting of November 3, 1983, and in the Main Aid meeting which occurred the same evening, the decision was made to refer to the Divisions as Circles. Each Division chose a name rather than a letter designation. For example, Division A became the Anna Circle. In the fall of 1986 there was discussion of revising the group’s constitution. The December 4, 1986, meeting minutes were entitled as LWML minutes rather than Ladies Aid minutes as all previous meeting records had been designated, reflecting a change in the group’s name. Article I of their new constitution regarding the name of the organization recorded the decision of the group to be known as LWML (Lutheran Women’s Missionary League) rather than Ladies Aid. This was done at the request of the Minnesota South District LWML and the Synodical LWML organizations which encouraged every local congregation’s society to be identified by the LWML name.

By the summer of 2004, it became necessary to change the Sunday morning worship schedule. The addition of the Saturday night service had not improved the total numbers attending weekend services as the Deacons had hoped, and the two services on summer Sunday mornings were adversely affected. The decision was made to offer only one Sunday service between Memorial Day and Labor Day. In other worship decisions of that year, the youth were given the opportunity to serve as acolytes for the Sunday services. This was instituted as a part of the Confirmation preparation experience. The youth began serving as acolytes in October. Meanwhile, the Deacons’ minutes reflect that the concept of every weekend Communion was being considered. The pastors began a process of educating as much of the membership as possible in regard to returning to the ancient Lutheran (and Christian) practice of Holy Communion on every Lord’s Day.

In December of 2004, Katie Brietbarth began teaching Kindergarten due to Mrs. Taylor’s resignation. She taught the remainder of that school year and the following school year when she moved to New York. Miss Kristen Wille became the new Kindergarten teacher.

In April of 2005 a significant decision was made by the Congregational Assembly. A motion was approved to adopt the new hymnal of the LCMS, Lutheran Service Book, as soon as it was available. Another historical decision was made to have a new Communion rail constructed on the main floor of the church. It was to be located where the modesty rail originally stood in front of the first pews. Several pews would be removed, and some others would be shortened to allow access into the front pews from either end. (They formerly abutted the pillars and could be entered only from the center aisle.) This change was made to improve traffic flow during Distribution of the Holy Sacrament. More discussion was held regarding the frequency of the Lord’s Supper. A straw poll was held to get the opinion of those present at that particular meeting. The group was about equally divided regarding a change.



On May 18, 2005, the Deacons decided that Holy Communion would be offered at every service each weekend beginning September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2005.

In August of 2005, Pastor Abernathy received a Call to serve a dual parish in Perry County, Missouri. He accepted this Call, and his final Sunday at St. Paul Lutheran Church was September 25<sup>th</sup>, the same Sunday that every weekend Communion was instituted. In his sermon he commended the congregation for this return to original Lutheran practice from the time of the Reformation.

On the Saturday night and Sunday morning of Pastor Abernathy's farewell services, there was heavy rainfall resulting in lots of water throughout the church basement. The church had had chronic leakage problems for several years, much to the distress of the Trustees and membership. A number of attempts had been made over the years to stop the leakage in various parts of the facility. Damage was done to the interior walls of the sanctuary, particularly in the bell tower area. In the spring of 2006, the Trustees contracted a firm that had done some successful tuck-pointing and sealing work on the building. At their recommendation, a copper roof was installed on the top of the bell tower, topped with a cross. This was largely successful. At the time of this narrative, the problem seemed to be mostly solved.

Following Pastor Abernathy's departure, the congregation again entered a vacancy. Pastor Fast steadfastly maintained the ministry of Word and Sacrament among us. The Deacons cancelled Advent services that year in order to give him some respite. Unlike pastors serving alone during previous vacancies, he now had three weekend services to officiate. The lengthy call process began once again. The District President wished to visit the congregation before a call was submitted. He held an informational meeting and informed the membership that a self-study must be done in order to determine the type of ministry the people of St. Paul Church wanted. A number of names were submitted as possible candidates for the pastoral office. No Calls were made until 2006 when the District President finally had all the information gathered. As previously done when Pastor

## **Organizations of the Congregation**

### **Choral Groups**

The first choir was organized in February, 1893, and was called "Harmonia". There were 25 members. During the most recent quarter century, the main vocal choir of the church was known as the "Mixed Choir". The main function of the Adult Choir has been to support the worship of the congregation in hymnody and liturgy and with anthems appropriate to the Church Year. Several years ago, at the suggestion of several members, the name was changed to "Adult Choir". In 1981 there were over 50 members of the Adult Choir. The large number of singers as well as large classes in St. Paul Lutheran School necessitated an expansion of the balcony, which was completed in autumn of 1983. In 1995 the Adult Choir was able to purchase new robes after approximately a year of fund raising activities. They were used for the first time at Ascension Day services on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 1995. In 1998 the Choir learned the new Divine Service in the Hymnal Supplement 98 in order to help teach it to the congregation. The choir's teaching function was especially important when the Lutheran Service Book was adopted in the fall of 2006. There were several liturgies and hymns that weren't well known to the members of St. Paul Congregation, so choral support was especially helpful for worshippers during the transition to the new hymnal. Other choral groups that served the church during the last quarter century include the Junior Choir (grades 5-8) and later, the Jubilate Choir (grades 3-6). Various grade groupings also were used to form choirs for particular services. The Director of Music from 1981 to 2007 was Richard Eyerly, who also taught full-time in the parochial school and served as organist. At the time of the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St. Paul Lutheran Church, the Director of Music-teacher position was vacant. Mr. Scott Fuhrman directed the Adult Choir during the vacancy.

### **Handbell Choir**

The Handbell Choir was started in the fall of 1982 under the direction of Julie (Baartz) Wright. The first two octaves of handbells were purchased in memory of Cornelius Hubers by his wife, Lil. The

the church and to provide a margin of profit for the expenses of the celebration weekend. All former pastors were invited to participate in the observance. A decision was made to have a scale model of the church built to be used in future community parades. The youth group, under the leadership of Scott and Carol Fuhrman, contracted artist John Saggisor, a Fairmont native. He painted a picture which the youth group purchased for the congregation along with the rights to make prints of the picture which could be sold. The original painting was to be on permanent display at the church.

In 2008, after a lengthy application process, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Martin Luther High School, and our sister congregations in Northrop and Truman received a \$100,000.00 grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. The money was granted to help Lutheran congregations and schools through planned giving education. A major goal was to train lay people to reach other church members with information regarding the best ways to use their wealth to provide for their families, churches, and Christian schools.

For 125 years St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church has been a place where the Gospel has been proclaimed. Thousands of people have heard the saving message of salvation. Baptism, catechesis, Confirmation, Holy Communion, marriages, and funerals have continued in the life of the congregation. The Church Year continues to be observed. May God continue to bless the proclamation of His Word in this place.

*Here stands the font before our eyes,  
Telling how God has received us  
The altar recalls Christ's sacrifice  
And what His Supper here gives us.  
Here sound the Scriptures that proclaim  
Christ yesterday, today, the same.  
And evermore, our Redeemer.  
**LSB 645, St. 4***

+ Soli Deo Gloria +



Rev. Anthony T. Bertram

Fast was called, the selections were made by lot, not by vote. After two such Calls had been declined, the name of Rev. Anthony Bertram of Litchfield, Minnesota, was selected in a special Congregational meeting held on July 30, 2006. A short time later, the congregation learned that Pastor Bertram had accepted the Call! He moved to Fairmont in October and assumed his ministry of Word and Sacrament among the people of this congregation.

In August of 2006, 550 copies of the Lutheran Service Book arrived. Not all of the materials were ready; the organist's copy of the hymnal and liturgy were not yet published. Plans were made to dedicate the new hymnals on the last Sunday of the Church Year and begin using them on the first Sunday in Advent.

The Congregational Assembly of January 28, 2007, included the announcement by Pastor Bertram that the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the parish would happen in 2008. He asked that people begin thinking about how this milestone should be marked. Also in January, two teachers announced their decision to retire from the teaching ministry at the close of the 2006-2007 school year. Kathleen (Bremer) Eyerly had taught 3<sup>rd</sup> grade at St. Paul Lutheran School since 1977. Richard Eyerly had taught 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades and had served as Music Director since 1981. A call for a Music Director was made but declined. Eventually, the decision was made to leave the Music Director position open. The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade position was filled by Mrs. Elaine Lieder, whose husband had assumed the principal-ship at St. James Church and School in Northrop. She served as an organist and the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher. Part time teachers (Mrs. Bergt, Mrs. Bertram, and Mrs. Fast) were engaged to teach enough classes to adequately cover the school curriculum.

A question was raised at the April, 2007, Congregational Assembly meeting concerning the name of this congregation. Should it be known as St. Paul's Lutheran Church or St. Paul Lutheran Church?

The Deacons promised to do some research on the issue and return with a recommendation at a later meeting. After considerable study of various documents and consultation with the Recorder's Office of Martin County and the Secretary of State, it was learned that quite a few variations of this church's name have been used over the years. In 1951, a Voters' Meeting had attempted to resolve the issue by stating that the congregation would henceforth be known as "St. Paul's Lutheran Church". However, the Secretary of State's office was never notified. In 2007, this church was still legally known as the "German Evangelical Lutheran St. Paul's Church U.A.C. of Fairmont, Minnesota" insofar as the State of Minnesota was concerned. At the Congregational Assembly meeting in October of 2007, the Deacons recommended that this congregation be legally named "St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church of Fairmont, Minnesota". The apostrophe s ('s) was dropped from "St. Paul" in order to conform to correct English usage. The motion passed by the necessary two-thirds majority needed for constitutional changes: 33 voted for the recommendation, 16 were opposed.



Council of Deacons • 2008

Also in October, the question of our worship schedule was raised. The congregation continued to discuss the issue of whether it was better to have two weekend services or three. In addition, a decision was made by the Board of Deacons to reinstitute the old German Lutheran tradition of ringing the church bell three times during the Lord's Prayer. Individual Deacons received a number of positive comments from worshippers who remembered this custom.

In the autumn of 2007 a committee was formed for the celebration of the 125<sup>th</sup> (quasiquicentennial) anniversary of St. Paul Lutheran Church. The group, under the leadership of Pastor Bertram, met regularly until the anniversary occurred. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever" was the theme chosen for the



125th Anniversary Committee

observance. It was determined that the official observance would be held October 25<sup>-26</sup>, 2008. The Saturday service would be planned to follow the "yesterday" portion of the theme. The early Sunday service would be considered "today", and the later Sunday service would emphasize the "forever" aspect. A design for a Christmas tree ornament was selected that displayed a drawing of the church, the anniversary theme, and the years of the congregation's life. They were sold for \$5.00 each as a keepsake for members and friends of