

Epistle April 2024

We, as members of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church have come to faith by God's grace and have seen that Jesus came to earth to save us from our sins. We are compelled to grow spiritually and to share this good news with each other, through the Word and Sacraments. We, as our loving response, will present Christ crucified to the world. We apply these truths in our daily lives all to the glory of God!



But now, this is what the Lord says—he who created you, Jacob, he who formed you, Israel: “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.”

Isaiah 43:1

God Puts His Name on Christians

One of the world's most famous artists was Michelangelo. One interesting fact about Michelangelo and his works is that he only put his name on one of his sculptures. It's his work known as the *Pieta*, a marble statue of Mary holding Jesus after he's taken down from the cross.

Michelangelo signed that sculpture in an unusual way. Instead of the typical, “Michelangelo made this.” He signed it, “Michelangelo was making this.” It's like he was saying that he had started this work of art but had not yet completed it.

That's what life can feel like for Christians. They know that God has made them. Not only did he create them, but he put his name on them, too. And yet, their lives can feel unfinished and unsettled. They can struggle with the same sins they struggled with for years. They can feel incomplete.

It's likely Michelangelo signed his sculpture as if it were incomplete because he was such a perfectionist. He never felt his work was truly finished. When Christians look at their lives, they see how imperfect they are. But that's not how God views them.

God sees Christians through the work of his Son, Jesus. His life was a masterpiece of perfect obedience to God. Instead of signing his name on his masterpiece, Jesus signs the names of those who believe in him. Jesus signed “It is finished,” not “was finishing.” God sees finished when he looks at Christians. He sees complete perfection.

Christians live in the tension of the already and the not yet. They are already saved by God even though their lives may not yet look like it. It is a reality that sin will always be a struggle until God calls them home to heaven.

But Christians don't need to be afraid because God knows their names. Jesus has signed his finished perfection over to them.

Prayer:

Jesus, thank you for giving me your perfection. Help me in my struggle against sin. Amen.

Daily Devotions are brought to you by WELS and www.WhatAboutJesus.com.

Called Home to Heaven

Gary L. Jackson

November 8, 1963 ~ March 11, 2024 (age 60)



Gary Lee was born November 8, 1963, in St Paul, Nebraska to Billy and Cynthia Jackson. He was confirmed at the age of 13 at First Lutheran Church in Lexington, Nebraska. When Gary was 15 years old, he and his family moved to Fremont, Nebraska. He graduated from Fremont High School in 1982.

Gary enlisted in the USMC right out of high school. He went to boot camp in Paris Island, South Carolina. Gary served in the USMC from 1982 to 1992. He served in Japan, the Philippines, and South Korea.

Gary met Laurie Schroeder in August 1999. They made their home in Norfolk, Nebraska in 2000. After a courtship of 14 years, they were married May 10, 2014, at St Paul's Lutheran Church in Norfolk

Gary was a member of St Paul's Lutheran Church where he served on executive council and served as the executive trustee for the church and the school. His faith, family, friends, and the USMC were his life. He was a member of the Norfolk Lion's Club and the American Legion. Gary was elected to serve on the city council in 2016 for ward 3. He stepped down in 2023 due to health reasons.

Gary is survived by his wife of nine years, Laurie Jackson of Norfolk, Nebraska; six children, Josh (Brittany) Nichols of Blair, Nebraska, Jeremy (Katie) Nichols of Blair, Nebraska, Jessica (Justin) Ratfield of Blair, Nebraska, Richelle Jackson of Arlington, Nebraska, Carlie (Ethan) Preister of Battle Creek, Nebraska, and Colton (Paige) Schroeder of Pierce, Nebraska; 18 grandchildren; his mother, Cynthia Robertson of Norfolk, Nebraska; his sister, Brenda (Todd) Sock; nephew, Swazy Dalrymple of Ft Worth Texas; and mother-in-law, Carlene Hansen of Tekamah, Nebraska.

Gary was preceded in death by his father, William Jackson; stepdad, Wayne Robertson; father-in-law, Vail Oleson; and granddaughter, Jordyn Marie Ratfield.

Called Home to Heaven



Jennifer Nichols

Jennifer M. "Jenni" Nichols, age 43, of Stanton

She passed away Tuesday, March 26, 2024, at University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, Nebraska.

Jennifer Mary was born June 4, 1980, in Norfolk, Nebraska to Kim and Jane (Hansen) Brahmer. She graduated from Stanton High School in 1999.

Jenni was an active member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church. She loved her time with her family. Jenni enjoyed her camping trips to Maskenthine Lake. She loved to cook and bake.

She is survived by her children, Jeremiah Nichols (fiancée Alexis Brass) of Twin Falls, ID and Katy Nichols of Stanton; parents, Kim and Jane Brahmer; sisters, Kimberlee Brahmer of Stanton and Kathy (Bill) Little of Norfolk; nieces and nephews; and her loving pug bulldog, Holly.

St. Paul Lutheran Church

Executive Council Meeting

Tuesday, March 19, 2024, 6:00PM

Executive Council Chairman: Ron Kraemer

Executive Council Recording Secretary: Joel Wiedeman

Council members present: Joel Wiedeman, Ron Kraemer, Pastor Paul Hirsch, Gary Bretschneider, Mike Mullen, Gary Tiedgen, Scott Uecker, and Aaron Markgraf.

Meeting was called to order. (6:03PM)

Opening Devotion: Pastor Hirsch read from Hebrews 11:1-4 and 12:1-3.

Agenda: See attachment #1.

Minutes from Previous Meeting: Presented by Joel Wiedeman. (See attachment #2)

1. Motion was to: "Accept minutes from February Executive Council as presented via email."
 - a. Motion was seconded with no discussion.
 - b. Motion was carried with a unanimous vote.

Pastors/Elders Report: Presented by Gary Tiedgen/Pastor Hirsch (See attachments #3) (6:07PM)

1. Discussed the Ushers update. Sent out letters to prospective usher captains, ushers, and acolytes. Showed the three letters to the Council.
2. Discipleship Seminar. Nothing new yet.

3. NE District Convention. Kansas City June 3-5. Aaron Markgraf, Scott, Brown, and Pastor Hirsch. No cost to St. Paul's. Cost already covered. Looking for a lay delegate.
4. Easter breakfast. Pancakes and sausage and drink. Members bring fruit. Council and Boards?
5. Ixonia Visitors – June Event. Steve Getz on committee from WI. Group of 15 folks coming in June. Event planners help? Outside cookout? June 2nd? Sounds like fun.
6. BIC continuing.
7. Sending out mailers to delinquents.

Board of Trustees Report: Presented by Mike Mullen. (No official report) (6:28PM)

1. Aaron Geary. May have issue with interior tin panels. Looking at how to handle. Get in touch with painter who painted the ceiling awhile ago.

Board of Education Report: Presented by Aaron Markgraf. (See attachment #4) (6:31PM)

1. Numbers for next year. Encouraged by Kindergarten numbers.
2. BOCE had a short meeting.
3. TV is on in the church narthex.
4. Zemlicka Family coming this spring.
5. Linda Mullen's retirement "celebration" after a church service.
6. Musical night coming this Friday!
7. Trip to Minnesota the few days of the first week of April. 11 or 12 kids signed up.

Board of Finance Report: Presented by Gary Bretschneider.

1. Jeff Jensen and Gary Bretschneider are figuring out what needs to happen with finances. Endowment funds to be used to pay back to congregation that was for tuition assistance. There is also Radio Funds that have not been transferred to the General Fund. Possibly \$25,000 is available to move. Have announcement in the bulletin to explain to the congregation.
2. Do we still need to do a full audit for grant writing?
3. Should we get some more help for seeking grants?
4. Need a 501.C.3 letter from IRS for non-profit standing document.
5. Windmeyer Estate fund is officially exhausted. \$400,000 went to the Church Extension Fund loan.
6. Have \$1800 for AED, plus \$1000 grant and \$1000 from Parent Connection for two AEDs. One for church and one for school. McKenzie family is helping to get them.

Vision Traction Organizer: No report tonight.

Building Committee: Presented by Scott Uecker. No official report. (7:07PM)

1. Progress taking place.
2. Travis Howard. Bringing in dirt from Uecker's to school site to prepare grade.
3. Trying to follow up with what's next? Concrete?
4. How about gym remodel and parking lot costs?
5. Do we need to send out an update letter?
6. Do we need to have some more help with leading Fundraising Committee? Is there someone out there that can lead this charge?

Old Business:

New Business:

1. Insure Building Construction Project? (See attachment #5)
 - a. Need St. Paul's listed as additionally insured from BC Builders Zimmerman Insurance.

- b. Church Mutual Insurance quoted \$7,256 for coverage.

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

1. Board Meetings April 2nd @ 6:00PM
2. Executive Council Meeting April 16th @ 6:00PM
3. Quarterly Voters Meeting April 21st

Closing:

1. Motion was made to: “Adjourn Executive Council meeting.” (7:40PM)
 - a. Motion was seconded with no discussion.
 - b. Motion was carried with unanimous vote.

Meeting was closed with The Lord’s Prayer.

AMEN. Length of meeting: 1 hour 37 minutes

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Wiedeman

St. Paul’s Executive Council Recording Secretary



April 1st Gina K., **April 3rd** Reece K., **April 4th** Ella K., **April 4th** Earl M., **April 6th** Matt B., **April 6th** Mark E., Louie U., Jean W., **April 8th** Joe Z., **April 11th** Barb R., Valen S. **April 14th** Kelly K., Zayden L. **April 15th** Judy B., **April 16th** JoAnn G., Ken H., Dwain K. **April 19th** Nancy B. **April 20th** Lorene H. **April 22nd** Skyler H. **April 23rd** Austin P. **April 25th** Kaden K., Karen M. **April 27th** Blake W. **April 28th** Marci N. **April 29th** Dave H.



April 21st Josh & Kristina Calhoon
April 23rd Curt & Kelly Dinkel

Memorials Given for the Month of March to the Building Fund

In Memory of Gary Jackson \$238.00

In Memory of Valere Winter (brother of Veryle Winter) \$1465.00

Memorials Given for the Month of March to the Radio Broadcast Fund

In Memory of Ervin Bohn \$2430.00

In Memory of Gary Jackson \$237.00

Church Attendance: Mar. 2nd/3rd **171** Mar. 6th Lent **101** Mar. 9th/10th **239** Mar. 13th Lent **110**
Mar. 16th/17th **173** Mar. 20th Lent **140** Mar. 23rd/24th **194** Maund. Thurs Mar. 28th **132**
Good Friday Mar. 29th **153** Mar. 31st Easter **278**

Communion Attendance: Mar. 2nd/3rd **131** Mar. 16th/17th **108** Mar. 29th **95**

Blessings on your month!