

Epistle January 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!



When the time had fully come, God sent his Son. Galatians 4:4

Barton Mitchell served as a private during the American Civil War. He fought for the North. Things were not going well for the Northern army. In fact, things were going so poorly that Great Britain was on the verge of recognizing Southern independence. If the South could gain just one more victory, Great Britain might intervene on behalf of the South. In other words, if the North lost one more battle, it might lose the war.

This brings us back to Barton Mitchell. One day, Barton and his comrades were on a hillside, taking a break from their march. The place where they were resting was a former campsite for the Southern army. As they sat, Barton looked down and spotted some cigars wrapped in a piece of paper. Interested in the cigars, Barton picked them up. And that's when he discovered that the paper around the cigars contained the marching plans for the Southern army. Quickly, Barton passed the paper up the chain of command. The information he found that day was enough to give the North a much-needed victory.

In so doing, Barton Mitchell may well have saved his country. It was one of the most dramatic episodes of good timing that history has seen.

The Bible tells us about an even better episode of good timing: one that took place in the town of Bethlehem.

The apostle Paul wrote, "When the time had fully come, God sent his Son." At a time when the Roman Empire ruled the known world, immorality and religious confusion seemed rampant, and many of God's people felt isolated and forgotten—it was in that moment when all things were ready. It was in that moment when God demonstrated that he was in control and sent his Son.

As you stare at that new calendar on the wall, keep in mind that God's sense of good timing has not changed. The One who sent his Son at just the right time to cleanse you from all sin is the same One who holds and blesses every moment of your life.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, you are the One who sent my Savior into this world at just the right time. Move me to trust your timing in every aspect of my life. Amen.

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

St. Paul Lutheran Church

Executive Council Meeting

Tuesday, December 19, 2023, 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, Ron Johnson, John Uecker, Scott Uecker, Gary Tiedgen, and Aaron Markgraf.

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

Opening Devotion: Council read from Psalm 111.

Agenda: See attachment #1.

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

1. Motion was to: "Accept minutes from November 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 attachment #3) (6:07PM)

1. Work is continuing Elder/Usher transition.
2. Continuing to make more calls to follow up on delinquent members.
3. Membership actions:
 - a. Transfer in:
 - i. Garth and Paige Spreeman
 1. Motion was made to: "Recommend to the voters to transfer in Garth and Paige Spreeman from Christ the Lord LC, Clearwater, FL, to St. Paul's Lutheran Church."
 - a. Motion was seconded and discussed. This motion was made because this wasn't discussed at Board of Elders.
 - b. Motion was carried with unanimous vote.
 - ii. Dorothy Kubal. Transfer in from Gethsemane Lutheran in Omaha, NE. Board of Elders voted to recommend this transfer to the Voters.
 - b. Transfer out:
 - i. Burt and Shelly Austin transfer out to Shepherd of Peace in Norfolk, NE. Board of Elders voted to recommend this transfer to the Voters.
4. BIC Class. Contacting 8 family units. Possibly 12-16 folks. Just started.
5. Pastor Hirsch will be gone from January 6th- 11th. Hirsch's are going to Arizona.

Board of Trustees Report: Presented by Ron Johnson. (No official report) (6:13PM)

1. Siding on garage on Saturday. Need some help.
2. Aaron Geary is hoping to get started on the Church roof after the first of the year.

Board of Education Report: Presented by Aaron Markgraf. (See attachment #4) (6:16PM)

1. Staffing. Working on a solution to address the number of students in the K-2 grades. Currently the numbers in grades K-2 do not support having three separate classroom teachers.
2. Vision statement was approved at the last meeting.
3. Board of Christian Education discussed tuition for the next school year, including a possible increase in preschool tuition for the first time in several years.
4. NELHS principal. Mr. Markgraf has recently fulfilled all the requirements to obtain his Principal license.
5. AED. Parent Connection is looking at getting an AED for the school. Should we get one for the church? They cost anywhere from \$800 to several thousand dollars.
6. Herzog Foundation. Christian Education Leaders summit in Nebraska City
7. Digital Signage. Two TVs have been installed in the school with a third to be installed in the church by the Communication Center.
8. Attendance is down three since last month due to family moving out of state.

Cemetery Report: No official report.

1. There have been a few burials recently of non-members.

Board of Finance Report: No official report tonight.

1. First National Bank. Sign to renew our line of credit for \$100,000. Our current loan is \$5,704.00.
2. Building Project. Elkhorn Valley Bank, \$330,000 wire to CEF. First National Bank, wire \$440,000 to CEF.

Vision Traction Organizer: Presented by Aaron Markgraf. (See attachments #5 and #6)

1. Reviewed the VTO.
2. Review of 1-year plan.
3. Review of Rocks.
 - a. #1 rock is looking at a January date.
 - b. #2 rock is looking at a January 14th meeting at Immanuel Lutheran in Hadar. Pastor Hirsch talked with Pastor Helwig in Omaha. Maybe consolidate some Pastoral duties with local churches? Need to see how the Hadar Pastor call works out.
 - c. Discussed at length the possible Immanuel/St. Paul's pastor call. A handout was given that was received from Hadar for us to look at.
 - d. #3 is still on the table.
4. Reviewed issues list.
 - a. #2 should get some action in the next month or so with the building project and Hadar pastor call.

Building Committee: Presented by Scott Uecker. (See attachment #5) (6:44PM)

1. Received the building permit from the City of Norfolk.
2. Wiring the down payment to Church Extension Fund on 12-20-23.
3. Shifting to fundraising. What's the next step?
4. Need to have another meeting with BC Builders to see what's the next step?

Old Business:

New Business:

1. Nomination Committee. 14 letters have been sent out. Need to assign folks to call the guys that have received the letters. Chairmen to call?
2. Preschool Instructor Call Meeting. Wait until next month.

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

1. Board Meetings January 2nd @ 6PM.
2. Executive Council Meeting January 16th @ 6PM

3. Annual Voters Meeting January 28th @ 10:30AM **Closing:**

1. Motion was made to: "Adjourn Executive Council meeting." (7:48PM)

- 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 35 minutes

Respectfully submitted Joel Wiedeman St. Paul's Executive Council Recording Secretary Attachments listed are on file.



Jan. 7th Hallie Spreeman, Jan. 10th Pat Jamison, Jan. 10th Jason Tollefson, Jan. 11th April Ebeling, Jan. 11th Val Zohner, Jan. 12th David Hille, Jan. 12th Bodie Kraemer, Jan. 13th Terri Weinrich, Jan. 14th Linda Thoms, Jan. 16th Kristina Calhoon, Jan. 16th Carol LaCroix, Jan. 18th Bill Ulrich, Jan. 19th Betty Hille, Jan. 20th Jeff Jensen, Jan. 21st LeAnn Maly, Jan. 21st Gary Tiedgen, Jan. 22nd Nikki Leuthold, Jan. 24th Scott Brown, Jan. 26th Kayli Kuhl, Jan. 29th Genavive Leuthold, Jan. 30th Dave Thoms, Jan. 31st Grant Markgraf



**Jan. 7th Mr. & Mrs. Justin Webb
Jan. 28th Mr. & Mrs. Mark Ellenberger**

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

In Memory of Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Klug, Mr. & Mrs. Al Baker, Delbert & Lois Retzlaff \$190.00

In Memory of Eldon Hirsch \$50.00

In Memory of Roxann Johnson \$225.00

In Memory of Ken Wichman \$40.00

Memorials Given for the Month of December to the Building Fund

In Memory of Tom Degroot \$25

In Memory of Inez Swartz \$20

In Memory of Eldon Hirsh \$25

Church Attendance: Dec. 2nd/3rd **162** Dec. 9th/10th **240** Dec. 16th/17th **182** Dec. 20th
Childrens Christmas Program 2:30/6:30 **323** Dec. 23rd/24th **99** Dec. 24th Christmas
Eve Serv. **164** Dec. 30th/31st **118**
New Years Eve Service **53**

Communion Attendance: Dec. 2nd/3rd **127** Dec. 16th/17th **122** Dec. 31st New Years
Eve Serv. **45**

Blessings on your New Year 2024!