



# THE STORY OF GOD'S GRACE UPON



1974-2024

# In celebration of 50 years of God's grace

## St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church and School

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

Pastor Tim Rosenow

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# HISTORY OF ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH BEVERLY HILLS, FLORIDA



In the summer of 1973, Florida became a part of the tenth district of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). It chose the name "South Atlantic District" and elected Pastor Raymond L. Wiechmann as its first president.

Prior to becoming a part of the South Atlantic District, Florida had been a part of the Michigan District of WELS. Mission work began in Florida already in the early 1950s with the establishment of the first Florida congregation – Faith in St. Petersburg – in 1955. In the years that followed, a dozen other missions were begun in Florida and several in other areas of the district.



Then in the fall of 1973, a family of five which had been traveling some eighty miles one way to attend a Wisconsin Synod church began exploring the possibility of starting a new mission in the Beverly Hills area. With the approval of the South Atlantic District Mission Board, exploratory work was begun. According to Pastor Dennis Lemke, the first resident pastor of St. Paul's, "Rev. Mark Goeglein from Peace Lutheran Church in Holiday, FL (about 80 miles to the south) was instrumental in the initial stages of organizing this mission. Assisting him was Rev. John Lawrenz of Zion Lutheran Church, Gainesville, FL (about 70 miles to the north). The core group leaned heavily on these men for leadership and guidance."

The impetus for the new mission at Beverly Hills came from a family that moved from Michigan to Holiday, FL and then to Beverly Hills. It was the Donald Popp family.



They traveled about 80 miles one way from Beverly Hills to Holiday to have their girls receive catechism instruction. They thought it would be a wonderful thing to have their own church in Beverly Hills. They got the ball rolling by contacting Pastor Goeglein and continued to work through him and Pastor Lawrenz.

The small nucleus consisting of only nine people – six adults and three children, including Donald and Ruth Popp and their three daughters – helped to begin the new mission. On Sunday afternoon, December 30th, 1973, the first exploratory worship service was held with 38 people in attendance. Pastor Goeglein conducted the service.

In early May of 1974, St. Paul's congregation was granted mission status by the WELS General Board for Home Missions. This led to Dennis R. Lemke, a 1974 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, being assigned as the first resident pastor.



He was ordained and installed on Sunday, July 7th, 1974. The service was attended by over 100 people. Pastor Goeglein preached the sermon, Pastor Lawrenz conducted the liturgy and Pastor Larry Zwieg, chairman of the South Atlantic District Mission Board, performed the rite of installation and ordination.

Originally, services were held on Sunday afternoons in the parish hall of the local Catholic Church, Our Lady of Grace, from December 30th, 1973 to July 7th, 1974 to accommodate the pastors who conducted the services.

The first Easter service for St. Paul's was held on April 14th, 1974 and conducted by Pastor John Lawrenz. A special mailing to residents in the Beverly Hills area helped bring attendance to almost 100 for the 3 PM service.

Beginning July 14th, 1974, worship services were held at 9 AM on Sunday mornings at the Beverly Hills Recreational Hall. Charter members of the congregation included Donald and Ruth Popp and their three daughters; Joseph and Eleanor Jegl; Ray and Lucille Rapids; Herb Schwabe; Harold and Frieda Dietz; Arnold and Edna Kranz; Janice Eiler; Ernie and Lillian Dayles; and George and Viola Gavin.

Upon the arrival of Pastor Lemke, the congregation rented a home at 56 South Tyler Street for the family to live. Pastor Lemke was married to Judy (nee Warnecke) on August 5, 1972. He graduated from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary on May 29th, 1974. They were parents of one child, Amy Joy, at the time of their arrival and later were blessed with two more daughters, Tracy and Jennifer, while still at St. Paul's. Additional children include daughters Emily and Cindy and son Kevin. Pastor Lemke later served at Shepherd of Peace, Norfolk, NE (1978-1990) and Beautiful Savior of O'Neill, NE (for about 10 years with Shepherd of Peace); Our Savior of South Shore and St. Peter of Goodwin, SD (1990-1999); and St. Peter of Weyauwega, WI (1999-2018). Since retiring from active ministry, Pastor and Judy Lemke live at West Bend, WI.

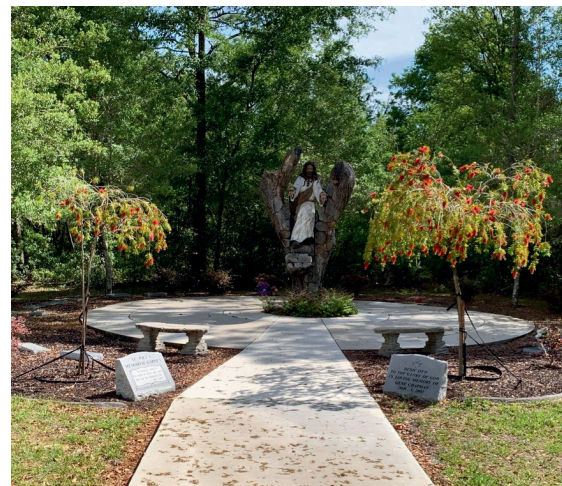


Some milestones for St. Paul's congregation as noted by Pastor Lemke are the following:

- Sunday School began on September 8th, 1974 at 10:15 AM; there were nine children who attended; Bible classes began a month later;
- First baptism: Larry McAllister on October 27th, 1974;
- First adult confirmands: Margaret Hillgardner and Walter Schmid on January 15th, 1975;
- Land-search committee members in 1974-1975 were George Gavin, Donald Popp, Ray Rapids and Pastor Lemke;
- The Building Committee members for the parsonage in 1976 were Harold Dietz, George Gavin, Joseph Jegl, Donald Popp and Pastor Lemke;
- Ground-breaking for new parsonage on February 29th, 1976;
- First youth confirmand: Linda Crowe on May 30th, 1976;
- A double ceremony of the dedication of the new parsonage and the ground-breaking for the new church was held on October 10th, 1976;
- Cost for the parsonage was \$32,000;
- The first confirmands in the new church were Terri Popp and Larry McAllister in 1978;

- The first Easter breakfast was held on March 26th, 1978;
- The median age of the new congregation was 65;
- Pastor's wife, Judy, was the first organist for all services.

Mission Festivals were held at St. Paul's already that first year of its existence. The first was held on November 3rd, 1974. Following the morning service, a filmstrip was shown of the six areas where the Wisconsin Synod was carrying out mission work. A church picnic was held the same day at Nature's Resort Campground in Homosassa Springs which included an informal service with Pastor Goeglein as guest speaker. Mission Festivals became an annual observance for several years.



The initial scenic site for a church building of approximately three acres and two miles north of Beverly Hills was purchased in May of 1975. On Easter Sunday, April 10th, 1977, the first worship service was held in the new church located at 6150 N. Lecanto Highway in Beverly Hills. On that Sunday the service time was changed to 10:15 AM with Sunday School and Bible class at 9 AM. The church had seating for 150 worshipers with the adjoining parish hall able to accommodate an additional 50 when needed. This was needed as some 200 members and guests attended the Easter service and fellowship that followed.

The formal dedication service of the new church and fellowship hall took place five months later on September 18th, 1977 at 4 PM. A door opening ceremony was held before the assembly of almost 250 worshipers filled the church and fellowship hall, as people came from several areas throughout the state. Pastor Goeglein, who was now pastor of King of Kings in Maitland, FL, preached the dedication sermon. More than 200 people remained after the service to enjoy a fellowship meal hosted by the women of St. Paul's.

On May 15th, 1978, Pastor Lemke accepted a call to begin a new mission church, Shepherd of Peace Lutheran Church in Norfolk, NE.

The vacancy at St. Paul's was served by Pastor Emeritus Harold Warnke until Glenn E. Wenzel, a 1978 graduate of the seminary, was assigned to St. Paul's. Arriving on June 10th, he was ordained and installed on June 18th during a 4 PM service. The service was conducted by South Atlantic District president, Pastor Ray Wiechmann, with Pastor Warnke preaching and Pastor Larry Zwieg performing the rite of ordination and installation. A new public address system, a gift from a member family, was used during the service for the first time.

Pastor Wenzel, a native of Menasha, WI, was married on May 31st, 1975 to Nancy (nee Deltgen) of Appleton, WI. They were blessed with their first child, Sarah, on February 22nd, 1977, thus arriving with a family of three. While at St. Paul's, three more children were adopted: Nevin, Nina and Robert, for a family of six. Later in California they were blessed with three more sons: Seth, Jesse and Zachary, for a total of nine children. Pastor Wenzel also served at Lamb of God in Rancho Cucumongo, CA (1980-1988); St. Paul in Riverside, CA (1988-2016) and Crown of Life in Riverside, CA (2016-2018). Pastor and Nancy still reside in Riverside, California



The longest continuous member of St. Paul's congregation is Lorene Seidenstucker. She and her husband, David, and two children moved to Inverness in 1971. They became members of St. Paul's in 1978. David received the crown of life in 2010 and Lorene continues to be a member of St. Paul's – 46 years as of this writing.

During the ministry of Pastor Wenzel, a special service was held on January 21st, 1979 in thanksgiving to God for all His blessings upon the congregation over its first five years. Pastor Larry Zwieg preached for the occasion. Also, St. Paul's had an active evangelism group that met every Tuesday morning and canvassed new people who had moved to Beverly Hills, helping with steady growth of the congregation.

Sunday School was an important part of our congregation's Christian education for youth from the very beginning. Following the arrival of Pastor Wenzel, Sunday School for the year 1978-79 was blessed by the Lord with remarkable growth. The year began with four students in grades 4-6 with one teacher and ended with fourteen students and three teachers!

Pastor Wenzel also commented, "I remember the Good Friday worship services in 1979 which were conducted in German for the many members who had been born in Germany.

Pastor John Meyer came up from Peace, Holiday to conduct the service. He stood outside before the service and conversed fluently in German with many of the people. I ushered for the service as I said: 'I can usher in German.' "

There was at least one other German service held at St. Paul's on Good Friday, April 17th, 1987. There were 51 people in attendance as Pastor Raymond Wiechmann of Bay Pines Lutheran Church in Seminole, FL preached for the occasion.

On May 25th, 1980, at the request of several members who had moved from the Tampa area to Brooksville and joined St. Paul's, Pastor Wenzel began conducting exploratory services at 8 AM on Sundays in the basement of the American Legion Post 99 Hall located at 208 East Ft. Dade Avenue in Brooksville, about 30 miles to the south of Beverly Hills. Pastor's wife accompanied the services with a small toy portable keyboard obtained from a yard sale. Robert and Dolly Donaty were the leaders of this small group of attendees. Apparently, the idea of establishing a congregation there was discontinued after Pastor Wenzel accepted a call to an exploratory mission, Lamb of God, in Rancho Cucumongo, CA in June of that same year, leaving after his final service at St. Paul's on November 16th, 1980.

Pastor Theodore Olson of Zion Lutheran Church in Gainesville, along with two vicars, filled the vacancy temporarily until December of 1980. Then the retired Pastor Warnke once again graciously served until the Lord took him home on January 30th, 1981 due to a heart attack at his home in Inverness at the age of 72. The remainder of the vacancy was served by Pastor Olson.

St. Paul's was vacant for almost six months before Pastor Robert G. Johnston, who had been principal of Michigan Lutheran High School in St. Joseph, MI accepted the call and was installed as the third pastor of the congregation on May 3rd, 1981. His oldest son, Paul, preached for the installation service.

Pastor Johnston, a native of Milwaukee, WI, attended Northwestern College in Watertown, WI; Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, IL and St Louis, MO; and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon, WI. He began his ministry in 1950 at the dual parish of St. Peter's of New Hamburg and St. John's of Baden, Ontario, Canada. In 1952, he accepted the call to serve as pastor at St. Paul's and St. Matthew's in rural Merrill, WI.

In 1957, he was called to be the assistant professor at Concordia Lutheran College in St. Paul, MN and in 1960 he was moved to become the headmaster of Concordia School at Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia. In 1965, he returned to the states and joined the Wisconsin Synod. From 1965 – 76, he served as co-pastor of St. Lucas in Milwaukee, WI. Twelve years later he accepted the call to be principal at Michigan Lutheran High School in St. Joseph, MI where he continued until he was called to St. Paul's of Beverly Hills in 1981. He retired at the end of May of 1997, after 47 years of ministry. A special service of thanksgiving was held on June 1st with Pastor Raymond Cox of Christ in Keystone Heights delivering the sermon and Pastor Richard Henning of Good Shepherd in Jacksonville serving as the liturgist. Pastor Johnston also served the vacancy at St. Paul's from 2004-05. He spent his last years at Ft. Wayne, IN with his wife Barbara Ann (formerly Marquart) until the Lord took him home to heaven on May 1st, 2022. He was preceded in death by his first two wives, Esther (nee Bluemner; died 1994) and Cecilia Acker (nee Pizon). He and Esther were blessed with five sons and a daughter: Paul, Mark, Timothy, Peter, Thomas and Kathy Hansen.

In 1984, the tenth anniversary of St. Paul's was observed on May 6th. The special gift of a brass missal stand for the altar was accepted as a donation by a member. In addition, the congregation added a reredos to the altar and a baptismal font. The following year frontal screens with hymnal holders were installed ahead of the front pews.

Also in 1984, the congregation was blessed by the Lord to the extent that they were now able to become a self-supporting congregation except for interest subsidy on the church loan from the WELS Church Extension Fund. Two years later the congregation received no further subsidy from the WELS.

In 1985, in observance of the 35th anniversary in the public ministry of Pastor Johnston, a special service was held on May 19th. Former district president, Pastor Raymond Wiechmann, preached for the service.

A noteworthy donation in 1985 was the first computer when a complete Commodore system with a printer was donated by one of the families of St. Paul's. Another family donated a brass Advent wreath with paschal candlestick in 1986.

1986 was also the year St. Paul's reached the milestone of becoming completely self-supporting, as it no longer received interest subsidy on its church loan.

In December of 1985, the congregation voted to add a second worship service each Sunday. This was to extend through March of 1986. For 1986-87, it was decided to extend the two services from the beginning of September through May, a practice that continued through the years until 2024.

On October 4th, 1987, a special service was held to commemorate the tenth anniversary of our church and fellowship hall. Preacher for the occasion was Pastor Raymond Wiechmann. At the same time, the congregation gratefully decided to gather a thank offering to cover the balloon payment on the Church Extension Fund loan which would fall due in 1997. The goal of the drive was \$55,000. The Lord opened the hearts of the people to complete the amortization of the entire debt.

In 1988, approval was given for the construction of a canopy at the entrance to the church and fellowship hall by the congregation's Men's Club. Exterior lighting was installed for the crosses on the front of the church in 1990.

Early in the spring of 1991, several members were interested in beautifying the church with the installation of stained-glass windows. All eleven windows were purchased with gifts from members at a total cost of \$3,957.



Divider curtains were also installed in the fellowship hall in January of 1992. This enabled the Sunday School to conduct classes in a quieter atmosphere. The dedication service for the new stained glass windows was held on October 18th, 1992. The service included the explanation of the various numbers, colors, and meanings of the eleven windows.

On May 24, 1992, a special School Study Committee was established to study the feasibility of a Lutheran elementary school. The committee drew up "A Prospectus for St. Paul's Lutheran Christian Day School", 12-page study guide with recommendation for establishing a school. At a special voters' meeting on September 19th, 1993, in view of a generous \$400,000 member gift and the study prospectus, the congregation took the step of faith in approving the committee's recommendation.

Groundbreaking for the new school addition to the church was held on January 2nd, 1994. Because of the inadequacy of the present kitchen in the fellowship hall, it was decided to include an area for an enlarged kitchen in the new construction. At the same time the voters established a fund drive of \$20,000 in commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the congregation.

On July 31st, 1994, Mr. John M. Melso, formerly principal at Immanuel Lutheran School in North Richland Hills, TX, was installed as principal and teacher of the school. On the same day the new school building was dedicated to the glory of God. The school included three classrooms, offices, storage areas and the new kitchen space. Provision was also made for additional seating in the fellowship hall by adding two double doors between the fellowship hall and school building.

In July of 1994, an additional 80 acres, adjoining the present property on the north and west, was donated to the congregation by a member. The property would enable the congregation to add parking spaces, playground areas, athletic fields, picnic area, nature trails, and allow for future expansion. At the same time, the offer was made to Southern Lutheran Academy to use part of the additional property as a site for their proposed high school. The offer, however, was declined by the SLA Board.

In August of 1994, the Board for Christian Education decided to expand the original number of grades offered from K-4 to kindergarten through eighth grade.

Tuition of \$1,500 per student was charged only to non-member families. Mrs. Kay-Lynn Johnston was called to serve as the kindergarten teacher while Mr. Melso served as teacher of grades 1-8.

Prior to the opening of the school on August 23rd, 1994, Pastor Johnston stated that "when I came to St. Paul's there were no children in the congregation, but the complexion of the community has changed through the years, and now we have 19 children in our congregation, ten of them school age. All ten will be attending our school." The total opening enrollment of the school was 17 students.

In January of 1995, Miss Susan Peesel was called to serve temporarily for three months to give Mr. Melso more time to devote to recruitment. On June 11th, 1995, Marissa Clark and Shelley Mirpuri became the first graduates of St. Paul's School. Lisa Johnston became the first kindergarten graduate. In October 1995, Mrs. Linda Mirpuri was extended the call to teach the lower grades.

Pastor Robert Johnston, who had served since 1981, retired from full-time ministry in 1997. A special retirement service was held on June 1st with Pastor Raymond Cox of Christ in Keystone Heights as the preacher and Pastor Richard Hennig of Good Shepherd in Jacksonville as the liturgist.



Pastor Timothy L. Johnston, a son of Pastor and Mrs. Robert Johnston, accepted the call to be the fourth pastor of St. Paul's. He was installed on November 16th, 1997 by his father.

Pastor Tim Johnston was born in Merrill, Wisconsin. He was a 1980 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and assigned to Zion and St. Paul of Colome, SD and Faith of Platte, ND. He also served as a civilian chaplain in Germany, pastor at Redeemer of Hettinger, ND, Christ of Bison, SD and Mt. View of Great Falls, MT before coming to St. Paul's. He and his wife, Judy (nee Bleichwehl), were parents of two sons, Nathaniel and Martin. Tim worked at Bethesda Lutheran Home in Watertown, WI before the Lord took him home on July 15th, 2017.

In 1998, the congregation voted to expand the school and include a pre-school.



Sherri (nee Sukow) Lueck was assigned to serve as the pre-school and kindergarten teacher to succeed Kay-Lynn Johnston.

Over the years, several auxiliary organizations assisted the congregation in various ways. The organizations included the Ladies Guild, Men's Club, Women's Group, Altar Guild and Banner Club. Also, for a few years there was a Senior Group that held lunches together in restaurants and made a few sight-seeing ventures.

Advent by Candlelight was a popular December women's get-together organized and led by Kay-Lynn Johnston, Carole Chapman, June Robinson and Sharon Welfel. It lasted for several years.

In 1999, the congregation observed 25 years of God's grace upon His church of believers at St. Paul's.



A special service of thanksgiving to God was held on October 3rd, 1999, with first resident pastor, Dennis Lemke, serving as guest preacher. That same year the school enrollment increased to 50 students with the addition of the preschool.

Principal Melso accepted a call to Williamston, MI after serving as the first principal of St. Paul's School from 1994-2001. He was succeeded by Mr. Derek Vanderheyden who served as principal from 2001 until his resignation in November of 2006.

Teacher Linda Mirpuri was taken home to heaven in 2001 and Jennifer Kolb accepted the call to succeed her.

Sherri Lueck retired from teaching in 2002 and Marily Krueger succeeded her as middle grades teacher.

Also in 2002, the church received a gift of \$600,000 toward the building of a new school building. This was made necessary due to the Lord's blessing of increasing school enrollment. Dedication was held on January 18, 2004. The school included three additional classrooms, offices, a gymnasium/cafeteria and kitchen. In recent years, three modular buildings were added on campus for additional classroom space.

In 2003, an Adult Handbell Choir was started.

Pastor Timothy Johnston served until 2004. His father and predecessor, Pastor Robert Johnston, served the vacancy until Pastor Mark Gabb accepted the call as new pastor in 2005. He was installed on April 24th, 2005, with his father, Pastor Bill Gabb, preaching for the occasion.

Pastor Gabb was born in Columbus, NE. He graduated from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in 1997, having served one year as a vicar at Hastings, MN and one year as emergency instructor/tutor at Michigan Lutheran Seminary in Saginaw, MI. Upon graduation, he was assigned as tutor at MLS for two more years and then reassigned to Crown of Life in Marietta, OH, where he served for six years before coming to Beverly Hills. He is married to the former Angie Rall. They have two daughters, Margaret (Maggie) Sims and Hannah Borgwardt, and a son, Jacob.

St. Paul's held Thursday evening services during the summer of 2007.

Following the resignation of Mr. VanderHayden, Mr. Kyle Bender was called to serve as principal and upper grade teacher of the school in 2007. The school experienced remarkable growth under the leadership of Mr. Bender. Total enrollment (pre-school and school) reached over 100 students in 2016-2017 and school alone (K-8) reached a total of 126 in 2018-2019. The high enrollment for the entire school was 163 students in 2019-2020.

Mr. Bender accepted a call to Greenville, Wisconsin before the 2020-2021 school year and was succeeded by Mr. Daniel Plath.

The congregation approved participation in a seminary vicar program to work with and be trained by Pastor Gabb. The first vicar was Mark Kahrs in 2013-2014. A total of ten seminary students received their vicar training at St. Paul's under Pastor Gabb from 2013-2023.

The original church building began to deteriorate as the years passed. The flat roof above the fellowship hall began to leak and repairs became frequent. With the increasing need for a new roof, more seating space for worship service and an updated sanctuary, a building committee was formed in 2013. The congregation approved a recommendation in 2014 to remodel the existing church building and fellowship hall. In January of 2016, the Cornerstone Stewardship Ministries was hired to assist with the "Building Treasures in Heaven" program and a sum of \$636,000 was pledged for the remodeling project. A goal was set at \$1.6 million. Shortly thereafter, the architect, John Holz of Plunkett Raysich Architects of Sarasota, was hired and presented plans for the interior and exterior church and fellowship hall remodeling.

The Rieker-Duley Construction Company of Orlando was hired in March and began work on the remodeling project in the summer of 2016.

A groundbreaking ceremony for the remodeled church was held on June 19th, 2016. Worship services were conducted in the school gymnasium for about 17 months during the construction period. A completion date of April 2017 for the project was far too conservative as the first services in the newly remodeled church building were held on November 12th with dedication on December 3rd, 2017. South Atlantic District President Charles Westra preached for the occasion. The newly remodeled building provided an additional 3,000 square feet of indoor space, doubling the worship seating capacity. It also added office spaces and more gathering space in the fellowship area.

The world changed and St. Paul's with it as the year 2020 brought on the onslaught of the COVID-19 virus. All in-person worship was suspended beginning the middle of March and did not resume until the end of May. Pastor Gabb and Vicar Callies did provide online worship during the weeks that in-person services were suspended. Also, Bible classes were conducted remotely via Zoom. In order to allow members to receive the Lord's Supper, small gatherings of members were held at church with devotions and communion. Unfortunately, this interruption, along with the continuation of the virus, affected in-person attendance when worship at church was resumed. Some members fell away and others continued to be content with viewing the services remotely.

The congregation observed the 25th anniversary of Pastor Gabb in the public ministry with a special service of thanksgiving on August 7th, 2022. His father, retired Pastor Bill Gabb, preached for the occasion with Pastor Luke Miller of Abiding Hope in Ocala, a former vicar of Pastor Gabb, serving as liturgist.

In 2022, as Pastor Gabb was now serving for a few years as chairman of the WELS Board for Home Missions, the congregation approved a recommendation to call for a second pastor to replace the vicar program and assist Pastor Gabb with the ministry responsibilities. Pastor Timothy Rosenow accepted the first call of the congregation and was installed on March 5th, 2023.

Pastor Rosenow was born in Menomonee Falls, WI and graduated from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in 2014. He served as pastor at St. Paul's of Prescott, WI before coming to Beverly Hills. In June of 2023, he was united in marriage with Hilary Diaz Suarez in Peru, South America.

Near the end of August of 2023, Pastor Gabb announced that he had accepted the call to serve as the administrator of the WELS Board for Home Missions. He concluded his ministry at St. Paul's on January 14th, 2024.

Early in 2024 Principal Plath and his wife, Beth, accepted calls as principal and teacher respectively to Westside Christian School in Middleton, WI. A farewell for them was held on June 2nd which included the celebration of Beth's 25 years in the teaching ministry.

In June of 2024, Mr. Randy Cochran, staff minister at Open Bible Lutheran Church in The Villages, accepted the call to serve as part-time interim principal for the 2024-2025 school year. Martin Luther College graduate, Hannah Foley, was assigned to fill the first grade vacancy, and Lucy Siegler accepted the call to be the kindergarten teacher after the resignation of Amy Marchbanks.

Thus, we come to this special golden anniversary of St. Paul's Lutheran Church and School. Our history reveals the many challenges our congregation has faced but also the bountiful blessings that our God and Savior has bestowed upon us. Therefore, as we celebrate this special anniversary of God's undeserved grace and mercy, may we do so with hearts filled with joy and gratitude and lives filled with the determination to carry out His work here in the surrounding area and throughout the world as we extend His Kingdom to His glory and the salvation of many blood-bought souls.

"Not to us, Lord, not to us but to Your name be the glory, because of Your love and faithfulness." – Psalm 115:1



## BRIEF HISTORY OF KINGSWAY PROJECT

In 2011, the Lutheran Home Association of Belle Plaine, MN and St. Paul's congregation entered into an agreement to construct and operate a senior retirement community on six acres of property owned by the congregation. The "Kingsway" project began in January of 2012 and the first phase of the community with 12 units, consisting of one- and two-bedroom villas, was dedicated in July with the first resident shortly thereafter. The old parsonage near the church, valued at \$55,000, was torn down in April of 2012 during the construction of the first phase of Kingsway. The building of phase two with another 12 units began the same year and was completed in 2013. By October of that year all units were filled.

The vicars of St. Paul's conducted Wednesday Bible classes for church members and residents of Kingsway at the Kingsway model home until 2020 when it was moved to the church.

The sale of the Kingsway retirement villas began in 2021 and was completed at the end of June 2022 for \$4.225 million. The proceeds from the sale were designated for the reduction of the church building indebtedness.



## **ADDENDUM**

### **PASTORS WHO HAVE SERVED ST. PAULS**

#### **Dennis Lemke (1974-78)**

wife Judy; served St. Paul's of Beverly Hills (1974-78); Shepherd of Peace, Norfolk, NE (1978-90) and Beautiful Savior of O'Neill, NE (for about 10 years with Shepherd of Peace); Our Savior of South Shore and St. Peter of Goodwin, SD (1990-99); St. Peter, Weyauwega, WI (1999-2018)

#### **Glenn Wenzel (1978-80)**

wife Nancy; served St. Paul's of Beverly Hills (1978-80); Lamb of God of Rancho Cucumongo, CA (1980-88); St. Paul of Riverside, CA (1988-2016); Crown of Life of Riverside, CA (2016-18).

#### **Robert Johnston (1981-97 and vacancy 2003-05)**

wives Esther (deceased), Cecilia (deceased) and Barbara (deceased); served at St. Peter's of New Hamburg and St. John's of Baden, Ontario, Canada (1950-52); St. Paul's and St. Matthew's in rural Merrill, WI (1952-57); Concordia Lutheran College, St. Paul, MN (1957-60); Concordia School of Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia (1960-65); St. Lucas of Milwaukee, WI (1965-76); principal at Michigan Lutheran High School of St. Joseph, MI (1976-81), St. Paul's of Beverly Hills (1981-97, vacancy pastor 2004-05)

#### **Timothy Johnston (1997-2003)**

wife Judy; served at Zion & St. Paul of Colome, SD & Faith of Platte, ND (1980-84); Chaplain in Germany (1984-86); Redeemer of Hettinger, ND and Christ of Bison, SD (1987-92); Mountain View of Great Falls, MT (1992-97); St. Paul's of Beverly Hills (1997-2004)

#### **Mark Gabb (2005-24)**

wife Angela; served as tutor at Michigan Lutheran Seminary in Saginaw, MI (1995-96, 1997-99); Crown of Life of Marietta, OH (1999-2005); St. Paul's of Beverly Hills (2005-24); Administrator for WELS Board for Home Missions (2024-present)

#### **Timothy Rosenow (2023-present)**

wife Hilary; served St. Paul of Prescott, WI (2014-23); St. Paul's of Beverly Hills (2023-present)

## **VICARS WHO SERVED AT ST. PAUL'S**

**Mark Kahrs** (2013-14) wife Olivia

served Calvary of Glenwood, MN (2015-23; serving St. Paul of Tomah, WI (2023-present)

**Darin Warnecke** (2014-15) wife Jenna

served St. John of Sturgis, MI (2016-24); serving St Paul of Winneconne WI (2024-present)

**Andrew Schrimpf** (2015-16) wife Sarah

serving Cross of Glory of Baton Rouge, LA (2017-present)

**Jason Zuehlke** (2016-17) wife Jenna

served Shepherd of the Lakes of Fairmont, MN (2018-22); serving St. Luke of New Lisbon, WI (2022-present)

**Luke Miller** (2017-18) wife Lilly

served as Tutor at LPS of Watertown, WI (2019-21); serving Abiding Hope of Ocala, FL (2021-present)

**Caleb Klatt** (2018-19)

served as Tutor at LPS, Watertown, WI (2020-22); serving Abiding Peace of Elgin, IL (2022-present)

**Lucas Callies** (2019-20) wife Emily

serving Good Shepherd of North Liberty, IA (2021-present)

**Joel Prange** (2020-21) wife Lydia

serving Amazing Grace of Dickinson, ND (2022-present)

**Karl Christie** (2021-22) wife Rachel

serving Our Savior of Kasson, MN (2023-present)

**Zachary Meier** (2022-23) wife Alexis

Serving St. Matthew and St. John of Ontario and Kendall, WI (2024-present)

## **PRINCIPALS WHO HAVE SERVED ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL**

**John Melso** (1994-2001) currently serving as teacher at New Hope Lutheran Academy of West Melbourne, FL

**Derek Vanderheyden** (2001-06)

**Kyle Bender** (2007-20) currently serving as principal at Great Plains Lutheran High School of Watertown, SD

**Daniel Plath** (2020-24) currently serving as principal at Westside Christian School of Middleton, WI

**Randy Cochran** (2024-present; interim part-time) also serving as staff minister at Open Bible of The Villages, FL

## **TEACHERS WHO HAVE SERVED ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL**

Kay-Lynn Johnston (1994-98 - K, 2003-19 – PS Director)

Susan Peesel (1995 served for 3 months to help Principal Melso devote time to recruitment)

Linda Mirpuri (1995-2001)

Sherri Sukow Lueck (1998-2002 – PS Director & K) currently serving as ECM director at Holy Trinity Lutheran School of Des Moines, WA

Jared Christensen (1999-2000 MLC student called as emergency teacher for grades 3-5) currently serving as principal at St. Paul Lutheran School of St. James, MN

Judy Johnston (1999-2000)

Carole Melso (2000-01) currently serving as teacher at New Hope Lutheran Academy of West Melbourne, FL

Roberta Mele (2001-03 PS)

Jennifer Kolb (2001-04)

Marilyn Krueger (2002-08)

Sharon Welfel (2003-08 Pre-School Assistant, 2008-22 PS Lead Teacher, 2022-present PS Director)

Patricia Vanderheyden (2004-06)

David Farstad (2007)

Nicole Kemnitz (2007-09)

Pam Johnson (2008-14)

Jennifer Joecks (2009-10)

Zachary Biebert (2011-18) currently serving as principal at St. Mark Lutheran School of Green Bay, WI

Amy Hand (2012-14)

Kristine Krug (2013-21) currently serving as teacher at St. Mark Lutheran School of Green Bay, WI

Jacob Biebert (2014-17 principal in training) currently serving as principal at St. Matthew Lutheran School of Spokane, WA

Aimee Clower/Marchbanks (2014-24)

Beth Rathje (2016-19 part-time, 2020) currently serving as teacher at Redeemer Lutheran School of Fond du Lac, WI

Justin Siegler (2017-present)

Aaron Markgraf (2017-20 principal in training) currently serving as principal at St. Paul Lutheran School of Norfolk, NE

Hannah Schmidt Markgraf (2017-19) currently serving as teacher at St. Paul Lutheran School of Norfolk, NE

Bridget Biebert (2017-18) currently serving as teacher at St. Matthew Lutheran School of Spokane, WA

Dale Rundgren (2018-22) currently serving as principal at Immanuel Lutheran School of Salem, WA



Kathy Rundgren (2018-20 part-time) currently serving as teacher at Immanuel Lutheran School of Salem, WA  
Luke Dorn (2018-22) currently serving as teacher at Salem Lutheran School of Stillwater, MN  
Allison Dorn (2019-22 – PS Director) currently serving as teacher at Salem Lutheran School of Stillwater, MN  
Emily Callies (2019-20)  
Josiah Jahns (2020-present)  
Lydia Prange (2020-21)  
Beth Plath (2021-24) currently serving as teacher at Westside Christian School of Middleton, WI  
Cindy Lendt (2021-present)  
Rachel Christie (2021-22)  
Lucy Siegler (2022-24 PS Lead Teacher; 2024-present K)  
Gaia Welfel (2022-23)  
Lindsey Klingenschmitt (2023-present)  
Hannah Foley (2024-present)

## **SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF ST. PAUL'S IN MINISTRY**

\*St. Paul's School graduates

Pastor Paul Johnston – WLS 1976

Pastor Mark Johnston – WLS 1978

Pastor Timothy Johnston – WLS 1980

Pastor Thomas Johnston – WLS 1988

Amy (Lemke) Frick - MLC 1996

Sarah (Wenzel) Homan - MLC 1999 currently teacher at St. Paul Lutheran School of Tomah, WI

Tracy (Lemke) Fedke - Mankato State 1998; Synod certification 2000

Jennifer (Lemke) Yahnke - MLC 2001 currently teacher at Trinity-St. Luke Lutheran School of Watertown, WI

Kevin Lemke – MLC 2004 currently teacher at Michigan Lutheran High School of St. Joseph, MI

\*Sarah (Welfel) Lahmann – MLC 2006 StP 1993-97 currently teacher at First Lutheran School of Elkhorn, WI

Cindy (Lemke) Zarling - MLC 2006

Emily (Lemke) Nass - MLC 2008

Jessie (Fields) Thiesfeldt – MLC 2008

\*Pastor Jesse Johnston – WLS 2011 StP 1994-99 currently pastor at Mt. Calvary of Menasha, WI

\*Pastor Daniel Johnston – WLS 2013 StP 1994-2001 currently pastor at Bethany of Appleton, WI

Pastor Eric Melso – WLS 2017 currently pastor at Living Hope of Chattanooga, TN

Kyle Melso – MLC 2017 currently teacher at Fox Valley Lutheran High School at Appleton, WI

Hannah Rundgren - MLC 2020 currently serving as teacher at Divine Savior Academy of Doral, FL

\*Margaret (Gabb) Sims – MLC 2023; StP 2005-15 currently lives in Canada

\*Hannah (Gabb) Borgwardt – MLC 2025; StP 2007-17 currently student at MLC of New Ulm, MN

\*Jacob Gabb – MLC 2027; StP 2009-19 currently student at MLC of New Ulm, MN

## **CONGREGATION CHAIRMEN/ PRESIDENTS**

Donald Popp

Dr. Leo Krzeminski

Martin Hambel

Phil Geistfeld

Harold Dietz

David Seidenstucker

Dennis Nommensen

Jim Teller

Donald Van Vliet

Robert Fonjallez

Paul Lueck

## **ORGANISTS/PIANISTS**

Judy Lemke

Flora Swanhall

Mildred O'Conner

Marilyn Krueger

Melissa Bender

Kathy Rundgren

Josiah Jahns

Patricia Spencer

Dorothy Metzger

Carole Melso

June Robinson

Luke Dorn

Cheryl Rutledge

Cindy Lendt

Nancy Wenzel

Jean Gunter

Marie Leinberger

Kyle Bender

Kristine Krug

Justin Siegler

Membership						
Church			School			
	Souls	Communicants	ECM	K-8	Total	Grads (110)
2024	219	188	32	107	139	
2023	213	181	32	95	127	2
2022	222	190	34	108	142	13
2021	235	196	27	101	128	8
2020	228	191	15	118	133	9
2019	253	204	32	131	163	9
2018	244	197	25	126	151	4
2017	227	179	27	97	124	6
2016	224	174	16	89	105	5
2015	246	188	17	78	95	4
2014	224	163	20	72	92	4
2013	216	159	22	61	83	6
2012	203	153	25	59	84	3
2011	190	141	29	49	78	0
2010	194	141	19	49	68	2
2009	195	148	28	38	66	2
2008	190	142	26	37	63	0
2007	170	126	16	33	49	4
2006	169	129	17	40	47	5
2005	178	136	16	31	47	2
2004	184	140	13	32	45	2
2003	190	151	11	29	40	2
2002	188	147	8	39	47	1
2001	183	147	13	33	46	4
2000	196	142	5	39	44	4
1999	206	162	3	46	49	4
1998	178	145	8	38	46	1
1997	159	130		36	36	2
1996	158	129		36	36	0
1995	166	140		20	20	2
1994	173	148		18	18	0
1993	166	151				
1992	167	152				
1991	162	149				
1990	149	137				
1989	142	135				
1988	129	125				
1987	135	132				
1986	140	139				
1985	134	132				
1984	133	129				
1983	116	110				
1982	99	98				
1981	90	88				
1980	93	90				
1979	123	100				
1978	91	80				
1977	66	60				
1976	50	45				
1975	52	46				
1974	32	29				





Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church Parish Hall in Beverly Hills, worship site until summer of 1974.



Our Lady of Grace Parish Hall in 2024.



First worship service at Our Lady of Grace Parish Hall on December 30, 1973 with 38 people in attendance.



Gathering of worshipers after the first service.





Pastor Dennis Lemke and wife Judy on July 7, 1974.  
Below, Pastor Dennis and July Lemke and family in 2022.







Installation of Pastor Dennis Lemke on July 7, 1974, first resident pastor of St. Paul's.



Temporary parsonage for our first resident pastor at 56 S. Tyler Street in Beverly Hills.



What the temporary parsonage looks like in 2024.





Groundbreaking for the new parsonage on the current church property, February 29, 1976.



Dedication of parsonage on October 10, 1976.



Church parsonage in 1976.





Pastor Lemke and Council members with church sign in 1976.



Opening of church doors before dedication on September 18, 1977 with Pastor Mark Goeglein, Pastor Lemke and Chairman Donald Popp (unlocking the doors).





Groundbreaking for St. Paul's church building on October 10, 1976.



Church dedication service on September 18, 1977.

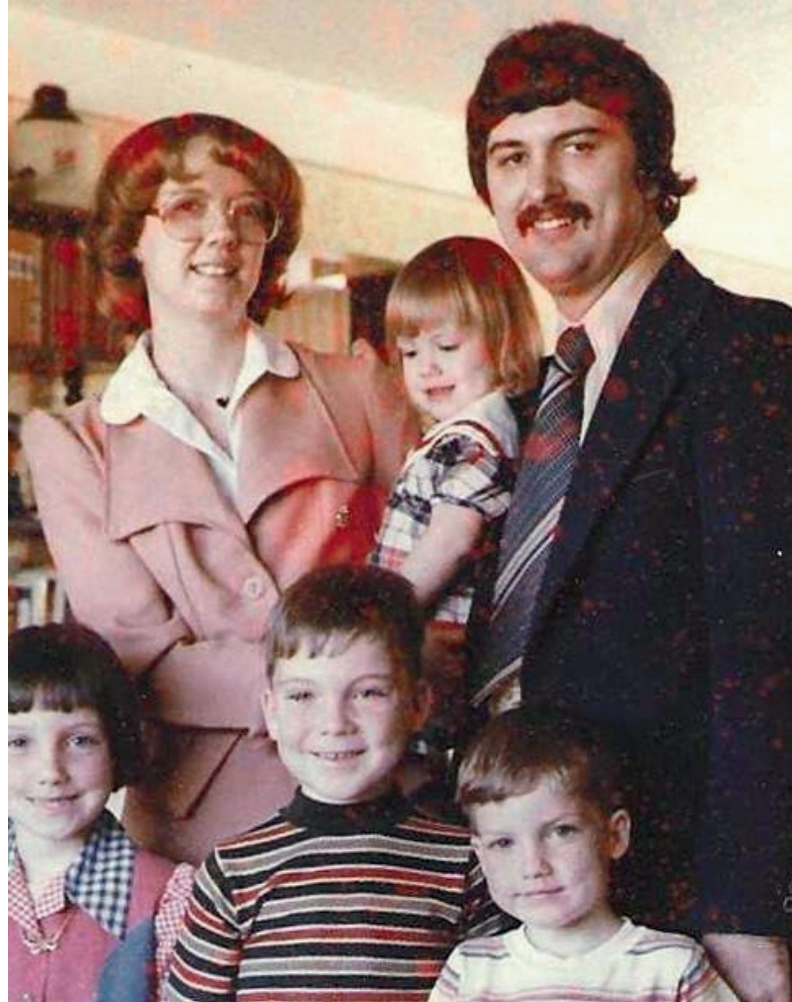


Gathering for the dedication of the new church building on September 18, 1977.





Installation service of Pastor Glenn Wenzel, second resident pastor, on June 18, 1978.

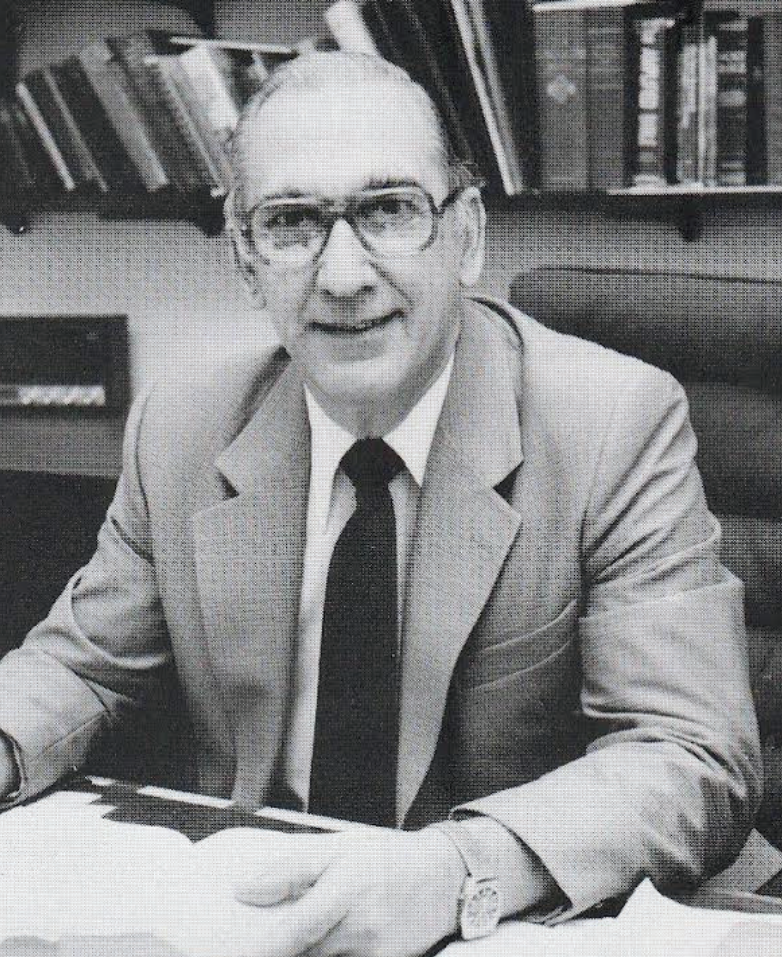


Pastor Glenn and Nancy Wenzel and family while pastor at St. Paul's.



Pastor Glenn and Nancy Wenzel (far right) and family in 2022.





Pastor Robert Johnston served as the third resident pastor of St. Paul's from 1981-1997.



Pastor Mark Gabb, fifth resident pastor, in 2005.



Installation service of Pastor Mark Gabb on April 24, 2005.





Pastor Mark and Angie Gabb and family in 2021.



The Church Renovation Building Committee in 2016.



Groundbreaking ceremony for the renovated church building on June 19, 2016.



Worshippers at the dedication of the renovated church building on December 3, 2017 greeting Pastor Gabb and Vicar Luke Miller.





Worshippers at the dedication of the renovated church steeple cross in 2017.



Pastor Tim Rosenow, sixth resident pastor, who was installed on March 5, 2023.



Pastor Rosenow who was married to his wife, Hilary, in June of 2023.



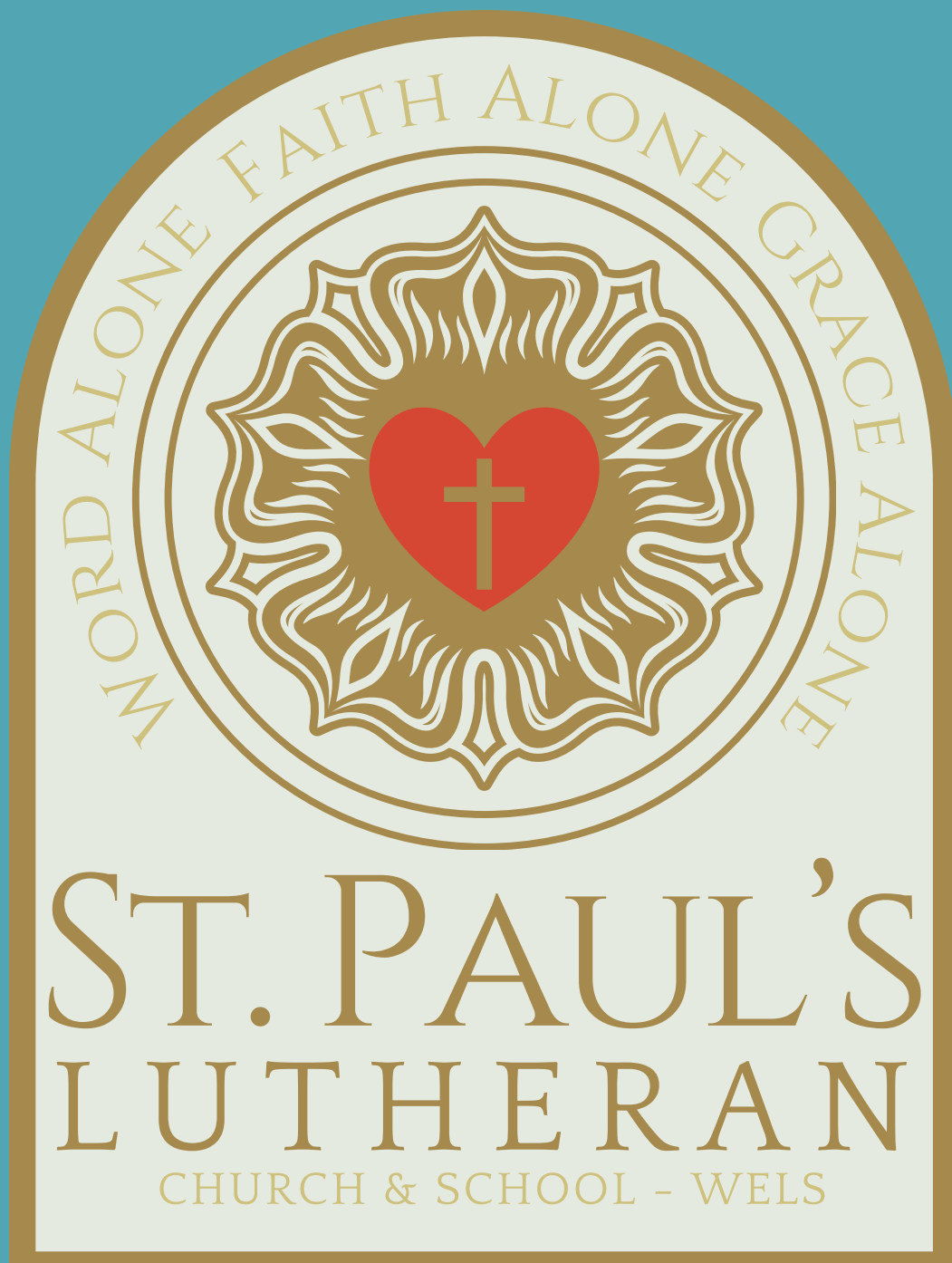








Lord Jesus, you have directed us to feed your lambs. We thank you for both the church and school you have kept in operation for fifty and thirty years. To you belongs all glory for this tremendous gift! Continue to bless our faculty, staff, membership, and families with a daily renewal of love so that we may continue to extend your kingdom of grace for generations to come. Amen.



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6150 NORTH LECANTO HIGHWAY, BEVERLY HILLS, FLORIDA 34465