

My Valentine

I don't know much about the modern development of Valentine's Day. That is, I don't know how it evolved from your run-of-the-mill saint day (honoring St. Valentine, who was martyred in 269 AD), to the chocolate-stained worldliness of bad dates and romantic comedies. But I recently read a little bit of the former in preparation for a chapel message at school, and I learned of certain modern practices that can be delightfully traced back to the eponymous saint. I give these stories to you with a caveat: like most hagiography, there is limited assurance in the veracity in them besides the fact that this guy existed, preached the gospel, and was killed for it. Now he's the patron saint of epilepsy and beekeeping (which seems like a dangerous combination). Nevertheless ...

In the city of Terni, northeast of Rome, in the third century, there lived a man named Valentine. Those were the days of tenuous legality for Christians, who were often violently persecuted for their faith. So it was that in the course of his vocation as a Bishop, Valentine was imprisoned for his faith. Like St. Paul before him, Valentine took the occasion to proselytize to his captor. The judge who imprisoned him put a challenge before Valentine: if he could heal the blindness of the judge's daughter, then the judge would know that Jesus was truly the resurrected Son of God.

Piece of cake. Or rather, piece of heart-shaped chocolates.

The daughter was miraculously healed, and the judge believed. Like the Philippian jailer before him, he and his entire household believed and was baptized. Valentine was set free to preach openly again. He spent much of his time consoling and ministering to the persecuted Christians of Rome and the surrounding areas. Even more poignantly, Valentine secretly performed the marriage ceremonies of Christian couples so that the men could dodge conscription into the military, which openly worshipped pagan gods. As a reminder of their vows, Valentine would cut heart shapes out of pieces of parchment and give them as gifts to the couples.



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SAVED

by Jesus,

SENT

to serve.

My Valentine

Continued from page 1...

Fast forward (for who knows how long), and Valentine was arrested again. This time (again, like Paul), he managed to proselytize to the emperor himself—Claudius II. Unlike the judge from before, Claudius could not be convinced of the preacher's message either by logic, rhetoric, or miraculous sign. So it was demanded of Valentine that he renounce his faith or be executed. Unsurprisingly, Valentine chose death. Legend has it, just before his execution he wrote a short letter to the girl whose blindness he had healed so long ago. Signed: "Love, your Valentine."

Then they beat him to death with clubs and cut his head off at the Piazza in Rome.

Again, true or not (and there are other stories about him floating around in the ether), hagiography is always fascinating and encouraging to me. And as the Lutheran Confessions state, the saints who have gone before us can be looked to as examples and testimonials of the faith. So this Valentine's Day, let us remember to thank God for the work that our brother Valentine did so long ago: he proclaimed the gospel to everyone with the intensity of a young man wooing a maiden; he defied his emperor's orders for the sake of love and marriage; and he gave tokens (Valentines) to people to remind them of Christ's love and commitment toward us.

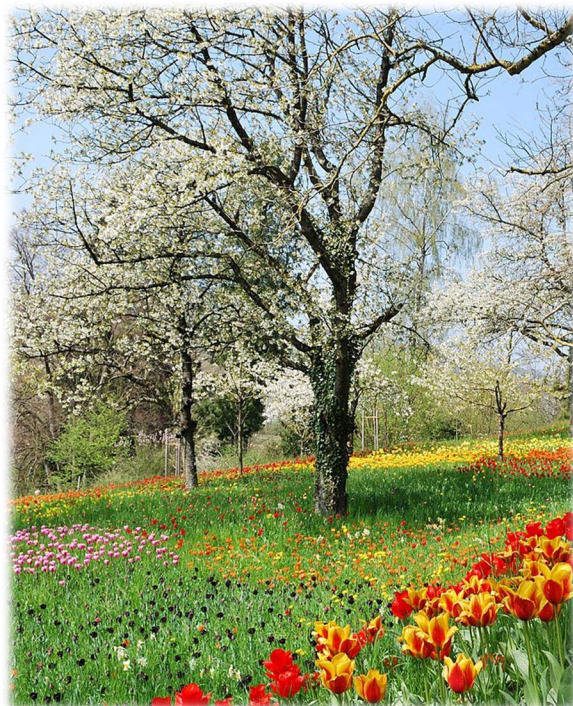
Above all, he willingly suffered the beatings and murder of his authorities rather than fall away from his faith in the one who suffered and died for him: Jesus Christ.

Happy St. Valentine's Day

From the Principal's Office

February can be a difficult month for educators. Christmas Break is long past, and Spring Break is nowhere near on the horizon. Gloomy uncooperative weather often forces teachers to have more indoor recess than normal, and the rubber has met the road in terms of putting in the hardwork to see small continuous gains in learning and student achievement. And yet, even in the sometimes muddy and gray days of February, St. Paul is seeing sneak peeks of upcoming growth and life. God is gracious and merciful, He grants glimpses and glimmers of what is up ahead. Early enrollment has begun and the response is delightful and encouraging. NWEA scores are almost complete and the Winter Scores, by and large, show strong improvement and growth from the Fall. Operetta rehearsal for the 5th-8th grade is in full swing, their competent and joyful voices resonate throughout the halls. Instrumentation for MusicFest is coming together as small ensembles and solos are being planned. The Third Quarter Wildcat Club featuring Jigsaw Puzzles will begin shortly. Volleyball for the upper and middle grades and PeeWee basketball for the very lower grades is just gearing up. So, although February may often feel like a slow arduous march toward March, there is much to be excited about. Thank you for your continued prayers and encouragement. Despite what the Groundhog predicted, Spring will be on its way before we know it, and with it all things of great growth and life.

-Principal Mrs. Valerie Matyas



Ladies Aid

Cathi Reymore led us in a devotion called Overlooked Blessings. Have we taken the time to think about how much we have to be thankful for? We are blessed for food, clothing and a place to live. If you have money in bank, in your wallet, or spare change, you are blessed. If you can read this message, you are blessed than two billion people in the world who cannot read. Don't overlook any blessing--thank God every day for His goodness in your life.

Ann Gould from Lutheran Braille Ministries talked to us about the Braille ministries. She talked to us on how Louis Braille started braille because he became blind at 15. The headquarters is in California where they print Bibles that are sent to many countries around the world. We will be having a shower for this ministry at our March 6th meeting. It will be a monetary shower so they can use for supplies needed. You can give either cash or check made out to St. Paul Ladies Aid. All ladies are invited.



Alaska Mission Update

First of all - thank you so very much to our St. Paul family for your continued support and prayers for this ministry! You have had a part in changing peoples lives and sharing God's love with others!!! As February is quickly coming to an end we are making plans for the mission trip that will be taking place in Cooper Landing, AK in June. This year is looking different than any other as our contact person in the community, Ladonna, lost her husband in November and she will most likely be relocating to Oregon by the end of the summer. Ladonna is 89 years old and a rock in the community. People respect her and listen to her. She has had a heart for the youngest of ones in Cooper Landing and has done all she can to connect with those families and kids. For over 20 years she has hosted a once a week bible class in her home for any children whose parents would allow them to go. She would drive her Subaru outback to the small community school every Tuesday and pack her car full of kids and bring them back to her house for fresh baked bread and God's word! Many children were baptized as a result of this time with Ladonna. The VBS mission is something that has reinforced the teaching that has been done in Ladonna's home. It is something that continues to feed into the lives of the young ones and the families there. With the high potential of Ladonna leaving things will look different. We have some very good relationships built with people in Cooper Landing and we will continue to lean on them for help with this program. We covet your continued prayers for the community of Cooper Landing, for the families there, for the ministry to continue in whatever way God chooses, and especially for Ladonna. If you would like to donate to this ministry you may send a check to

Copper Landing Community Lutheran Church
c/o Ladonna Herbert
PO Box 518
Cooper Landing, AK 99572

With VBS Mission on the memo line.

-The Schultz Family





St. Paul Lutheran School Operetta

Join the St. Paul Lutheran School, grades 5-8, on March 10 in the school auditorium as they perform the Promise U Operetta at 1:30 p.m. & 6:30 p.m.



All Things Considered #8 “God is Moving in North Korea”

When I first saw this small article, I was amazed and then thankful and then wondering, “How could this be in such a restricted, hostile nation?” Anything, anyone Christian is “disappeared” and rarely heard from again. As some of you know I dedicated almost a year’s worth of articles to North Korea a few years ago. The great sadness is that nothing has truly improved. Yet, there are small hopeful signs, and we are thankful. It is with that small glimmer of hopefulness the following is taken in its entirety from The Voice of the Martyrs 2022 Global Prayer Guide.



“When pandemic restrictions in South Korea forced discipleship classes to move underground, the instructors feared they would lose the North Korean defectors they were teaching. But instead, the teachers have seen unexpected growth in their students. One student who had failed to attend training in the past was convicted to stick with the training, and she did. After completing her discipleship training, she is now preparing to minister to North Koreans as a missionary.”

And we quietly rejoice and pray for her dedication, safety and ability to reach those for Christ that God wants in His family. She probably knows the trials and terrors of becoming a missionary wherever she goes and yet she steps out to do so. Well done thou good and faithful servant! Go with God. He goes with you.

Writing of this dedication and commitment we can only pray that we will be found worthy of being called, “Christian.” The coming times are fraught with troubles and needs of which we can only imagine and yet must prepare ourselves and our families to stand strong and boldly for Jesus Christ.

Join us for a fundraiser...



Monday, March 13th
4 - 8pm

Dine In or Carry Out
Printed Flyer Required

Pierce Road Bar & Grill
2903 Pierce Rd.
Saginaw, MI 48604
www.pierceroadbng.com

15% of sales will benefit the St. Paul PTO! Thank you for your support!

ST. PAUL PTO FUNDRAISER

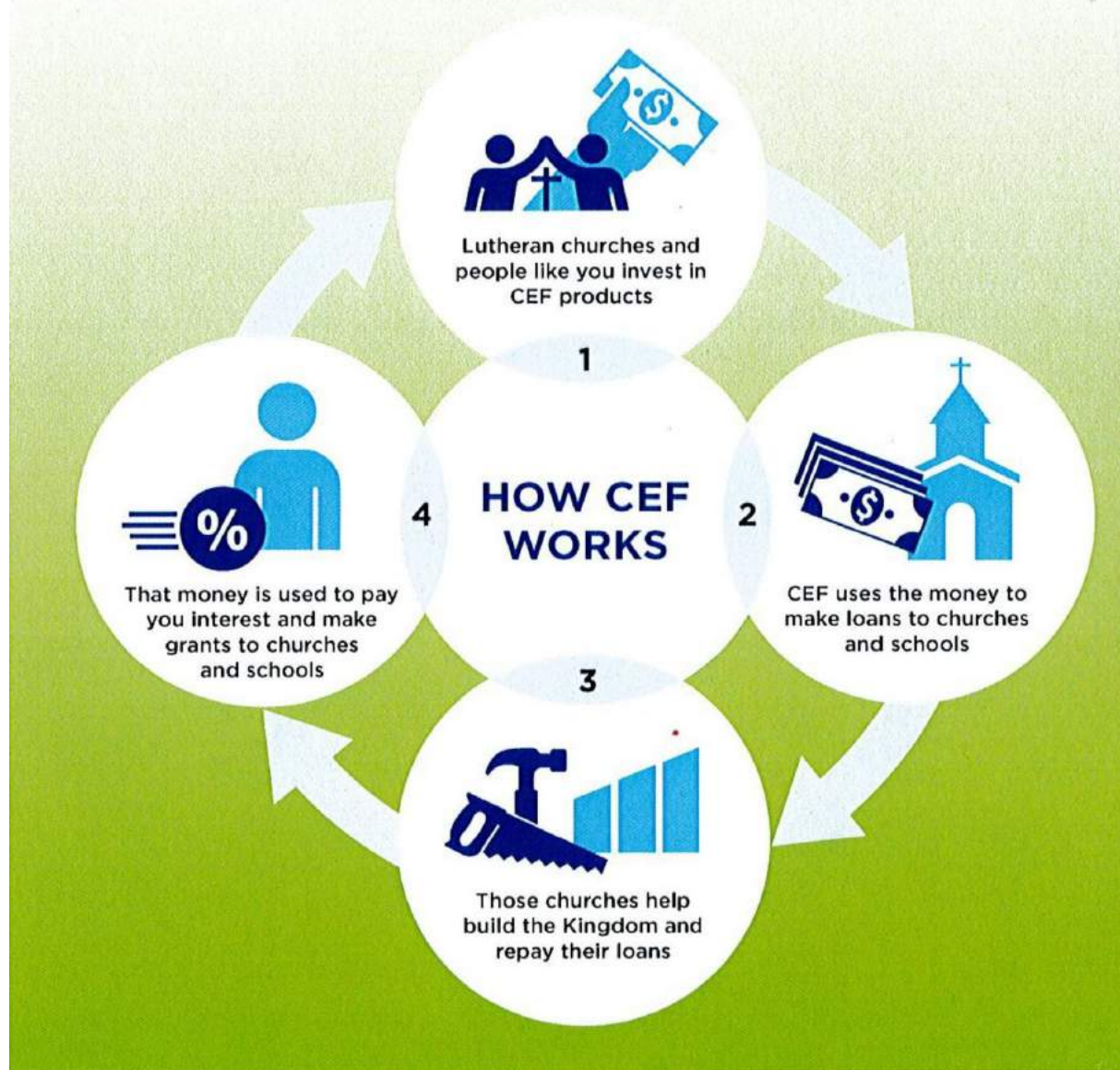
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**MUST SHOW A
PRINTED
FLYER**

**MAR
13**
4:00 - 8:00 p.m.

FLYERS CAN BE FOUND
IN THE SCHOOL OFFICE
AND CHURCH NARTHEX

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Missionaries, James & Christel Neuendorf

JANUARY 2023



A note from LCMS Missionaries, James & Christel Neuendorf

The fire, when it finally came, was the sort of non-surprise that you feel when you roll over and discover with a jolt that it is already morning and you are late for work. We were gathered together for a belated New Year's dinner with teammates on the second day of 2023 when I finally heard the phone's incessant buzzing and picked it up.

"Is this the Lutheran Church?" came the voice from the crackling line in an urgent Spanish. "Yes, this is the pastor, how can I help you?" I replied.

"Your church is on fire."

Ah, yes, that. Alarming.

I wish that I could tell you that it came as a complete surprise, like lightning out of a clear blue sky. We have been begging the city to do something about the collapsed wooden ruin leaning dangerously near our building for years. Drug users often hole up in the ruin and sometimes light fires. Of course this was always going to happen, but now it had.

"We are on our way." I told the voice and soon we were; changing gears in a more than metaphorical way.

Although the face of it was deeply scarred, with the historic balcony and solid cedar doors from the glory days of Ponce turned to charcoal, glass shattered and melted from the heat; inside the building barely a hair was out of place. We were open for ministry again the very same week.

The blaze lit up the sky for miles, it was such a conflagration that when we reached the police cordon and needed to park, it seemed like there was no chance that anything would remain of our ministry center. As we walked up the street, waves of heat radiated from the ruin in a vision from Dante; brave firemen silhouetted against the glow, pouring water endlessly against the walls of our mercy house, standing like Abednego in the midst of the fire; incredibly preserved.

Once again, the Lord preserved us from disaster, and once again He used it immediately to provide blessing. There was an outpouring of support and interest from the community, neighbors came out to see what had happened and before long our list of people to visit and pray for grew longer and longer. An astonishing number of volunteers from our homeschool ministry and ESL classes came and helped us clean up the rubble and the glass. Our ministry appeared on Telemundo during prime-time across the entire island. We held a banquet to thank the fire-fighters and the sergeant said that in 25 years we were the only victims to thank the men who fought the fire. We are now in the process to see if the city will grant us the neighboring property to incorporate into our campus.

Missionaries, James & Christel Neuendorf

Continued from page 7...

All of this was surprising, and yet not surprising. Was it not obvious that the fire would come eventually? Was it not obvious that the Lord would preserve what was important to Him and use even evil things to bless His people and share His Gospel? Hasn't He promised to be with us and accomplish His good and gracious will? Do we even learn anything from reading the scriptures every day?

"Why are you standing there looking into the sky?" said the angel to the disciples at the Lord's ascension. Didn't He tell you all along what He was doing? But they were amazed, and surprised, even shocked. As dismayed as they were at the arrest and crucifixion, as surprised to see Jesus die like He said He would, as astonished that He rose on the third day. How many examples would it take for them to stop being surprised?

Dear friends of the mission in Puerto Rico, here is a lesson for every disciple which you may learn together with us for those sleepless nights of anxiety:

How many disasters will you need to be preserved through before you get it? How many acts of God that show that He has a plan and that the Christ who died for you is sitting on the throne in heaven? How often will His promises need to be proven true before your very eyes? How many times does He need to tell you that He loves you, forgives you, and shines His face upon you and gives you peace... for you to at last realize that the thing you dread, which you can see is going to happen if nothing is done to stop it, is in His Hands?

Nothing can stop the work of Jesus. Not hurricanes or earthquakes, not plagues or fires, not wars or evil men, not the government, not even your own failures or weaknesses! The only direction is forward, and up.

Why are you standing there looking into the sky?

Do you know where your truest Friend is sitting?

Prayers:

- Continued repair on the CARD house after the fire.
- Catechism classes.
- Visitation with new people we have met this month.



LCMS

Adopt Us as your missionaries by visiting
www.lcms.org/Neuendorf

A check can be made out to LCMS
with "A16166-69181" in the memo and sent to:

LCMS

P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861



Mission Central

Adopt Us as your missionaries by visiting
www.missioncentral.us/Neuendorf

A check can be made out to Mission Central
with "A16166-69181" in the memo and sent to:

Mission Central

40718 HWY E16
Mapleton, IA 51034

Acolyte and Reader Schedule for March 2023

Acolytes:	8:00 a.m.	10:30 a.m.	Readers:	8:00 a.m.	10:30 a.m.
Wed., Mar. 1 Lent Mid-Week	Olivia Matyas (3:30 p.m.)	Isaac Hendrick (6:30 p.m.)	—	—	—
Sun., Mar. 5 8:00 a.m. 5-8 Grade Sing	Jozelyn Begick	Daniel Haas	John Schlicker	Richard Doan	
Wed., Mar. 8 Lent Mid-Week	Lillian Bourdow (3:30 p.m.)	Owen Weiss (6:30 p.m.)	—	—	—
Wed., Mar. 12	Alex Schlicker	Ava Begick	—	—	—
Wed., Mar. 15 Lent Mid-Week	Elise Helmreich (3:30 p.m.)	Charles Begick (6:30 p.m.)	—	—	—
Wed., Mar. 19	Maura Zeilinger	Rylie Garret	—	—	Brian Appold
Wed., Mar. 22 Lent Mid-Week	Elaina Garcia (3:30 p.m.)	Isaac Hendrick (6:30 p.m.)	—	—	—
Wed., Mar. 26	Noah Helmreich	Chase Wyman	Sam Britton	Sam Britton	
Wed., Mar. 29 Lent Mid-Week	Kaleb Kusterer (3:30 p.m.)	Alex Schlicker (6:30 p.m.)	—	—	—

Altar Guild and Ushers in March 2023

Altar Guild:	8 a.m. Ushers: Group #1	10:30 a.m. Ushers: Group #4	Head Usher:
Margie Begick	CARY BEHMLANDER (631-0914)	BOB EASTMAN (686-7365)	Dale Jezowski (327-7613)
Cheryl Leppek	Dale Jezowski	Cindy Eastman	
Kristen Fisher	Adam Jezowski	Tim Begick	
	Matt Schlicker	Andrew Weiss	
	Kali Hayward	Lynn Strawn	
	Roger Hendrick	Larry Strawn	

Family Elder List (January-June 2023)

<u>Family Name:</u>	<u>Elder:</u>	<u>Family Name:</u>	<u>Elder:</u>
A-Bec Abraham-Beckers	Brian Appold	L-Na LaFontaine – Nagy	DJ Bourdow
Beg-Br Begick-Brown	Howard Helmreich	Ne-Schi Neuman– Schimm	Scott Weiss
Bu-E Buda – Engelhardt	Jeremy Begick	Schl – V Pfau-Schlicker	Tom Appold
F-He Finney - Hendrick	Ben Burnison	Wa – Z Schmidt-Wagner	Jerry Schlicker
Hi-Ku Hildebrandt– Kusterer	Terry Burkard		

Your elder should be able to answer any church related questions you may have, or they can find the person who can answer your question.

St. Paul Lutheran Church Newsletter

February 15, 2023
Volume 28—Issue 2

6100 Westside Saginaw Road
Bay City, MI 48706
Church Phone: 989.686.7140
School Phone: 989.684.4450

Pastor:

Rev. Dennis Matyas

Vicar:

Mr. David Schultz

Principal:

Mrs. Valerie Matyas

Office Manager:

Mrs. Nicole Burnison

Newsletter articles for the next newsletter are due on Wednesday, March 8, 2023. You may submit articles to the email address below or drop them off in the office.

Website: www.stpaulbaycity.org
Email: office@stpaulbaycity.org

**St. Paul Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes of January 5th, 2023
(Approved)**

Chairman Weston Appold called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Pastor Matyas led us in an opening prayer.

Council members in attendance include: Weston Appold, Pastor Matyas, Vicar Schultz, Andy Weiss, Valerie Matyas, Tom Appold, Jim Marter, Josh Schlicker, Jason Schlicker, Leeta Theiss, Kayla Schlicker and Sharon Schlicker.

Acknowledgement of Blessings - Pastor stated that we had 18 baptisms last year. The water is working in the Ministry Center.

Minutes - *A motion passed* approving the minutes from December 8th, 2022 council meeting.

Treasurer's Report - Andy Weiss stated that the report is not compiled yet for the month of December. They have their meeting next week. In summary, revenue is up 6 percent from the previous year. The Treasurer's Report will be filed for audit.

Committee Reports

Gifts and Memorials - No report

175th Anniversary Committee - No report

Planning Committee - Valerie Matyas presented the planning committee report. They are not pursuing the walk-in freezer for school at this time. The request to go ahead with bid documents for the school locker room remodel will be presented at the upcoming Voters Meeting for approval.

Auditing Committee - *A motion passed* to add Emily Bass to the auditing committee.

BOARD REPORTS

Board of Elders - Chairman Tom Appold reported there has been one death, Vera Begick. They also will be taking down Christmas decorations at church on January 7, 2023.

Board of Trustees - Chairman Josh Schlicker reported the following:

1. Will be looking at purchasing a larger push behind salt spreader for the Ministry Center.
2. Obtaining estimates for the pump gasket that is leaking in the boiler room at school.
3. Obtaining estimates on replacing the pipes in the school basement.
4. Planning on keeping the old fence that was removed from the ball field. It will be stored in the barn.
5. Looking into upgrades in the school basement including doors and a fire alarm.
6. The pipes froze over Christmas break at church and they may put insulation in that area to avoid future problems.
7. Will check when the last inspection was done on the elevator at church to make sure paperwork is up to date.

Board of Education - Chairman Jim Marter reported the following:

1. They reviewed the school calendar for the 2023-2024 school year.
2. Enrollment dates for the upcoming school year will be:
 - a. St Paul congregation members on February 1, 2023
 - b. Current families on February 15, 2023
 - c. Community on March 1, 2023
3. They are continuing to work on the statement of beliefs.

Board of Business Management - Chairman Andy Weiss presented the proposed budget for 2023. After their meeting next week, they will have specifics on last year's finances.

Board of Youth - Chairman Kayla Schlicker reported that the Vespers Service went well. The Wild Game Dinner with a silent auction will be on January 29th. They are continuing with the transition of Vicar Schultz. Still looking for options for childcare during the Voters Meeting. Vicar Schultz reported Kristin Fisher, Emily Bass, Tiffany List, Natalie List and Ann Gurnee will be the leaders for VBS this year.

Board of Evangelism - No report

Board of Stewardship - No report

Unfinished Business

1. No updates on an AED for Ministry Center

New Business

1. Voters Meeting agenda was reviewed
2. *A motion passed* for Jeremy Warren to be our congregation lay rep for the synodical convention.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m. Pastor Matyas closed the meeting with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Schlicker, Secretary

Next Regular Voters Meeting-Sunday, January 8th, 2023 at 12:00 p.m. - Budget Approval

Next Council Meeting - Thursday, February 9th, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

St. Paul Lutheran Church Calendar

MARCH 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																											
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