

1972-1997

Pastor Robert Cordes started this 25 year history. He was very instrumental in organizing three choirs for the congregation, one of which he directed himself.

March of 1972 had the congregation visited by Missionary Gaylon Gilbertson of Japan. The congregation greatly appreciated the visit and promised its support.

April 23, 1972 found the congregation celebrating its 100th anniversary of founding. The organists were Misses Leah Cordes and Rhonda Riedesel. Intern Al Rode was the liturgist for the 8 A.M. service and Pastor Walter C. Probst, a former pastor, delivered the sermon. The Jr. Choir, directed by Mrs. A. W. Schendel rendered special music.

At the 9:15 A.M. German Communion Service, Pastor Wm. Feller conducted the liturgy while Pastor E. A. Sagebiel delivered the sermon. Special music was presented by Mrs. Twyla Henze Nau.

The 10:45 A.M. Service had Pastor Cordes conducting the liturgy and the former Pastor Alvin H. Bohls delivered the sermon. Both the Jr. High and High School Choirs delivered special music.

During the noon meal, the bell rang 100 times and the centennial hymn "Now Thank We All Our God" was sung.

The 2:30 p.m. informal celebration included singing, viewing old movies of the congregation, viewing displays and artifact from the church's history, and hearing greetings from special guests. Pastor Cordes announced that it took St. Paul 125 years to elect its first women to the church council. They were Lucille Klein and Gladys Haun.

The offering, after expenses, was divided between American and Foreign Missions, with the latter designated for Japan's radio mission work.

On August 13, 1978, the congregation dedicated an Intern's House which later became Parsonage No. 2 when the assistant pastors lived in it. The small brick veneer house is one block from the church on Gohmert Street. It was built on property given to the congregation by Mrs. Adolph Menn. With a tremendous amount of volunteer work, the construction cost was only \$30,753.00.

During the 1980's, the annual "Watermelon Picnic" became part of the September Rally Day celebration when Sunday school pupils were promoted to the next grade level. Teachers were recognized, and balloons were released. After a hotdog/hamburger lunch, games were held such as sack races, egg races, water balloon toss, and a fishpond for the youngest students. The adults were encouraged to play table games or join the youth in volleyball games. Many flavors of ice cream were also served.

Some of the special projects of the Sunday school included purchasing a movie projector in 1977, saving pennies for World Hunger where they were carried to the altar during the Christmas Program. In 1992 \$138.00 in pennies had been collected. Seder Meals were a highlight in 1983 and 1984. Students helped prepare School Kits for Lutheran World Relief, and beginning in 1985, started having live Nativity Scenes on the lawn of the church. In 1986 they presented a drama, "Adam's Apple", at the Rally Day festivities.

Some of the American Lutheran Church Women's Projects during this time period were publishing a Cookbook and having Mother/Daughter/Other banquets with such themes as "Don't Let Life Flutter By", "No Hands but Ours", "Global Missions", "Road Signs", and "Hats".

In 1974 the Esther Circle began having secret prayer partners. The whole group had an advent "Christmas Around the World", sent 21 hospital shirts to Lutheran General Hospital, made 103 quilts for Lutheran World Relief, and had a 20th anniversary ALCW banquet.

In 1981 the ALCW hosted, in Yorktown, the Victoria Conference of the ALCW with a theme, "Living Stones, Chosen, and Precious". They also prepared caladium plants, stars and paper flowers for the Women's National Triennial Convention in San Antonio. Inez Hahn was the chairperson of the Victoria Conference at this time.

In 1982 The Women sponsored a Family Hobby Talent night.

In 1983 they observed the 500th birthday of Martin Luther with a supper, program, and the movie, "Where Luther Walked". Near Christmas they created and trimmed a tree with Jesse Tree ornaments. They also furnished new drapes and blinds in the Fellowship Hall.

In 1987 Dee Tesch and Frances Hartmann represented St. Paul women in the constituting convention in Corpus Christi at which the ALCW was changed to Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Their magazine was "Lutheran Woman Today" with Bible Study outlines and general information.

In October 1988 the St. Paul women adopted a new constitution and became the St. Paul Women of the ELCA. Most of the on-going projects held under the ALCW were continued. The Circles met once a month for Bible Study and short business sessions. They received two offerings. One was for the local general fund and the other was sent to the National WELCA. During 1996 some of the support went to the Oaks Indian Mission, Missionary-for-the-day, American Bible Society, the congregational Sunday KAML (radio) Broadcasts, and the 125th Anniversary Fund.

In 1993 Rev. Steve Spilde, Associate Pastor, began a Bible Study on the first Saturday of each month at a local restaurant with the men of the church. Twelve to fourteen men met regularly. They participated in meaningful discussion of a variety of Biblical topics.

The Luther League continued to be active. They conducted monthly meetings of study and recreation. By 1972 St. Paul had High School and Jr. High Leagues. Each met twice a month. They attended Rallies in Karnes City and Ganado. In 1973 they hosted the Victoria Conference with 130 persons present. For years they sponsored the Easter Breakfast as well as helped with Christmas Eve services and Easter Services. They began work projects in which they held cleanup days at the church, helped repair and did renovations at Camp Chrysalis in Kerrville, did chores for senior citizens, and helped feed the homeless in Austin, Texas. To help raise funds for retreats and conventions, they held car washes, cake and pie sales, and garage sales. They were able to go to two retreats in Colorado as well as attend the "Passion Play" in Eureka Springs, Arkansas.



Confirmation Classes during this period were held for both 7th and 8th grades which met on Wednesday afternoons, and during the summer the students attended a week of camp. Before the Rite of Confirmation, the students were asked to write a statement of their belief for the final assignment.

In 1973 Pastor Robert Cordes and Beverly Feller began the Bethel Series of in-depth Bible Studies. In 1983 a second class on the same series was successful with Geraldine Goehring as the leader.

Also in 1973 with Inez Hahn as superintendent, 206 children attended Vacation Bible school. Other superintendents in the 1970's were Lucille Klein, Judy Wagenschein, and Intern Howard Vranken. An interdenominational school was held in 1981 with 170 enrolled and Bonnie Riedesel as superintendent. In 1994 Merrily Wisian conducted another combined school with 250 in attendance. There was no Vacation Bible School in 1995, but in 1996 Linda Hurta and Lauren Jackson were co-superintendents, and with the help of 11 teachers and 12 helpers, they led 142 students through a course on Friendship Adventures with Jesus. The offerings collected that year were used for expenses and Camping funds.

In 1980 a Social Concerns committee, under leadership of Jerry Pierce, began to help the needy. YAM (Yorktown Assistance Ministry-composed of area churches) obtained non-perishable food, clothing, and money to help those in need. A large amount of clothing was sent to the Rio Grande area to help families there.

In 1981 the Pastoral Support Committee was appointed with Frances Hartmann elected chairman. In 1989 Marjorie Klaevemann was appointed. The purpose of this committee was to serve as an advisor to the pastors and to be a liaison between members and the pastor(s).

In 1984 the Christian Life Committee was organized to provide fellowship, food, and fun within the congregation. It sponsored a Mardi Gras Mystery Meal, welcomed the family of Pastor Heidtke with an ice cream social, had a "Burger Bash", and spaghetti dinner with Bruce Weise providing accordion music. Other activities were: arranged transportation to hear the Vienna Boys Choir who performed at Texas Lutheran, arranged transportation to the Texas Lutheran Vespers, sponsored a New Year's Eve party and Communion Service, and provided a nursery during Services and Sunday School. Kathy Weischwill was the chairperson.

At this time, the Stephen Ministry was begun with the purpose of training and organizing lay persons to serve as caring people. Pastor Richard Garbus and Kathy Weischwill attended training. Later trainings were attended by Pastor James Pearson, Judy Wolpman, and Pastor Steve Spilde. These leaders conducted five series of classes through which at least fifty people became Stephen Ministers.

In 1994 Pastor Spilde began a Search Series. Among leaders of this study were: Kay Bruns, Geraldine Goehring, Marty Domke, Beverly Feller, Marjorie Klaevemann, and C. B. Suggs. Two units of Genesis and two of Acts were studied.

At a November 1994 Special Called Congregational meeting, the congregation voted to have a “heat strip system” placed in the church which would replace the boiler system used since its beginning. At this time computers were added to make church recordings more efficient.

On October 30th, Pastor Stan Meyer, Assistant to the Synod Bishop, was the guest pastor for the day, and on November 13th, a former member of St. Paul, Pastor Daniel Schorlemer, was the guest preacher.

The Youth attended the National Youth Convention in Atlanta, Georgia this year.

Boy Scouts of America Troop 250 developed in 1997. The Scoutmaster was Mike Stern, Assistant Scoutmaster was Sam Brannon, with Chairman George Klein and Institutional Head, Dalton Metting.

Pastors and Interns in this era:

Rev. Robert Cordes 1966-1975
David Moore (Intern) 1972-1973
Kurt Joseph (Intern) 1973-1974
Bob Edwards (Intern) 1974-1974
Rev. LeRoy Deans 1975-1978
Steve Tjarks (Intern) 1975-1976
Howard Vranken (Intern) 1976-1977
Steve Neirman (Intern) 1977-1978
Phil Peterson (Intern) 1977-1978
Rev. Paul Ziese 1979-1984
Rev. Lynn Ziese 1979-1983
Rev. Rich Garbus (Assistant) 1984-1988
Rev. Harold Tesch 1985-1989
Rev. David Heidtke 1985-1990
Rev. James Pearson (Assistant) 1989-1990
Rev. James Pearson 1990-1994
Rev. Steve Spilde (Assistant) 1993-1995
Rev. Gary Kleypas 1995-1999
Rev. Kay Johnson (Assistant) 1996-2000