

# St. Pauli News in Detail

## October Happenings



### Greeting and Ushering

Oct. 7 Jim Rondorf  
Oct. 14 Unassigned  
Oct. 21 Arlo Rude  
Oct. 28 Barb Smith

#### Sunday Service:

- Light altar candles before service and put out flames after church.
- Act as Greeters and hand out bulletins.
- Usher for offering and communion.
- Tidy up pews after church to make it ready for the next Sunday's services.

**Altar Preparation:** Shelley Mathson  
(Oct. 7 & 16)

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### October Milestones

#### Birthdays

Oct. 6 Pr. Carl Hansen  
Oct. 20 Jim Nelson  
Oct. 22 Bob Gunstad  
Oct. 29 Joan Nelson  
Oct. 31 Jim Kotz



#### Anniversaries

Oct. 11 Larry & JoAnn Hurst  
Oct. 25 Jim & Joan Nelson  
Oct. 26 Myles & Kathy Albert

(If we don't list your birthday or anniversary, it's because we don't have it. Email or call Faye.)



### Layettes for Lutheran World Relief



Anyone having items for the layettes that WELCA ships to Lutheran World Relief should leave them **on the shelf above the coat rack in the church entry by October 14<sup>th</sup>**.

This will give us time to purchase the items needed to complete the layettes and assemble them. We are asking for a slightly earlier date this year because our Fall Supper is just a week before the shipment date, leaving us just a few days to wrap things up.

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## Fall Supper

Roast turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, gravy, carrots, coleslaw, rolls, lefse & pie!

**Sunday, October 28<sup>th</sup>**  
**Serving: 4:00 – 7:00 p.m.**

**Adults: \$10.00**  
**K-age 12: \$5.00**  
**Pre-school: Free**

Due to all of the basement remodeling, the Fall Supper has been postponed to this later date this year. If you are able, post the full-page notice found in this newsletter for the Fall Supper (or make copies) at your place of business or your apartment complex and pass the word to your friends and families.

# Minutes of the Church Council

August 16, 2012

The St. Pauli Church Council held its monthly meeting on Thursday, June 21, 2012 at St. Pauli Church. Members present: Sharon Bergerson, Arlo Rude, Wahna Smith, Skip Swanson, Jodie Torkelson and Pastor Carl Hansen. The meeting was called to order by Council President Rude at 7:00 p.m.

Pastor Hansen opened the meeting with a prayer.

## Approval of Agenda

Smith made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Swanson seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

## Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's report for June and July 2012 was distributed and reviewed.

### **June**

Expenditures:	\$4,800.82
Income:	\$2,901.00
Checking account balance:	\$19,898.69
Savings account balance:	\$20,378.93
Edward Jones balance:	\$32,447.62
Memorial Fund balance:	\$22,610.73
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$95,335.97</b>

(as of June 30, 2012)

Cemetery Association balance: \$3,239.93

### **July**

Expenditures:	\$2,190.56
Income:	\$2,986.77
Checking account balance:	\$20,694.90
Savings account balance:	\$20,381.53
Edward Jones balance:	\$33,102.04
Memorial Fund balance:	\$22,611.39
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$96,789.86</b>

(as of July 31, 2012)

**Cemetery Association: \$3,339.93**

Swanson made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report for June and July. Smith seconded, motion carried.

## Secretary's Report

Torkelson distributed the Minutes of the June 21, 2012 regular meeting. Following review, Bergerson made a motion to approve the Minutes with one edit. Swanson seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

## Pastor's Report

Pastor Hansen will be available to lead worship for all of the Sundays in September and is willing to serve an additional three months. Rude will prepare the contract for signature. The Council expressed their continued gratitude for his service to our congregation.

The council was asked by Pastor Hansen how they generally felt about the new ELW hymnal and any feedback heard from the rest of the congregation. The council said the feedback was generally good and that everyone knew it would take some time to become comfortable with the new hymnal. The council discussed trying some other settings once everyone is more comfortable.

Thursday, September 6<sup>th</sup> in Pelican Rapids at Trinity Church the ELCA Social Statement on Criminal Justice will be discussed. Pastor Hansen encouraged the council and members of the congregation to attend. A summary of the Social Statement will be made available to the congregation next Sunday and an announcement made in the bulletin on the hearing.

## Reports

Members in Sickness or Distress – Clayton Mathson is hospitalized in New Ulm but doing well. Pastor Terri is undergoing a breast biopsy. Both of them will be in our thoughts and prayers as they undergo medical treatments.

WELCA – Cleaned the church basement to get ready to sheet rock and the other renovations. The church supper will be pushed back to accommodate the renovations.

Men's Group – will start meeting again in September.

Sunday School/Board of Education – Kari Torkelson put an announcement in the church bulletin about a meeting at 6:30pm on August 26<sup>th</sup> at St. Pauli for parents of Sunday School age children and anyone else from the congregation who is interested in teaching or helping out with Sunday School.

Names were raised of other families in the area that someone should contact about Sunday School. Torkelson will contact the Board of Education with these names for them to follow-up.

## Old Business

Steeple Painting/Repair – The metal fascia and soffit are installed. Rude ordered trim boards from Pro Build and they will arrive in a week or so. The council thanked Rude for all of his work on this project.

Storage Shed - Gary Iverson completed work on the storage shed by putting in 8ft. walls instead of the standard 5 ft. walls. The council would like to see him recognized for this donation as well.

Basement Renovation – The additional cost for materials for the basement is \$485. The corner cupboards of the old kitchen have all been taken down. The council looked at

the space and decided that it would be fine to leave the space without cabinets for this year's church supper and see how it works. Then make a decision at that point on whether cabinets need to be installed or not.

Ken Cedergren will relocate the pressure tank for the well tomorrow so it will be in the furnace room and out of the way.

The council discussed having an appreciation day for all who have worked on the building and grounds. Bergerson will talk with WELCA about this.

#### New Business

Pastor Terri Cuppett has requested transfer of her membership. Rude will send a letter from the church stating that we've transferred her membership.

The meeting closed with The Lord's Prayer.

#### Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jodie Torkelson, Church Council Secretary

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## **ELCA Disaster Response: Syrian Conflict**

### **The Situation:**

Since February 2011, the ongoing conflict in Syria has displaced nearly 2.5 million people. Many have left their homes to take refuge elsewhere within Syria while others are beginning to cross the borders into the neighboring countries of Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq in search of safety and shelter. Those who have fled are finding care in refugee camps while others are staying with host families.

Many of Syria's neighbors have opened their borders to receive the refugees fleeing chaos and danger in their home country. Receiving refugees is difficult work that can stretch resources and affect political dynamics in the host countries. In these difficult times, groups already vulnerable in the region can be at even greater risk.

### **ELCA Response:**

Earlier this year, Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson wrote to Christian church leaders in Syria, offering support for the churches' collective call for an end to violence and his prayers for the people in the region. This reflects our continued commitment to stand with our companions in Syria as we seek ways to encourage their role in the promotion of peace and reconciliation.

ELCA Disaster Response is working with our partners in the region, both within Syria and the surrounding areas. We have already sent \$200,000 to help those who are in need. We have been at work to provide food and items such as hygiene kits, household items, bedding and clothing. Special care and training in nutritional support for mothers is also being made available. Subsidies for rent, tuition, school fees and classes have also been made available to help alleviate some of the economic burden faced by displaced families.

We are also at work through The Lutheran World Federation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land meeting the needs of Syrian refugees who have traveled to Jordan. Camp management and the provision of access to proper shelter have been the primary focus of our work. ELCA Disaster Response has committed another \$250,000 to help support housing costs and camp management.

## **St. Pauli's Response**

Donations made to the ELCA Disaster Response: Syrian Conflict will be matched up to a total of \$500 by St. Pauli's general fund.

Please make checks payable to "ELCA Disaster Response" and write "Syrian Conflict" in the memo line. Checks should be placed in the basket in the rear of the church or mailed to St. Pauli by October 14, 2012 to be included.

Mailing address: St. Pauli Lutheran Church  
P.O. Box 944  
Thief River Falls, MN 56701

## **Northwestern Minnesota Synod Conference Fall Gatherings**

### ***Serving Together: Rethinking Stewardship***

***Rethinking Stewardship in Worship, Thought-Provoking Ideas and Conversation***

**Sunday, October 14, 2012 – Grace Lutheran Church, Detroit Lakes  
(Conferences 5-10)**

**Sunday, October 21, 2012 – Zion Lutheran Church, Thief River Falls  
(Conferences 1-4)**

**Both events run from 2 pm – 7 pm, with music and registration beginning at 1:30**

- Vibrant worship led by Nate Houge, with Pr Larry Strenge preaching
- Keynote presentation by Pr Larry Strenge; mini concerts by Nate Houge
- Breakout conversation sessions focused on some of the ways in which we are *Serving Together* as congregations in the Northwestern Minnesota Synod
- Distribution of practical stewardship resources
- Fun, food and conversation
- A chance to conduct conference fall gathering business



Back by popular demand, sharing his songs and leading our worship, will be the incomparable and almost unimaginable Nate Houge! Nate is a very fun, engaging, thought-provoking and dynamic musician, songwriter, developer of liturgical music, and writer of educational material for the church (including sections of the Spark Children's Bible).

Our keynote speaker this year is Pr Larry Strenge, the SW MN Synod's "Director for Evangelical Mission". Larry uses his experience as a mission developer in the ELCA to help congregations - or teams within new or renewing congregations - rediscover God's purpose and how to live out the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). Larry is one of the most energetic people you are likely to meet. He enjoys running marathons and swimming for exercise, year round, in the Mississippi River.



### **Registration:**

**The registration fee covers the cost of the program, materials and supper.** Cost for the first registrant from a congregation is \$20 and the cost for all other registrants is \$10 per person.

The take-home value of this event will rise dramatically as more registrants come from a congregation. **Each congregation is urged to send at least three persons.**

Registration materials and other information are available on the NW MN Synod website:  
[www.nwmnsynod.org](http://www.nwmnsynod.org)

# Historic Minutes of the St. Pauli Congregation

12 January 1901

**(Editor's note:** Last month, we published the final minutes from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. You will read below in the first minutes of the new century that the church building has been erected and there are no lingering debts.

As we make this turn into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we will also look from time to time in future issues at other happenings in the area or in the world that helped to shape events at St. Pauli Church.)

St. Pauli Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran congregation held its 7th annual meeting in Braaten's school house on January 12th 1901.

The meeting was opened with reading from the scripture and prayer by Pastor I. T. Aastad as chairman, whereafter the report of the secretary from the last annual meeting was read and accepted without change. Then the report of the treasurer was read and accepted.

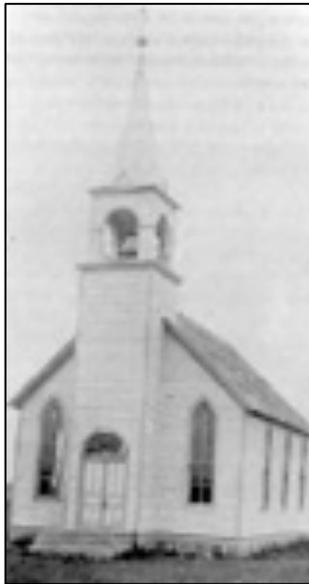
Thereafter the report of the secretary of the building committee was read and accepted by the congregation. This report informed that the church was now erected and that there were no longer any debts due insofar as the outstanding subscription covered this with surplus. Thereafter Mr. A. Odegaard reported on behalf of the trustees that the deed on the church site was on record and in his possession, and that the church was erected and nearly ready.

After which trustees were elected: A. Odegaard re-elected as trustee for 3 years. H. Torstvet re-elected as treasurer for 1 year. J. Amundson re-elected as secretary for 1 year. Which was unanimously accepted.

Thereafter was collected a subscription for the pastor's salary. The subscription amounted to about fifty dollars. It was proposed and supported that the trustees of the congregation shall negotiate with those members of the congregation who have turned out to be in debt to the congregation and find out their explanation about what they will do about it.

This will be discussed at a later meeting with the congregation.

It was proposed and supported to form a committee of three men to take care of the religion school of the congregation. Accepted. Members of the committee: A. Odegaard, L. Lokken, H. Fredrikson.



**St. PAULI CHURCH**

**The steeple was constructed at the same time as the church building. It was added after 1901, but this is the oldest known photograph to date.**

It was proposed and supported to elect Jacob Amundson as sexton for one year. Accepted.

Thereafter the chairman announced that Mr. Ole Helgesen and wife and adopted son wished to be accepted as members of the congregation. And that they would be admitted at the next service.

Proposed and supported to give to St. Hilaire Synod congregation what stones were left over in the church yard. Accepted.

It was proposed and supported that the building committee was reduced from [illegible] to [illegible] members and that these also will serve as a subscription committee. Unanimously accepted. Members of the committee who were elected: Andrew Odegaard, Jacob Amundson, H. Fredrikson.

On proposal the meeting was ended with the Lord's prayer by the chairman.

Jacob Amundson,  
Secretary of the congregation

Trustees of the congregation:  
Tollef Erickson, 1902  
Peter Nilson, 1903  
Andrew Odegaard, 1904

P.S. Proposed and supported and unanimously accepted to incorporate the congregation and that the chairman draws up the papers necessary.

## “Subscription to the Church in St. Pauli Congregation”

1899 - 1912

(Membership lists hand-written in the *Menighedsprotokol*.)

### Members of the St. Pauli congregation: Polk [now Pennington] County, Minnesota [not in order by date admitted]

1. Gilbert Skjerva with wife, 3 children
2. John Skjerva, widower. Admitted in the congregation on November 26, 1894, moved out from the congregation on December 9, 1899
3. Gilbert Anfinson, wife, 1 child. Deceased August 1, 1898. Gilbert Anfinson's widow dead and another child
4. Tollef Erikson, widower, child, admitted in the congregation December 2, 1896. Mrs. Erikson dead, remaining in the congregation [?]
5. Ole Pederson, wife, 2 children, admitted in the congregation January 3, 1895
6. Pete Paulson, wife, 6 children, admitted in the congregation January 3, 1895. Regarded as an outsider owing to his own conduct on December 9, 1899
7. Ole Torkelson, wife, 3 children, regarded as “standing”
8. Jim Braatten, mother and 2 siblings. Ole H. Braatten deceased July 21, 1899. Widow and three children remain in the congregation.
9. Hans Fredrikson, wife, 5 children. Admitted in the congregation January 2, 1896
10. Peter Stene, wife and son, regarded as outsiders by the congregation
11. Pete Simondson, wife, 5 children, moved from the congregation January 12, 1901. Admitted in the congregation July 1894.
12. Anders A. Odegaard, wife, 4 children. Admitted as members in the congregation on January 3, 1895
13. Alek Arveson, wife, 1 child. Moved out of the congregation
14. Mrs. Skone, widow. Regarded as having left the congregation, deceased
15. Halvor Johnson, wife and daughter. Moved out from the congregation January 12, 1901
16. Peter Tüne, wife, 4 children, to be regarded as having left the congregation owing to his relations with same after December 8, 1902, admitted as member of the congregation February 4, 1896
17. Lars Lokken, wife, 5 children
18. Hans Amundson, wife and son
19. Halvor Thortveth, wife, 2 children. Admitted as members of the congregation 1896
20. Halvor Hostvet, wife, 6 children, regarded as having left the congregation “standing” member. Admitted as members of the congregation February 4, 1896
21. Pete Nelson, wife, and son. Admitted as members of the congregation 1896.
22. Cornelius Oien, wife and 2 children Admitted as members of the congregation March 4, 1899
23. Ole Helgesen, wife and 1 adopted son. Admitted as members of the congregation January 13, 1901
24. Fredrik Sjerva and 1 daughter, moved out. Admitted as members of the congregation April 7, 1901
25. Halvor O. Viken with wife. Admitted as member of the congregation Dec 26, 1902.

### Number of paying members within the congregation: 14 persons on December 14, 1903

26. Christ Moe, wife, 3 children. Admitted as members of the congregation May 2, 1904
27. Ole Valsvik, wife and one child. Admitted in the congregation January 21, 1906
28. Ole Hestekind and son Andrew, and daughters Tilda, Gina. Congregation May 23, 1909
29. Tobias Stene with wife and two children and parents. Congregation May 23, 1909
30. Anfin Torkelsen and wife. Congregation December 13, 1909
31. Martin Lokken and wife. Congregation December 13, 1909
32. Torgrim Jorgensen with family, Congregation September 11, 1910
33. John Kval with family. Congregation February 26, 1911
34. Ole and Jorgen Larson, brothers. Congregation April 17, 1911. Ole Larson dead October 19, 1911
35. Mr. Ole Viken and wife. Congregation September 23, 1911

# Century Farm Status Bestowed upon Wedul Farm By Heather Blodgett

(As a coincidence, after including Otto Wedul's memories of Hazel, MN, in our September newsletter, the REA *Volts & Jolts* newspaper that came out just days later had a feature article on the Wedul farm. That article is reprinted here for the enjoyment of those who do not live in our REA service area, with permission from the Red Lake Electric Cooperative.)

The Wedul farm in rural Thief River Falls, MN, has been named a Minnesota century farm for 2012. The farm, located approximately 6 miles east of Seven Clans Casino, is now owned and farmed by Jon and Mary Wilson.

The farm originated in October of 1903 by Johan Wedul, an immigrant from Norway. Not two years later in March of 1905, Johan's son, Ole Wedul, along with Ole's wife Maret, purchased the farm and Johan returned to Norway as most of his family still resided there. When Ole and Maret arrived on the farm, they had one son, Arnt, who was still a young boy.

A house was moved onto the farm from a property six miles south for the family to live in. Ole and Maret had seven more children, all of whom were born in that house. None of the children are still living.

Arnt returned to Norway at the age of 27 with his uncle, Ole's brother, John. John had been homesteading in Tioga, North Dakota. His wife had passed away and John decided to return to Norway. During the three years Arnt spent in Norway, he met and married Berit Gimse. The couple moved to Hazel, MN to work in, and later operate, a general store. Arnt started Wedul Truck Line in 1934. The couple moved themselves and the business to Thief River Falls in 1945.

Johanna, born October 24, 1902, never married. She owned a beauty shop in Graceville, MN before enlisting in the army during World War II. Following the end of the war, she returned to Thief River Falls and operated Joanne's Beauty Shop until her death.<sup>1</sup>

Anna, born February 27, 1905, became a teacher in the area. She married Thomas Waale in 1936 and the couple had a business, the Waale Studio, in Thief River Falls.

Oscar, born April 6, 1909, married Helen Jacobson in 1938. He worked as a truck driver, mostly hauling cream from the local farms and gravel around the area.

Melvin, born March 7, 1912, married Deloris Lippert in 1939. He held the title of officer in the Navy during World War II and later earned a Ph.D. from the University of Colorado. He was employed as a professor at the University of Winona. Deloris, at the age of 97, is still living in their home in Winona.



**Wedul Family - B: Arnt, Martin, Berit, Anna, Vernon, Beatrice, Johanna, Oscar & Melvin; F: Otto, Maret, Kenneth, Ole & Maynard.**

Beatrice was born April 4, 1914. That year an addition was built

onto the house for a living room and another upstairs bedroom. Beatrice was a teacher. She married Sidney Wilson in 1939 and the couple farmed in Kratka township near Thief River Falls. Beatrice died in May 2006 and was the last of the siblings to pass away.

Martin, born February 17, 1917, married Hazel Nelson<sup>2</sup> in 1943. He purchased the farm in 1942 from his parents and had dairy cattle until 1951. He also farmed grain and worked off of the farm as a carpenter.

Vernon, born February 22, 1920, earned a degree from Moorhead State Teacher's College. He then enlisted in the Army Air Corps and became a P-38 fighter pilot. He was killed in battle during the invasion of Normandy, France.

<sup>1</sup> Johanna (Joanne) served as an Army nurse during World War II, achieving the rank of sergeant. She is buried at Fort Snelling.

<sup>2</sup> Hazel Nelson grew up just one-half mile south of the St. Pauli church. She was the daughter of Nels and Hannah Nelson.



Caption from *Volts & Jolts*: An early picture of a gathering at the Wedul farm shows the original farmhouse in the background with a collection of people and their 1937 Chevrolet vehicles including two sedans, a pickup with an enclosed container in the back (partially blocking the view of the house) and a flatbed truck with stake sides.

Caption from *Pennington County Historical Society*: Wedul Farm - 1934 Chevrolets sold to man on left in overcoat & hat - Martin, Ole, Anna, Merit, Oscar, Otto (child in front), Helen, Maynard (2<sup>nd</sup> child in front), Vernon (up on truck), Berit, Arnt, and Kenneth

After Martin's death in 1990, Beatrice's son, Jon Wilson, began farming the land. Jon and his wife Mary purchased the farm from Martin's estate. Jon, with help from his brother Bernard, has done work to the home so that it can be used as a hunting cabin. The brothers have also restored several old tractors that have been passed down within the family. Jon made improvements to the land so that it all can be used for farming.

"For me personally it gives me great pleasure to see the improvements Jon has made out there," said Maynard Wedul, son of Arnt & Berit. "I have fond memories of the farm going back to when I was a little boy and Grandma and Grandpa Wedul lived out there. As I grew older, I spent several summers helping Martin put up hay."

Jon also has fond memories of stacking hay on the farm for his uncle Martin. Jon and Mary chose to purchase the land because they wanted to keep the farm within the family, but chose not to move onto the property because they already had a home. Their six children, Cally, James, Cody, Adam, Joshua and Luke have helped farm over the years. "All of them have spent many hours on the farm, from seeding to picking

rocks to ditching," says Mary. "It's the best place to raise children," she says, "The farming life is wonderful!" The farm produces soybeans, wheat, barley, oats and alfalfa.

On August 11<sup>th</sup>, the couple invited friends and family to the farm to celebrate the certification as a century farm. Mary is quick to point out the celebration was to remember the family that created the farm and worked the land in years past. "We appreciate their work because without it, none of us would be here. They came all this way overseas, not to get a job, but to create something of their own. They are the reason we are celebrating." The celebration included a noon lunch and an evening pig roast. Throughout the day there were many stories told of the farm and the Wedul family. Visitors were also treated to a tour of the farm in an old army truck by Jon. The next day Jon and Mary hosted a brunch at their home and a family member gave a sermon for the group.

Mary is glad that her family is a part of the Wedul Farm. "It's important for our children and our children's children to know their heritage and what those people actually did," she explains, "That's why it's important to keep it in the family."

# A Landscape becomes a Garden

At the 2011 Annual Meeting of the Congregation, it was decided that a landscape committee should be set up to design plantings to replace the overgrown shrubs that were removed when the new steel siding was installed. Faye Auchenpaugh, David Lee, and Patricia Swanson volunteered.

Potted shrubs, perennials, sod and a tree were purchased and planted in the Fall of 2011 with the help of several volunteers. Myles Alberg tilled the ground and arranged for Jim Breiland to trench for the edging, Diane Lee and Skip Swanson dug holes and planted. Gary Iverson was recruited to haul a large, beautiful rock from his farm to place at the corner of the church next to the *Amelanchier* or serviceberry tree. Ken Cedergren donated and installed an outside faucet to make watering less of a chore. (Prior to this, water was hauled by pail from the kitchen sink.

This spring, Joan Nelson, who has a greenhouse on her farm and is a knowledgeable horticulturist, asked if she could donate and plant some additional annuals and perennials to bring more color to the grounds, including the “new sign’s” flower bed. Christy Carter and Clair Mathson planted flowers in the “old sign” planter in memory of their grandparents, Martin and Alma Mathson. Kathy Alberg agreed that she and Myles would take care of the watering. Little did they realize what that would mean as the summer of 2012 went on to become one of the driest on record.

**But, oh, what a beautiful sight to the Glory of God!**



Wahna Smith and Faye painted the foundation walls and recently painted the church entrance doors a bright red, which symbolizes the love of the Holy Spirit and the tongues of fire that appeared over the heads of the apostles on Pentecost.

**NEXT MONTH: Basement remodeling**

# The Back Page

**A woman went to the Post Office** to buy stamps for her Christmas cards.

“What Denomination?” asked the clerk.

“Oh, good heavens! Have we come to this?” said the woman. “Well, give me 50 Baptist and 50 Catholic ones.”

\* \* \*

**On a very cold, snowy Sunday** in February, only the pastor and one farmer arrived at the village church.

The pastor said, “Well, I guess we won’t have a service today.”

The farmer replied: “Heck, if even only one cow shows up at feeding time, I feed it.”

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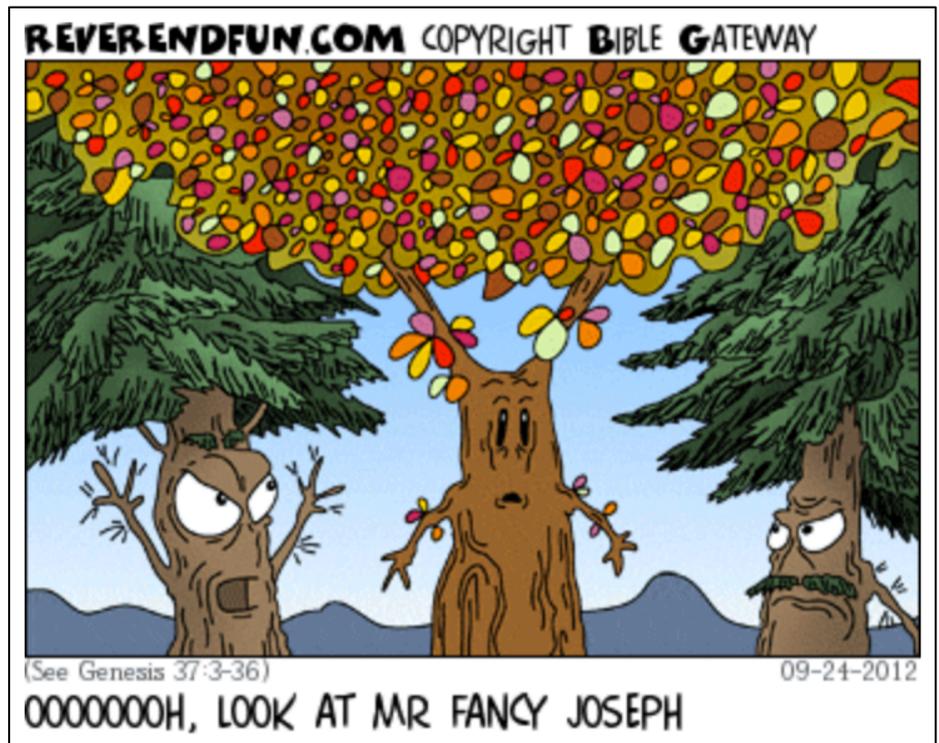
**My wife invited some people** to dinner. At the table, she turned to our six-year-old daughter and said, “Would you like to say the blessing?”

“I wouldn’t know what to say,” she replied.

“Just say what you hear Mommy say,” my wife said.

Our daughter bowed her head and said: “Dear Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?”

\* \* \*



**An inexperienced preacher** was to hold a graveside burial service at a pauper’s cemetery for an indigent man with no family or friends. Not knowing where the cemetery was, he made several wrong turns and got lost. When he eventually arrived an hour late, the hearse was nowhere in sight, the backhoe was next to the open hole, and the workmen were sitting under a tree eating lunch.

The diligent young pastor went to the open grave and found the vault lid already in place. Feeling guilty because of his tardiness, he preached an impassioned and lengthy service, sending the deceased to the great beyond in style.

As he returned to his car, he overheard one of the workman say to the other, “I’ve been putting in septic tanks for twenty years and I ain’t never seen anything like that.”

