

St. Pauli News in Detail



Greeting and Ushering

April 1 Dennis Nelson
 April 8 Laurie Nelson
 April 15 Staci Reay
 April 22 Volunteers
 April 29 Jim Rondorf

Cleaning: Clean *prior* to your Sunday to usher. Don't forget to check the wastebasket in the pastor's office.

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: Cindy Cedergren

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April Milestones

Birthdays

April 3 Eunice Grove
 April 18 Shirley Johnson

Anniversaries: None that we know of

Are we missing your anniversary or birthday? If so, please contact Faye at auchenpaugh@gmail.com.

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Cleaning Night!

Monday, April 16th

6:30 pm

We really need EVERY able-bodied person to come and help with our spring cleaning of the church. It is getting more and more difficult for the older members to do this all by themselves. No prior skills needed. All that is required is a dedicated heart.

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BLANKET SUNDAY

April 29th



Blankets and quilts for Lutheran World Relief and our local area will be placed on and around our altar ring for blessing prior to shipment.

Shipment pickup is May 5th from 8:00-Noon at 604 N. Atlantic in Thief River Falls.

April 29 is also our Potluck Sunday.
Freewill offering for Violence Intervention Project

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WELCA Spring Conference

Saturday, April 28

Our Savior's Lutheran, Thief Lake

Theme: "Joy in the Morning – Psalm 30:5"

8:30 am Registration, 9:00 am Program

Cost: \$10.00 includes morning coffee and noon lunch

Speaker/Program: Pastor Rufus Kuddee and Roxanne Goulet from the Williams-Roosevelt Parish. Pastor Kuddee was born in the Phoebe Hospital in Liberia and Roxanne will share her visit to Liberia for the opening of the solar panels installed on Phoebe Hospital.

Presenters: Tammy & Lew Wallace
 Honker Flats Nursery

A Message from Elizabeth A. Eaton, Presiding Bishop of the ELCA in America.

“Love means never having to say you’re sorry.” (*Love Story*)

“Forgiveness guaranteed. Repentance optional.” (Sign in front of a Lutheran church)

This year Ash Wednesday and Valentine’s Day fell on the same date. It seems like an odd pairing—Ash Wednesday, a day of solemn repentance and honest reckoning of our brokenness, and Valentine’s Day, a lighthearted celebration of love. Do we fast and pray and commit to rigorous spiritual disciplines, or do we dive in to Champagne and chocolate? Is it a day of contrition or of abandon? Do we abstain or do we indulge?

It’s strange how our culture divides up human experience and the way it puts a premium on happiness, self-fulfillment and conflict avoidance, particularly in personal relationships. The good life is untroubled. There should be no worries and certainly no cause to acknowledge pain or wrong. It’s a life of endless possibility fueled by positive thinking and affirmation. It should be perky, upbeat and fun. And somehow love needs to be shaped the same way. Certainly there is no room for Ash Wednesday and Valentine’s Day in the same space.

The two quotes above are the manifesto for this worldview. They hold out the promise of pain-free, investment-free, responsibility-free relationships. They encourage an unexamined life, a kind of Teflon existence to which consequences don’t stick. They sound like the real thing but are as poor a substitute as the sentiments printed on the little sugar valentine hearts are for a real expression of love. In this world, Ash Wednesday and Valentine’s Day make no sense together. But here we are. This February 14th held two holy days. And, in our life in Christ, they aren’t incompatible but inseparable.

The history of salvation is one extended love story between God and God’s creation, between God and humankind, between God and God’s people. We were created in love for love. Real love. Love that is solid and deep and unflinching. Love that is true enough to be honest.

The history of salvation is one extended love story between God and God’s creation,
between God and humankind, between God and God’s people.

God’s work of reconciliation in Christ is God’s eyes-wide-open acknowledgment of human rebellion and sin, the undeniable fact that all is not well no matter how hard we try to fix it or deny it. The remedy was the all-in, complete love of the incarnation, crucifixion and death of Christ. Jesus meets us right in the middle of our pain—the pain we feel and the pain we cause others—and without minimizing the depth of our offense, offers forgiveness and new life. Love does *not* mean never having to say you’re sorry—love means being *able* to say you’re sorry.

Lutherans point out that grace is a gift, but sometimes we get a little carried away. I believe the sign in front of one of our congregations that claimed “Forgiveness guaranteed. Repentance optional.” was trying to announce good news. Instead, it sent passers-by in the wrong direction. Our reconciled new life in Christ not only makes it possible for us to strip away any illusion of a whole and holy life that we bring about by ourselves, it compels us to repent.

Theologian and martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer warned us about this cheap grace. He wrote: “Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves. Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, communion without confession. ... Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate” (*The Cost of Discipleship*).

So, Ash Wednesday is a valentine from God, one that invites us to enter deep into the mystery of true love, honest examination of our lives and the possibility of real repentance. The Ash Wednesday valentine starts us on the journey to the cross, to the passionate love of God shown in the Passion of Christ. And after the cross, the resurrection. No more pretense, freedom.

HISTORIC CHURCH DESTROYED BY FIRE; LIGHTNING COULD BE THE CAUSE

Grand Forks Herald, March 5, 2018

When Roger Anderson got a call from church president and sister Kris Heine late Sunday night, he knew immediately it was bad.

He only had to look out his window to see the Skjeberg Lutheran Church in Kittson County just across the border from Drayton, ND was fully on fire. Anderson, a fourth-generation member of the congregation, lives on a farm about 2½ miles south of the church.

“It was one of the worst sights I’ve ever seen,” Anderson said. “You definitely could see the outline of the church. It was all on fire.”

His neighbor 2 miles north of the church, Gary Jenson, saw it, too. He was the first person to notice the glow through the haze of the storm and drove through the 6-inch-deep snow to check it out.

By the time he arrived at the church, located about 3 miles east and a ½ miles north of Drayton, he said the steeple already had fallen and the rest of the church was engulfed in flames.

Volunteer firefighters from Drayton, along with Minnesota crews from Kennedy, Hallock and Stephen all responded, but there was little they could do to save the church that was built by Norwegian settlers in 1883.

Volunteer Drayton Fire Chief Jordan Grundstrom said he got the call at 9:41 p.m., but the fire was shooting through the roof when crews arrived 12 minutes later. The storm made travel extremely difficult, he said, doubling the usual response time.

“Not that we would have been able to save it, but it definitely hindered our capability to fight it,” he said. “We endured some rain and a little bit of sleet, but the wind was probably the worst factor. It was a wind-pushed fire. The winds were 20 to 25 mph, and that helped fuel the fire and make it spread that much quicker.”

The cause of the fire is unknown, but Grundstrom said many speculate lightning may have been the source.

“It sure seems like a possibility,” Grundstrom said. “We were in the middle of a terrible thunder and lightning storm that lasted for a very long time.”

Grundstrom said near-blizzard conditions also caused some firefighters driving in personal vehicles to slide into the ditch enroute to the scene, but no one was injured.

The fire destroyed the church, but the congregation with roughly 100 members is trying to stay positive.

“Skjeberg has been around so long, it’s the heart and the soul of the community,” Anderson said. “We just had church on Sunday, and the church was full. ... Everyone is saying the people are the church, and they all want to continue it.”



Heine, who also serves as the main organist for the church, said three neighbor churches already offered to open their doors for services.

“Everybody is just devastated but hopeful,” Heine said. “The whole community is behind us. Everybody is sending us their love, support and encouragement.”

Heine said kind words and prayers also have traveled all the way from Norway. Her fellow organist at a sister church in Skjeberg, Norway, reached out via Facebook.

Members of both churches have traveled back and forth through the years, Heine said.

“It’s such a supportive, welcoming church. During the sharing of the peace it takes about a minute because everybody is hugging each other,” Heine said. “You’re not a stranger when you come here because everyone welcomes you.”

Heine said the church has insurance, but some things will be impossible to replace such as the antique, handmade altar cloth that came from Norway and the ornate wooden altar with its painting of Jesus.

Heine said the congregation will meet Wednesday to discuss what to do next. Donations may be sent to Skjeberg Church, c/o Koda Bank, Box 369, Drayton, ND 58225.

Minutes of the Church Council

February 15, 2018

The St. Pauli Church Council met on Thursday, February 15, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at St. Pauli Church. Board Members present: Arlo Rude, Faye Auchenpaugh, Gary Iverson, and Larry Hurst. Absent: Ivette Garrett and Pastor Carl Hansen.

The meeting opened with the Lord's Prayer.

Selection of Council President: **M/S/C** (Iverson/Hurst) to elect Ivette Garrett to serve as council president for 2018.

In Garrett's absence, Rude served as Acting President.

Approval of Agenda: **M/S/C** (Hurst/Iverson) to approve agenda as submitted.

Secretary's Report: **M/S/C** (Iverson/Hurst) to approve the January 11, 2018 Secretary's report as read.

Treasurer's Report: **M/S/C** (Iverson/Auchenpaugh) to approve the treasurer's report as presented.

Balances as of 1/31/18:

Checking Account as of 12/31/17:	\$ 26,507.32
Income	\$ 2,610.00
Expenses	\$ (2,268.42)
Checking Account as of 1/31/18	\$ 26,848.90
Investor Savings	\$ 36,060.38
Certificates of Deposit	\$ 20,000.00
Edward D. Jones Investments	\$ 48,120.25
Memorial Fund Savings & CD	\$ 11,820.17
Mission Grant Fund Balance	\$ 2,026.19
Total Church Funds as of 1/31/18:	\$ 144,875.89

Pastor Carl's Report:

No report. Pastor Carl was unable to attend due to a conflict.

Reports of members in sickness or distress: Concerns and prayers were said for those experiencing illnesses.

New members or interest in membership: None.

Reports.

- 1) WELCA: The ladies have made 15-16 quilts so far this year in three days of quilting at the church.
- 2) Board of Education: Nothing new to report.

Old Business:

- 1) Rude learned that the problem in not being able to use the rest room a short time ago was due to a bad relay for the pump. He has replaced it.
- 2) **M/S/C** (Hurst/Iverson) to approve budgeted payments. These include carryovers from 2017: a) transferring the \$1,000 mistakenly transferred in 2017 to the Memorial Fund to its correct repository in the Mission Grant Fund, b) payments to the co-treasurers and heat caretaker, and c) payment to Pathways and the Education Fund. 2018 budgeted payments include \$3,050 to the NW MN Synod, \$3,500 to the Cemetery Association fund, \$1,000 to the Mission Grant Fund, \$265 to the Education Fund, and \$2,500 to the ELCA Seminary fund. The council decided to wait until later in the year or if a crisis arises to donate the \$1,260 budgeted for the ELCA Disaster Fund. The ELCA Seminary fund donation was split with \$1,000.00 going to seminarians and \$1,500.00 to the endowment.
- 3) Iverson has checked online and it appears that as long as we are part of the overall ELCA body that we do not need a separate 501(c)(3). He will check further.
- 4) Construction Projects: Rude visited with Don Schindler and recommended more shelf supports. Schindler will begin in about three weeks.

New Business:

- 1) Internet Service: There will be a \$100.00 installation fee and a two-month contract that can be changed or canceled at any time thereafter.
- 2) As new treasurer, Rude needs a letter from the Council to Northern State Bank authorizing him to have access to accounts plus a copy of the 2018 Annual Meeting minutes showing that he was duly elected as treasurer. The letter was signed and Auchenpaugh will send the minutes via email to Rude.
- 3) Vanessa Martell will be invited to a council meeting to review the church's investments.

M/S/C (Iverson/Hurst) to adjourn at 7:55 p.m.

Faye Auchenpaugh
Secretary

Historic Minutes of the St. Pauli Congregation

With this newsletter, we enter a new decade of our church's historic minutes – a decade in which women now have voting power in the church but never serve as officers, the basement is rebuilt, the Great Depression hits, and church business is transacted in English instead of Norse, although minutes of annual and special meetings continue to be written in Norwegian until 1939.

14 November 1930

St. Pauli congregation held its annual meeting in the Church on November 14, 1930.

The meeting was opened by the chairman Pastor M. L. Dahle with hymn song, reading from the Bible and prayer.

The report of the secretary was read and accepted as it was read. The report of the treasurer was read and accepted as it was read.

Pastor Dahle reported that he had, during the course of the year, held 23 divine services, 2 Holy Communions, 2 funerals

and that there had been conducted six weeks of religion school.

The following officials were elected:

Secretary: O. J. Snetting 1 year;

Treasurer: Tobias Stene 1 year;

Trustee: Emil Thune 3 years.

School committee: Mrs. Martin Mathson, Mrs. Nels Nelson, O.

J. Snetting

Sexton: Nils Nelson

Assessment committee: Ole Pederson, Helmer Finstad, Ed

Vigen

It was proposed and supported that the trustees shall apply to the county commissioners to have a bridge built to the graveyard. Accepted.

Proposed and supported that the trustees shall find out what should be done to the graveyard. Accepted.

On proposal the meeting was ended.

Olaf Snetting, Secretary

Historic Minutes of the St. Pauli Luther League

From this August 1928 meeting forward, what had been called the "Young People's Society" is now referred to as "Luther League"
By this time, Luther League is the common name for nearly all young peoples' societies among Lutheran churches in America.

19 August 1928

The St. Pauli Luther League held its last meeting at the church Sunday evening, August 19. The meeting was called to order by President Oscar Odegaard.

The following program was rendered:

Song by audience.

Recitation: Mrs. Martin Finstad

Reading: Gilma Helgerson

Song: Stanley and Mrs. Lemke

Recitation: Clara Iverson

Song "Holy, Holy, Holy" by audience

Reading: Tobias Stene

Recitation: Vernon Finstad

Song by audience

The following program committee was appointed: Mrs. Martin Finstad, Marie Oien, Helmer Finstad.

On motion duly made and carried, the meeting was adjourned.

Lunch was served by the Luther League. Proceeds: \$19.50

Gust A Gustafson, Secretary

2 September 1928

The St. Pauli Luther League held its last meeting at the church Sunday evening, September 2. Meeting was called to order by Rev. Dahle.

The following program was rendered:

Scripture Reading and Prayer: Rev. Dahle

Song: Audience

Talk: Rev. Dahle

Song: Audience

On motion duly made and carried, meeting adjourned.

Lunch was served by the Luther League. Proceeds: \$13.28.

Gust A. Gustafson, Secretary

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April 1955

The April meeting of St. Pauli Luther League was held at the church. Secretary's report was read and approved. Darryl gave the treasurer's report which was also accepted.

Betty read a letter concerning the workers conference to be held at Holt on May 1.

The program opened with the singing of "All Glory Be to Thee Most High." Scripture and prayer were read by Rev. Person. A poem "Thank God That We Have Work to Do" was read by Roger Belange. Hymn "God of Mercy, God of Might" by the audience.

A skit was presented by Carol Rude, Lyle Bjorge, Corrine Torkelson and Carmen Lokken.

A solo "Beneath the Cross of Jesus" was sung by Elinor Gustafson and a reading by Gary Rolandson. Hymn "Jesus Master at Thy Word" by congregation. Lord's Prayer and benediction was given by Rev. Person.

Servers were Joe Belange, Olaf Snetting and Herman Rude. Proceeds: \$13.50.

Lorrie Weckwerth, Recording Secretary

22 May 1955

The May meeting of Luther League was held on May 22 at the church with Betty Rude presiding. Secretary's report was read and approved. There was no treasurer's report.

A money raising project was discussed. It was voted to hold an ice cream social. A committee consisting of Janice Finstad, Beverly Rolandson and Elinor Gustafson was chosen to set it up.

Song "Onward Christian Soldiers" was sung by the congregation. The topic for the evening's program was "Fear" A skit entitled "David and Goliath" was given by Lyle Bjorge, Robert Arneson and Gary Rolandson, with the audience taking part. Talks on different kinds of fear were given by Bev Rolandson and Ila Belange. Buzz sessions were held on "Things we fear most and how to overcome them," with both the parents and leaguers taking part. Some very interesting views were presented on this problem. A song "I Need Thee Every Hour" by the audience.

Rev. Person led us in the Lord's Prayer and pronounced the benediction.

Servers: Madames Mons Engelstad, Paul Engelstad, Edwin Hanson and Sig Folkedahl. Proceeds: \$14.05.

Lorrie Weckwerth, Secretary

The Great Depression in Rural America

The Depression changed the lives of rural Americans. It actually began in rural America a decade before the Great Depression. The United States had experienced a recession after World War I from 1918 to 1919, which was followed by a severe depression in 1920-21.

Urban America quickly recovered from these recessions and enjoyed a decade of economic expansion and growth. Rural America, however, never recovered. And a depressed rural sector meant that the American economy was vulnerable. Thus when the Stock Market crashed in 1929 and the economy began to restrict, rural America was especially vulnerable. And the subsequent drop in farm prices devastated rural America.

Many farmers were already behind on their mortgages and with prices declining they had no hope of keeping up payments or borrowing more money. And this only accentuated the economic spiral. Farmers unable to pay their mortgages put increasing pressure on banks, which were also troubled by defaults on loans to city residents. And this was made even worse when the farmers on the Great Plains had to contend with a severe drought. Unappreciated by the pioneers who came to the Great Plains after the Civil War, they were settling down on a fragile environmental system. The term eco-system had not yet entered the vocabulary, but was suddenly brought home by the dust storms and the new term "Dust Bowl."

Most farmers still did not have heat, light or indoor bathrooms, as were now standard in the cities. Farm families raised most of their own food – eggs and chickens, milk, meat from their own pigs and cows, and vegetables from carefully tended gardens. This put them at an advantage from many city families when the fathers lost their jobs – as long as they didn't lose their land. Tragically many farm families did; this included both farm owners and sharecroppers. Many farm families moved away. The best known are the Oakies. Hard hit by the Dust storms, many headed West. California was a common destination because of rumors about jobs and opportunities. Many black sharecroppers headed north, part of the Great Migration which began after World War I.

While the drought and resulting dust storms were the most visible problem, farmers experienced other problems, including insects, summer heat and winter cold. As the economy continued to spiral down, farmers could not afford to buy the products made by urban workers like tractors, farm equipment, pumps, tools, and much more including a range of consumer goods. And unemployed workers in the cities could not afford to buy farm products.

Farmers losing their land were forced into the cities, where they competed for jobs with unemployed city workers. Many farm families were forced to pack what they could fit into their Model-T or other car or truck and leave the land, in some cases land that had been farmed for generations by their families.



Hoover Administration (1929-33)

The rapidly deteriorating farm situation forced the Federal Government to take action. President Hoover wanted to allow market forces to resolve the farm problem, but the problem was so great that he began Federal efforts to aid farmers. He set up the federal Farm Board. It was a limited commitment, but it was the first Federal commitment to Government intervention in farm markets and prices. The Farm Board attempted to aid farmers by providing access to credit under favorable terms. It also bought agricultural commodities to stabilize the prices. The result was that farmers increased production. This and falling demand because of the Depression drove prices even lower.

The Roosevelt Administration: The New Deal Rural Programs (1933-41)

The New Deal was not only focused on industry and urban America; it was particularly concerned about rural America. A majority of Americans now lived in cities, but there was still a very substantial farm population, much larger than is the case today. The New Deal included several programs to both assist rural Americans to survive during the Depression as well as to try to correct the endemic farm problem. Some young men in rural America found government jobs building roads and bridges. Others found work with the CCC or WPA.

New Deal efforts to improve farming methods also had an important impact, both in preventing another Dust Bowl and increasing farm productivity. One program which undeniably improved farm life and productivity was the Rural Electrification Administration (REA). This made farm life not only easier and safer, but American farmers vastly more productive. And efforts to improve farming methods also had an important impact.

A limited form of the Social Security program began as a measure to implement "social insurance" when poverty rates among senior citizens exceeded 50%. The Social Security Act, enacted August 14, 1935, was an attempt to limit what were seen as dangers in the modern American life, including old age, poverty, unemployment, and the burdens of widows and fatherless children. The law was very unpopular among many groups, especially farmers, who resented the additional taxes and feared they would never be made good and they lobbied hard for exclusion. Furthermore, the Treasury realized how difficult it would be to set up payroll deduction plans for farmers, for housekeepers who employed maids, and for nonprofit groups; therefore they were excluded. State employees were excluded for constitutional reasons (the federal government cannot tax state government). Federal employees were also excluded.

Ultimately it was the weather and two brutal dictators, Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin, who revived the fortunes of rural America. Normal rainfall patterns resumed in the Southern Plains. The rain allowed those farmers who had managed to keep their land to resume normal operations (1940). And

Hitler and Stalin, by launching World War II, created a vast demand for farm products with European and Asian agricultural production disrupted by the War.

As in World War I, American farm production not only fed American armies, but those of its allies as well preventing famine and starvation in many countries that the War and genocidal policies had reduced to starvation. Russia and the Ukraine included some of the most productive agricultural land in the world. It had for centuries been the European bread basket. But Stalin had now significantly reduced the Soviet agricultural production by collectivization. The Soviet Union could no longer export massive quantities of grain as

was the case in Tsarist times, but it could still feed its own people.

This changed when Hitler ordered the Barbarossa invasion of the Soviet Union. With the black soil regions of the western Soviet Union in Nazi hands, the Soviet Union could no longer feed its people.

One of the brutal dictators who started the war, Stalin had to turn to the capitalist United States to prevent mass starvation – the second time that America had saved the Russian people from starvation. President Roosevelt called the United States the Arsenal of Democracy. It was also the Bread Basket of democracy.

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QUILTING 2018

The WELCA ladies of St. Pauli made 16 quilts this year in just three days. These will be displayed on the altar for blessing on Blanket Sunday, April 29th. They will then be shipped in May, along with the Personal Care Kits that have been collected during Lent.



ARMOUR – A Way of Life

Forty years ago this month, the Armour meatpacking plant in South St. Paul closed its doors forever.

By Pioneer Press | news@pioneerpress.com
November 13, 2015

With the announced closing of the Armour Food Co. plant in South St. Paul, the city experienced the latest in a series of economic blows.

Mrs. Dorothy McCann of River Falls, WI, and Peter Jerome, of South St. Paul, leave their jobs at the Armour plant at the end of their shift. They were among 800 workers who expected to get their walking papers by the time the plant closed on April 1 of 1978.



Once, it was the largest building in Minnesota. Now it's gone. But for 60 years, everything about the Armour and Co. meatpacking plant in South St. Paul was immense.

"It was the largest meatpacking plant in the history of the world when it opened in 1919," said Lois Glewwe, an author and local historian.

The Armour colossus sat alongside the Mississippi River, five miles downstream from downtown St. Paul. Next door were the equally huge Swift & Co. meatpacking plant and the St. Paul Union Stockyards.

Together, they branded South St. Paul with its identity — as a livestock marketplace teeming with workers and wealth, grisly tasks and powerful stench, tough characters and tempting steaks.

Outsiders would recoil at the slaughter and smell, so workers developed a thick skin.

"I'd say they couldn't take it," recalled Hubert Murphy, a 17-year Armour employee. "It was the best plant, and we were making good money."

For six decades, the Armour plant put burgers and bacon on America's plates. At its peak, the Armour complex had 4,000 employees who slaughtered and sliced nearly 2,000 animals an hour. Hogs, cattle and sheep walked in; they came out as sides of beef, lard, canned chili, mutton, hides or fertilizer.

Armour's reign didn't last. Changes in the way meat was raised, packed and marketed turned the giant factory into a dinosaur. The company closed its South St. Paul plant in 1979. The complex was demolished a decade later.

Yet the memories linger.

Paul Anderson, an associate justice on the Minnesota Supreme Court, was a young lawyer in South St. Paul in the early 1970s and recalls the town's bygone era of cowboys, packers, buyers and stockmen.

For many of them, "South St. Paul wasn't just work," Anderson said. "It was a way of life."

THE TOUR

Thanks to a catchy jingle, Armour's best-known product was its hot dogs. Maybe you remember: "Hot dogs, Armour hot dogs. What kinds of kids eat Armour hot dogs? Fat kids, skinny kids, kids who climb on rocks..."

Armour and Swift used to give public tours, but anyone expecting a hot-dog factory was in for a shock. Many horrified schoolchildren never forgot it: cattle being killed with sledgehammers, their throats slit, floors covered with blood.

"I still have a visual image of how the animals were hung up," said Anderson, recalling his slaughterhouse tour decades ago as a 12-year-old farm kid.

For many years, Glewwe said, "Every sixth-grade class in South St. Paul was forced to tour the slaughterhouse. The little girls would be throwing up, screaming."

But there was more to Armour than the slaughterhouse. The 22 buildings in the complex housed a canning operation, a box factory, a huge front office, a smokehouse, and loading facilities.

"They made baby food there, they made ribs in that plant, they made chili," said Joe Stoi, a former employee. "You name it, they made it there."

"A GOOD PLACE TO WORK"

On a recent Tuesday, Stoi, 75, was outdoors grilling hot dogs and bratwurst for his fellow packing-plant retirees.

"They used to treat the workers pretty bad at those old packing houses," Stoi said. But over the decades, government regulation and union pressure — including worker strikes — changed that. By the time Stoi joined "Armour's" in the 1950s, it boasted good wages, excellent health coverage and a pension plan that still exists today. There were nice extras, too, like the company meat market.

"It was a damned good place to work," said Stoi, who spent 27 years there. "I worked in every department in that packinghouse, and we had 46 departments."

Stoi's main job was on the mechanical gang, which once had 220 workers. He saw it all, from cleaning sewers to watching slaughtered steers hoisted up on a chain that moved through the plant.

"The beef went along on a trolley, and each person had a job they had to do — or it didn't get done," Stoi recalls. "People that worked on the line, they worked hard. Line work was tough."

Retiree Don Biermaier, a regular in the lard department, once got to try a different sort of job.

"I got a job one day on the hog kill — one day, and I said, 'I want out of here.' ... Pretty soon I got back to (refining) lard again." And that's where he stayed for 28 years.

If workers took pride in their toughness, some also wanted their children to have a different life. That yearning built strong schools in South St. Paul, aided by taxes from the meat industry.

Said Anderson, "Employees knew that getting a good education meant that their kids didn't have to work in the plants."

STAR OF SOUTH ST. PAUL

South St. Paul was a thriving livestock center decades before Armour arrived.

The stockyards came first, in 1886. Then a small packinghouse arrived. Then in 1895 came one of the meat industry's big boys, Swift & Co.

Soon, locals tried to lure a second giant. But Armour wasn't interested. Then as World War I broke out, the combination of a thriving stockyard and generous subsidies persuaded Armour to build there.

Armour's mega-plant opened in 1919, with some of its work force gleaned from "these little towns in Serbia, Croatia, Poland," young

men tempted by free passage to America and a job, Glewwe said. "It was economics," she explained. "They could bring these guys over for very little. It was a labor-intensive industry, and let's face it, there was competition for jobs and not everyone wanted to work at a slaughterhouse."

The plant's mammoth scale worked in Armour's favor, as did the era's geography of small farms, railroad lines and far-off urban customers. Farmers in remote locations needed a place to sell livestock, and for a 1,000-mile stretch across the northwest, the action was in South St. Paul.

"Every farmer out there had a few hogs and a few cattle, and they all brought them into the central livestock market," said Jerry Hawton, a one-time hog buyer for Swift.

Railroads converged in urban areas, able to deliver animals to a central market and, after slaughter, quickly move the perishable meat to the busy East.

Inside the packinghouses, gangs of specialized workers could dismember carcasses with unmatched efficiency. And the giant packers were masters at turning leftovers like fat, hair and blood into money-makers like leather, lard, medicine, fertilizer and Armour's most famous product, Dial soap.

In its heyday, Chicago-based Armour was among the world's largest companies. When the Fortune 500 list debuted in 1955, Armour ranked No. 7. (The next 10 smaller companies were Gulf Oil, Mobil, DuPont, Amoco, Bethlehem Steel, CBS, Texaco, ATT, Shell Oil and Kraft.) Swift was larger still. Its corporate parent, Chicago-based Esmark, ranked No. 5.

Today, it's hard to appreciate how much economic power had clustered in South St. Paul. But a look beyond the plant gates gives some clues.



Armour Plant. South St. Paul. October 1932

OUTSIDE THE GATES

More than 100 taverns crowded along bustling Concord Street, from the Hook-Em Cow to Hank's and Kay's and Gene's and Chet's.

The street was alive with diners and boarding houses, farm-supply stores and trucking companies, clothiers and car dealers.

"South St. Paul, it was kind of exotic — a destination place in my world when I was growing up," remembers Anderson. "We would ship our cattle to South St. Paul probably once or twice a year," and marvel at the street scene.

In its heyday, business in South St. Paul never stopped.

"All night long, there'd be loads of livestock coming in," Hawton said.

Its fame spread across the farm belt, with hourly radio reports giving the latest prices from the center of the livestock universe.

Yet if South St. Paul was living high on the hog, it was also nagged by its cow-town reputation. Shifting winds carried its stench across the Twin Cities.

"It brought about this culture of defensiveness," Glewwe said. "Kids from the other schools were like, 'Peeewwww, you smell so bad, the Packers.' ... That community psyche exists to this day."

CHANGING TIMES

Gradually in the 1950s and 1960s, the advantages began to wane for the old-line meatpacking giants.

Small farms were vanishing, replaced by larger hog and cattle operations who sold animals directly to packers, avoiding stockyards altogether. The rise of trucking meant the flow of animals no longer had to follow rail lines.

More specialized and efficient packing plants set up shop in rural areas, closer to the animals and farther from urban unions. A six-story packing plant became an anachronism.

And an urban packinghouse became a headache. Neighbors resented the stench, owners resented the taxes, and cities resented the pollution.

After Swift closed its South St. Paul plant in 1969, rumors about Armour never stopped.

In 1972 Armour closed its beef operations in South St. Paul, then its canning operations, then its smoked meat and sausage operations. Finally, in 1979 Armour closed the remaining South St. Paul plant for good. A company official blamed Minnesota's high taxes.

In hindsight, Armour had bigger problems than MN taxes. Its profit margins had always been razor-thin. Now many of its plants were obsolete, as were its packing methods and cost structure.

Ultimately, Armour and Co. suffered the same fate as the hogs: it was sliced apart and sold in pieces. Today different corporations own Dial soap, Armour's food brands, the refrigerated meat business and its pharmaceutical lines. So the Armour brand still exists, though the company is gone.

A LASTING LEGACY

The Armour plant was shut in 1979, then stood vacant for years. Dreams of redevelopment flickered and died. In 1989 the whole complex was demolished. Only the plant gates were spared.

"It left 40 acres of horribly polluted land," Glewwe said. "The tannery, the rendering plant, they all used these caustic chemicals."

After an expensive cleanup, the land was turned into a light industrial park. Today the area is home to a bagel bakery, a lighting company, a pump maker, some union offices and more. The riverfront has become parkland.

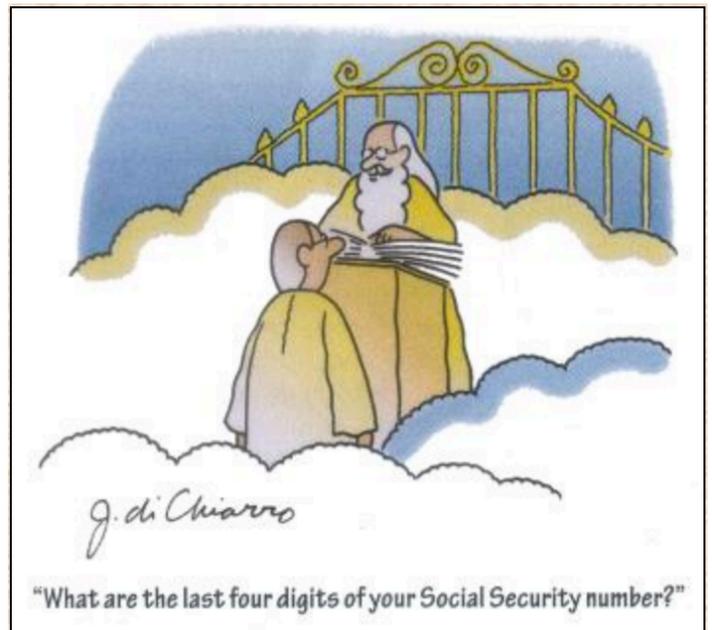
Yet one thing hasn't changed. Minnesota still produces a lot of meat — actually, more than ever. Now the state's big packing plants are in Austin and Worthington, not in the Twin Cities. And their workers are mostly Hispanics, not Croatians and Poles.

But the real legacy of South St. Paul is more easily seen from afar. In 1916 poet Carl Sandburg famously called Chicago, "Hog butcher for the world, tool maker, stacker of wheat ... City of the Big Shoulders."

Today Chicago isn't much of a hog butcher, nor a wheat stacker. Those industries have moved. Yet they helped build a great city. The same is true in livestock centers like Kansas City, Fort Worth and Denver.

Today in South St. Paul, the stockyard is gone, Swift is gone, Armour is gone. But a legacy remains — the Twin Cities they helped build, filled with people who love burgers and bacon.

* * * * *



The Difference Between Men and Women

Curious after finding a black-and-white negative in a drawer, a woman had them made into prints. She was pleasantly surprised to see a younger, slimmer version of herself taken on one of her first dates with her husband.

When she showed him the photo, his face lit up. She beamed, waiting for him to comment.

"Wow, look at that!" he said with appreciation. "It's my old Mercury!"





Come and join us for our annual week-long celebration of Syttende Mai, Norway's Constitution Day!

Saturday, May 12

- Uff Da Day at Pioneer Village

Sunday, May 13

- Concert by Inger-Kristine Riber and Reidun Horvei from Norway. "Migrasong - the tunes they carried across the sea." United Methodist Church, 7 p.m. Freewill donation.

Monday, May 14

- Norwegian Movie Night, award winning 1948 movie "I Remember Mama." NCTC Auditorium, 7 p.m. Freewill donation.

Tuesday, May 15

- Dr. Odd Lovoll, history professor and author of many books on Scandinavian immigration, will speak on "Observations on the History of the Norwegian American Experience." NCTC Auditorium, 7 p.m. Freewill donation.

Wednesday, May 16

- Scandinavian Smorgasbord Dinner, Zion Church. 5-7 p.m. \$12 adults, \$5 children under 12.

Thursday, May 17, Syttende Mai

- Syttende Mai Open House with Scandinavian goodies and coffee, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. at Northern State Bank.

Friday, May 18

- 'Old Time Dance' with the Cathy Erickson Band, folk dancing instructions by Jeanne O'Neill, 7-11 p.m. at the Eagles Club. \$7.50, includes lunch.

Saturday, May 19

- Author Susan Foote speaking on MN mental institution reform led by Engla Schey, daughter of Norwegian immigrants who settled near Newfolden. TRF Public Library. 10 a.m. Free.
- "Ole & Lena's Wedding" comedy theater performance by Change of Pace Productions, NCTC Auditorium. 7 p.m. \$10.

Sunday, May 20

- "Ole & Lena's Wedding" comedy theater performance by Change of Pace Productions, NCTC Auditorium. 2 p.m. \$10.

For more info, go to [facebook.com/snorrelodge/](https://www.facebook.com/snorrelodge/) or call (218) 686-0205



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The Back Page

Christ is Risen Indeed!

It all started with such promise –

the angel announcing to Mary that the child she would bear would be called Son of the Most High; the conviction of Mary that this child would be the embodiment of God's promised justice, that the hungry would be filled with good things and the rich sent away empty; angels announcing his birth; thousands being fed; the sick healed; the dead raised.

And then, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" It was over. The world hadn't changed. Might still made right. How ridiculously naïve to believe that any reversal of the old order could come about. Hope is for the gullible. Looking at this broken man hanging utterly helpless, naked and broken on a cross, the powers and principalities, earthly and spiritual, death and the devil must have said, "You fool."

This, as St. Paul reminds us, is the wisdom of the world. And the world can present plenty of hard evidence that it is right: children killing children in horrific school shootings, 60 million displaced people – all of this supported by our rebellion against God, our idolatrous claim that we are in control and the world is ours. In the face of this and all of the suffering others cause and we cause others, we, too, might cry out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

I believe that the beginning of Psalm 22 expresses the anguish of the psalmist and the anguish of our Lord, but there is more going on here. Citing the first words of a text was, in the tradition of the time, a way of identifying an entire passage. The psalm ends this way: "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him. ... Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord, and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that he has done it." This is the wisdom of God. Jesus' crucifixion is the death of our death. His innocent suffering has reconciled all of creation to God. He has done it. We stake our lives on this.

This year, Easter falls on April 1. We shall have come through the Lenten desert to the Easter garden. We shall say, "Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!" And we shall confess this and live this in the face of worldly wisdom that is based on death. Life wins. Love wins. And if the world wants to call us April fools, we are glad to claim that title.



An Easter message from
Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.