

St. Pauli News in Detail



Christmas Eve

Bell Ringing
5:30 pm

Worship Services
5:00 pm



Greeting and Ushering

Dec. 4	Jim Rondorf
Dec. 11	Jordan Rondorf
Dec. 18	Arlo Rude (SS Program)
Dec. 24	Wahna Smith (Christmas Eve)
Dec. 25	No worship services
Jan. 1	Mike Stickler

Altar Preparation: Kari Iverson
Christmas Eve: Jan Strandlie

Sunday School Christmas Program

We always look forward to this annual event, which will be held this year on Sunday, December 18, during worship services. Potluck to follow with Lydia A-F serving.

CHRISTMAS BRUNCH

Saturday, December 3rd
10:00 am

Biff's Cafe

All St. Pauli women are invited to a Christmas Brunch in the north side of Biff's Café in Thief River Falls. This will be a "Dutch Treat" with everyone ordering off the menu.

Please RSVP to Cindy Cedergren by November 28.

Stewardship Numbers for 2022

29 quilts, 7 fabric kits, 31 personal care kits, 24 baby care kits, 11 school kits, and 2 graduation quilts.

Looking for a Christmas Gift?

We still have St. Pauli 125th Anniversary Cookbooks for sale. It contains some favorites from the 100th Anniversary cookbook but has tons of new recipes. Cost is \$15.00. For an additional \$1, you can get a special box that can be used just for wrapping or for shipping the cookbook.

December Milestones

Birthdays

Dec. 5	Roxanne Rondorf
Dec. 12	Heidi Haugen
Dec. 23	Jim Strandlie
Dec. 28	Ella Rondorf
Dec. 29	Neil Bugge
Dec. 30	Richard Geske

Anniversaries

Dec. 1 Jordan and Erin Rondorf



In Memoriam

Lyle Theodore Bjorge

October 29, 1940 – November 16, 2022

Lyle Theodore Bjorge, 82, passed away on November 16, 2022, at his residence in Smiley Township, rural Thief River Falls, MN.

Lyle Theodore Bjorge was born on October 29, 1940, the son of Theodore and Anna (Longren) Bjorge. Lyle was welcomed home by his big brother, Marlyn, and completed their family.

In his earlier years, Lyle attended country school #221, located across the road from their farmstead. Although school was not one of Lyle's favorite times, as he often told stories of ways he would "skip," he went on to attend Lincoln High School in Thief River Falls, MN in 9th grade, and graduated with Corine in the class of 1958. Throughout his adulthood, there weren't many class reunions that he missed.

Lyle attended Sunday School, was baptized, and confirmed at St. Pauli Lutheran church. It was at Sunday School where, little did he know at the time, he first met his future wife, Corine Torkelson. The two became "partners in crime," and spent their younger years living life to the fullest, and a little on the wild side. The two of them had many stories to share, from racing cars to pulling pranks. Lyle and Corine were united in marriage on June 9, 1961.

Lyle grew up on the farm where he currently resided, helping his dad. Farming was in his blood, and there was no question that this would be his lifelong career. After his father's death in 1965, Lyle and Corine took over the farm and took great pride in it. Besides small grains, they also raised cows, pigs, sheep, and goats for many years.

Lyle also spent his younger adulthood operating heavy equipment. He enjoyed his time working for Harry Dahl Construction and Prestebak Construction. He was proud of the jobs he was a part of, building the dams in Twin Valley and Florian, MN. He also found new friendships with "the guys," friendships that he cherished throughout his lifetime.

Lyle was a knowledgeable man and could fix anything. One of his most significant accomplishments was when he worked for Edgar Hetteen at Arctic Enterprises, building an Arctic Cat Air Sled. The sled was soon dismantled after testing, and the only picture of the sled is the one with Lyle on it. Through the years, he was able to attend a variety of events that showcased a replica of the sled.

Lyle would say that his biggest accomplishment was his family. His pride and joy, daughter Charissa Ann, "Kissy," was born on October 26, 1962, arriving just three days shy of Lyle's birthday. Wherever Lyle was, you'd be sure to find Kissy not far behind. He loved having his daughter help him on the farm. Later on, Tim Raiter began working for him on the farm, and he soon became Lyle's best friend, spending many, many hours in the shop together, tinkering, fixing, and a whole lot of BS'ing. The shop soon became the place that the neighbors would stop by often. He considered himself one of the lucky ones when he gained his son-in-law, Dan Larson. Lyle's soft spot was definitely for his grandchildren, Cynthia - "grandpa's little girl," and Travis - his "buckwheat." Just when we didn't think Lyle's heart could get any larger, it did with the birth of each of his great-grandchildren: Carly, Nels Lyle, Kyson, and Thielyn.

When Lyle wasn't working, he made sure he was doing something he enjoyed, and rarely sat still. When he was younger, he enjoyed racing stock cars all over the region. Later, he enjoyed watching the races in Greenbush on the weekends. He also loved watching Nascar and the Minnesota Vikings, attending neighborhood card parties, checking the crops, pulling tabs, and drinking an Old Mill or two. Lyle took every opportunity he could to have a fishing rod in his hand. Both summer and winter fishing were some of his favorite pastimes and he had many stories and pictures to share.

Lyle also had a deep love for restoring things, especially John Deere tractors. He had a true talent for it. He took pride in owning the first R John Deere purchased from Amundgaard Lunke Implement in Thief River Falls, MN. Soon his talent was known by his friends and neighbors, and he began restoring items for them. Up until the time of his death, Lyle spent his spare time in his shop, restoring any project someone had for him. Lyle was a proud resident of Smiley township and served as a supervisor on the town board for nearly 40 years.

Lyle loved his family beyond measure. He is survived by his loving wife of 51 years and partner in crime, Corine; his daughter and pride and joy, Charissa and son-in-law Dan Larson of Oklee, MN; his grandchildren Cynthia (Neil) Jensen and their children Carly and Nels Lyle of Goodridge, MN, and Travis (Kristy) Larson and their children Kyson and Thielyn of Oklee MN. He is also survived by his brother, Marlyn of Grand Forks, ND; his shop buddy Tim (Putzy) Raiter; brother-in-law Oliver "Skip" Swanson; brother-in-law Craig (Sally) Torkelson, sister-in-law Carolyn Haugen (Charles "Chuck" Larson), all of Thief River Falls, MN, as well as his nephews, nieces, friends, and neighbors.

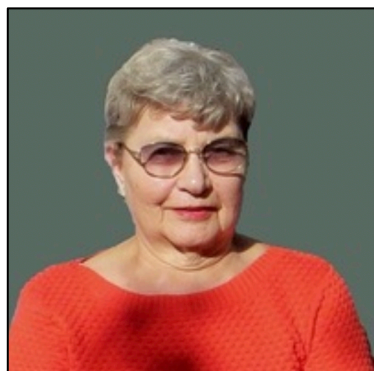
He is preceded in death by his parents, Theodore and Anna Bjorge, his brother, Morris in infancy; his sister-in-law Dalonna Bjorge, sister-in-law Patricia "Patty" Swanson, nephews Kevin Swanson and Brad Swanson, and great-nephew Blake

Torkelson. He is also proceeded in death by a number of his fishing buddies, who we know were waiting on the other side to cast that first line with him.

Visitation was held on Tuesday, November 22, 2022, from 5:00 to 7:00 PM, with a prayer service at 6:30 PM, at the Johnson Funeral Service Chapel in Thief River Falls. Funeral services were held on Wednesday, November 23, 2022 at 11:00 AM at St. Pauli Lutheran Church. **The family requested that at the service, everyone wear their favorite John Deere apparel or flannel shirt in celebration of Lyle's memory.**

Burial was at St. Pauli Cemetery.

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In Memoriam

June (Van de Streek) Jorgenson

June Jorgenson was a sister to Barb Nelson.

June Jorgenson, 88, of Stanwood, WA peacefully passed away on Tuesday October 25, 2022.

June was born to Egbert and Effie (Stavenger) Van de Streek on June 22, 1934 in rural Nobels County, Minnesota, the sixth of nine children. She grew up near St. Hilaire, MN and attended high school at Thief River Falls, MN.

June married Raymond Wyoski on May 11, 1957. Ray died on January 28, 1958, of cancer. Paul, her first son, was born less than a month later in February 1958.

June married Kenneth Jorgenson on March 8, 1959. Son Brian was born in November 1959 and son Gary in November 1962.

The family moved from Minnesota to North Dakota, then to Idaho, then to Washington by 1965. They lived in the Stanwood area starting in 1968. June worked as a homemaker, postal mail carrier, and teaching assistant for the Stanwood school district.

June was active with the family in Scouting as a Den Leader and assistant with the Boy Scouts. All three sons were Eagle Scouts. June loved the outdoors with camping and boating. She and Ken travelled extensively all across the country and on multiple cruise vacations.

June was preceded in death by Ken in 2017 and is survived by sons Paul (Gwen), Brian, and Gary (Tammy); grandchildren Ryan, Blake, Sean, and Alicia; great-grandchildren Aria, Olivia, Cash, Roman, and Ireland. She is also survived by sisters Barbera, Dorothy, Ruth, and Muriel.

Funeral services were held at Gilbertson Funeral Home in Stanwood, WA on Friday, November 4th.

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In Memoriam

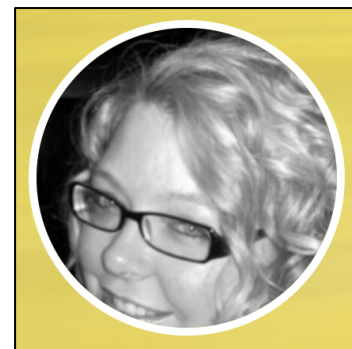
Nichole Marie Holt

Nichole Holt was a great-niece to Barb Nelson.

Nichole Marie Holt, 43, passed away on Friday, November 4, 2022, at Sandford Hospital, Fargo, ND, after a long battle with cancer.

On March 24, 1979, Nichole was born to Tim and Lana (Van de Streek) Bulger in Thief River Falls, MN. She was baptized and confirmed at Zion Lutheran Church, Thief River Falls. Nichole attended school in Thief River Falls, graduating from Lincoln High School in 1997. Nichole continued her education at Northland Community College before she began working. She worked at Digi-Key Electronics from 2004 to 2015. From 2015 to the present, Nichole worked at Polk County Social Services in Crookston. Her second job was putting together the Red Lake Falls *Gazette*.

On June 4, 2015, Nichole was united in marriage to Allen Holt at Cocoa Beach, FL, creating a wonderful, blended family including Brady, Olivia, and Parker. Nichole was diagnosed with cancer in the spring of 2021.



Fishing, spending time at the family cabin in the Beltrami Forest, and enjoying time with her children as they grew up was meaningful to her. Florida, especially Cocoa Beach, was a passion for the family to visit and explore. Outgoing, adventurous, and fun-loving describe her personality.

Nichole is survived by her husband, Allen, Red Lake Falls; children: Brady Bulger, Red Lake Falls, Olivia Bulger, Fort Drum, NY, and Parker (Torie Bugge) Holt, Thief River Falls; parents: Tim and Lana Bulger, Thief River Falls; brother, John Bulger, Thief River Falls; several aunts, uncles, and cousins, as well as special friends Nola and Casey Lemonds, Thief River Falls.

She is preceded in death by her grandparents—Darleen and Hank Lindom, Ed and Myrtle Van de Streek, and Joyce and Bill Bulger; cousin, Kimberly Hintz; and special friend, Becky Veselka.

Memorial services were held on Saturday, November 12, 2022, at Bethany Lutheran Church, Red Lake Falls. Visitation was on Friday evening, November 11, 2022, with a prayer service at 7 pm, and one hour before the 11 am service at Bethany Lutheran Church. Interment will be at a later date in Greenwood Cemetery, Thief River Falls, MN.

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In Memoriam

Bonnie (Finstad) Altman

Bonnie was the daughter of Martin and Julia Finstad, sister to Jan Breiland and Ginny Armstrong, and was baptized at St. Pauli.

Bonnie Elaine Altman, beloved wife and mother, passed away in Berthoud, Colorado at the age of 76.

Born in Thief River Falls on April 2, 1946 to Martin and Julia Finstad, she was the last of three sisters following Janet and Virginia.

During her childhood she worked on the family farm and went on to study at Moorhead State University where she met her first husband, Leonard Johnson.

The couple eventually settled in Boulder, Colorado and had two children: Derek and Michelle. Bonnie taught elementary education for developmentally disabled children before establishing her own design firm, Distinctive Décor. She continued her education, receiving a PhD in Organization and Management from Capella University, and enjoyed a successful career teaching at Regis University where she was Degree Chair for Graduate Management Programs, and at the University of Phoenix.

In 1999, she was married to her loving husband, Alan, and in retirement the couple moved to Berthoud, Colorado.

Her strong sense of faith and community led to 50 years of service and engagement at Mount Calvary Lutheran Church (now Westview Lutheran Church). There she developed deep and meaningful friendships that continued to bring her joy throughout her life.

Bonnie is survived by her husband, Alan Altman; son, Derek Johnson; and daughter, Michelle Anderson, and her husband Bret and grandson Tyler.

A memorial service was held Thursday, November 10, 2022, at 4 p.m. at Westview Lutheran Church, 6710 Arapahoe Road, Boulder, CO 80303.

In lieu of flowers, the family asked that a memorial be given in Bonnie's name to the Boulder Community Health Foundation or the Westview Lutheran Church.

NOTE: Bonnie was baptized at St. Pauli on April 21, 1946, with Mr. and Mrs. Tilmer Breiland and Louise and Kermit Finstad as sponsors.

May God richly bless the memories of these dearly departed.

Minutes of the Women of the ELCA

October 26, 2022

The St. Pauli Women of the ELCA met at the church on Wednesday, October 26, 2022, at 7:00 pm with 5 members present.

The ladies assembled baby care and school kits for a half hour before the meeting began. President Kathy Alberg then opened the meeting at 7:30 pm with devotions titled "Kindness in Creation," based on Jeremiah 9:24.

Secretary's Report: Approved as read with one correction.

Treasurer's Report:

Balances as of October 26, 2022: Checking \$3,483.71, Savings: \$573.97
CD balance as of December 31, 2021: \$6,209.21

Income for the Fall Event was \$1,935 in offerings and pie sales of \$240. We also sold 5 cookbooks for \$75. Expenses were \$52.50 for ads in *The Times* and \$78.33 for supplies at Hugo's, \$150 for stipends for Hilary Stoltman and Derek Druse for a total of \$280.83. We received a \$250 Thrivent card that was used to pay *The Times* and Hugo's and the remainder of \$119.17 was put on our account at Hugo's.

Stewardship: Ron and Virginia will be taking the quilts and kits to Thief River Falls for shipment on November 5th.

Council report:

- 1) Servant of Christ award will not be presented by Lutheran Social Service during a Sunday worship service. The council will discuss.

- 2) A child will be baptized on November 13 and they have asked to use the basement for a gathering after services. Faye will be present and help as needed.

Old Business:

- 1) No one was able to attend the Fall Gathering at First Lutheran in Warren. Virginia was told the speaker from the Northwest Food Bank was excellent. They had a donation basket for the Food Bank after the program and \$400 was gathered from the 40 people present.
- 2) Thank you to everyone who worked at the Fall Event and did fall cleaning. There was one more person at the fall cleaning than had shown up for the spring cleaning. Discussion regarding getting an outside person to clean both fall and spring. Will be brought up at the next Council meeting.

New Business:

- 1) Christmas brunch: Nothing decided yet. The meeting room at the Wired Bean is a possibility.
- 2) Next meeting is November 16. Program will be Thankoffering and deciding Fall Event donation recipients.
- 3) Kathy has communion prep for November.

Prayer requests were read. Offering was taken and the Lord's Prayer prayed and table grace sung.

Faye Auchenpaugh, Secretary

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2022 "Fall Event" Donations

Donations this year totaled \$2,250. WELCA at their November 16 meeting decided to donate a total of \$2,000, reserving \$250 for special projects that may arise. Since we are now able to hold potlucks with those funds going to Lutheran Social Services, Violence Intervention Project, and Hospice, we did not include them in our fall list this year. Instead, we increased the amounts to each of the charities below.

ELCA Scholarship Fund	\$ 300.00
Salvation Army	500.00
TRF Area Community Fund	400.00

ELCA Good Gifts, as follows:

Irrigation unit	\$100.00
2 goats	100.00
Mosquito nets	20.00
3 fruit trees	30.00
Water filters	30.00
Community vegetable garden with honeybees	<u>220.00</u>
Total for ELCA Good Gifts:	500.00
Northland Rescue Mission	100.00
Prowler Pantry	<u>200.00</u>
Total Charitable Donations:	\$2,000.00

Pastor Carl's Sermon for Pentecost October 9th

2 Kings 5:1-15, Luke 17:11-19

It seems to me that bells aren't as important as they used to be. They still mark class periods in schools, and they still make the beginning and end of worship services. But there are lots more ways of getting our attention these days than with bells.

In ancient Israel, people who had contracted leprosy were required to carry a bell. And when they came within range of other people, they rang their bell and yelled out "Unclean!" Others then would stay away from those with leprosy.

Leprosy was a dreadful, incurable disease in the ancient world. You died in two ways. You died physically as your body withered away in chunks and you became disfigured and subject to increasing numbers of infections. And you died emotionally, as friends and family had to stay at a distance from you, lest they be considered unclean and risk contracting leprosy themselves. Leprosy was an ugly, lingering death.

People reacted then like many people react to ALS or cancer or Alzheimer's disease in our own time. You were a leper. Your name was not Carl – it was Leper. Your disease became your identity. You didn't have a disease. You *were* the disease. That's who you were.

Today's first lesson tells the story of Naaman, the commanding general of the King's army in the ancient country of Aram – which we know today as Syria. To give you a sense of this man's importance, it was as if Naaman were General Washington from the Revolutionary War, General Grant from the Civil War, General Pershing from World War I, General Eisenhower from World War II, and General Petraeus from our own time all rolled into one. Naaman served the King of Syria, but he was the most important and valuable person in the country, including the king.

Naaman had leprosy. The great general had a terminal disease. And everyone, not only Naaman and his family, not only the king and his court, not only the soldiers in the army—but all the people of Syria were desperately seeking a cure for the disease. The scripture tells us that a slave girl from Israel who had been taken captive in a Syrian raid and served Naaman's wife, told her mistress, "*If only my Lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy.*"

Even though this young woman had been seized as a slave by Naaman's army, she cared for them enough to pass on this word of hope. Naaman's wife told him what the slave girl said. Naaman passed that word along to the King of Syria. And the king was desperate enough to take a chance that a foreign prophet could cure the great general, so as to send him to Israel with a ton of money and the strong request to cure Naaman.

The King of Israel freaked out when he received the request, shredding his clothes and saying, "*Am I God to give death or life?*" But Elisha the prophet heard about all of this and sent a message to the king of Israel saying, "*Let*

him come to me, so that he may learn that there is a prophet in Israel."

So picture what happens next. Here comes General Naaman and all of his retinue, chariots, horses, horsemen, and this ton of money to the super modest home of this prophet, Elisha. But Elisha doesn't even come out of his house to greet this great general who has come to Elisha at Elisha's invitation. Instead, he sends a messenger, a flunky, out to Naaman with this message: "*Go, wash yourself in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored and you shall be clean.*"

Now it's Naaman's turn to freak out. "*Why should I wash in this grubby mudhole that you call the Jordan River? We have far bigger and better rivers in Damascus. Why didn't he come out of his house and wave his hand over the leprosy and call on his god to cure me?*" And he stomped off in a rage.

But Naaman's servants understood how important this was. And they understood how to handle him. So they said to him, "*Father, if the prophet had commanded you to do something difficult, would you not have done it? How much more, when all he said to you was, 'Wash and be clean?'*" So Naaman went to the Jordan and washed seven times. And, as the scripture says, "*His flesh was restored like the flesh of a young boy, and he was clean.*"

Naaman had expected God to work through his prophet in a spectacular and showy way. He wanted recognition for the great man that he was, and he wanted to do something great so that he could show that he was deserving of healing.

But Naaman was not healed because of anything that he had done – not because of his conquests, his charisma or his value to the nation; not because of the huge amount of gold and silver that his king sent. Naaman was healed solely by water and the Word of God.

The story continues after Naaman's healing. Naaman returned from the Jordan River to Elisha with all of his retinue. He stood in public before Elisha and the Syrian armies and said, "*Now I know that there is no god in all the earth except in Israel; please accept a present from your servant.*" Elisha replied, "*As the Lord lives, whom I serve, I will accept nothing.*" Naaman urged Elisha to accept, but he refused. Then Naaman said, "*If not, please let two mule loads of dirt be given to your servant, for your servant will no longer offer burnt offering or sacrifice to any god except the Lord.*"

This is really fascinating. Naaman says to Elisha and in front of members of his army that he knows now there is no god in all the earth except in Israel. Then, when Elisha turns down the ton of money that the King of Syria sent along with him, Naaman makes what we would consider a very strange request. He asks if he might take two mule loads of dirt from Israel back with him to Syria. Why?

2,800 years ago, the vast majority of people believed that there were many gods. And these gods, it was thought, were territorial. They had power in a certain area, but not in others. If you wanted to pray to Yahweh, the God of Israel,

you had to pray on his turf – the place where he is God. So now that Naaman has recognized Israel's God as the only God, and he wants to pray to him, he is taking home some of the turn of Israel's God.

Now that may seem really weird and primitive but let me suggest a possible parallel. When people leave home and their home congregations and move to another location, they sometimes find it difficult to find a new church home. Nothing feels like St. Pauli. It's as if God is somehow not present in their new location – but only here, in this sacred place, in God's country.

What comes through in this fantastic, engaging story of the healing of the greatest general of a powerful nation that often clashed with Israel, is that God and his amazing

grace is not confined to a territory or to a nation or to human expectations of how God works.

In Jesus Christ, God is constantly surprising and engaging human beings in places we think of as godless. God heals people – body, heart, mind and soul. By his incarnate Word, Jesus Christ brings life, light, wholeness, healing and salvation into every corner of God's creation.

He comes to us where we are. He takes us where we are at. If we think that God is God only in a given place, he leads us to see that God is Lord everywhere. If we define ourselves or others define us by a disease, by our appearance, by what we perceive as our limits – Christ makes whole that which is broken.

Amen

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St. Pauli WELCA



is holding an "Underwear" Drive for the Northlands Rescue Mission

Please consider donating any of the following items listed below by December 15. A basket is located in the narthex.



Men's new underwear (S, M, L, XL)

Women's new underwear (Sizes 5, 6, 7, 8)

(May include thermal underwear)

Thank you for participating in this drive to lend a hand to those in need!

If you wish to donate other needed items, please refer to the list posted on the church bulletin board or on their website:

northlandsrescuemission.org/needs

Rhyett David Vikre Baptized



Logan and Tessah Vikre presented their son, Rhyett, for baptism on Sunday, November 13th. Sponsors were Kayla Mehrkens and Heather Vikre.

Baptism is a special and joyous occasion and many Vikre family members and friends were here to witness this sacrament.

By being baptized, one is adopted into God's big family. This sacrament marks one's beginning into a journey of faith and devotion. Children flourish in a Christ-centered community that has love at the core of its teachings.

Photos courtesy of Heather Vikre.



St. Pauli's Christmas Tree 2022



Ronnie and Virginia Anderson always pick out our Christmas tree and set it up in the sanctuary.

This year, LeRoy and Carol Stumpf offered a FREE one from their farm. The Andersons arrived: prepared and equipped to cut down the tree. But LeRoy was ready for them, and in short order this beautiful tree was in the back of Ronnie's pickup.

It's gorgeous!



In This Season of Hope

As part of Norway's Queen Sonja's visit to Minneapolis in October, a special concert of *"The Stranger"* was held at the Ordway Theater featuring the music of contemporary choral composer, Kim Andre Arnesen (b. 1980). Although an avid follower of MTV and a huge fan of The Cure at ten years old, he also studied classical piano, was a chorister in the Nidaros Cathedral Boys' Choir, and was later educated at the Music Conservatory in Trondheim. With deep interests in baroque, contemporary, classical, and popular music, his musical career could have taken many roads, but choral music became his greatest passion.

An unusual instrument for America was in the concert's orchestra: a cimbalom. When Faye did research on the cimbalom, she discovered this was the instrument she had seen played in Budapest, Hungary! It has a beautiful sound.



Cimbalom

The modern Hungarian concert cimbalom was created by V. Josef Schunda in 1874 in Budapest based on his modifications to existing folk dulcimers. Schunda demonstrated an early prototype at the 1873 Vienna World's Fair, gaining praise from audiences and drawing the attention of highly-placed Hungarian politicians such as King Franz Joseph. He then continued to improve his design, extending the length of the strings and redesigning the position of the bridges to improve the tone and musical range. He added heavy dampers which would allow a greater degree of control over the ringing of the strings, and a metal brace inside the instrument which would increase its stability.

The Stranger was commissioned by the "Together in Hope Project," whose mission is changing lives through music. The text for this composition was developed and integrated by the founders of the Together in Hope Project and includes first-person immigrant poetry and religious texts from the world's major faith traditions – drawn from work initiated by Antonio Guterres, now Secretary General of the United Nations and previously the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

More than 100 million people worldwide have been forced to flee their homes – the highest level of displacement on record. UNHCR (the Un Refugee Agency) has worked with

faith leaders, humanitarian organizations, academics, and international government representatives to promote the values of "humanity, caring and respect, and the tradition of granting protection to those in danger."

The Together in Hope choir consists of more than 50 premier artists, who are primarily from the Twin Cities area, and were selected through invited auditions. The chosen texts give us insight and food for thought.

Things We Carry

We carry tears in our eyes:
goodbye father, goodbye mother.
We carry soil in small bags:
may home never fade from our hearts.
We carry names, stories,
memories of our villages, fields, boats.
We carry scars from proxy wars of greed.
We carry carnage of mining, droughts, floods, genocides.
We carry dust of our families and neighbors incinerated in
mushroom clouds.
We carry our islands sinking under the sea.
We carry our hands, feet, bones, hearts
and best minds for a new life.
We carry diplomas: medicine, engineer, nurse, education,
math, poetry, even if they mean nothing to the other shore.
We carry railroads, plantations, laundromats, bodegas, taco
trucks, farms, factories, nursing homes, hospitals, schools
temples...built on our ancestors' backs.
We carry old homes along the spine,
new dreams in our chests.
We carry yesterday, today and tomorrow.
We are orphans of the wars forced upon us.
We are refugees of the sea rising from industrial wastes.
And we carry our mother tongues.
Wang Ping – from *Things We Carry on the Sea*

I was Hungry

"I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me..."
Matthew 25:35

The Stranger Who Resides With You

"The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as one of your citizens. You shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt."
Leviticus 19:33-34

Some are Black and Some are White

Some are black and some are white, Other are in between.
There are young and old, sturdy and slight.
Many we have never seen.
From all contents they gather here,
With speech as strange as can be.
Their habits and customs, to us seem new,
But are they so different, to you and me.
Bernard "Bern" Shaw, from *Strangers*

You First Saw Them By the Roadside

You first saw them by the roadside, Standing at the crossroads, waiting...listening...watching...

They walked in silence, small bundles on their backs,
clutching other bits in their hands.
Fears on the faces of those women, men and children.
Frightened of the past, fearful of the future.
Will no one understand their pain?
Will anyone open a door to receive them?

Patricia Mulhall, from *Call No One a Stranger*

Love Should be Felt

“Love should be felt for one’s own kin, And so for strangers too.
And the whole wide world should be pervaded with a heart of
love – This is the doctrine z Buddhas all.”

The Questions of King Milinda 7.5.5

Look Again and You Will See

Look again and you will see familiar people...
mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers.
Listen and you will hear familiar sounds...
talking, crying, laughing...

Understand and you will know the stuff of which your dreams
are made...love and laughter, security and safety, peace and
prosperity...are their dreams too.

That which is joy to every human heart is not alien to theirs.
The peace you long for is that same peace they strive for.

Patricia Mulhall, from *Call No One Stranger*

Love and Good Faith

“Love and good faith must so dominate the human heart that
we will regard the stranger as a familiar friend, the alien even
as a loved one.”

Baha’I Tradition, writings of ‘Abdu’l-Baha

Call No One Stranger

We stand together as one...drawing warmth from the same
sun and life from the same earth.

And though we travel on different roads, we are part of one
God, one Earth, One Universe.

There are no strangers. Tears shed in compassion...songs of
love and dreams of peace make us all one.

Recognize your family in the stranger. Open your door, invite
them in to sit at your table and share your bread.

Call no one stranger whose roots are kin to your own...whose
lives all spring from the One Great Fountain of Life!

Patricia Mulhall, from *Call No One Stranger*

Do Not Neglect

“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing
that some have entertained angels without knowing it.”

Hebrews 13:2

Say It Loud, Say It Clear

Say it loud, say it clear. That stranger could have been me.

Born in a land cherished and dear,

Grateful to live knowing I’m free.

In other lands so far or near, these strangers were also at
Home. Forced to leave by deadly fear, Outcasts this world to
roam. Once more humankind, show love and care.

Let welcome be your guide. That that stranger to you, may
also share, the blessings that are your pride.

Bernard ‘Bern’ Shaw, from *Strangers*

Reflection

“Do good unto your parents, your kin, and unto orphans, the
needy, the neighbor from among your own people, and the
neighbor who is a stranger.”

The Qur’an – An-Nisa 4:36

Love, Peace, Hope

“None is our enemy, none is a stranger to us, we are in
accord with one an all.”

Sikh Tradition, from Guru Granth Sahib

Amor, libe, kjærlighet, sa rang, hubb, love!

“May we never close our hearts to those in need. For by
openness to others, our lives are enriched, our societies
enjoy peace, and all people can live in a way befitting their
God-given dignity.”

Pope Francis

Shalom, salaam, ping-an, fred, pace, shaanti, paz, peace!

“Our faiths demand that we remember we are all migrants on
this earth, journeying together in hope.”

UNCHR *Welcoming the Stranger: Affirmations for Faith Leaders*

Hoffnung, ‘amal, Speranza, h ap, xi’wang, hevi, von, hope!

The Guest is as God

“The guest is as God. Let a person never turn away a
stranger from his house. Good people say to the stranger:
‘There is enough food for you.’ “

Hindu Tradition, from Taittiriya Upanishad 1.11.2

Welcome!

Welcome and entertain them all! Be grateful for whatever
comes. Because each has been sent as a guide from beyond.

Rumi from *The Guest House*

Let Us Build a House

Let us build a house where hands will reach

Beyond the wood and stone

To heal and strengthen, serve and teach,

And live the Word they’ve known.

Here the outcast and the stranger bear

The image of God’s face;

Let us bring an end to fear and danger.

All are welcome, all are welcome.

All are welcome in this place.

Marty Haugen, from *All Are Welcome*

Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymnal, No. 64



“Men’s Lutefisk Supper”

Our Savior’s at Thief Lake Celebrates 100th Anniversary

But first, some history...

The Thief Lake area was settled chiefly by Norwegian immigrants beginning about 1890. They brought with them their rich Lutheran heritage: a Bible, hymn book (*salmebok*), and Luther’s Small Catechism.

There were very few immigrants at first, but by 1895 it had become a fair settlement. Congregational history really began when Rev. Ivar T. Aastad, who had graduated from Luther College and just finished seminary training in St. Paul, came to his pastorate in Thief River Falls. (One of the churches he had helped to establish that year for the Thief River Falls parish was our very own St. Pauli – and he served St. Pauli until 1908.)

Aastad met with seven families at the T. O. Moe home and an organizational meeting was held on November 12, 1895. Worship services were held in the homes as often as Rev. Aastad could come up the 32 miles to the Thief Lake area.

In 1899, Rev. Flekke came and took over a number of Aastad’s groups to form a new parish out of Holt: Nazareth of Holt, Our Savior’s at Thief Lake, Scandia, Immanuel, St. Petri at Ringbo, West Valley and Moose River (Gatzke) congregations that were started by Flekke.

Flekke was born in Norway, as was Aastad, and had taught school there. In America, he graduated from Luther (Hamline) Seminary.

The early years were times of struggle. Records show difficulties in raising sufficient salary for the pastor. The graveyard had to be cleared and readied, but this was not done soon either. The first burial, that of a three-month-old baby, had to be placed far forward in the graveyard.

In 1903, Rev. Flekke resigned to go to a call in Gary, MN and a parish realignment took place. Our Savior’s was now served from a new parish centered at the post office and store called “Fram.” This town was about half a mile west of the present location of Gatzke. (Gatzke was then further east and north.)

(At this time, we encounter another familiar pastor’s name: Stilluf T. Palm, who served St. Pauli from 1908-1913.)

Palm was also a native of Norway and for ten years before coming to America had been a sailor. He had married Lovise in Norway and by the time she died around 1900 they had 5 children, all born in the U.S.

During this time, Palm attended Luther College and, after a few years spent teaching, completed his course at the seminary and was ordained in 1903. He came as his first call that same year to the Fram parish at Thief Lake.

There were real discussions in those days, problems of serious concern. Membership was carefully considered by the congregation in annual meetings. More land was arranged for at the graveyard, and they held a special meeting out of concern for education of the young. “Norske Skole” or parochial school was agreed upon and its support was considered each year and the next term decided upon. Problems of church and instruction were earnestly discussed.

During those years, annual meetings and services were held in the District 73 schoolhouse, a small log building built of hand-hewn tamarack logs.

In January 1908, Rev. Palm tendered his resignation and stayed until August, but then began serving the St. Pauli parish. Incidentally, Rev. Palm remarried around 1908 and he and his second wife Randie had another ten children.

(Coming to St. Pauli and living in St. Hilaire would be life-changing for his daughter Lydia, for she married Carl Finstad in 1927 at St. Pauli Church and the couple lived just three miles north and two miles west of St. Pauli church. They named their son Kermit Stilluf Carl Finstad and their grandson Robbie and his family now live on the Finstad farm.)

A church building, and where to build it, had been in discussion for years at Our Savior’s. Finally, in 1913 after another offer of land for a church site, it was put to the congregation by ballot – whether to build near the old graveyard or at a new location. The old graveyard location received 2/3 of the vote. As soon as they could get a guarantee for deed on the property, they began construction.

In 1914, a committee divided the graveyard into plots. Anyone who had paid \$5.00 or more to the building of the church would get a lot free. All others had to pay \$3.00 per grave, or \$5.00 per plot.

In 1917, a new parish was created with the parsonage now at Middle River. Pastor Ordahl, who lived in Holt in 1915, reported regular services for eight congregations, but there were many other preaching places – a maze of names of congregations and gatherings served over a very wide area – all the way to Espelie (south of Grygla) and Ilag (several miles east of Gatzke near what is now Hayes Lake State Park).

The new pastor in 1917, A. O. Nettet, was the first American-born pastor to serve Our Savior’s. And for the first time, Our Savior’s congregation had its own ministerial record, for its people alone. Prior to this time, the records were in the church archives at Holt.

By 1937, there had been water issues in the church basement for a number of years rendering it unusable, so the Ladies Aid purchased an old schoolhouse from the Mud Lake area and placed it at the southeast corner of the cemetery until it was moved and attached to the church in 1959.

In May 1991, a generous gift from the Larmoe family estate gave the congregation options otherwise impossible and helped turn a dream into a reality: the building of a new church. Land was purchased from DuWayn Thygeson and they now have a building all on one floor, with a large kitchen and the luxury of restrooms.

The altar from the old church was moved into the new building. Pastor Amundson made the hymn board, pulpit, and plant stands. The baptismal font was refinished and a new podium purchased. The cross set in rock is the focal point of the front of the church and the cornerstone reads, “Rebuilt to the Glory of God – 1991.”

On to the Men's Lutefisk Supper...

The Scandinavian immigrants brought with them another tradition that has continued for years at Thief Lake – the Lutefisk supper!

The first lutefisk supper was in December 1922, as far back as records show. Income from that first supper: \$34.35.

The men cooked the lutefisk outdoors in a large black cast iron kettle that hung from a tripod, but they served the delicacy in the church. When the weather was cold, they would cook the lutefisk behind a tarp at the corner of the church.

For some years, lutefisk wasn't served and the reason is not stated in any of the records; instead, chicken and turkey suppers were served. The ladies also had fancywork sales.

The 1934 lutefisk supper was particularly memorable. The old sheriff from Warren came out for the supper, but everyone had gone home by the time he arrived because the peat smoke was so dense.

The work of preparing for the supper was never considered a chore, despite the fact there were no modern facilities or conveniences. Water was hauled in (and out) until 1985 when the well was dug. Parishioners enjoyed the teamwork needed as well as the fellowship, which was all a part of this big undertaking.

Attendance kept increasing and by 1990 they had to order 600 pounds of lutefisk and 165 pounds of hamburger.

In 1991, the first lutefisk supper in the new church broke the record: 650 pounds of lutefisk and 700 dinners served!

The ladies do help with some of the food preparation. They make the coleslaw, meatballs, and apple bars, and are always willing to offer suggestions! The youth and ladies serve as waiters and waitresses.



Peeling potatoes



Serving the meal. He already has 2 pieces on his plate but he'd like more, thank you.



Cutting up the lutefisk



Canadian-Pacific Holiday Train (Courtesy: Canadian-Pacific website)

(ABC 6 News)


The Canadian-Pacific holiday train returns to the rails this holiday season after a two-year hiatus.

It's the holiday train's 24th year and its first cross-continent tour in 3 years, following virtual concerts in 2020 and 2021. The 2022 tour will launch on November 23 in Maine. The holiday train will make its way west and roll into Minnesota with stops scheduled from **December 11-16**. Live music is also part of the experience. Alan Doyle and Kelly Prescott will perform during the Minnesota stops. There will be 14 rail cars each decorated with thousands of LED lights and holiday designs. See the full Minnesota schedule below. *****Times are subject to change*****

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15th

- **Glenwood** – 10:15 a.m. CP Station, 20 – 15th Street NE
- **Alexandria** – 11:430 a.m. 8th Avenue East railroad crossing by Hubbard Feed Mill at 8th and Nokomis
- **Detroit Lakes** – 2:30 p.m. Holmes Street Railroad Crossing near Holmes Community Center, 826 Summit
- **Mahnomen** – 4:20 p.m. W of U.S. 59 and S of E Washington Avenue
- **Plummer** – 6:00 p.m. Main railway crossing on Central Avenue
- **Thief River Falls** – 7:30 p.m. CP Depot (Soo Line Depot/City Hall), 405 3rd Street E

**It's kinda funny
how being old
doesn't seem so old
now that I'm old.**

A lit candle in a Christmas tree with a red ornament.

Sharing with you
the Glory, the
Wonder, the
Miracle of this
Holy Season.
Have a Blessed
Christmas and
New Year.