

St. Paul Lutheran Church and School

Bonduel, Wisconsin



150th Anniversary 1863—2013

A Brief History

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St. Paul Lutheran congregation can attribute its beginning to early German-speaking settlers who came to this area in the late 1850's and early 1860's. Most of them came from southern Wisconsin in search of cheaper land. Some of these settlers were the Henry Burmeister, Fred Zernicke, Gottlieb Manthei, August Kallies, and Karl Stern families. Because their Lutheran religion was so important to them, these families met together in the Henry Burmeister home for church services before a pastor was available. Their leader used a book of sermons and prayers called the "postil" as the source for their worship.

Although a pastor from the Township of Caledonia in Waupaca County, J. N. Beyer, stopped in Hartland (as the Bonduel area was known then) and conducted a worship service with the settlers, the settlers did not formally organize into a congregation until 1863.

Rev. P. H. Dicke, who had become the pastor at St. Martin Lutheran church in the Town of Belle Plaine south of Shawano in May of 1863, came to Hartland and conducted services in the Burmeister home whenever he was able to do so.



Rev. P. H. Dicke

1863–1872

Rev. Dicke furnished the leadership in gathering the settlers into the congregation which the settlers named St. Paul. He also had purchased 40 acres of land from the Fox & Wisconsin Improvement Company in November of 1864, which he in turn sold on January 25, 1866, to the St. Paul congregation for \$85.00.

Although there was a public school in the area, for several reasons these settlers did not want to send their children there. These people felt that it was imperative for their children to be instructed in a Christian environment where they would learn the tenets of Lutheran doctrine as well as secular subjects. Also, in their own school, German as well as English could be the language of instruction, whereas English was used exclusively in the public school. Since there was no trained teacher available, Henry Burmeister also undertook to teach the children. We can conclude that both St. Paul's church and school were organized at much the same time.

In 1869 the congregation built a log cabin for their church services, and in the years following they very likely held their voters' meetings here as well as other congregational gatherings. They may also have used that building for school to some extent. After 1879 when the frame church was built, it was used exclusively as the school for ten years. We



have no picture of this actual building; rather this is a reasonable depiction of it. It was a typical log church of that time.

St. Paul Church 1869–1879 & School 1879–1889

Rev. Dicke served St. Paul along with at least six other preaching stations until 1872, when Rev. Henry Stute, who had recently come from Germany, arrived to shepherd the St. Paul flock as its first resident pastor. St. Paul then constructed a house for the pastor, commonly referred to as the parsonage. As part of his compensation, providing housing for the pastor was done through the years until 2003, when the practice was discontinued.



Rev. Henry Stute
1872–1881

We have no record of exactly where Rev. Stute came from or where he went when he left St. Paul. He married the oldest daughter of Rev. Dicke.

In January of 1879 ground work was laid to build a wood frame church. Committee members Ferdinand Brodhagen, Traugott Simon, Ludwig Kopitsch, Carl Sumnicht, and Johann Popp agreed that the church should be 40'x70' with a bell tower.



It was located approximately 150 feet south of the road. The grave yard was located to the east side of the church

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Bonduel, Wisconsin 1879–1916

The building was completed in 1879 at a cost of about \$2500. Money for the building was borrowed, and member Ferdinand Brodhagen backed this debt with his personal guarantee of repayment. As was the custom for raising money for all church purposes at this time, each St. Paul member was assessed an amount which fit with the family's circumstances.

Consistent with the practice of many Lutheran congregations at the time, Rev. Stute also became the school teacher. This changed when he was succeeded by Rev. Karl Friedrich Wilhelm Ebert as pastor in 1881. He came to Bonduel from having been the pastor at St. Martin in Belle Plaine.



Rev. Karl Friedrich Wilhelm Ebert
1881–1888

Rev. Ebert soon found that the growing duties of his pastorate made it impossible to devote the required time to the school. He had at least four other preaching stations that he served besides Hartland/Bonduel. As has been the practice for all St. Paul pastors since that time, he continued to instruct the older children in religion as they prepared for confirmation. However, his wife, Caroline Ebert, assumed the main responsibility as

the teacher in addition to her duties as the mother of a large family. The Eberts eventually had ten children.

It must be noted that St. Paul, along with many schools of the time, did not always conduct school for consecutive months as is done now, nor did all the eligible children attend regularly when school was in session. At times some children were taken out of school to help with work in their home or on the farm. Children were enrolled in school at varying ages, depending upon their health, position in the family, traveling distance from the school, etc. Also, most schools of these earlier times in this area were not arranged in sequential “grades” as they are now. Once in school, each child’s level of instruction depended upon his/her progress in subjects such as reading and mathematics. St. Paul’s school children usually received no further formal education after they were confirmed in the Lutheran faith at about age fourteen.

At this time the total pupil population was as many as 80 children, and it was apparent that a full-time teacher was needed. In the summer of 1883, St. Paul hired Carl Nicholeisen, a young man who had recently come from Germany, at an annual salary of \$250. He seemingly was replaced in 1884 when St. Paul called William Mueller, who had prepared for Lutheran teaching at the Lutheran seminary (as the teacher preparation institution was called) in Addison, Illinois. However, St. Paul records indicate that Nicholeisen continued to teach in some capacity for some time after this because it is noted that he was being paid in 1886. In any case, he married a local girl, Louise Popp, and remained in the community for some time.

Just as a house had been built for the pastor, St Paul also built one in preparation for Teacher Mueller’s arrival. This, together with \$300 annually, became part of Mr. Mueller’s salary. Until 1889, when the last remaining teacherage was sold, congregation-owned housing was always part of the called (now termed “commissioned”) teacher’s salary.

Although the school was under the direct daily supervision of the principal/teacher, the pastor was the one “in charge” of all activity at St. Paul. St. Paul pastors have always been highly supportive of our parochial school, which in large part accounts for the important status ascribed to the school and its continued philosophical and financial support from the congregation. Rev. Ebert had made the school one of his main interests at St. Paul. It was under his guidance that the one-room wood-frame school building was planned and which replaced the log cabin in 1889. Its dimensions were 30’ x 56’ and it was sided with the tan-colored brick common to many buildings of that day. The intentional construction of a building solely for school purposes further strengthened the position of the elementary school as an integral part of St. Paul’s ministry.



St. Paul Lutheran School 1889–1925

After serving two years at St. Paul, Mr. Mueller accepted a call to Oshkosh. He was replaced by William Horst. The school population had increased to 90 to 100 children at times, and Mr. Horst, after teaching a few years, soon found that it was not feasible to continue as the sole teacher in the school. In 1892 Mr. Horst was allowed to ask his unmarried sister, Eleonore, to be his assistant, and she taught the younger children. She was paid \$15 per month for eight months. The building was then divided by a central wall into two classrooms.

In 1896, when Mr. Paul Elbert succeeded Mr. Horst, Gustave Schilke, a congregation member,

became the assistant. He later became a fully trained Lutheran school teacher. He was followed by Mr. Elbert's sister, Eleanor, who taught for two and a half years until she married a local man, Traugott Simon, in July 1899.

At this time St. Paul voters decided to call a second teacher, a man who had also been trained at the Lutheran Teacher Seminary, to teach the younger children. This was R. W. Dobberfuhr, who taught the younger children for four years until Mr. Elbert left in 1903. He then took Elbert's position as principal and teacher of the upper grades. Ernest Boseck, a student teacher at the time, taught the younger children for one year until Henry Munding was called in 1904. Mr. Munding taught the younger children until 1912 when he resigned.

J. L. Banser then was called, and he taught until 1950. He was also one of the church organists and directed one of the choirs for all those years. The practice of requiring the male teachers to be church organists and choir directors was commonly expected at St. Paul for many years into the late 20th century. Later, when females were employed as teachers, they, too, were expected to be active in other capacities, such as being choir members and assisting with leadership of the youth groups.

When the pupil population reached 122, it was no longer possible for two teachers to handle all the teaching duties. A third teacher was contracted in 1929; this was the beginning of the practice of regularly hiring female teachers, who usually taught the younger children.

A listing of principals follows: William Mueller, 1884–86; William Horst, 1886–96; Paul Elbert, 1896–1903; R. W. Dobberfuhr, 1903–17; Ernest Boseck, 1917–23; R. W. Dobberfuhr (who returned), 1923–28; Erich P. Hueschen, 1929–46; Walter J. Lobitz, 1946–47; Walter J. Kallies, 1947–64; Donald F. Karolus, 1964–81; Frank L. Wegner, 1981–2005; Gerald R. Schmidt, 2005–present.

Rev. Ebert was no longer the pastor at St. Paul when the new school building, which he had so vigorously encouraged the congregation to build, was completed in 1889. He had accepted a call to Berlin, Wisconsin in 1888.

A very important step was taken in 1889, when St. Paul joined the national Lutheran organization now known as The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. The Bonduel area grew greatly in population during this time in our history, and St. Paul grew with it. Remarkably, congregation membership grew from 370 to 970 in less than ten years!

Rev. Henry Rathjen succeeded Rev. Ebert and served St. Paul for 23 years, when he retired.



Rev. Henry Rathjen

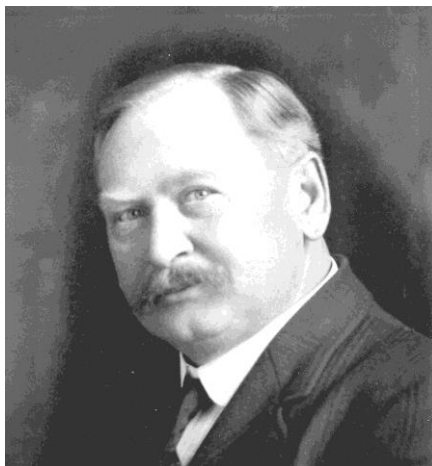
1888–1911

During Rev. Rathjen's tenure, land was cleared for more cemetery space, horse shelters and sheds were built, and an outdoor festival meeting place was cleared in the woods. For many years during the 1900s, the St. Paul annual Mission Festival church services were held in the woods. The day was a very special one with worship services held both in the morning and the afternoon. There was a platform on which a simple, movable wooden altar and pulpit were located, along with a pump organ to accompany the singing. Saw horses with planks laid on them provided the seating. St. Paul members eagerly participated. Ladies of the congregation served a noon meal which they prepared in a kitchen built in the woods for that purpose.

The site was also used for the annual church/school picnic at the close of the school year. Other buildings were added: a bandstand to house the St. Paul band, a building out of which ice cream and candy were sold, and a liquid refreshments stand. The school children used the platform as a stage for the programs they presented for the entertainment of the congregation members and guests. The picnics were occasions for games for the kids, softball games (often married men opposing the single men), and activities/games for women.

In 1907 the congregation was asked to allow its pastor to regularly serve Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Landstad. St. Paul's pastors continued this practice throughout most of the years until 1943/44, when that congregation disbanded. The majority of those people then became members of St. Paul.

After Rev. Rathjen retired, the next pastor was Rev. Martin Mueller, who served from 1911 until his death in November, 1920. He was called from a three-congregation parish in rural Marquette County near the village of Westfield, Wisconsin. Rev. Mueller, his wife, and six children moved into the old parsonage, but by 1913 a new, spacious parsonage was built.



Rev. Martin Mueller
1911–1920

It had become apparent that the 1879 wood-frame church building was not adequate for the needs of the congregation by this time. The building itself was in good condition, but there was need for storage space and a basement which could be used as a meeting place and fellowship hall. The members met those needs by 1916. After much discussion they decided to keep the basic church building, but to construct a basement in front of that building onto which the church could be moved. This basement was built north of the existing building, close to the highway.

As they had always done before this when labor was required for a building, the men of the congregation were asked to work on the project. They built the basement (see picture below) and contributed labor to get lumber from the trees in the woods and did the actual building, as much as possible.



After the church was set on the basement, a new front was built with two towers, one main entrance and two side doors that opened into a narrow hallway/narthex which ran the width of the building. There was now a balcony inside the sanctuary where the organ stood and the choir members were seated. New furnishings (pews, altar, baptismal font, and lectern) were purchased. Stained glass windows were installed throughout the structure.

Wide concrete steps on the outside provided access to the church, which now was higher than it had been before the move. On the south end a

chancel plus another entrance was built. The whole building was then sided with cream-colored brick. Total cost was about \$8000.

In 1918 two large oil paintings on canvas were purchased, one of Jesus, the Good Shepherd and one of the Resurrection. They were mounted on the front wall of the sanctuary on either side of the chancel.



St. Paul Lutheran Church
1916–1961

Rev. Walter J. Plischke was called shortly after the death of Rev. Mueller, and he was installed on February 13, 1921. He served until his retirement on August 19, 1956. Like his predecessor, Rev. Mueller, Rev. Plischke was called from the pastorate at Westfield in Marquette County, where he had served for ten years after having been a missionary in Texas. In his memoirs he stated that the fact that St. Paul had an elementary school was definitely an added attraction for him because he and his wife, Minnie, had four young sons. He became



a
strong

advocate for our St. Paul School.

Rev. Walter J. Plischke
1921–1956

Some of the changes and accomplishments during his many years of service were:

- 1) Introduction and regular use of the English language in one of the weekly worship services and in confirmation instructions;
- 2) Together with the pastor from St. James, Shawano, he initiated WTCH radio broadcasts of morning devotions and Sunday sermons;
- 3) He initiated German language mid-week devotions on the radio. (In his memoirs he stated that more letters of commendation from listeners were received for this program than for any others!)
- 4) Organization of a mixed-gender young people's group in 1924, St. Paul Mission Circle (English language women's group) in 1933, and St. Paul Men's Club in 1948. These groups became affiliated with, respectively, the International Walther League in 1927, the Lutheran Women's Missionary League, and the Lutheran Laymen's League. The Ladies Aid, which conducted its business in German, had been formed in 1913;
- 5) He was elected first vice-president of the North Wisconsin district and held other positions in the district through the years.

Rev. Plischke deeply felt that the mission of the Christian church was, in addition to maintaining our local ministry, to spread the saving Word to all people. To that end, throughout his tenure in

Bonduel, he passionately urged St. Paul to support world-wide mission efforts. Under his leadership, the children of the school began their own program of mission education and support. Many St. Paul adults recall the little individual cardboard “mission boxes” into which they deposited their weekly mission offerings. This culminated in their having a brief part in the afternoon outdoor Mission Festival service, when they each carried their box and placed it before the altar.

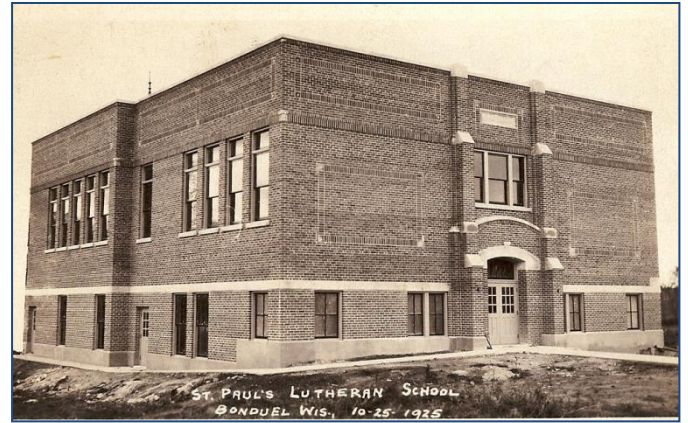
The adults were continually encouraged to increase their efforts toward missions as well. As an example of St. Paul’s support for missions, our minutes record that for 1932, our regular expenses were set at \$7000, and, in addition, our mission budget of \$2700 was approved. It is remarkable that the contribution level for missions was almost 40% as much as the total for local expenses!

The crowded conditions of the school building had been a matter of concern and discussion for some years before Rev. Plischke’s arrival. In 1922 the pupil population was 105, and it was obvious that more classroom space was needed. With the pastor’s guidance, plans were made to replace it. In 1925 a new building was constructed to replace the 1889 two-room school building.

St. Paul Lutheran School 1925–1954

The new two-story building housed four classrooms on the second floor, while the first floor had a kitchen, a furnace/boiler room, restrooms, plus a large, multi-purpose auditorium/gymnasium with a stage. A grade school (and by this time, the children were grouped in age-related “grades” as they are today) with facilities like these was the envy of many in this area in 1925. This building remains a part of St. Paul School to this day.

The school population continued to increase through the decades of the 1930’s and 1940’s until in 1947, there were 133 pupils in grades one through eight. The teaching staff, which had increased in number from two to three in 1929, numbered four in 1947. By 1952, as a result of the post-World War II



baby boom, it became necessary to increase the staff to five; by 1957, with the pupil population at 187, the number of teachers was increased to six.

With the increased population came the need for more space. The first addition was built in 1954 and included an office for the pastor, a large kitchen, and two restrooms on the lower level, plus two classrooms on the second floor. Due to increasing complexity in the school curriculum, the need arose to have each grade in its own room with its own teacher. An intermediate step was taken toward that goal in 1964 when the staff was increased to seven teachers, with the church basement used for the seventh classroom.

In 1968 another section was added to the school that housed three new classrooms, offices for the pastor, principal, and church/school secretary, restrooms, and a large gym with shower rooms. This made it possible to increase the staff to eight members, which included the principal, who had always been a full-time classroom teacher as well.



1925 with additions in 1954 and 1968

Pupil population numbers grew annually until 1973, when it was 218 in grades one through eight.

Since then, most local school populations in this area have decreased in number due to fewer children in the population. In 1981 another teacher was hired, and the principal's teaching time was limited to an hour or two per day.

A new segment of Lutheran education was begun at St. Paul in 1985, when a preschool for three- and four-year olds was begun. Our preschool serves the whole Bonduel community. In 1994 St. Paul added Kindergarten to its school. (Until then, St. Paul's five-year-olds had always attended Bonduel Public Schools for Kindergarten before transferring to St. Paul.)

In 2000 St. Paul added the position of church/school music professional to its staff, with the school's portion being 60% of that position.

The most recent addition to our school was made for the 2011-12 school year when a Kindergarten for four-year-olds was added.

Throughout its history, St. Paul members have always endeavored to adequately support its professional workers and to maintain and improve its facilities as need indicated. At first a portion of the members' support of the church was contributed in the form of hay for the pastor's horses and farm and garden produce, e.g., besides annual dues of \$1.00 from each family. With the passage of time, the dues were raised according to the rising value of property and the increased income of the members. Amounts for each family seem to have been set by the pastor and the elders with the consent of each member. At the end of each year, the amount the family had contributed was published.

Until the late 1930's and early 1940's St. Paul members were assessed dues as a condition of their membership. In the late 1920's voluntary contributions were added to this method of financially supporting the church, and later this became the only official method. Since the 1950's contribution envelopes have been provided to all

confirmed members. In the 1970s, St. Paul adopted the "Unified Budget," which puts all planned expenditures into one treasury.

Despite our best efforts, it is generally acknowledged that our professional staff workers have frequently been in the position of contributing their talents and efforts for less salary than could be expected. We are grateful for their work on our behalf. A listing of all our workers from our founding in 1863 until today can be found in the appendix at the end of this booklet.

Upon Rev. Plischke's retirement in 1956, Rev. Randolph Mueller was called from Spencer, Wisconsin, and he served until 1963. He was the last St. Paul parish pastor to regularly hold worship services in the German language.



Rev. Randolph Mueller
1956–1963

Rev. Mueller, too, was highly supportive of our school. However, he saw the lack of provision for our four- and five-year-olds, since St. Paul had no Sunday School. Under his leadership St. Paul began a Saturday school for these little ones. It was staffed by various mothers and teen-aged girls who volunteered their time and talents. It existed until we began our pre-school in the mid-1980s.

St. Paul members saw a growing need for improvements to our church building during these years. The broad outdoor steps were hazardous to walk on in winter weather, so they were torn away and a new entrance was built. It included cloak rooms, a larger narthex, and a mother's room. The basement was also improved to make it more comfortable for fellowship, meetings, etc. The dedication was held on December 17, 1961.



St. Paul Lutheran Church 1961–2007

Rev. Mueller accepted a call to Rockford, Illinois in 1963. He was succeeded by Rev. Virgil Joss, who served until he accepted a call to New Mexico in 1981. He came to Bonduel from serving a dual parish in Junction City and Dancy, Wisconsin.



Rev. Virgil Joss
1963–1981

At this time, it was decided to replace the parsonage with a more modern house. This house

served as our parsonage until 2001; the congregation no longer maintains housing for the pastor.

In the years after Pastor Plischke left, German services were held regularly but not with the frequency as they had been. More people preferred English church services, even many of our older St. Paul members. In 1971 all German services were discontinued; since 1963 they had been cut back in frequency to once a month and had been conducted by Rev. O. Zuberbier, a retired pastor who lived in Shawano.

Pastor Joss began the practice of holding regular Saturday evening services to accommodate the many members who preferred that or who could not attend on Sunday. During the 18 years of his pastorate, communicant membership increased by 225 people, church attendance increased in percentage, and per-member contributions also increased. Improvements were made to the church, and the school was enlarged (as mentioned earlier). Rev. Joss was followed by Rev. Roland Golz as St. Paul's pastor in November 1981. He came here from having served the church at Dorchester, Wisconsin. Prior to being trained as a pastor, he had been a Lutheran elementary school teacher for 17 years.



Rev. Roland Golz
1981–1993

During his pastorate, Pastor Golz began Bible Study groups, of which there had been few. He encouraged members to become lay leaders of the groups. He worked hard to encourage members to

be more active in leadership roles in general. He established a monthly congregational newsletter, which was mailed to the homes of members. In 1987 Vacation Bible School was begun under his leadership, and it has been held annually ever since. In January of 1982, acting on an issue that had been considered many times in the preceding five years, the right to vote and hold office was extended to all female members, 18 years and older. (Prior to this, in 1978 it had been decided that all male members, 18 years old and older, were automatically regarded as voting members.)

St. Paul celebrated its 125th anniversary with a year-long emphasis in 1988. On the second Sunday of each month, special programs were held. Former pastors and teachers were invited and honored, and confirmands in ten-year sets were invited to participate. In preparation for this anniversary the church towers were repaired and re-bricked, and the entire exterior of the church was sandblasted and tuck-pointed. The nave was air-conditioned and the pews were padded.

In 1987 St. Paul took a giant step forward in order to better minister to the more than 1400 souls already in the congregation and to more effectively reach out to others in our community; it approved the position of associate pastor. Rev. Brent Klein, a candidate graduate of St. Louis Seminary, accepted the call, and since then St. Paul has had two pastors.

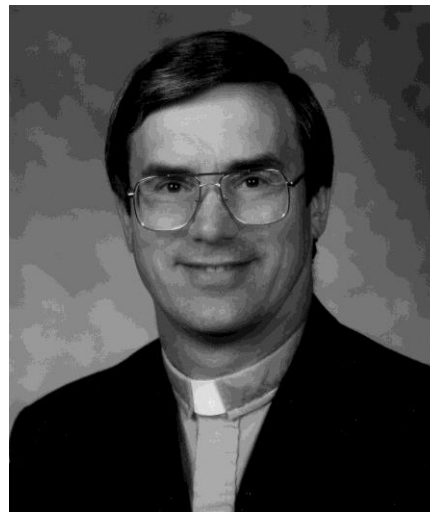


Rev. Brent Klein

1987–1997

Rev. Klein actively participated in the work at St. Paul. He became acquainted with all the members and was particularly active in work with the younger members and the teenagers. He took over all the work and responsibility of being the pastor of our parish when Rev. Golz left in 1993 to assume the pastorate at St. John in the township of Hermansfort, rural Shawano.

St. Paul then decided to temporarily fill the vacancy with a vicar, who would gain experience for one year in preparation for a call to a more permanent position. Accordingly, Rev. Leonard Wildauer was sent to us in that capacity, and he arrived in the summer 1994. He quickly learned the identity of St. Paul members and gained experience in all aspects of parish ministry.



Rev. Leonard Wildauer

1994–2008

After the year of vicarage, St. Paul called Rev. Wildauer to be our associate pastor. Before preparing for the pastoral ministry, Rev. Wildauer had been a certified public accountant in Indiana. Besides his many pastoral duties at St Paul, he also ably advised St. Paul in financial matters.

Rev. Klein, who had been named administrative pastor in 1993, accepted the position of Navy chaplain in September 1997. St. Paul then called Rev. Timothy Shoup, and he became the administrative pastor in the summer 1998. Rev. Shoup came to us from Napoleon, Ohio.



Rev. Timothy J. Shoup
1998–Present

Having been given the charge to help us to plan for our future, Pastor Shoup helped St. Paul to begin that process. In the fall of 1998 a committee was appointed to assess the needs of the congregation in terms of both facilities and staff. It found that extra space was needed at both the church and school. In the years between 1999 and 2003, many solutions were explored. When it was found that it would cost at the very least four to five hundred thousand dollars or more to renovate, repair, and redecorate the church building, make it handicap accessible, and add a fellowship hall, besides provide space in the school, the voters decided to build a totally new facility instead.

The design that was accepted was that of a new sanctuary, expanded narthex, offices, meeting rooms, fellowship hall and kitchen connected to a school addition of four classrooms. All parts of the new building are accessible to the people who are mobility-challenged..

Construction organized by the general contractor E. G. Hintz and Sons began the day after the ground-breaking ceremony that was held on June

25, 2006 and continued for more than a year. These furnishings that had made the old building a beautiful sanctuary were removed and used in the new one: the pipe organ, the stained-glass windows, and the ornately carved altar, pulpit, lectern, and baptismal font. The pews, although they are new, have the same designs on the ends as the old ones had. The old church bells were refurbished and hung in the tall steeple of the new building.

The approximately 1600 members of St. Paul congregation made the transition from the old church to the new one on September 30, 2007. The formal dedication was held on November 11, 2007. The restored and enhanced organ was dedicated in May of 2008.

The new school rooms were ready and in use at the beginning of the 2008–2009 school year.

In October of 2008 Rev. Wildauer accepted a call to Christ Lutheran congregation in Lampson in northwestern Wisconsin. St. Paul then began a period of assessing our present and future needs in terms of pastoral services. It was determined that we should call an experienced pastor as associate. Accordingly, Rev. Mark Palmer was called, and he was installed on November 15, 2009. He came to us from Hibbing, Minnesota.



Rev. Mark A. Palmer
2009–present

Rev. Palmer became an immediate asset in all aspects of the work at St. Paul. Together with Rev. Shoup, these activities include, but are certainly

not limited to, conducting worship services, funerals, and weddings; counseling; leading Bible studies; visiting the sick and shut-ins, working with the young people; teaching confirmation classes; representing St. Paul to the community, etc.

St. Paul congregation continues to grow in numbers and participation in church-sponsored activities. There are a number of auxiliary organizations which St. Paul members may join. Some are: Ladies' Aid, Mission Circle, SPYRT (youth group), Men's Club, Parent/Teacher League, Scrapbooking Group, Prayer Shawl Group, Quilters, etc. St. Paul welcomes members who contribute many volunteer hours helping with tasks in the church and school. By January 1, 2012, St. Paul's total membership was 1788, with 1388 of these being confirmed members.

St. Paul's mission encompasses far more than merely taking care of ourselves. Through the years of its existence St. Paul has supported many of the mission activities of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod and those of its North Wisconsin District as well local projects.

Additionally, at the present time St. Paul is regularly offering financial support to a needy Lutheran

congregation in Romania and its pastor, Rev. Dusan Vanko.

Rev. & Mrs. Vanko at parish in Butin, Romania

St. Paul Lutheran Church ~ from its past into its future



We are conscious of our primary purpose for existence, which is expressed in our mission statement:

“It is the mission of St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran church to communicate the saving Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to our members, our neighbors, our community, and the world—and to do so in an active and joyful manner.”

Teachers of St. Paul Lutheran School

The first teacher seems to have been Mr. Henry Burmeister, one of the founding members of St. Paul. His farm was located on what is now the south village limits of Bonduel. The children gathered in the Burmeister home, and he instructed them in religion as well as basic literacy. This “school” was conducted as much as time and space allowed.

When Pastor Dicke was available, he also instructed the children. He was followed by Pastors Stute and Ebert. More regular school sessions were then possible. Pastor Ebert’s wife, Caroline, assisted him until the first male teacher was hired.

Student Teachers

Gustav Schilke 1896–97

Ernest Boseck 1903–04

Emil Rostek (vicar) 1947–48

Male Teachers

Carl Nicholeisen 1883–84 (or 86?)

William Mueller 1884–86

William Horst 1886–96

Paul Elbert 1896–1903

R. W. Dobberfuhl 1899–1917 & 1923–28

Henry Mundinger 1904–12

John L. Banser 1912–50

Ernest Boseck 1917–23

Erich P. Hueschen 1929–46

W. J. Lobitz 1946–47

Walter J. Kallies 1947–64

Oscar Bothe 1950–52

George Lehrke 1952–97

Karol Dujka 1961–67

Donald F. Karolus 1964–81

Norman Pagel 1967–74

Luther Kell 1974–81
Frank Wegner 1981–2005
Gary Hilgendorf 1982–84
Fred Pedersen 1984–91
Ralph Beversdorf 1989–99
William Hilgendorf 1991–92
Brian Buteyn 1997–2000
Matthew Reimer 1999–2001
Gerald R. Schmidt 2000+
Jason Wesenberg 2002–2004
Michael Schmidt 2002+
Joshua Molnau Spring semester 2002
Brandon Davis 2005+

Female Teachers Grades 1–8

Eleonore Magdalena Horst 1892–96
Eleanor (Elbert) Simon 1897–99
Esther Zimmerman Fall semester 1928
Irma (Burmeister) Juedes 1929–35
Olive (Jensen) Stoehr 1935–36
Erna Stoehr 1936–1943
Mabel (Sumnicht) Boettcher 1943–44
Inez (Gebert) Kupsky 1944–47, 56–57, 61–73
Jean (Hatcher) Stoll 1947–48
Myrtle Westphal Fall semester 1947
Yvonne Gehring 1948–49
Miriam (Keuer) Mueller 1948–52 & 67–91
Matilda (Oehlman) Kallies 1949–53 & 65–92
Donalyn (Krueger) Buelow 1952–54
Norma (Kallies) Graf 1952–54
Evelyn Wolf Spring semester 1953
Lois (Wenger) Pera 1953–55
Elaine Trimberger 1954–58
Marguerite (Strodthoff) Schultz 1954–55
Sylvia (Ziegenhagen) Monson 1955–56

Marian (Westphal) Kupsky 1955–58 & 66–74
Carol (Manthei) Westphal 1956–58
Corinne (Groth) Schneider 1957–60
Marilyn Boock 1958–1960
Kathryn (Maag) Brusewitz 1958–61
Phyllis (Wunrow) Sprengler 1959–60
Edith (Rupprecht) Lehrke 1960–61
Helen (Rupprecht) Brodhagen 1960–61
Alice (Rakow) Bahn 1961–63
Hilda (Mayer) McClone 1962–65
Donna (Schroeder) Graffunder 1963–64
Karen (Schlemmer) Baker 1964–66 & Fall 2001
Henrietta Koneman 1964–65
Janet (Hoesch) Peterson 1964–67
Nancy (Gerhard) Schmeling 1966–67
Maxine (Aufdemberge) Wolzlein 1967–70
Susan (Enders) Oster 1970–71
Laurel (Burmeister/Betzner) Brown 1971–73
Verna Schultz 1973–74
Debra (Hinz) Court 1973–75 & 2002–2012
Deborah (Meyer) Welch 1974–79 & 03–99
Lois Schroeder 1974–76
Margaret (Feldt) Buchholz 1975–81 & 82+
Kristine (Mueller) Reinke 1976–82 & 83+
Pamela Kell 1978–81
Ramona Hillers 1980 Spring semester
Amy (Walters) Krohn 1980–86
Jane (Spiegelberg) Koplitz 1981–82
Jean Umland 1981–94
Sue (Kurgoweit) Jones 1982–83
Dawn (Gruenewald) Scheelk 1986–89
Kathryn Kirchner 1988–89
Kimberly Smith 1989–91
Janet Moede 1991–2000
Rebecca Mansson 1992–94

Gayle Eggerstedt 1992–2005
 Deanna Otte 1994–2002
 Louise (Banaszynski) Reisler 1994–96 & 2008+
 Cindy Muther 2000–2003
 Kari (Krueger) Williams 2004–2008 & 2009+
 Jill Borchardt 2005–08
 Jesse Schultz 2008+
 Lorraine Doell 2000+(Primarily church & school
 Vocal music & organist)

Kindergarten

Jean Wildauer 1994–99
 Robin (Woldt) Reep 1999+

Instructional Aides

(where needed in Grades K–8)

Elizabeth (Mueller) Seering 1946–47
 Donna (Hinz) Niles 1987–2004
 Miriam Mueller 1991–92
 Cathy (Kuehn) Schmidt 1996–2003 & 2005–12
 Bridgett (Niles) Dingeldein 2003+
 Karla Moede 2011+

St. Paul Preschool

Brenda Pedersen (teacher) 1985–89

The following people worked as teachers or aides through the years since the beginning:

Sandra Rosin	Debbie Stoltenow
Pam Rose	Tillie Kallies
Donna Niles	Cathy Schmidt
Debbie Tinlin	Staci Pedersen
	Sherrie Peterson

Donna Niles has been the Director/Teacher since 2005. Various other women have been volunteer aides through the years.

Kindergarten for four-year-olds was begun in 2011, with Donna Niles as Director/Teacher and Staci Pedersen as aide.

Before & After School Care

Andrea Schneider 2011+

St. Paul Custodians

St. Paul records indicate that someone was hired to sweep the church as early as 1880, shortly after they had transitioned from the log building to the 1879 wood-frame church. In 1880 and 1881 the annual salary was \$5.00. In 1883 the salary was raised to \$10.00. The names of some early custodians were: Johann Schroeder, August Boettcher, Wilhelm Burmeister, and Theodore Kosbab.

In 1895 it was noted that Wilhelm Burmeister was hired to pump the organ during church services for \$5.00 annually. The organ had a set of bellows through which air was pumped to supply the sound. Therefore, it was necessary to have an “organ-pumper” whenever the organ was being played.

In 1898 August Boettcher was hired to ring the church bells for \$5.00 annually. In 1905 the teachers were directed to ring the church bells on Saturday evenings. It was the custom to announce the next day’s church service by ringing the bells at 6:00 P.M. the evening before. The church bells were also rung at about 11:00 A.M. to announce the death of a member; this was followed by tolling a bell to mark the age of the deceased.

One can assume that for many of these earlier years, congregation members continued to serve in these ways. After the brick school building was built in 1889, more maintenance work was necessary. Gradually someone was hired for each building, the school separate from the church. The names of some of these employees were: F. F. Boettcher (church only), Paul Boettcher, William Krause, and J. G. Moericke. They were all

part-time employees who worked at one time or another as needed.

Beginning in 1923, Seigfried Zastrow was hired at \$50.00 annually to pump the organ for all services, and he did this until the electric organ was installed in 1935. In December of 1934 St. Paul decided to hire one person as the first full-time employee to assume all the duties of maintaining St. Paul's buildings, the cemetery, and the property in general. Siegfried Zastrow was hired, and his duties were many and varied: clean rooms, keep the coal-and-wood furnaces fired in cold weather, shovel snow, cut grass, pull weeds, ring the bells, do minor repairs, etc. He did this until 1960 when he retired; after that, he still continued to ring the bells (although there were others who also did this as time went on). In the new church, the bells are rung electronically.

Siegfried was followed by Ben Dehn, who together with his wife, Elnora, was employed from 1960 to 1973. Then Walter Klosterman was the custodian until 1977, at which time Carl Kosbab was hired. Carl served until 2010. Since then, Scott Krause has taken over. Beginning in 1994 part-time employees have been hired to assist with some of the daily school cleaning. Some of these people were: Diane Genke, Marlene Schmidt, Pam Sondergaard, Barbara Born, Susan Styczynski, and Kathy Moericke (who is the current assistant). Various individuals have also been hired through the years to give the school a thorough cleaning in the summer.

At the present time, the church and narthex are cleaned every week by volunteers.

School Lunch Program

Until about 1960, St. Paul school children brought their lunches from home. Then an alternative was offered: St. Paul children could be taken by bus to the public school where they participated in that lunch program. In 1985, St. Paul offered its own hot lunch program. Tammy Czarapata was the first cook. The following people

worked as cooks (either head cook or assistant) through the years: Roxane Monroe, Paula Hamilton, Linda Spreeman, Debbie Buss, Tammy (Anschutz) Rosin, Christine Zernicke, Joy Artis, Toni Schoepke, Lynn Ruechert, Sharon Hasser, Lorna Buelow, Beth Palmer, and Maureen Zernicke (who is the present head cook). Volunteers help to serve the lunches.

Secretaries (church & school)

Until 1967 neither the church nor the school had a secretary. The pastors did their own office and record-keeping work; the principals did likewise (in addition to being full-time teachers).

Kathryn Brusewitz (church & school) 1967–77

Audrey Marohl (church & school) 1977–85

Audrey Marohl (school) 1985+

Cathy Larsen (church) 1985–1991

Debbie Boerst (church) 1991–2000

Since 2000 most of the church's secretarial needs have been filled by a number of volunteers. They have been extraordinarily faithful in carrying out the work.

St. Paul's website is currently maintained by Jan Kuchenbecker.

Youth Leaders

From the beginning of our youth programs at St. Paul to about 1960, the youth leadership role was filled by the called male teachers as a duty besides their teacher or principal roles. After the mid-1940s, the female teachers were expected to assist them. Sometime in the 1960s, volunteer J. J. Brusewitz became the primary leader. Other volunteers took over when he moved away in 1977.

In 2000 Gerald Schmidt was Called as a teacher at St. Paul, and part of his position officially included being the youth leader. He filled this role until 2005 when he became the St. Paul school principal. Thereafter, Robin Reep has been

employed as the youth leader in addition to her Kindergarten teacher role.

Computer Technician

As St. Paul moved into the age of technology, it became necessary to find someone with the expertise needed to service computers and solve networking issues. St. Paul has had part-time employees:

Ron Klosterman 1998-2008

Kevin McCann 2009-2011

Ryan Peters 2011+

Volunteers

Many St. Paul members have been frequent volunteers in both the church and school. From the beginning, the opportunities for members to help out have been many and varied. No official record has been kept of their names and the work they have done, and that is unfortunate. We will not try to list any of them; it would be impossible to do so with accuracy. Mention has already been made of some of the volunteer work that has been part of our St. Paul existence. Below are some more which may not have been adequately mentioned.

First of all, there are the members who have served as officers and on official boards and committees of St. Paul since 1863. Not all of those groups were organized in 1863; over the years, each group or position was added as the need for it arose. The officers now are: Chairman, Chairman-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary.

Boards: Elders, Christian Education, Evangelism, Parish Education, Parish Fellowship, Stewardship, and Trustees. Committees: Memorial, Endowment, Personnel, Budget, Public Relations, Forest, Financial Review, Nominations, and Cemetery. Other committees are appointed as needed.

Then there are the many other ways in which members have “pitched in,” and the following listing is by no means complete: clipping grass and trimming around monuments on the cemetery, cleaning up the grounds (and the forest) in general,

taking care of the landscaping around the buildings, repairing playground equipment and the ball diamonds, preparing the church service, funeral, and wedding bulletins, folding bulletins, tutoring children, aiding the teachers, helping with tasks in the church/school office, assisting with special projects in church and school, maintaining computers and network servers, serving meals (both in school and for other gatherings), etc., etc., etc.!!

The needs are ever-present; and the worth of our volunteers’ help is invaluable.

Sons and Daughters of St. Paul

(Members who prepared for a career to work in our Lutheran churches and schools)

Pastors

Gottfried Luebker

Carl Runge

Herman Koch

Fred Schilke

John Ebert

Henry Rathjen

Henry Boettcher

Richard Runge

John R. Westphal

John Busch

Henry Simon

Harley Kopitske

Gerald Herman

David Boettcher

Dennis Pegorsch

John Mueller

Kevin Voss

Nicholas Buchholz

Teachers

Gustave Schilke
Herman Burmeister
Louis Luepke
Robert Runge
John Brodhagen
Edwin Bonnin
Arthur Benter
Walter J. Kallies
Louis Schilke
David Schilke
Martin Dobberfuhl
Irma (Burmeister) Juedes
Marvin Klosterman
George J. Lehrke
Norma (Kallies) Graf
Harriet (Kallies) Fester
Lorraine (Boehlke) Schroeder
Marian (Westphal) Kupsky
Carol (Manthei) Westphal
Joanne (Burmeister) Scheer
Darl Rose

Elaine Ebert
Laurel (Burmeister) Brown
Owen Boettcher
Debra (Hinz) Court
Neil Boettcher
Warren Graf
Kristine (Mueller) Reinke
Christine (Kallies) Vande Hei
Dawn (Gruenewald) Scheelk
Donna (Hinz) Niles
Gerald Schmidt
Robin (Woldt) Reep
Michael Schmidt Diane (Baker) White

Other

Gertrude Simon (Missionary to China)
Dianne Hinz (Director of Christian Education)
Hannah (Shoup) Berkesch (Lay Ministry)

A Timeline of Events

- 1) 1853: Shawano County was organized as a governmental unit of the state of Wisconsin.
- 2) Decade of the 1850s: Families from southern Wisconsin, primarily Dodge county, settled in Hartland.
- 3) 1861: Rev. J. N. Beyer, Lutheran pastor from Caledonia Township, Waupaca County, traveled through Hartland and met with some of the Hartland settlers.
- 4) 1863: P. H. Dicke, pastor at St. Martin in Belle Plaine Township in Shawano County, organized the settlers into our St. Paul congregation.
- 5) 1869: First church building, a log cabin, was built.
- 6) 1879: Wood frame church was built.
- 7) 1889: St. Paul joined the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
- 8) 1889: Brick-sided one-room school was built.
- 9) 1914: Large, brick-sided parsonage was built.

- 10) 1915: Bonduel's Fourth of July parade was led by St. Paul's 20-member band.
- 11) 1916: Village of Bonduel was organized into a governmental unit separate from Town of Hartland.
- 12) 1916: Church building was moved to new location.
- 13) 1918: World War I ended; celebration for returning military personnel was held.
- 14) 1921: Electric lights were installed in church.
- 15) 1925: New two-story school replaced 1889 school building.
- 16) Increasingly over the years from the mid-teens through the mid-thirties, more functions in church and school were conducted in the English language rather than in German. English became the main language of instruction in the school, but religion, particularly confirmation instruction, was still taught in German until 1932. German language in the school had simply become one of the curriculum offerings.
- 17) 1930s & 1940s: A civic "Armistice Day" (now termed "Veteran's Day") observance was held annually in Bonduel, initiated and conducted by E. P. Hueschen, principal of St. Paul School.
- 18) 1938: 75th Anniversary of St. Paul Church was observed.
- 19) 1939–1941: Water is piped into church and school; as a result, outdoor toilets on the grounds and in the woods were no longer needed, and hand-filled drinking water fountains were removed.
- 20) 1944: Emmanuel Lutheran Church at Landstad closed; most members join St. Paul.
- 21) 1945–1946: Returning military personnel from World War II were welcomed home.
- 22) 1954: School addition (two-story) was built.
- 23) 1960s: Saturday School for four-and-five-year-olds was begun.
- 24) 1961: Church addition (new front) was constructed.
- 25) 1963: 100th Anniversary of St. Paul Church observed.
- 26) 1968: School addition (classrooms, offices, and gymnasium) was constructed.
- 27) 1978: Males from age 18 through 21 were automatically made voting members at St. Paul.
- 28) 1982: Females 18 years and older were granted voting privileges at St. Paul.
- 29) 1984: Preschool for three and four year olds was begun.
- 30) St. Paul authorized having two pastors, one administrative and one associate.
- 31) 1988: 125th Anniversary of St. Paul Church was observed.
- 32) 1994: St. Paul added Kindergarten to its elementary school.
- 33) 2000–2006: Plans for upgrades in church and school were discussed, and construction was designed for a new sanctuary with a fellowship hall and office facilities connected to a school addition.
- 34) 2006: Groundbreaking for new building was held in June, and construction began immediately.
- 35) 2007: The new facilities were completed.
- 36) 2008: Summer Celebration, an annual parish picnic, was begun. As additional guests, all confirmands during Rev. Plischke's pastorate were invited in 2009, those from Rev. Mueller's classes in 2010, and those who were confirmed by Rev. Joss (including those in 1981 by Rev. Brassfield) in 2011.

- 37) October, 2012 through 2013: 150th Anniversary celebration. The following dates are planned for these events:
- October 21, 2012: Informal opening for the 150th anniversary
- January 13, 2013: 150th Official opening church service for the year-2013 observance
- January 27, 2013: Recognition of St. Paul staff
- February 3, 2013: Guest Pastor–Rev. David Boettcher
- February 9–10, 2013: Hymn Festival
- March 10, 2013: Concordia University Wisconsin Concert choir
- May 5, 2013: Guest Pastor–Rev. Nicholas Buchholz
- May 12, 2013: Guest Pastor–Rev. Leonard Wildauer
- June 2, 2013: Summer Celebration
- June 9, 2013: Guest Pastor–Rev. Brent Klein
- June 23, 2013: St. Paul Alumni Sunday
- July ?, 2013: Mission Sunday Guests from Romania (Rev. & Mrs. Dusan Vanko & Viola Fronkova)
- August 25, 2013: Cemetery Walk (Walk in the Past)
- September 15, 2013: Guest Pastor–Rev. Roland Golz
- September 29, 2013: Guest Pastor–Rev. Kevin Voss
- October 20, 2013: 150th Anniversary Sunday–Rev. Matthew Harrison, Missouri Synod President

Acknowledgements & Sources

1988 History of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Bonduel, WI; Violet Golz, editor

Official Church Records of St. Paul

Minutes of St. Paul Council and Voters' Meetings

Financial Records of St. Paul

Articles in the Bonduel Times and Shawano Leader Newspapers

Memoirs of Rev. W. J. Plischke

Informal Accounts of Events by St. Paul Members

150th Anniversary Booklet Committee

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Sharon Schlender

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