

St. Pauli News in Detail



Greeting and Ushering

Feb. 5	Jim Rondorf
Feb. 12	Jordan Rondorf
Feb. 19	Arlo Rude
Feb. 26	Barb Smith

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

Sunday Service:

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

Altar Preparation: Tammy Haugen

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February Milestones

Birthdays

Feb. 20	Gary Iverson
Feb. 25	Arlo Rude
Feb. 26	Evie Johnson
Feb. 27	Edna Rondorf



Anniversaries

None that the editor is aware of

BASKETS OF PROMISE



As is our custom during Lenten season, the congregation will take part in collecting Personal Care Kits. When LWR distributes these kits, it is often to people who have lost everything. In the wake of an earthquake, or having fled from violence as their homes were overtaken, they clasp a towel from a faraway place, with a bar of soap, a toothbrush...and washing up, they know that they have not been forsaken by the world.

The very simple gesture of giving a Personal Care Kit can give someone the encouragement to start anew, starting with a bath.

You can share God's grace and love by providing that simple comfort.

- March 5: Bar of Soap (4 or 5 oz. in original wrapper)
- March 12: Bath Towel (lightweight, max. size 27" x 52", dark color preferred)
- March 19: Toothbrush (adult size, in original packaging)
- March 26: Sturdy Comb
- April 2: Nail Clipper (metal, attached file optional)
- April 9: Bar of Soap

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Join the Quilting!

The WELCA ladies will quilt again on Wednesday and Thursday, February 15 and 16. At our January session, we finished 8 quilts!! All of this while having good fun and conversation.

On Wednesday, Sharon Bugge is the hostess for lunch. On Thursday, we will have pizza for lunch and will hold our regular WELCA monthly meeting that same Thursday at 4:00 pm.

Minutes of the 2016 Annual Meeting of St. Pauli Church

January 31, 2016

The St. Pauli Lutheran Church congregation held its Annual Meeting for 2015 on January 31, 2016 following the 10:30 am worship service, with 25 members present. Council President Arlo Rude called the meeting to order.

Approval of Agenda: Ron Anderson made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Larry Hurst seconded. Motion carried.

Reports:

Secretary's Report: The minutes of the January 25, 2015 Annual meeting and the March 8, 2015 Special Congregational Meeting were reviewed. Bryan Grove made a motion to approve. Barb Nelson seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Council President Rude recommended the approval of these reports be postponed until a thorough review and audit is completed.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Hansen stated that he has been at St. Pauli for 4-½ years, the same length as his first ministry. He stated it has been and continues to be a joy to serve St. Pauli. He appreciates the spirit in the congregation and its willingness to reach out into the community. He appreciates Faye Auchenpaugh's role in helping the congregation produce excellent music. He stated that sometimes the pastor is the last to know about a need for pastoral care, and encouraged members to inform him when a situation arises.

Membership Report:

Total confirmed members: 90
Baptized -Not Confirmed: 16
Total Baptized Members: 106
Members deceased in 2015: 3
(Arlene Thune, Meribeth Dicken, JoAnn Hurst)
Baptisms: 1 (Easton Berg)
Transfers In: 2 (Corey Berg, Nicole Axdahl)
Transfers Out: 0

Board of Education/Sunday School Treasurer's Reports: A motion was made by Larry Hurst to approve the reports. Barb Nelson seconded. Motion carried. It was stated there are three students who should be completing Confirmation in 2016. The congregation applauded Gary Iverson for his class act in teaching Confirmation to St. Pauli students. There was also a brief discussion about internet use for Sunday School materials.

WELCA Treasurer's Report: Jan Strandlie made a motion to approve the report. Virginia Anderson seconded. Motion carried. A member noted he had heard several comments from the community on the loss of the fall supper. It was noted that proceeds from the fall event with Eric Bergeson were comparable to fall supper proceeds, and there were approximately 12 congregational members that weren't available to help with the supper this fall.

Old Business:

- 1) Steeple Repairs: This project has not been completed.
- 2) Constitution and By-Laws: A task group will meet this winter to review and update.

- 3) Base Trim for the Altar Railing: Materials have been ordered.
- 4) Fireplace for the Basement: Discussion was held on the addition of a fireplace in the basement, with exact location yet to be determined. Pledges totaling \$1,500 have been received for this project, plus a Thrivent grant could provide \$250, and funds from the Memorial Fund could also be used to help cover the estimated \$3,000-\$4,000 project. It has been proposed to utilize woodwork from an upright piano for the mantel. It was recommended that further discussion be held at the next congregational meeting when the Treasurer's Reports are ready for approval. Andrew Halvorson made a motion to form a fireplace committee to review and make recommendations on options for locations, and an accurate cost estimate. Jim Strandlie seconded. Motion carried. Faye Auchenpaugh, Jim Strandlie and Arlo Rude volunteered to serve on the committee.

New Business:

- 1) 2016 Budget: Changes in the budget were reviewed by Rude. Faye Auchenpaugh made a motion to approve the budget. Val Torstveit seconded. Motion carried.
- 2) Setting time for Easter Worship Service: Following discussion, Virginia Anderson made a motion to set the time of service to 8 a.m. for 2016. Jim Strandlie seconded. Motion carried.
- 3) Purchase Chair Lift: Rude reported on the details of purchasing and installing a chair lift for the stairs leading to the sanctuary. The chair he had researched cost \$2,400, and with wiring and some remodeling in the corner, he budgeted \$3,500 for the project. The chair is rated for 350 pounds, with a 120-volt AC unit. It was recommended that Memorial Funds be used to cover the cost, and if anyone wanted to donate to the project they could donate to the Memorial Fund. This project was included in the 2016 Budget, which was already approved, so another motion was not necessary. A question was raised regarding the need for liability insurance for use of the chair. Rude agreed to check on this topic.
- 4) Repairs to Vandalism Damage: Rude estimated \$500 to make repairs to a basement window and entrance door, recently damaged by vandals. He will submit an insurance claim, but there is a \$1,000 deductible.
- 5) Church Copyright License: Rude explained the need to budget \$124.00 for this item.
- 6) Synod Assembly Representatives: Rude asked for volunteers interested in attending the Synod Assembly on May 20-21, 2016 in Moorhead.
- 7) Bishop's Annual Report: The report was included in the meeting materials and members were asked to read it on their own.

8) St. Pauli Cemetery Association Update: Rude reported the Cemetery Association recently held their Annual Meeting. Bruce Mathson volunteered to serve as Sexton, following the resignation of David Lee. Other changes he reported on included: 1) Plans for planting trees for a windbreak; 2) Constructing a directional sign to indicate location of church from cemetery; 3) Overhead entrance sign; 4) Perpetual Care Fees; 5) Purchasing a fireproof safe for cemetery records, to be stored at the church, but separate from church records. 6) Discuss placing "No Trespassing" signage at the entrance. Rude will furnish an updated church membership list to Bruce Mathson. David Lee plans to continue to mow the church lawn and cemetery. In regards to the cemetery budget, the congregation approved a \$3,500 contribution from the church budget to the cemetery, and Rude recommended the congregation continue to do so for another five years, bringing the cemetery fund to approximately \$50,000. The church is also presently paying for mowing expenses.

Elections:

Nominating Report and Nominations:

Treasurer Position: Rude asked that the election of the Treasurer be postponed until the special congregational meeting when reports are approved. Andrew Halvorson stated that upon taking over the Treasurer position, there were items that were not clear. He asked that a committee be formed to review the position duties and processes in

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regards to required reports. The committee should review what is currently being done and determine what needs to be changed. Faye Auchenpaugh volunteered to work with Andrew Halvorson and Arlo Rude on a committee.

The Nominating Committee presented the following slate of officers for 2016:

Council Member: Gary Iverson – 3 year term
 Council Secretary: Cindy Cedergren (second year)
 Financial Secretary: Barb Nelson (second year)
 Board of Education: Valarie Torstveit (first year), Kari Torkelson (first year)
 Heating Caretaker: Myles Alberg
 Church Recorder: Valarie Torstveit
 Organist: Faye Auchenpaugh

Voting: Rude asked three times for nominations from the floor for the positions listed above. Deone Cerny made a motion to approve the nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for the proposed slate of officers. Bryan Grove seconded. Motion carried.

Closing: Rude thanked everyone who helped in various ways throughout the year. The meeting concluded with the Lord's Prayer, adjournment at 12:45 pm, followed by Table Grace.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Cedergren
 St. Pauli Church Council Secretary

Minutes of the Church Council

December 15, 2016

The St. Pauli Church Council held its regular meeting on Thursday, December 15, 2016 at 7 p.m. at St. Pauli Church. Members present: Arlo Rude, Cindy Cedergren, Gary Iverson, Kathy Alberg and Pastor Carl Hansen. The meeting was called to order by Arlo Rude. Pastor Hansen opened with prayer.

Approval of Agenda: The agenda was approved as presented.

Secretary's Report: The minutes of the November 17, 2016 meeting were approved as presented.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's report was approved as presented. It was noted that \$665 had been sent to Lutheran Disaster Relief, including \$125 from personal contributions. An updated 2016 budget was reviewed and approved. Revenue exceeds expenditures for the year by \$6,695.28.

General Fund Checking Account:

Balance as of 11/1/16	\$14,594.55
November Income	\$2,958.00
November Expenses	\$(1,582.69)
Balance as of 11/30/16	\$15,967.86

Certificates of Deposit	\$20,000.00
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General Fund Savings Account	
Balance 11/30/16	\$35,967.83
Edward D. Jones Balance 11/30/16	\$42,074.78

Memorial Fund Savings Account & Certificate of Deposit	
Balance 11/30/16	\$11,292.82
Mission Grant Fund Balance 11/30/16	\$2,023.36
Total Church Funds	127,326.65

Pastor's Report: Pastor Hansen reported it was a delight and blessing for all who attended the confirmation of Aleisha Albeyta, Dacian Grove, and Devin Haugen on December 11. Gary Iverson has indicated there are five students in the current confirmation class. The St. Pauli pictorial Christmas cards are just gorgeous. Thanks to Arlo for his photograph of our 2015 Christmas Eve service and the thoughtfulness of WELCA in using it in a beautiful Christmas card. Pastor Hansen will be leaving on Christmas Day to visit his Texas family, and will return prior to the Annual Meeting and will lead worship on January 29. This spring he will be attending his grandson Christopher's graduation from Texas A&M on the weekend of May 14, and is considering staying a few additional days to take in a portion of the Festival of Homiletics sponsored by Luther Seminary, held during the week of May 15-19 in San Antonio.

Pastor Hansen stated he continues to be blessed to serve at St. Pauli. He is thankful that the Holy Spirit connected Pastor Mary with Calvary and him with St. Pauli less than two months after they moved to Thief River Falls in July, 2011.

Pastor Hansen asked the Council to consider including the following in the 2017 budget: 1) Funds to support campers going to Pathways Bible Camp; and 2) Gifts to provide scholarships for persons preparing for pastoral ministry in the ELCA and/or funds to help newly ordained pastors pay off their student loans. Over the past 10 years, enrollment in ELCA seminaries has decreased by 40%. It is vital that those who perceive the Holy Spirit calling them into ordained ministry are not discouraged by financial considerations.

Reports of Members in sickness or distress: Council members shared prayer concerns of members.

New Members or Interest in Membership: Rude will consult with the Cervantes family on a date in February to become official members, due to Pastor Hansen's absence in January.

Reports:

- 1) WELCA: Cedergren and Alberg reported on the December 3 Christmas Brunch held at Summerfield. No WELCA business meeting was held in December.
- 2) Board of Education: Sunday School program is Dec. 18.

Old Business: None

New Business:

- 1) Agreement with Pastor Hansen: A three-month contract was approved by a motion by Cedergren, second by Iverson. Motion carried.

- 2) 2017 Budget Discussion: Rude presented a draft budget, and members reviewed and edited several line items. Rude will make revisions and email a new draft for another review at the next meeting. Rude will consult with Sjoborg's on an estimated cost of internet service. Discussion was held on establishing an Education Fund, which will need written criteria to administer funds. This will be brought up at the Annual Meeting.
- 3) 2017 Calendar: Rude reported on the pastoral plans for January while Pastor Hansen is on vacation: Jan. 1 & 22 – Dale Knotek; Jan. 8 – Kari Torkelson will be asked; Jan 15 – John Wollenzien. Communion will be scheduled for Jan. 15 and 29. Other services discussed were Easter – set for 8 a.m. again; Christmas Eve services at 5 pm Sun, Dec. 24, no morning services on that day.
- 4) Annual Meeting reports: Cedergren asked that reports for the Annual Meeting booklet be submitted by January 15, for distribution on Sunday, Jan. 22 and again on Jan. 29.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer and adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Next regular meeting date: Thursday, January 12, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Cedergren
St. Pauli Church Council Secretary

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St. Pauli Cemetery Association Board Meeting

November 17, 2016

The St. Pauli Cemetery Association Board of Directors met on November 17, 2016 at 8 pm at St. Pauli Church with the following members present: Arlo Rude, Kathy Alberg, Gary Iverson, and Cindy Cedergren.

Chairman Arlo Rude opened the meeting. The agenda was approved as printed.

Secretary's Report: The minutes of the September 19, 2016 meeting were approved as presented.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's report was approved as presented, with a checking account balance of \$33,173.08 as of 10/31/16.

Old Business:

- 1) Cemetery Project List: The list was reviewed. The remaining repairs to the Vigen monument will be completed in the spring, due to weather conditions.

- 2) Operation Guidelines and Fees: Rude presented a proposed list of fees for Board members to review and to provide feedback at the next meeting.

New Business:

- 1) Annual Meeting: The Annual Meeting for the St. Pauli Cemetery Association was set for January 12, 2017 at 8 p.m., following the St. Pauli Council meeting.
- 2) Other: A question was raised about whether the Cemetery Association should carry insurance protection from vandalism.

Next meeting: December 15, 2016.

Meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Cedergren, St. Pauli Cemetery Association Secretary

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St. Pauli Cemetery Association Annual Meeting

January 21, 2016

The St. Pauli Cemetery Association held its Annual Meeting on January 21, 2016 at approximately 8 p.m. at St. Pauli Lutheran Church. Board members present: Arlo Rude, Cindy Cedergren, Kathy Alberg, and Ron Anderson. Guests in attendance: Faye Auchenpaugh, Wally Torkelson, Bruce and Shelly Mathson.

Approval of Agenda: The agenda was reviewed. Landscaping was added to the agenda by Faye Auchenpaugh. Agenda was approved.

Election of Officers: Alberg made a motion to re-elect all previous officers to the Board of Directors – Chairman, Arlo Rude; Secretary, Cindy Cedergren; Treasurer, Andrew Halvorson, Board members – Kathy Alberg, Ron Anderson. (will be updated following Church Council elections on January 31). Motion seconded by Anderson. Motion carried.

Secretary's Reports: Cedergren presented minutes from the 2015 meetings in February, April and November. These minutes will be printed in the next newsletter, and future minutes will be submitted for the newsletter. Motion by Anderson, seconded by Alberg to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: A full report was not available for the meeting. However, Rude reported the ending balance in November was \$25,988.08.

Old Business:

- 1) Guidelines and fees for burial: A discussion was held regarding the establishment of a perpetual care fee. No decisions were made.
- 2) Application for state sales tax exemption: Accountant Gayle Schmitz is handling the paperwork involved.
- 3) Recommendations to improve cemetery entrance: Discussion was held regarding installing the existing iron archway at the entrance, over the driveway. Rude will research the installation of steel poles to extend the height of the archway. Another suggestion from a guest was to install a St. Pauli Church sign, directing visitors to the church. Rude offered to build another sign similar to those

currently posted. He will talk to Skip Swanson about acquiring posts from Pennington County.

New Business:

- 1) Election of Sexton: A motion was made by Anderson, seconded by Cedergren, to hire Bruce Mathson as Sexton, after the resignation of David Lee. Motion carried. The Board thanked Bruce for agreeing to serve as Sexton. Rude will see that Bruce receives all the information needed to perform the Sexton duties.
- 2) Request to St. Pauli Church concerning annual donations: At the St. Pauli Church Annual Meeting on January 31, Rude will recommend that the church continue to contribute \$3,500, plus cover mowing expenses, from their general fund, to support the Cemetery Association for the next five years. The Board of Directors will discuss an investment strategy in five years.
- 3) Purchase of a fireproof safe/storage: Rude made a recommendation to purchase a fireproof safe to store all cemetery association records, separate from the church records, and will make a request at the Annual Meeting for the safe to be stored at the church. Rude will research costs for the appropriate sized safe.
- 4) Operations Policies and Fees: This document needs to be reviewed and finalized.
- 5) Input from guests: David Lee has agreed to continue to mow the church grounds and cemetery. Marisa Benson should be given any updates for the map located on the church's website. Some gravestones need repair/straightening. Rude reported that the Thune gravestone that was previously damaged was replaced by Johnson Funeral Home.
- 6) Landscaping: Discussion was held on the suggestion of planting a windbreak of spruce trees, either all around the cemetery's perimeter, or on one or two sides (west and north). No decisions were made.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Cedergren, St. Pauli Cemetery Association Secretary

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HAPPY 50th BIRTHDAY RICHARD GESKE!

Forty-five to fifty former co-workers, nursing staff, family and friends came to help Ricardo celebrate his 50th birthday on December 30th. There were even five deer that made a walk by the house.

Food, visiting and cupcakes were enjoyed by all. Family and friends traveled all the way from Thief River Falls in the north down to Kansas City to the south.



The bells still ring at St. Pauli Church near Thief River Falls

By Marilyn Hagerty on Dec 16, 2016 at 4:13 p.m. *Grand Forks Herald*



St. Pauli Lutheran Church was founded south of Thief River Falls in 1895 by Norwegian immigrants. Courtesy of St. Pauli church.

THIEF RIVER FALLS—Times change. People move away. But for 115 years and counting, they have been keeping Christmas in a little country church just south of Thief River Falls. And they still are ringing the bells.

This Sunday morning, a dozen children will take part in the annual program during the 10:30 a.m. service in St. Pauli Church. Parishioners will take turns ringing the bells high up in the steeple of the stately white church on the prairie. They will be ringing the bells again for next week's Christmas Eve services.

Parishioners have nurtured and cared for the traditional church. It is clean, nicely painted. There is an automatic chair lift for those who might have trouble on the wide, carpeted stairway that leads down to the kitchen and dining rooms in the basement.

This is important for the members who are older. And the congregation has numerous dinners and dessert sessions.

The church was founded when newly arrived Norwegians were settling on Minnesota soil to stay. The first Christmas services in its present home were held in 1901. Services then were in Norwegian. And with a long-ago gift of land from one of the parishioners, a cemetery was established nearby.

Pastor Carl Hansen, a retired Lutheran pastor, now serves part time for St. Pauli. Parishioners come out from the area. The church is reached by going 3 miles southeast of Thief

River Falls on U.S. Highway 59. Then there's a turn south on 170th Ave. NE (or County Road 20). After continuing south about 3 miles, the church is on the west side of the road.

Nelson, Helgeson, Vigen, Swanson and Torkelson are among the mostly Norwegian names on the gravestones at St. Pauli cemetery.

During this season, St. Pauli is one of the dwindling number of country churches still open and celebrating Christmas. With its devoted members, it continues as a robust place of nurture and growth. Church members step up and take their turn serving dinners during the year. Volunteers perfectly maintain the grounds. And they keep ringing the bells that sit high above in the church steeple.

Some of them remember the years when Nels Nelson could lovingly ring the bells for hours at a time. In these times, members take turns and keep the bells sounding over the snow covered Minnesota farmland.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: We are delighted that Marilyn Hagerty was so taken with our church that we were included in one of her columns. A few corrections: Parishioners take turns ringing the bell only for Christmas Eve services, not for the Sunday School program. The chair lift leads from the entrance to the main floor of the sanctuary, not down to the basement.

Lutherans Making a World of Difference



Bishop Wohlrabe's
February Study

Leymah Gbowee

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." Matthew 5:9

[Jesus said to his disciples] "See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves." Matthew 10:16

During this year of commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation spearheaded by Martin Luther (1483-1546) we are telling the stories of Lutherans from across the globe whom God has used to act redemptively in the world.

This month we mark the 45th birthday of the woman who is perhaps the most well-known Lutheran of the 21st century, Leymah Gbowee of Liberia, winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace in 2011. Participants in the 2016 ELCA Grace Gathering in New Orleans, held in conjunction with the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, were privileged to hear her speak last August (see the photo below).

Leymah Gbowee (*pronounced BO-wee*)[1]



To understand the life and work of Leymah Gbowee it's important to know a bit about her homeland, the African nation of Liberia. The country was established in

1847 by freed slaves from the United States. Located along the western coast of Africa, Liberia was the creation of the American Colonization Society (founded in 1816 in Washington DC)—an organization of whites and black nationalists who believed that American black slaves would face better chances for freedom in Africa than in the United States.

Established as a democratic republic modeled on the U.S. Constitution, Liberia entered a time of political instability in the last decades of the 20th century, resulting in two civil wars. The First Liberian Civil War (1989-1996) produced the overthrow and killing of Master Sergeant Samuel Doe by Charles Taylor's rebel army. (Doe had himself become president of Liberia following an earlier coup.) The Second Liberian Civil War (1999-2003) resulted in the overthrow and exile of Charles Taylor, after which full and free elections produced Liberia's (as well as the continent of Africa's) first female president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in 2005 and re-elected in 2011.

Leymah Gbowee was born February 1, 1972 in central Liberia. She came of age in the city of Monrovia, during the First Liberian Civil War. For a time, like many other Liberians fleeing the horrors of the civil war, Leymah and her three children moved to the neighboring country of Ghana—penniless and on the verge of starvation.

After the civil war ended she and her young family returned to Monrovia, and Leymah volunteered in the Trauma Healing and Reconciliation Program (THRP) that had been started by the Lutheran Church in Liberia. This unique program focused on

trying to repair the psychic and social damage left in survivors of the war. As Leymah volunteered in this program she also pursued college studies in social work. Her work with THRP gave her the opportunity to try to rehabilitate some of the former "child soldiers" of Charles Taylor's rebel army. Leymah began to realize that *"if any changes were to be made in society it had to be by the mothers."*

Leymah's early involvement in bringing healing to victims of the civil war opened her up to the broader work of peace-building and reconciliation among nations. She read widely in the field, including *The Politics of Jesus* by Mennonite theologian John Howard Yoder and works by Martin Luther King, Jr., and Mahatma Gandhi.

During the Second Liberian Civil War Leymah Gbowee began to emerge as a national figure in the country, as coordinator of the Liberian Women's Initiative within the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET). In 2002 Leymah had a dream in which God told her, *"Gather the women and pray for peace."*

Gbowee and others involved in WIPNET started going to the mosques on Friday afternoons, to the markets on Saturday mornings, and to the Christian churches on Sundays. They distributed fliers that read: *"We are tired! We are tired of our children being killed! We are tired of being raped! Women, wake up—you have a voice in the peace process!"*

By the summer of 2002 Leymah was the spokeswoman and inspirational leader of the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace. They prayed for peace, using both Muslim and Christian prayers, and began holding daily nonviolent demonstrations and sit-ins, defying Liberia's tyrannical president Charles Taylor. WIPNET's protest activities accelerated to include occupation of a soccer stadium in Monrovia, across from Liberia's capitol.

In June of 2003 Gbowee led a delegation of Liberian women to the neighboring country of Ghana to apply pressure to the warring factions in the Liberian peace-talk process. As the negotiations continued to drag on, Leymah led hundreds of women in a sit-in in the hotel where the peace-talks were going on, literally blocking the entrance until the men negotiating the peace came to an agreement. The lead mediator in the peace-talks declared: *"The peace hall has been seized by General Leymah and her troops."* The civil war ended official on August

18, 2003. Leymah, looking back on the experience, declared: *"What we [women] did marked the beginning of the end."*

For her bold actions in peace-building, Leymah Gbowee (along with President Ellen Sirleaf and a Muslim woman, Tawakkol Karman) was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011. This proud mother of six children continues her work today through the Gbowee Peace Foundation African, which provides educational and leadership development opportunities for women, girls and youth.

Remembering and Responding

- Leymah Gbowee is very clear that her peacebuilding witness grows out of her faith as a Lutheran Christian. In 2009 she declared: *"I didn't get there by myself...or anything I did as an individual, but it was by the grace and mercy of God...He has held my hands. In the most difficult of times, [God] has been there....There's no way that anyone can take this journey as a peacebuilder...without having a sense of faith....As I continue this journey...I remind myself: All that I am, all that I hope to be, is because of God."* **Ask yourself: How does my faith as a Lutheran Christian move me to witness and serve in God's world today?**
- Leymah Gbowee has worked in a male-dominated African culture. She has helped women find and unleash their unique power, sometimes in scandalous ways. For example, she encouraged Liberian women to go on a sex strike until their husbands/partners stepped away from violence. When ordered to disperse her protestors during the hotel sit-in of June 2003, Leymah threatened to disrobe publicly. **Why do you think women like Leymah were able to make such a difference in a country caught up in bloody civil war? How might the bold actions of Leymah and the other women reflect Jesus' words in Matthew 10:16** (see the verse at the beginning of this study)?
- Pursuing justice and building peace are intrinsic to the Christian life. But people of other living faiths share these

convictions. Leymah Gbowee empowered both Christian and Muslim women to join forces for the sake of ending the civil war in Liberia. In Minnesota ELCA folks participate (through our membership in the Minnesota Council of Churches) in the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition (JRLC)—that includes Protestants, Catholics, Muslims and Jews. **Find out more about JRLC at jrlc.org and consider participating in JRLC's annual "Day on the Hill" at the Capitol in St Paul on February 23, 2017.**

- Give thanks to God for Leymah's faith-inspired witness for peace: **"O God, it is your will to hold both heaven and earth in a single peace. Let the design of your great love shine on the waste of our wraths and sorrows, and give peace to your church, peace among nations, peace in our homes, and peace in our hearts; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."** (ELW, p. 76)



Lawrence R. Wohlrabe, Bishop

Northwestern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

This is the second in a series of monthly bishop's studies during 2017 on the theme, *Lutherans Making a World of Difference*. These columns are designed to equip the disciples and leadership groups such as church councils, for faithful and fruitful ministry. Feel free to use each column for personal reflection or group discussion, e.g. church council meeting devotions/discussion.

[1] Sources consulted include *Wikipedia* articles on "Liberia" and "Leymah Gbowee" along with her biographical sketch at https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2011/gbowee-bio.html and an article from *Christianity Today* at <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2012/aprilweb-only/prayer-nobel-peace-prize.html>

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School for Lay Ministry: Creating Worship Vitality In Any Setting

March 4, 2017 - 10 am - 3 pm
Lutheran Social Services Building - Fargo, ND

"What are the essential components that bring life - vitality - to worship? How does this differ based on context, history, and congregation size? What can leaders do to enhance both the meaning and the experience of worship?"

Jay Beech will convene a conversation with participants around these questions. He will report on the early findings of the Study and Enrichment of Worship and Music in Small-Member Congregations currently being conducted by The Center for Worship & Music Studies in six synods of Region 3 - ELCA. The day will also include interviews with leaders from congregations of various sizes in Eastern North Dakota and Northwestern Minnesota Synods that experience vibrant and life-giving worship.

School for Lay Ministry
Creating Worship Vitality
In Any Setting

March 4, 2017
10 am - 3 pm

Register Today



featuring
Jay Beech

Tickets for this event are \$50 and available at: layschooljaybeech.eventbrite.com

2016-17 SEASON Singing a Sacred and Spiritual Story



National Lutheran Choir Comes to Moorhead, MN

Friday, March 17, 2017 - 7:00 p.m.

Trinity Lutheran Church - Moorhead, MN



The National Lutheran Choir presents a concert featuring Bach's Cantata 80, Ein feste Burg (A Mighty Fortress), performed with chamber orchestra, along with works by other early Lutheran composers, including Johann Walther, Heinrich Schütz and Michael Praetorius.

MOORHEAD:

Friday, March 17, 2017 - 7:00pm

Trinity Lutheran Church

(210 7th St S, Moorhead, MN 56560)

Tickets: Pricing varies per location. Call Brown Paper Tickets (800) 838-3006 or order online at NLCA.com.

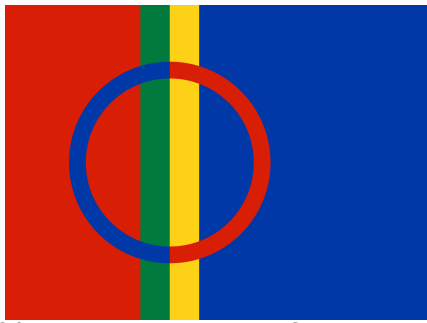
Synod Assembly 2017
June 9-10, 2017



Information soon to come...

2017 Synod Assembly Information

In the next few months, more information will be available regarding the 2017 Synod Assembly.



Happy Sámi National Day!

By Christian 'Asle' Pederson Behrends

Published: February 2, 2017 in *Skogsavis* – Skogfjorden's newsletter

Lihkku Sámi Álbmotbeivviin! Happy Sámi National Day!

Sámi National Day is a holiday celebrating Sámi culture and identity. Observed on February 6th, the day commemorates the first Sámi Congress of 1917, held in Trondheim, Norway, that convened to address common concerns across Sápmi, the Sámi homeland divided by the Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, and Russian nation-states.

First celebrated in 1993, Sámi National Day's 2017 celebration marks the holiday's 24th anniversary and the one hundredth anniversary of the Sámi Congress. Though not recognized as a Public Holiday, it is a national Norwegian flag day when both the Norwegian and the Sami flags are raised together. Likewise, Sámi across the world mark National Day by wearing regional clothing called *gákti*, flying the Sámi flag, and speaking and singing in Sámi languages.



The Sámi are the only recognized indigenous nation of Europe, have unique cultural histories, and command distinct legal protections. Historically, the Sámi have fished, trapped fur, and herded reindeer, the lattermost becoming the best recognized icon of their culture. The Sámi languages - of which Northern (*Davvisámegiella*), Southern (*Åarjelsaemien gïele*), and Lule (*Julevsámegiella*) are the most spoken - are part of the Uralic language family and display linguistic patterns similar to Finnish, Estonian, and other regional languages in Russia. Protected by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Norway, Sweden, and Finland, and the International Labor Organization Convention 169 in Norway, the Sámi have the unique right to 'free, informed, and prior consent' regarding any development affecting their lands, culture, and livelihoods within their own countries.

Implicit in the holiday's name, Sámi National Day is a celebration of indigenous identity and a reminder of nationhood to counter the continued occupation of Sámi lands by the Fennoscandic nation-states. The continued overlapping of these states with Sápmi complicates Sámi self-determination by enforcing laws dictated via arbitrary borders,

fracturing the Sámis' ability to enact policy that works for them. That the Congress of 1917 that inspired Sámi National Day had to cross borders on their lands to convene with their own nation underlines the importance of National Day's intent to overcome international borders separating Sámi. Because the holiday came to be in reaction to these borders, Sámi National Day can be seen as a construction of the colonial nature of Sámi-Nordic/Russian relations and an attempt to assert nationhood outside the parameters of the nation-state.



Sámi usually move their reindeer from Norway over to Sweden for the winter. Every year during the first week of February, many elders lead reindeer caravans through the narrow makeshift alleys of the 412-year-old Jokkmokk market, the largest traditional Sámi festival in the world.

Permanent marketplaces near the Sámi's winter settlements were established by the Swedish crown at the beginning of the 17th century in all the Sámi Lappish territories on both sides of the Gulf of Bothnia. The purpose was to strengthen the state's control of the population in the north as well as to collect taxes, hold legal court and spread the Word of God.

Planning a market in the Lappish territories during the coldest time of the year had several advantages. The Sámi were gathered in their winter settlements in the forest area with winter grazing for their reindeer and the frozen waterways constituted magnificent roads for the merchants, state officials and men of the church.



Reindeer Games

By Jessica 'Dina' Korynta

Published: February 2, 2017 in *Skogsavis*

Christmas may be over but the reindeer games are only just beginning in Norway! With Sami People's Day happening next week, it is also time for the annual Sami Week in Tromsø, a time to celebrate history and heritage through concerts, contests, coffee, and costumes.

There is a lot taking place in Tromsø for Sami Week. From Sami language courses at the library to concerts and films by Sami artists around town, you are sure to experience something new. At the winter market, the *lavvu* are set up along the streets and passersby can shop for Sami handcrafts made from wood, reindeer, and wool or try some Sami



Interior of a Lavvu with display of goods for sale

delicacies such as *bidos* (reindeer meat stew) or dried reindeer meat or heart.

Of course, the most fun may come from watching the competitions taking place around town. The Norwegian lasso-throwing championship occurs during Sami Week in Tromsø and crowds gather to watch as the best of the best compete in women's, men's and junior classes. Lassoing is an art that comes from reindeer husbandry (no cowboys here) and has since become a sport practiced by the Sami Sports Association.

As Sunday approaches, barriers will pop up along Storgate, Tromsø's main street, signaling to you that the time has come for some serious reindeer racing. The twelve fastest reindeer from Norway and Finland (with their drivers behind them on skis), line up at the northern end of the race, ready to leap from their stalls. There is no distinction between male and female drivers, it is all about the reindeer at this event. Looking for even more reindeer racing? Head over to Kautokeino during Easter for the Reindeer Racing World Cup.

This unique event highlights an important part of Norwegian and Nordic culture and history. Sami Week is about fusing modern city life with traditional Sami values. Should you ever find yourself in Tromsø at the beginning of February, this event is something you won't want to miss!



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What is a *Lavvu*?

The Lavvu is a temporary dwelling used by the Sami people of northern Scandinavia. Its simplicity enabled the Sami to move quickly with their semi-domesticated reindeer herds at a moment's notice. This structure enabled the indigenous cultures of the treeless plains of northern Scandinavia and the High Arctic of Eurasia to live in harmony with nature.

Although the Lavvu can be easily confused with the Native American Tipi - it's not a Tipi! The differences between the two structures are reflected in their respective environments and cultures. Being more centered to the ground, the Lavvu is better able to endure the fierce winds of the Scandinavian tundra, thus a more stable structure. Few structures used by indigenous peoples, with the exception of the Inuit (Eskimo) Igloo, are as stable in strong winds.

The Lavvu's centuries old design also reflects the Sami culture as a community. Traveling in small, single family groups, the Lavvu was designed so that even one person could quickly set it up with little effort. The Native Americans who traveled in larger, several family groups had the extra hands to help in the assembly of their Tipi. The Lavvu is also still in use today as a temporary shelter by the Sami reindeer herders of northern Scandinavia and as a year-round dwelling of the Nenets and Khants of the Russian Federation.



Interestingly, there is a company named Northern Lavvu in St. Paul, MN who makes them. Their website says "the people who work, design or mentor the craft of Lavvu making are of Sami ancestry and have experience in living and camping in Lavvus."

The Back Page

Obituary Notice



ur church was saddened to learn this week of the death of one of our most valued members, Someone Else.

Someone's passing created a vacancy that will be difficult to fill.

Else had been with us for many years and for every one of those years, Someone did far more than a normal person's share of the work. Whenever there was a job to do, a class to teach, or a meeting to attend, one name was on everyone's list, "Let Someone Else do it." Whenever leadership was mentioned, this wonderful person was looked to for inspiration as well as results; "Someone Else can work with that group."

It was common knowledge that Someone Else was among the most liberal givers in our church. Whenever there was a financial need, everyone just assumed Someone Else would make up the difference.

Someone Else was a wonderful person; sometimes appearing superhuman. Were the truth known, everybody expected too much of Someone Else. Now Someone Else is gone! We wonder what we are going to do.

Someone Else left a wonderful example to follow, but who is going to follow it? Who is going to do the things Someone Else did?

When you are asked to help this year, remember -- we can't depend on Someone Else anymore.

