



# *St. Paulí Lutheran Church Congregational History and St. Paulí Cemetery Association History*

All church history and photographs can be downloaded from our website.

<https://StPauliCemeterySD.org> Email us:  
[StPauliCemetery@gmail.com](mailto:StPauliCemetery@gmail.com)

*Updated by  
Kathy Jo (Dragsten) Haugan  
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## **St. Pauli Lutheran Congregation History 1881 – 1889**

**1881-  
1882**

The St. Pauli congregation was located where the Northwest corner of Codington County and the Northeast corner of Clark County join Day County. The majority of the settlers were of Norwegian descent.

The first Norwegian pastor to visit the settlement was Reverend Skjorven.

**1883**

Nine men, (Lovering, Stuverud, Markrud, Stromme, Ustrud, two (2) Wibetos and two (2) Aabys) under the guidance of Reverend Nielson organized the St. Pauli Norwegian-Lutheran-Evangelical Congregation on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Andreas Nielson became the first pastor.

During the early years the services were held in family dwellings. The school house by the Ustrud farm was also used for services.

**1886**

Wheatland Ladies Aid (Wheatland Township) was organized with the primary object of raising money for a church building.

**1887**

St. Pauli Ladies Aid was organized.

**1888 –  
1889**

Many meetings were held to settle a bitter controversy regarding where the church should be built. During the summer of 1889 a subscription was taken for a church building. On November 5, 1889, a two thirds majority agreed to construct the church on the site where it stood until 2014. Eleven families to the East and three families to the West withdrew from the church on that day.

# **St. Pauli Lutheran Congregation History**

## **1890 – 1898**

- 1890** St. Pauli was incorporated as an independent congregation on March 13, but on May 20<sup>th</sup> 1890 it decided to join the United Church.
- The church was constructed that summer at a cost of \$1304.65.
- 1892** The new church was struck by lightning and burned to the ground. The services were again held in the school by Ustrud farm. Reverend Nielson contracted a serious illness that later resulted in his death. Reverend Granskau gave the congregation temporary service during Reverend Nielson's illness and after his death.
- 1893** Reverend Sjur Rislov took the call to be the minister.
- 1893-1895** During the dry years, farmers of the community acquired many debts, therefore plans for rebuilding the church were postponed for several years. However, the thoughts of rebuilding were not dead and the Ladies Aid worked steadily towards raising money for a new church.
- 1896** A Young People's Society was organized to help raise money for the church.
- 1898** A subscription was taken to build a new church.

# **St. Pauli Lutheran Congregation History**

## **1900 – 1923**

- 1900** The cornerstone for the new church was laid by the Reverend Joh Granskau. The church was constructed by three congregational members: Lars Hagen, August Faehn, and Halvor Markrud, with the assistance of other members.
- The partially furnished church cost \$2105.50. Of this sum the St. Pauli Ladies Aid furnished \$250.00, the Wheatland Ladies Aid \$222.50 and the Young Peoples Society \$200.00 and an organ.
- 1901** Reverend Sjur Rislov resigned as pastor.
- 1902** Reverend John Madsen took over the call. A new parsonage was built at the cost of \$2567.82 and St Pauli paid \$922.61.
- 1904** The congregation societies worked continuously to furnish the church, which provided a baptismal font, alter, pulpit, and cluster lamps. The church bell was dedicated by the president and Reverend T.H. Dahl. From that time on, the congregation developed more activity in church work outside the congregation. In certain years, the contributions to these activities exceeded the expenses within the congregation.
- 1912** Reverend Madsen resigned. Reverend J.J. Haanstad assumed the call. He served as congregation pastor until his death in 1923.
- 1923** Reverend E. Jorgenson served as temporary pastor.



# **St. Pauli Lutheran Congregation History**

## **1924 – 1942**

- 1924** Reverend Vold was installed as pastor. The Young Peoples Society was reorganized as the St. Pauli Luther League on October 5.
- 1927** The two Ladies Aids were combined into one society under the name of St. Pauli Ladies Aid. The basement was built under the church at a cost of \$2191.60. The Ladies provided \$1328.00. In later years the Luther League installed Delco Lights and a piano.
- 1930** Reverend J. Vold resigned. Reverend CK Malmin was called in his place and was installed in August.
- 1936** Reverend CK Malmin resigned on October 21. Reverend L.J. Odland served temporarily.
- 1937** Reverend A.H. Holm was installed on October 24.
- 1941** Reverend A.H. Holm resigned in November. Reverend Hofstad served temporarily.
- The regular services and other church work were carried out exclusively in the Norwegian language. However, English gradually came into use and for a time, one half of the regular services were in English. The same year, the Norwegian services were discontinued.
- 1942** Reverend Harold Engh was installed as pastor in August.

# **St. Pauli Lutheran Congregation History**

## **1944 – 1976**

- 1944** A tornado swept through Florence on June 17, destroying the parish parsonage and all of the ministerial records. A new parsonage was purchased on June 19, 1944.
- 1949** The interior of the church was re-done. Pastor Engh and Horace Ustrud drew the plans and the men of the congregation helped with the work.
- 1950** Members discontinued paying monthly dues and relied on free will offerings.
- 1952** Reverend Engh resigned on October 5. Services were conducted by students from the St. Paul Seminary and neighboring pastors.
- 1953** Reverend Kenneth Strangeland was installed on July 26.
- 1953 - 1976** Five Pastors served the church: Christianson, Bruchlacher, Swenson, Nilson, and Doering. Time passed, small farms disappeared, and young people moved away, membership was elderly and few.
- 1976** The congregation dissolved. A Cemetery Association was formed to insure upkeep of the grounds. An annual meeting is held each Saturday before Memorial Day.

# St. Pauli Lutheran Cemetery Association History

## 1991 – 2017

- 1991** It was determined that the church steeple could no longer be kept structurally safe without extensive repair. The Cemetery Association voted to remove the steeple and place on a mount as it now stands. Cost was approximately \$10,000.
- 2006** The church was painted by over and above contributions from 37 members of the Cemetery Association; cost was approximately \$5000. No cemetery association funds were used.
- 2008** The last service was held.
- 2010** The church basement started to crumble.
- 2013** The church donated items from inside the church and a silent auction was held in May.
- 2014** The last Cemetery Association meeting was held at the church in May. The St. Pauli Church was moved from this site to Webster, South Dakota on November 13. The church steeple will remain on the current site.
- 2017** The St. Pauli Cemetery Association Board had the steeple and fence painted. The association approved the creation of a website, <https://stpaulicemeterysd.org>. An email address was created for the St. Pauli Cemetery Association (StPauliCemetery@gmail.com). Kathy Jo (Dragsten)Haugan, Out Source Projects, Inc. was hired for the project.
- The steeple and railing was repainted by Peder David Haugan.

# St. Pauli Lutheran Cemetery Association History

## 2018 – 2020

**2018** Memorial Garden project began with cornerstones placed where the church once stood.

The website was completed.

**2019** Work on the Memorial Garden continued.

**2020** The Memorial Garden was completed with plants, cross, flag, cornerstones, benches and plaques. Our annual meeting was held outside at the cemetery.

The association voted to remove the steeple after receiving estimates to repair it. An outdoor structure was unanimously approved.

Bylaws were updated by: Wayne Kinstad, Kathy Jo (Dragsten) Haugan and Heidi Inga (Dragsten) Barcia. The association approved the bylaws at the May 2021 meeting.

Steeple removal was completed by Nathan Meland, Merlin Hagen, Bill Hagen and Bryan Nelson in December. The bell will remain on site.

An outdoor structure will be built to house the bell and additional memorabilia.

The outhouse was repaired by Kornel Wibeto and painted by Ardis Dragsten and daughters Heidi Barcia and Kathy Haugan.

# St. Pauli Lutheran Cemetery Association History

## 2021

**2021**

The outdoor structure was completed by Nathan (Design & Leadership), Bill Hagen, Merlin Hagen & Mark Meland.

Metal photos hung in the open air structure, business cards and history book were donated by Elroy (Decd 2018) & Ardis Dragsten and Family.

The wooden cross was created, built and donated by Bryan Nelson.

Cemetery map was re-created by Bryan and Ben Nelson and is displayed in the structure. Given in memory of Reverend Anders Nielson and Melvin and Mabelle Nelson.

Wayne Kinstad and family placed the light on the cross.

The Grody family donated the guest registry.

Thank you to our brothers and sisters in Christ who donated to this project financially.

The bylaws were updated by a committee of Kathy (Dragsten) Haugan, David Haugan, Wayne Kinstad and Heidi (Dragsten) Barcia.

**2022**

There was a storm that knocked down trees and fencing. James and Susan Thorson, Nathan Meland, Bill Hagen, Merlin Hagen, Ben Nelson and Bryan Nelson completed the after storm clean up.

**2023**

The spire (Steeple Ornament) has been refurbished and placed to the East of the St. Pauli Memorial Shelter by Nathan Meland.

The St. Pauli Road sign was replaced with a new sign by Peder Haugan and Kathy Jo (Dragsten) Haugan.

On July 8, 2023 the following people got together for a St. Pauli Cemetery work day: Bryan Nelson, Ben Nelson, Bill Hagen, James Hagen, Connie Kinstad, Wayne Kinstad, Brice Hamburg, Nathan Meland, Mark Meland, Luke Meland, Merlin Hagen, Kornel Wibeto, Kathy Haugan, and Ardis Dragsten. The following items were completed:

- Headstones were leveled (There are more head stones that need to be leveled)
- Lichons were removed from the headstones
- Tree stumps were removed
- New fencing was put in place with a large gate to make it easier to enter the cemetery with machinery.

**2024**

The outhouse on the cemetery grounds was scraped and repainted by Ardis Dragsten, Heidi (Dragsten) Barcia, Kathy Jo (Dragsten) Haugan, Merlin Hagen, and Bryce Crawford.

# St. Pauli Lutheran Cemetery Association History

## 2022

**2022**

The church replica was mounted in the outdoor chapel. The replica was built by Olaf Fiksdahl with an estimated construction date in the early 1960's. The church is 15 inches wide, 3 feet long, and 2.5 feet high. The replica was stored in the bell tower (before the tower was removed from the church) after Olaf's death. Once the bell tower was removed from the church, Toby Fehn stored the replica. It was then stored by Merlin Hagen and most recently by Nathan Meland. James Thorson cleaned, painted and restored the replica. James retrieved wood from the steeple to make the table stand to set the model on.

A Veteran memorial created by James Thorson to look like one of the church windows with wood from the steeple.

## Baptisms June 1932 - November 1947



## **August 7, 1887**

Reverend Andreas Nielson presided over the first confirmation at St. Pauli.

The twelve members of the confirmation class were:

- Tm. Hagen
- Mrs. Fredrick Faehn
- Anna Josephine Knudson
- Susan Bergen
- Bertha Fjelstad
- Anton Urevig
- Oscar Hogstad
- Minnie Jameson
- Mrs. Inga Sakariason
- Carrie Loveng
- Andrew Hegg
- Tom Bergen

# **St. Pauli Lutheran Congregation**

## **Ladies Aid Beginning History**

### **1886**

**1886**

In March, a small earnest group of women met at the Mads Fiksdal home to discuss starting a Ladies Aid. The purpose of the new "aid" was to help build and furnish the church.

#### **The Wheatland Ladies Aid**

Ingeranna Fiksdal  
Guri Langeland  
Ingeberg Stormo  
Margrethe Fosse  
Mrs. Langeland (President)

Their earliest method of securing money was by making garments. The women were busy sewing or knitting at each meeting. Goods were purchased by the yard. Garments were cut out and each one took material home to sew. Every summer or fall a bazaar was held and the money turned over to the church.

The ladies came to the meetings by whatever means they could, lumber wagon, even drawn by oxen was not an uncommon sight. If they were within three to four miles, they walked. As they walked, they continued to knit, so no time was wasted.

# St. Pauli Lutheran Congregation

## Ladies Aid Beginning History

### 1887

**1887**

At the *Syttende Mai* Festival, held on May 17, at the Ustrud School, Pastor Nielson suggested that the Ladies from South of the church start another "Aid" as the distance between those up North and those on the South was too great for them to get together (considering the means of transportation in those days).

A group of women met at the Halvor Okland home on June 2.

#### **St. Pauli Ladies Aid Charter Members**

Mrs. Hans Wibeto  
Mrs. E.T. Hegna  
Mrs. Andreas Hogstad  
Mrs. Hans Ustrud  
Mrs. Andreas Kinstad  
Mrs. Andreas Stuverud  
Mrs. Anton Haugen  
Mrs. Halvor Okland  
Mrs. Okland (President)