



LIVING GOD'S LOVE

YESTERDAY, TODAY & TOMORROW

PASTOR BIO: RICHARD REHFELDT



In the fall of 1960, Pastor Richard Rehfeldt entered the Wartburg Seminary and served as a student minister at Yosemite National Park. This opened his avenue to doing Pastoral Clinical Training at Boston City Hospital and afterwards serving a year as an intern at Bethany Lutheran Church in Brooklyn, NY which led him to receive his Bachelor of Divinity in 1964. His educational achievements did not only start there. He graduated with a BS in education from the University of Wisconsin in 1960, where he was also born and raised.

He answered his call to St. Paul's Lutheran Church in 1964 to serve as an associate pastor after his graduation where he moved with his wife, Cathy, to Waverly. This is where his son and daughter were born. He continued to engage in academia by receiving his Master of Sacred Theology from Wartburg Seminary in 1969 during his time off and later received his PhD from the University of St. Andrews in Scotland in 1975.

During his doctorate education, Pastor Rehfeldt accepted a call to serve Windsor Heights Lutheran Church in Des Moines. His involvement in the church led to him and his wife traveling to Jerusalem where he studied at the Tantur Ecumenical Institute.

His excursions include joining a professor of biblical geography at the University of Jerusalem where he and his daughter explored the "unseen Israel." He was with Windsor Heights Lutheran Church until 2005, where he also coordinated the monthly Central Iowa Pastors' Forum for 28 years.

Upon his retirement, he and his wife moved to Rochester, Minnesota. This is where he stepped up to serve as Adjunct Professor at Luther Seminary in St. Paul.

Pastor Rehfeldt has attended international gatherings of "the crib" societies in Augsburg, Germany, Pamplona and others with his wife by being members of "Friends of the Creche."



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PASTOR BIO: MICHAEL L. BURK



The Rev. Michael L. Burk is a well recognized pastor who has served on the boards of Wartburg College, Grand View University, Luther College, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Lutheran Services in Iowa, and the hospitals of UnityPoint Health - Des Moines.

His academic achievements were brought to life by being a graduate of Wartburg College, Wartburg Theological Seminary and the University of Iowa.

This led to Dr. Burk being labeled the “Albert E. Stone Distinguished Alumnus in American Studies” by the University of Iowa in 2001.

Wartburg Theological Seminary recognized and granted him an honorary Doctor of Divinity Degree.

“In recognition of his evangelical leadership, reflected in the development of the worship resource, Evangelical Lutheran Worship, and in his continuing ministry on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,”

His contributions as a bishop for the ELCA do not go unnoticed as he has immensely contributed to the ELCA’S advocacy efforts on matters related to hunger and poverty. His role as the Vice Chair of ELCA Conference of Bishops has also presented him the opportunity to be a speaker on matters related to worship and the culture of the church.

Pastor Burk has retired and relocated to Edina, Minnesota with his wife, Diane, to be near their three children and their families.

As St. Paul’s Lutheran Church & School celebrates 150 years of ministry in Waverly, Iowa, former pastors will be welcomed to preach. Pastor Burk will serve as the guest preacher for March, specifically for the weekend of March 12 and 13.



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PASTOR BIO: LARRY TRACHTE



In the spring of 1970, Pastor Larry Trachte received a call to St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Waverly. He joined Pastor Durwood Buchheim and Pastor George Hanusa in a team ministry. During his time at St. Paul's, his area of focus was on youth and education. He also shared preaching/teaching duties. Pastor Trachte revised the confirmation program to include "service modules," such as "Adopt-a-Grandparent" program, where students regularly visited St. Paul's shut-ins and nursing home residents. Senior high youth met Sunday nights and made monthly visits to the Bremer County Home. Highlights of those years included a retreat ministry with youth and confirmands to EWALU, Luther Village, Canada and national youth conventions. He also began a "Young Couples Club" and organized a family camp retreat to Luther Village during his years at St. Paul's.

Pastor Trachte had "imported" a Phillipus Gemeinde elderly visitation program when he arrived at St. Paul's, and the pastors began to make "birthday calls" on members of the congregation on their 65th birthday (with complimentary flowers from Eckers!) and then yearly after 70.

"I'm pleased that fifty years later this contact continues as a lay ministry," Trachte said.

Pastor Trachte enjoyed his contact with St. Paul's Lutheran School, loved doing children's sermons for school worship, and was a champion "kick ball" player when he could join the school children for recess. He also began teaching German to St. Paul's third through sixth graders twice a week and worked with the ELCA's Dr. Don Vetter, with continuing theological education/dialogue with teachers of St. Paul's Lutheran School.

"Both of our children, Aaron (now a cardio-thoracic surgeon in Lawton, Oklahoma), and Joy (now a Professor of mathematics at Wartburg) benefited from a St. Paul's Lutheran School education," said Trachte. "We are blessed with six multi-talented grandchildren, and Joy and Joel's children are now the second generation to attend St. Paul's Lutheran School."

After his retirement from Wartburg in 2009, he began to serve as a "supply pastor" to the many congregations in Northeast Iowa who needed one. He remained active at St. Paul's leading a grief support group and being one of St. Paul's the "preaching pastors."

"I have enjoyed and appreciated the chance to return to the pulpit where I first began my ordained ministry," said Trachte. "The call to ministry remains strong for me, though the desire is now tempered by age and health issues (for both Lois and me). But I remain grateful to God and St. Paul's for half a century of blessings shared in this special community."