

CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE



Congregation Name and Location

Name St. John's Lutheran Church and St. Paul Lutheran Church

Mailing address St. John's: PO Box 518 St. Paul: PO Box 557

City, State, Zip St. John's: Goliad, TX 77963 St. Paul: Runge, TX 78151

Telephone St. J: 361-645-3330 St P: 361-571-0481 Fax _____

Email address St. John's: stjohngoliad@gmail.com St. Paul: n/a

Congregation website St. John's: stjohngoliad.org St. Paul: stpaulrunge.org

Congregation's Social Media Links St. John's: <https://www.facebook.com/stjohngoliad/> St. Paul: n/a

Seeking Full-time pastor Part-time pastor Either full-time or part-time

Call will be for Solo pastor Senior pastor Associate pastor

Current denominational affiliation:

NALC LCMC Other: _____

Current NALC Mission District Southwest Texas

Congregational President or Vice President

Name St. John's: Mark Stroman / St. Paul: Thomas Natho Mailing Title Goliad President / Runge President
address P.O Box 389 / 3717 S FM 81

City Goliad / Runge State/Province TX / TX Zip/Postal Code 77963 / 78151

Mark S. Phone 254-644-5606 Thomas N. Phone 361-571-0481

Email address Mark S: mark.stroman@gmail.com Thomas N: tnatho@yahoo.com

Call Committee Chair

Name Heather Roeske

Mailing address 1373 N. San Patricio St.

City Goliad State/Province TX Zip/Postal Code 77963

Home phone _____ Cell phone 956-655-1950

Email address momroeske@yahoo.com

Congregational Demographics

Number of **paid** staff (full- or part-time): Clergy 1 Lay professionals Secretarial 1

Average worship attendance St. J: 62 / St. P: 41 Average Sunday school attendance St. J: 16 / St. P: 8

Describe the type of community in which your congregation is located (is it small town, small city, suburban, large city, farming, industrial, festivals, schools, industries, etc.).

Our parish includes two churches, St. John's Lutheran Church in Goliad, TX and St. Paul Lutheran Church in Runge, TX. The demographics and makeup of these two small communities are similar, both being considered rural and largely agricultural. Goliad, which is where the parish's parsonage is located, is the larger community, with a population inside the city limits of about 1,900 to Runge's 1,000.

Goliad is one of the oldest municipalities in Texas. Beautifully historic, Goliad is located at the crossroads of US Hwy 59 and US Hwy 183. Its an easy 1-hour drive to Corpus Christi with its beautiful beaches for swimming, sunbathing, and fishing, and an hour and a half to San Antonio, Austin, and Houston for everything else! Full of small-town charm, but close to the city life, Goliad has a lot to offer residents and visitors alike.

The town has ample shopping, including a small grocery store, a dollar store, hardware stores, an auto parts store, and a Tractor Supply Company. Tucked away on the historic downtown square are various gift shops, boutiques, antique stores, and a pharmacy. There are multiple options for dining out including three fast food restaurants, a sandwich shop known for its jalapeno cheese soup, a café, four Mexican food restaurants, and even a great little spot to get pizza and wings.

Students attend Goliad ISD which has three campuses. Headstart, Pre-K, and Kindergarten-5th Grade are housed on the Elementary School campus, grades 6-8 are located at the Middle School, and grades 9-12 are on the High School campus. Children receive personalized attention with small classes and highly engaged teachers. The residents of Goliad County are invested in the future of their schools and recently voted to approve a Bond to improve and expand the buildings and campuses for its students.

Should the need arise, the citizens of Goliad County are served by a proactive Sheriff's Office with professional and experienced deputies and constables, a well-staffed EMS Department, and an active Volunteer Fire Department. The town also has a medical and dental practice as well as a veterinarian for your four-legged family members.

Goliad has many historical and natural attractions including:

- **Goliad State Park** - The Goliad State Park complex is located on the San Antonio River and contains a restoration of the Spanish Colonial era Mission of Nuestra Senora del Espiritu Santo de Zuniga. The park is a place for activities that include camping, picnicking, hiking, fishing, nature and historical studies.
- **Presidio La Bahia** - Established at its present location in 1749, Presidio La Bahia is the only fully restored Spanish presidio West of the Mississippi River. Presidio La Bahia served as a key military post for nearly a century and is best known for the role it played in the Texian War for Independence.
- **Historic Downtown District** - The historic district around and including the Courthouse was designated in the National Register in 1976. Over forty buildings are in the nine-block historic district with many built between 1890 and 1910. It is interesting to note that three streets in this district are interrupted by the presence of great Live Oak trees that were kept in the streets. Stories were that the ladies of Goliad refused to allow the trees to be cut down when the streets were being paved and even chained themselves to those trees to prevent anyone cutting them down.
- **Coletto Creek Park & Reservoir** - The Coletto Creek Park and Reservoir is a 190-acre outdoor recreation area offering a variety of family-friendly opportunities including camping, group pavilions, a large picnic area, 200' lighted fishing pier, 1 mile nature trail, and playgrounds. The 3,100-acre reservoir offers year-round opportunities for fishing, boating, swimming, kayaking, and more.

Goliad is an active community, bringing locals and visitors together for numerous events and festivals including:

- **Goliad Market Days** – Held the second Saturday of each month, Goliad Market Days is an open-air market held downtown around the beautiful courthouse lawn. Vendors line the streets and sidewalks with shopping reminiscent of the trade days from the 1700's.
- **Christmas in Goliad** – A tradition that has endured more than 40 years, Christmas in Goliad is held the first weekend in December and features live entertainment, great food, a lighted parade, a large vendor market, and the arrival of Santa Claus riding on a longhorn steer.
- **Historic Reenactments** – Reenactors and living historians from across Texas regularly gather at Presidio La Bahia to reenact battles, skirmishes, and historic events that occurred in and around the stone walls of the Presidio.

If this isn't enough, a quick 30-minute drive will get you to even more options in the nearby city of Victoria which boasts a mall, movie theater, large chain stores, hospitals, a community college, a university campus, and much more.

Runge is located in neighboring Karnes County and began as a railroad settlement in 1887. By 1890 Runge had grown significantly. Among its businesses were a mercantile store, a lumberyard, a livery, a depot, a drugstore, a sheet-metal works, a barbershop, a saloon, a mill, and a gin.

Though not as large as it was during its heyday, Runge is still an active community. Businesses in town include a local CPA, a veterinarian, a dollar store, gas station, and a top-notch BBQ joint that draws visitors from near and far. Surrounded by a gently rolling landscape, Runge is a quiet bedroom community known for its friendly and welcoming atmosphere.

Visitors to Runge are encouraged to take a tour of the Runge Museum where they will learn more about the history of this quaint town. Runge has also recently begun hosting their own monthly Market Days event, drawing various vendors from neighboring communities.

Runge ISD has two campuses, the Elementary campus for students grades PK-6 and the High School Campus for grades 7-12. Students at Runge ISD are excelling academically. In a recent press release, Runge ISD shared: "In an unprecedented achievement for Runge High School, the Class of 2024 has set a new standard for academic excellence and college readiness. An impressive 83% of students have passed one or more sections of the Texas Success Initiative Assessment 2 (TSIA2), marking them eligible for college-level courses. This landmark accomplishment reflects the strategic initiatives and collaborative efforts of Runge Independent School District to elevate the quality of education and student success rates."

Together, these two towns make up the communities represented by St. John's Lutheran Church and St. Paul Lutheran Church.

Describe the congregation's ethnic composition and age distribution.

The congregations at St. John's and St. Paul have a very similar ethnic composition and age distribution. Both are primarily Anglo, with some Hispanic membership. And both have a mix of ages between 1 to nearly 100, with a slightly larger saturation of individuals ages 50 and above.

Both Goliad and Runge have a high Hispanic population, our previous pastor was fluent in Spanish which was helpful for outreach efforts in both communities.

Does the congregation have a clear vision for mission — a clear and shared understanding of where God is leading you? If so, be as descriptive as possible.

Our parish's joint mission statement: Our mission is to be a Christ centered Congregation that proclaims God's loving grace through Word and Sacrament, empowers people to worship regularly, give generously, live responsibly, and faithfully witness in the community.

What are the primary goals of your congregation?

Both congregations agree that our primary goals are to spread the word of Jesus Christ throughout our two communities, to grow spiritually while building active and effective Lay Leaders, to increase fellowship opportunities within and between both congregations, and to grow the membership of both congregations.

Describe your congregation's worship practice (liturgy, hymns, vestments, music, hymnals, and frequency of Holy Communion).

The congregations at St. John's and St. Paul have very similar worship practices. Our Worship services follow the traditional Lutheran liturgy. Holy Communion is held on the first, third, and fifth Sundays, utilizing Now the Feast and Celebration by Marty Haugen. We have a mix of traditional hymns from the LBW with a sprinkling of more contemporary ones found in With One Voice. Volunteers, both young and old, assist with Worship as lectors, ushers, communion assistants, and acolytes.

During the season of Lent, the congregations hold midweek services that culminate with Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services during Holy Week. Additional special services include a Christmas Eve Candlelight service and a joint Polka Sunday Service that features a traditional German Polka band playing festive hymns to polka tunes, followed by a potluck for all to share. The polka service is well-loved and draws a crowd every year.

The distance between our two churches is 27 miles, an approximately 30 min drive. In Runge, Sunday morning Worship begins at 8:30 a.m. and is followed by Sunday School at 9:45 a.m. In Goliad, Sunday School begins at 9:15 a.m., followed by Worship at 10:30 a.m.

We have been without a full-time pastor since the beginning of the year. During this time, a number of dedicated individuals from both congregations have stepped up, joyfully filling the gap as lay leaders. They have taken on leadership roles in organizing and leading Worship services, teaching Confirmation classes, and facilitating small group Bible studies. Their commitment and enthusiasm have been invaluable in maintaining the spiritual life and continuity of our church community. We hope our new Pastor will continue to grow and nurture these volunteers providing guidance and support to further deepen their involvement.

Describe your congregation's Christian education ministry.

St. John's Lutheran Church in Goliad holds Sunday School every Sunday during the school year for children ages 3 to 5th grade. Children gather in the Sanctuary for an opening message and then they head to the classrooms for age-specific activities, crafts, and lessons. We are currently using Group's Dig In curriculum which allows us the flexibility to craft the lessons for a mixed-age group or for age-graded groups, depending on how many children we have each week. The average number of children attending currently is around 4, but this number was as high as 12 just two years ago.

Adult Bible study is also held during the Sunday School hour. Around 12-14 members attend this class each week. The study is usually led by our Council President, but others step in if he has to be away. We host VBS week every summer where an average of 30 children from the church and community are in attendance. Volunteers, parents, and children come together each morning to learn about Jesus through lessons, activities, crafts and more. Thanks to a couple of very talented and dedicated volunteers, we are known for going "all out" with our decorations, each year members and visitors are wowed by their creativity and commitment to the theme.

At St. Paul Lutheran Church in Runge the primary and elementary school students meet after the worship service for Sunday school. Our church is blessed with two sweet girls and six energetic boys who attend Sunday school and church services almost every Sunday. We are using Enduring Faith Bible Curriculum which is a three-year study of the Bible. We also read Egermeier's Bible Story Book when the stories apply to our lessons.

The adult Sunday school class that had been meeting for over 30 years has not met since the pandemic began as many had gotten older and not able to attend and others now are enjoying more fellowship time after Worship. Some miss Sunday School, so we have talked of getting it started again.

Vacation Bible School is always a fun and exciting week at St. Paul. When we were affiliated with the our VBS was always at the nearby church that we partnered with for a pastor. In 2010 the congregation decided to begin hosting VBS. Since we only had a few young families in our church at the time, many of the older generation decided to invite their grandchildren to come spend a week with them and attend our “new” VBS.

Over the years we have grown to have about 35 children attending each summer. Many of the visiting grandchildren are now in college, but a favorite topic of conversation when they get together is how much fun they had at VBS and staying with their grandparents for a week all together.

Describe the congregation’s current activities for mission and outreach.

St. John’s Lutheran Church commits annual benevolence to the NALC and local outreach organizations including Crosstrails Ministry, the local Ministerial Alliance, Goliad County Outreach, Samaritan’s Purse, and our local Habitat for Humanity.

The Women of St. John’s provide personal kits, school kits, health kits, and quilts for the NALC Disaster Warehouse. The Women’s Circles also host a birthday party at the local nursing home, providing goodies and bingo prizes for the residents to enjoy, deliver cookies to the school campuses in honor of Teacher Appreciation Week, and provide Christmas Cheer Bags to the nursing home residents.

Our men have an active outreach as well, hosting a monthly Men’s Breakfast the first Monday of every month. This event is open to all men in the community and has an attendance of anywhere between 12 and 30. The men of St. John come together to cook a delicious breakfast of eggs, sausage, bacon, biscuits, and gravy and welcome guests and visitors to join for a meal followed by a devotion and prayer time, feeding both the body and the soul.

The congregation also comes together on Mother’s Day to host a BBQ fundraiser. It’s all hands on deck in order to pull off this event, but everyone comes together with cheerful hearts and helpful hands to get all 300 chicken halves cooked, plated, and out the door. The community looks forward to this annual tradition, and we regularly sell out in a short time.

St. Paul Lutheran Church commits annual benevolence to the NALC and local outreach organizations.

St. Paul has an active Sewing Circle who meet twice a month in our former Parsonage building to work on their beautiful quilts. These quilts are a true labor of love and are donated to individuals in need, including NALC Disaster Relief or anyone in the community who might need comfort due to grief, loss, or illness. On the last Sunday of each month, a drawing is held after Worship to give away a quilt to an individual in attendance. Everyone puts their name in the ‘bucket’ each Sunday to be entered in the drawing. It’s a fun addition to our service and people really love it.

The congregation hosts an annual Community Meal, inviting the entire community to join them, and a Senior Class Party for the entire High School senior class, the members and students both look forward to this event every year!

Before the pandemic hit, St. Paul held a community wide Third Thursday Fellowship each month, inviting all senior citizens from the churches and the Runge community for lunch and fellowship. The event grew from 10 or so people to as many as 30 attending. Each month the theme would change, some of the favorites were our January rodeo and November Thanksgiving. We also invited members of the community to bring an informational presentation, such as a local nurse bringing wellness information or a group of master gardeners speaking about container gardening. Each gathering concluded with a meal, followed by visiting or playing bingo or dominoes. It did help that our previous pastor was fluent in Spanish as our small town of Runge citizens is more than 50% Hispanic.

Unfortunately, the Third Thursday Fellowships were halted during the pandemic. Several people have expressed a desire to see this program start back up again, and in March our first step is to have a free meal for senior citizens. We are planning to prepare 200 to 250 plates of roast beef and gravy, mashed potatoes, green beans, and homemade cookies and are excited to begin this outreach service again.

The NALC is committed to moving away from an institutional understanding of the Church, to the biblical commission to be a community of followers of Jesus who focus on being disciples and making disciples. Which best describes your congregation's understanding of this movement? [Type an X by the appropriate response]

- Totally unaware
- Have heard about it
- Have been involved personally
- Some in the congregation are involved, some aren't
- Congregation understands, is on-board and involved

List the *Top Five Things* your congregation hopes for in its next Pastor

1. Biblical Guide – providing Biblically sound teaching and opportunities for Bible study to help us grow spiritually and equip us to become Godly disciples and effective Lay Leaders.
2. Open and Transparent – an approachable leader who keeps some regular office hours.
3. Mission-Minded – ready to participate in current outreach activities and implement additional ones to help us increase in our outreach to others, growing our ministry to youth and families and increasing our membership and regular attendance.
4. Patient Communicator – slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love; able to communicate with various types of personalities with ease, willing to bend when appropriate and confident to stand firm, with grace, when necessary.
5. Compassionate Minister – visiting the sick and shut-ins, open and available to minister to individuals in their time of need.

What were the three most significant events in your congregation's history? Provide the years in which these events happened and why they are important to your congregation.

St. John's Lutheran Church was founded in 1906 by German settlers, with services being held in both German and English. While many fascinating historical events have occurred in the past 100+ years, these are some of the more significant, recent events:

1. **1946 – Church building moved to current location.** “Have you ever looked out into the distance and above the trees and roof-tops have seen the upper portion of a church quietly travelling around the county?”, reads a newspaper article from the Goliad Advance Guard in 1947. Accompanying photos show that this was indeed, quite a scene.
2. **2011-2012 – Departure from the ELCA and cooperative agreement with St. Paul Lutheran Church in Runge.** In 2011, St. John's began the process of severing ties with the ELCA. The congregation was blessed to have faithful supply pastors during this time of transition. In May of 2012, we entered into a partnership with St. Paul Lutheran Church in Runge, together agreeing to extend a call to our first NALC pastor, who accepted the call, coming to Texas to serve both congregations.
3. **2020 – The Pandemic.** The COVID pandemic put a halt to many things, businesses were closed and church services were stopped. Initially, St. John's followed suit, cancelling services, but even then, small groups such as the Adult Sunday class, continued meeting in member homes. After two weeks of no services, our Pastor and Council decided to resume Worship. Services were conducted in the

parking lot with members 'tuning in' on their radios, and Holy Communion provided in a drive-thru line. By that summer, we began holding Worship in person again, with social distancing protocols in place.

St. Paul Lutheran Church was formed in 1896 when a group of predominantly German settlers met with Pastor Carl Frieling to organize the church, draw up a constitution, and chart a course to minister to the religious needs of the community. As with St. John's, St. Paul has a rich history that is difficult to consolidate, but below are some of the more significant or recent events:

1. **1914 – First Sanctuary is built.** In 1914, the members of St. Paul, led by the Ladies' Aid, pooled their resources and were able to build their first sanctuary. The total cost of the building was \$1,500, which was a tidy sum for that time. But from the beginning, St. Paul, along with other churches in the area, has been a steady influence on this community.
2. **2011-2012 – Departure from the ELCA and cooperative agreement with St. John's Lutheran Church in Goliad.** St. Paul voted to leave the ELCA in 2011. The congregation was blessed to have faithful supply pastors during this time of transition. In May of 2012, we entered into a partnership with St. John's Lutheran Church in Goliad, together agreeing to extend a call to our first NALC pastor, who accepted the call, coming to Texas to serve both congregations.
3. **2020 – The Pandemic.** The COVID pandemic put a halt to many things, businesses were closed and church services were stopped. On April 12, 2020, Easter Worship was held in the church parking lot. Attendees remained in their cars and the service was broadcast through a PA speaker. Pastor and the communion assistants served Holy Communion by walking to each vehicle. In May of 2020 we began holding Worship in the church Sanctuary, with social distancing and masks.

Has your congregation participated in the Congregational Workshop Preparatory to the Call Process? [Type an X by the appropriate response]

Yes No

What were the three most significant results of the workshop?

1. Our two congregations are more similar than we initially thought.
2. We have a desire for more Biblical training and more opportunities to serve.
3. We are ready for change – yet we struggle with change.

Describe the nature and extent of any significant current or recent conflict in the congregation. Is this conflict resolved, or ongoing? If resolved, how was it resolved?

Both St. John's and St. Paul have experienced minor conflict here and there, but, as discussed at the Congregational Workshop, we have been able to work through them.

The most difficult period for either congregation was the time of deciding and voting to join the NALC in 2011-2012. The process of making a decision of this magnitude could not come without conflict, and some members did decide to leave both congregations. Thankfully, this decision is what led us to join our two congregations in partnership, and we are now both much stronger because of it.

How does your congregation handle conflict/tension? Which of the following do you think best describes your congregation? [Type an X by the appropriate response]

- As a church, we respect and listen to each other and work things through without generating divisiveness.
- As a church, we try to respect and listen to each other, but it is not uncommon for differences of opinion to be a problem and for some people to choose sides. Some have left our church because of conflict.

- Conflict hurts our sense of unity, but we tend not to talk about it.
- Painful experiences with conflict has been present, but it has been worked through, and we have learned from the experience.
- We have had some painful experiences with conflict, and they linger in the background.
- Open conflict is present, and we need a minister who can help us deal with it.
- Other (describe)..... As a church we try to respect and listen to each other, but differences of opinion do occur, and we are able to work through them.

Describe the nature of the relationship between your last pastor and the congregation? (positive? struggling? cooperative? tense?)

Our last pastor answered the call to come to serve our congregations in 2012, just after we joined the NALC and entered into our partnership. He and his wife brought stability and unity to both churches. Under his leadership, both congregations saw an increase in activities and membership, however, the pandemic slowed many things down and it has been difficult to regain that momentum. In December of 2023, he announced his retirement.

How did your council/congregational leaders work together with your last pastor? [Type an X by the appropriate response]

- Leadership is shared, with shared decision-making
- Pastor makes important decisions
- Council makes decisions with pastoral input
- Council makes decisions without pastoral input

Is your pastor a member of council with: [Type an X by the appropriate response(s)]

Voice Vote - Voice plus Tie-breaking Vote if necessary

Congregational finances

St. John's Lutheran Church – Goliad:

Total budget for last fiscal year: \$ 221,585

Benevolence to the North American Lutheran Church: \$ 5,500

Other benevolence: \$ 19,750

Total debt of the congregation: \$ 0

Total savings, reserves, and endowments: \$ 270,000

St. Paul Lutheran Church – Runge:

Total budget for last fiscal year: \$ 90,525

Benevolence to the North American Lutheran Church: \$ 7,786

Other benevolence: \$ 4,500

Total debt of the congregation: \$ 0

Total savings, reserves, and endowments: \$ 514,000

2024 Budgeted Salary and Compensation

Total Compensation (base salary & benefits): \$83,700

Compensation Breakdown:

Base Salary: \$ 59,000

Parsonage available YES – See Below

Social security offset: \$ 4,000

Pension: \$ 7,200

Health Insurance: \$ 13,500

Vacation: 2 weeks

Continuing education (time/funding): \$500

Travel reimbursement: St. John's - \$1,500 St. Paul - \$3,000

Other: Additional benefits include negotiable moving expenses and the 3Bd/2Ba parsonage with paid utilities.

Parsonage

The 3BR/2BA Parsonage is located on a quiet residential street in Goliad. It has a cozy living room with a fireplace, a study/formal dining room, covered parking, a storage shed, and a spacious, fenced backyard.

The home is currently undergoing renovations to freshen it up in preparation for our new pastor. The scope of work being done includes updating the kitchen and bathrooms, new paint and light fixtures throughout, and a thorough deep cleaning. Click on the YouTube channel below to follow along with the progress of this project.

Utilities

The following utilities are included with the Parsonage: water, electric, internet, and sewer, along with a landline telephone (we are open to converting this to a cell phone stipend).

Moving Expenses

Reimbursement for moving expenses is negotiable.

Congregational Summary

Our parish, consisting of St. John's Lutheran Church in Goliad, TX and St. Paul Lutheran Church in Runge, TX, seeks a pastor to join our Christ-centered community. Nestled in a rural, agricultural setting, but not too far from the city, our towns offer rich history, small-town charm, and vibrant community life. Goliad features historical landmarks, recreational parks, and numerous local events. Runge is a friendly, welcoming community known for its deep cultural heritage. Our congregations span all ages and are committed to spreading Christ's word, growing spiritually, and fostering fellowship and membership. We follow traditional Lutheran liturgy with some contemporary elements sprinkled in. Though we are two congregations, we enjoy the opportunity to come together for our annual Polka Sunday a special joint service featuring a Polka band playing Worship Hymns set to traditional Polka tunes.

Through the efforts of many dedicated members, both congregations have joyfully maintained regular Worship services during our pastoral vacancy. As we look to the future, we hope our new Pastor will continue to grow and nurture these volunteers, providing guidance and support to further deepen their involvement. We envision a collaborative ministry where lay leaders and the pastor work together to enrich our congregational life, expand outreach efforts, and strengthen the bonds within our faith community.

Congregational Profile:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rAv4KXfKWno>

Parsonage Updates, VBS, etc:

<https://www.youtube.com/@BethanyH-iq6eg>

Provide any other information about your congregation that may be helpful in the call process.

[St John's Website](#)

[St Paul's Website](#)

[Goliad ISD](#)

[Runge ISD](#)

[Visit Goliad](#)

[Goliad County Chamber of Commerce](#)

[Goliad Main Street](#)

[Goliad State Park](#)

[Presidio LaBahia](#)

[Coletto Creek Park](#)

Completed by: Heather Roeske

Date: 03/12/2024

