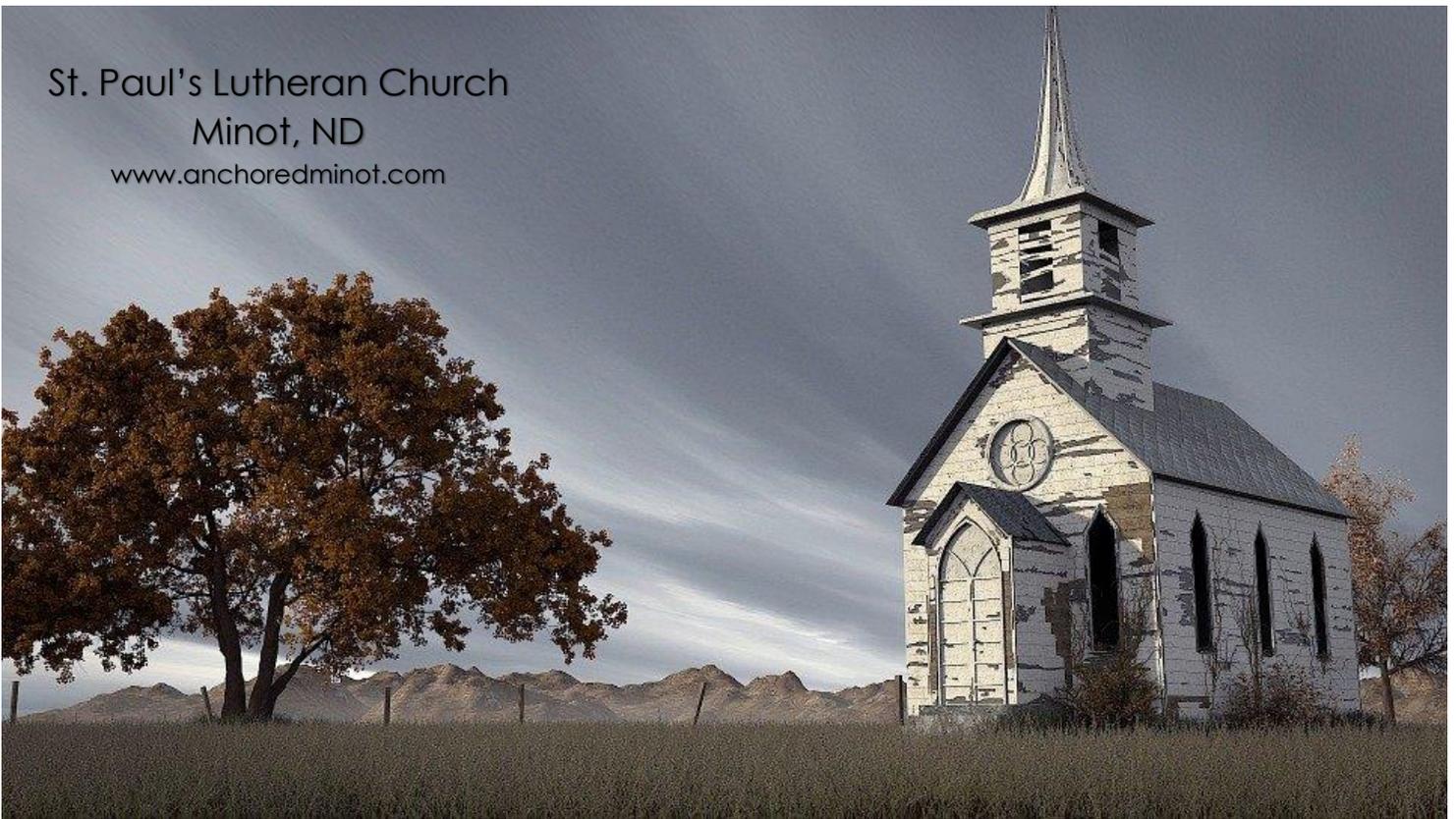


St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Minot, ND
www.anchoredminot.com



The Acts of the Apostles

The Ministry of the Gospel in a Messy Church & Conflicting World

Acts 1:6-11

The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus demonstrated the power of Christ. And so, it makes sense that the disciples asked Jesus if the time was right to restore the kingdom to Israel.

Keep in mind that a popular hope among Jewish people in the first century was that the Messiah would bring about a restoration of Israel's greatness. They had hoped that Israel would not only be free but that Israel could become a world power.

Ever since the fall of mankind into sin, mankind has always aspired for perfect utopias. Here is how it works. Typically we sanitize a past era of society and then aspire to see the current society return to the past glorious status. The reason why? We are all longing to get back to Eden. We all want to feel safe. We want prosperity. We want comfort. We want power. And we want control. Every generation fights for the perfect utopia, for we are all longing to be back in Eden where things were good. Our aspirations for the perfect utopia are further evidence

that we live this life in the valley of tears.

The disciples, though, needed to be instructed yet again about Jesus's purpose in the nature of God's kingdom. The same is true for us in the 21st century. This life that we live in is not a perfect utopia, nor will it ever be. The world is stained with sin. To believe that we could possibly make our world into a perfect utopia is not only naïve but fails to acknowledge the problem of sin.

Perhaps a bigger challenge to this kind of thinking is when we consider the ascension of Jesus. Did Jesus ascend to the right hand of the Father to escape the treachery of life? Is that our quest as well, to die, and have our souls escape the treachery of this life under the sun? No! That is not how we should

