

Confessional Lutheranism in Kewaunee County, Wisconsin  
1850-1890

CH3031—Lutheranism in America  
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In May of 1850, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin was officially established in Milwaukee. Within eight years, the new church body's influence had spread north along the lakeshore into northeastern Wisconsin. Early mission exploration in Kewaunee County was carried out by independent Lutheran pastors. After correspondence with those first visitors, leaders from the young Wisconsin Synod also travelled north along Lake Michigan to visit the newly settled areas. As a result, Confessional Lutheranism made its first inroads into the areas of Ahnapee (now Algoma), Kewaunee and the surrounding towns.

Modern day Algoma was first settled in the 1830's and was known as "Wolf River." By the 1850's, the settlement had become known as Ahnapee after the Potawatomi word meaning "land of the grey wolf."<sup>1</sup> The first German settlers were from the areas of Pomerania and Mecklenburg. They found a heavily wooded area inhabited by Potawatomi Indians.

L.M. Mack, a missionary sent by the German Methodist Church, first visited Ahnapee in 1854. He returned and established a German Methodist Church in Ahnapee in 1855. Mack found modest success in his new mission but many of the German immigrants were confessional Lutherans. Having left Germany following the Prussian Union, they sought to be served by a confessional Lutheran pastor.<sup>2</sup>

The first Lutheran clergy to visit Ahnapee was Pastor Stecher, a Missouri Synod pastor from Trinity Lutheran in Sheboygan. Gottlieb Fachtmann also visited Ahnapee and conducted services there. Although not an official member of the Wisconsin Synod until 1858, he was in contact with President Muehlhaeuser concerning his mission exploration in northeastern

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<sup>1</sup> Ahnapee will be used as the default term for Wolf River/Ahnapee/Algoma unless one of the other names is used in a quotation.

<sup>2</sup> Leon M. Raether, *The History of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church Algoma, Wisconsin 1862-1992* (Algoma WI, 1992), 8. Hereafter cited as Raether, History.

Wisconsin. Fachtmann makes mention of Ahnapee in a letter, to the Wisconsin Synod president, dated October 2, 1857: “on Friday at Wolf River [I conducted] a communion service in the house of a certain Krehnke, a Pommeranian...”<sup>3</sup>

It was in 1857, as a result of Fachtmann’s previous reports, that “Pastors [John] Bading and [Philip] Koehler undertook a hiking journey from West Bend to Ahnapee (Algoma today) on Lake Michigan.”<sup>4</sup> Going forward, confessional Lutherans in Ahnapee would be served by traveling pastors associated with the Wisconsin Synod, first informally and then as part of the synod’s official *Reisepredigt* (traveling preacher program).<sup>5</sup> Although the *Reisepredigt* was given high priority by the Synod, the availability of the *Reiseprediger* (traveling preacher) was still sporadic at best due to the high demand for pastors.

It was often weeks, sometimes months, between visits by the *Reiseprediger*. Any babies born since the last visit would be baptized. The settlers joined to hear God’s Word and to celebrate the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper together. It seems that as this community of Lutherans grew, there was a desire to formally organize into a congregation. The Wisconsin Synod 1860 convention proceedings read as follows: “The following Ev. Lutheran congregations sought membership in our synod and were accepted:...5) The Ev. Lutheran congregation in A[h]nape [Algoma]; with the condition that the congregation’s resolution to join the synod and

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<sup>3</sup> Glenn Schwanke, *The Story of God’s Grace in Northern Wisconsin 1850-1917*, (paper presented to the WELS Historical Institute, October 2009), 5.

<sup>4</sup> J.P. Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod* (St. Cloud, MN: Sentinel Publishing Company, 1970), 51.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Arnold Lehmann, trans., “Proceedings of the Thirteenth Convention of the German Evangel.-Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin and other States from May 29 to June 3, 1863.” *WELS Historical Institute Journal*. October 1998, 47. Hereafter cited as Lehman, 1863 Convention.

the congregation's Constitution subsequently be sent in."<sup>6</sup> There is no recording of this 1860 overture, to join the Wisconsin Synod, in any congregational records.<sup>7</sup> For reasons unknown, the condition was not met at this time and Ahnapee continued as part of the *Reisepredigt* for the next two years.

The congregation in Ahnapee was officially established in 1862: "In the meeting of December 10, a constitution drawn up by the synod was accepted, officials were elected, and the name 'Erste deutsche Evangelische Lutherische St. Pauls Gemeinde' (First German Evangelical Lutheran St. Paul's Congregation) was adopted."<sup>8</sup> Although the congregation would not officially join until 1864, the synod assisted in calling a pastor:

At the recommendation of Pastor Harms of Hermannsburg, and with the aid of our Senior, Pastor Muehlhaeuser, Missionary Brockmann arrived here at the end of November from Germany. On December 10 he received a call from the Ev. Luth. St. Paul Congregation in Anhepee [today Algoma], Kewaunee, Co., Wis. and has been active in said congregation since then.<sup>9</sup>

As evidenced in their earlier dealings with the German Methodist missionary, L.W. Mack, the new Lutheran congregation in Ahnapee held strongly to their confessional beliefs and expected their pastor to do the same. Pastor Brockmann wrote of his call: "The call charged me with the

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<sup>6</sup> Dr. Arnold Lehmann, trans., "Proceedings of the Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin from May 31 to June 7, 1860 A.D." *WELS Historical Institute Journal*. April 1995, 12. Hereafter cited as Lehman, 1860 convention.

The bracketed items in this quotation were added by the translator. It seems that whoever recorded the proceedings in German forgot the "h" in Ahnapee. Going back through the synod proceedings of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, it's not uncommon to find Ahnapee spelled a variety of ways. It was probably a mistake by the Convention secretary.

<sup>7</sup> Leon Raether (historian, St. Paul's Lutheran Church Algoma, WI) telephone interview with author, November 5, 2010. Hereafter cited Raether, Telephone Interview.

<sup>8</sup> Raether, History 9.

<sup>9</sup> Lehmann, 1863 Convention 45

duty to teach the Word of God purely and clearly *according to the Confessional Writings*” (emphasis added).<sup>10</sup>

Upon his ordination and installation, Pastor Brockmann also took over some of the duties of the *Reiseprediger* in the surrounding area. Because of disagreement over church location, there were two groups among the Ahnapee Lutherans who did not sign the December 10<sup>th</sup> constitution. Both groups lived a considerable (for the day) distance from the actual town of Ahnapee. The newly formed St. Paul’s congregation resolved that Pastor Brockmann be allowed to preach to the Green Bay Road group every two weeks and the northern group (modern day Forestville) every eight weeks. Pastor Brockmann wrote of his traveling service to the three Lutheran groups: “Mainly the wide distances and partly my arrival here, as well as the mixed feelings among the Lutherans on the site of the new church, divided the people into three groups; these were called St. Paul’s, those on Green Bay Road were called St. John’s, and those up the river were the called the Immanuel congregation.”<sup>11</sup>

Pastor Brockmann served the Ahnapee area until 1866 when he received and accepted a call to Sheboygan County. During his ministry at St. Paul’s, the congregation officially took membership in the Wisconsin Synod, built its first church building and grew in number. In addition to the churches on Green Bay Road and “up the river” near Ahnapee, Pastor Brockmann was also permitted to serve the Lutherans in Kewaunee every three months.<sup>12</sup> By God’s grace,

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<sup>10</sup> Raether, History 9.

<sup>11</sup> St. John’s Lutheran Ev. Church Algoma, Wisconsin, *Built on the Rock We Stand 1867-1992*, St. John’s Lutheran Church Algoma, Wisconsin (Algoma WI, 1992), 2. Hereafter cited as St. John’s, Built.

<sup>12</sup> “Our History,” Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church Kewaunee, WI, accessed December 2, 2010. <http://www.immanuelutherankewaunee.org/7373.html>. Hereafter cited as Immanuel Kewaunee, History.

It should be noted that the history found on the website is cited as “Abridged and condensed from ‘History of the first 75 years’, Compiled and written by Rev. W.A. Kuether Pastor of Immanuel 1929 – 1943 (edited by E. Holub).” Unfortunately, the author was unable to obtain a copy of this booklet from either the congregation or the Kewaunee County Historical Society.

during Brockmann's tenure in the lakeshore town, St. Paul's Ahnapee became the center for mission expansion for Kewaunee County, and later even Door County.

The young congregation was reluctant to see their spiritual shepherd depart. Brockmann wrote concerning this time: "The congregation agreed upon my departure with the condition that I do all within my power to find a faithful pastor to serve this congregation."<sup>13</sup> By all known accounts, Brockmann carried out his call in Ahnapee, and throughout the county, "clearly according to the Confessional Writings" as he pledged in 1862.

An immediate replacement pastor could not be found. During the vacancy, St. Paul's was served by other pastors of the Wisconsin Synod. Pastor Philip Koehler of Manitowoc traveled north to conduct services as often as possible. Without regular pastoral leadership, however, the divide between the three groups grew larger.

St. John's on Green Bay Road called Pastor C.K. Keller (Missouri Synod), from Reedsville, to serve as their pastor. He was installed on March 24, 1867 as St. John's first resident pastor. The first congregational meeting was held in a home on March 28, 1867. The minutes from this meeting are the first piece of the history of the "Church on Rankin Hill."<sup>14</sup> The minutes from this first meeting also listed membership qualifications for St. John's: "(a) baptized, (b) subscribe to the unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism, and (c) conduct one's life in accordance with God's Word."<sup>15</sup> This same year, St. John's applied for membership in the Wisconsin Synod. However, the congregation's request "for acceptance into

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<sup>13</sup> Raether, History 11.

<sup>14</sup> St. John's, Built 2.

"Green Bay Road" is known today as Wisconsin State Highway 54. The church is situated in the unincorporated community of Rankin. Local people know the church as "St. John's, Rankin" or simply "the Rankin church." It is sometimes referred to as St. John's, Algoma in official documentation because it falls under the jurisdiction of the Algoma Post Office.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. 3

synod membership [could] not be granted at this time because the congregation's constitution was not handed in."<sup>16</sup>

It would seem fitting to also mention how God blessed the work of Pastor Brockmann in his quarterly visits to Kewaunee. There was enough of a German Lutheran population in Kewaunee that they felt it necessary to begin organizing their own congregation. In July 1865, the "The Corporation of the German Evangelical Lutheran Immanuel Congregation, Kewaunee, Wisconsin" was incorporated. Brockmann's confessional beliefs and leadership were reflected in Article II of Immanuel's Act of Incorporation:

This congregation shall accept and confess all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed word of God as the only divine standard of faith and life. And it further confesses all the symbolical books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord of 1580. Especially the Confession of Augsburg and Luther's Small Catechism.<sup>17</sup>

Immanuel's first resident pastor was Gustaf Bachmann. It is stated in the congregation's history that not much is known as to how Bachmann arrived in Kewaunee. The history even goes so far as to say that he may have been one of the men who "played themselves up to unsuspecting congregations as pastors and were called."<sup>18</sup> However, this may not be the case as Pastor Bachmann is listed as a delegate pastor in the 1866 Wisconsin Synod Convention Proceedings.<sup>19</sup> Bachmann is also listed in the 1867 Synod Convention proceedings as taking a call to the Farmington congregation and being installed by his predecessor, Prof. Adolf

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<sup>16</sup> Dr. Arnold Lehmann, trans., "1867 Synodical Convention of the Wisconsin Synod: Part II of Proceedings." *WELS Historical Institute Journal*. April 2002, 15. Hereafter cited as Lehman, 1867(b) Convention.

<sup>17</sup> Immanuel Kewaunee, History.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Dr. Arnold Lehmann, trans., "Proceedings of the Sixteenth Convention of the German Evangel. Luther. Synod of Wisconsin and other States from June 7 to 13, 1866." *WELS Historical Institute Journal*. October 2000, 4.

Hoenecke.<sup>20</sup> This situation would make it likely that Pastor Bachmann was in good standing with the synod.

The history of Immanuel, Kewaunee becomes hazy following Bachmann's departure. The 1867 Synodical Convention Proceedings mention that the synod was concerned about filling the vacancy in Kewaunee and that "the congregation at Kewaunee which has built a new parsonage will join the synod."<sup>21</sup> This was not to be as L. Nietmann began serving as pastor in Kewaunee sometime in 1867. Nietmann had been on the pastor role of the Wisconsin Synod beginning in 1860 when he received a call the congregation in Greenfield.<sup>22</sup> However, in 1863, the Synod Convention proceedings have the following in the president's report:

Pastor L. Nietmann had to be suspended from the office of the preaching ministry. He is guilty of numerous criminal infractions not only here but also in Germany. He was forced to make confession only after persistent interrogation because he could no longer hide his misdeeds with lies. As a result his congregation let him go and he himself signed a declaration in which declared himself unworthy for the Christian preaching ministry and made a promise he would never seek work in any of our congregations.<sup>23</sup>

Immanuel's history states that not much is known about Nietmann's ministry in Kewaunee other than the congregation grew in numbers. Nietmann served Immanuel for about ten years, "up to 1877 when mention is made in the minutes of a meeting of November 5<sup>th</sup>, 1876 that the congregation dispensed with his services."<sup>24</sup> Nietmann, however, was not finished with Kewaunee County. He would move north to Ahnapee and become a thorn in the flesh of St. Paul's.

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<sup>20</sup> Dr. Arnold Lehmann, trans., "1867 Synodical Convention of the Wisconsin Synod: Part I of Proceedings." *WELS Historical Institute Journal*. October 2001, 11. Hereafter cited as Lehman, 1867(a) Convention.

<sup>21</sup> Lehmann, 1867(b) Convention 10.

<sup>22</sup> Lehmann, 1860 Convention.

<sup>23</sup> Lehmann, 1863(a) Convention, 46.

<sup>24</sup> Immanuel Kewaunee, History.



For St. Paul's, Ahnapee, it took about one year to find a replacement for Pastor Brockmann. With synodical assistance, St. Paul's called Pastor Bernhard Ungrodt, a former missionary to Africa. President Streissguth's report to the 1867 Synod Convention explains:

[With Pastor Koehler], the ordained Missionary Bernhard Ungroth, who served eleven years in South Africa for the Barmen Missionary Society, came to me and was likewise given an informal colloquy and sent to Ahnepee, vacant for a long time, where he was immediately called and where I had him installed by Pastor Koehler on *Rogate* Sunday.<sup>25</sup>

The excitement of the congregation was unfortunately short lived as Pastor Ungrodt resigned because of illness after a year and a half in Ahnapee. Despite the short time of his work, the Lord greatly blessed him and St. Paul's while he served. The congregation had purchased five acres of land and found it necessary to look into building a new church because it had outgrown the 1864 building.

Once again, the synod assisted St. Paul's in finding a new pastor and Pastor Ungrodt remained until the new man arrived. Pastor C. Titze arrived, from St. John's Burlington, in October 1868 to replace Pastor Ungrodt.<sup>26</sup> But, Pastor Titze's stay in Ahnapee was also brief. There were financial difficulties throughout the country following the Civil War and it was no different for little Ahnapee. This strained the relationship between pastor and congregation. It seems accusations were thrown about and the matter was serious enough to come up in the Proceedings of the 1870 Synod Convention. The committee assigned to the matter found fault in both the pastor and the congregation. It was recommended that a change of pastors take place so

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<sup>25</sup> Lehmann, 1867(a) Convention 11.

<sup>26</sup> Dr. Arnold Lehmann, trans., "Proceedings of the 19. Convention of the German Evangelical Lutheran Church of Wisconsin and Other States from May 27 to June 1, 1869." *WELS Historical Institute*. April 2004, 12.

that there may be peace.<sup>27</sup> A reconciliation was attempted but by the 1872 convention, it was noted that Pastor Titze followed the advice of a pastoral conference and “withdrew from the preaching ministry because of the lack of ability to proclaim the Gospel and to lead a congregation.”<sup>28</sup>

From late 1870 until spring 1872, St. Paul’s was again without a full-time shepherd. Pastor Keller from St. John’s, Rankin was called to serve as the vacancy pastor. During this year-long vacancy, the Peshtigo fire jumped the bay, burning some crops and buildings in and around Ahnapee. Discouragement was visible throughout the area including the “pastorless” Lutheran community of St. Paul’s. A \$200 gift from Mr. E. Eisfeld of Milwaukee helped pay off some of the congregations debt, raising the spirits of the members of St. Paul’s.<sup>29</sup>

The next three pastors in St. Paul’s history would also have short tenures in Ahnapee, each ending in a resignation from the ministry. Pastor E. Jonas served from 1872-1875, followed by C. Lieb (1875-1877), followed by J.M. Johannes (1877-1880). It would seem that it was the situation, in the congregation, that each inherited which ultimately led to the resignations.

Jonas already found a partially fractured group following the difficult dispute with Pastor Titze. He arrived with the goal of reconciling the congregation but a new challenge soon emerged. The Sons of Hermann Lodge arrived in Ahnapee in 1873. A congregational resolution

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<sup>27</sup> Dr. Arnold Lehmann, trans., “Proceedings of the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin and Other State from June 16 to 22, 1870.” *WELS Historical Institute Journal*. April 2005, 26-27.

<sup>28</sup> Dr. Arnold Lehmann, trans., “Proceedings of the Twenty-Second Convention of the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin and Other States from May 30 to June 4, 1872.” *WELS Historical Institute Journal*. October 2006, 10.

<sup>29</sup> Raether, History 14

was passed in 1874 “excluding from membership those who had joined lodges.”<sup>30</sup> The battle over lodge membership only made the divide among the Lutherans greater.

Pastor Lieb is most remembered for introducing English instruction into the curriculum of St. Paul’s. His goal was to have the children of the congregation be able to interact in American society as they were in their small German communities. Lieb had no interest in moving from the Scriptural grounds of refusing lodge membership for church members. When this became obvious, the dissidents began doing everything in their ability to undermine his ministry. Unable to effectively shepherd the congregation amidst the attacks, Lieb resigned in 1877.<sup>31</sup>

Johannes arrived amidst the highest turmoil of the congregation. The congregation would acquire its (reed) organ and form a men’s choir during Johannes’ time in Ahnapee. But it was, at best, a distraction as record numbers left the congregation as a result of the lodge controversy. In January 1880, Pastor Johannes turned in his resignation and left immediately after Easter 1880.<sup>32</sup>

Despite the short, difficult ministries of these three men, there is no evidence to make an argument that they were unfaithful to Scripture or the Lutheran Confessions. There is no doubt each one had his weaknesses but the refusal to compromise on Scriptural principles, regarding the lodge issues, speaks of their confessional character. How true Paul’s words to another young pastor, Timothy, ring: “For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid. 15

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. 16

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. 16

what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths” (2 Timothy 2:3-4, NIV).

It was mentioned above that, upon his removal in Kewaunee, L. Nietmann would be a thorn in the flesh of the Ahnapee Lutherans. Nietmann was another wedge being driven into the congregation. According to St. Paul’s historian, Nietmann was the very definition of a “sheep-stealer.”<sup>33</sup> He moved to Ahnapee in 1876 (probably about the same time as Pastor Johannes) and founded the Lutheran Evangelical Society, worshipping in the Baptist and Methodist churches. It was advertised as the alternative to St. Paul’s for those unhappy and in dispute with the pastors. In 1877, Nietmann or one of his followers purchased land on the corner of what is now Navarino and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets.

Much like his ministry in Kewaunee, not much is known about the specifics of Nietmann’s teachings while in Ahnapee. It seems clear that he was not confessional in practice, based upon his acceptance of lodge membership (among others) and the rebuke recorded in synodical proceedings at the time of his suspension and removal from Wisconsin Synod clergy roles. Whatever his teachings, his “ministry” in Ahnapee was a stumbling block for a significant number of Lutherans that were early members of St. Paul’s Ahnapee.

Upon Johannes’ resignation, the pastor in Kewaunee encouraged St. Paul’s to call J. G. Oehlert. Pastor Oehlert accepted the call and was installed in July 1880. He arrived knowing the situation and ready to combat it with God’s Word. Oehlert wrote:

When I came to the congregation, [there was] a counter-congregation whose members had, for the most part, separated themselves from St. Paul’s congregation. Right from the start I attempted, with God’s help, to influence the congregation to solve its differences. This succeeded. Both groups reconciled

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<sup>33</sup> Raether, Telephone Interview

and I won the trust of all. I must admit that the congregation generally stood by me and grew, not only outwardly, but also inwardly.<sup>34</sup>

God had provided a confessional Lutheran pastor to be the unifier of the fractured congregation. God used the strong, faithful pastor to not only grow the congregation numerically once again, but also spiritually. At the same time, Pastor Oehlert's humility and graciousness were evident as he wrote about his time at St. Paul's:

I must recognize that the whole congregation, young and old, parents and children, came to God's House as I have never seen before. In the area of Christian education, not only those in school and those confirmed young people, but the entire assembled congregation took an active role. For all these things God deserves the glory.<sup>35</sup>

Pastor Oehlert served St. Paul's until 1885 when he accepted the call to serve in Bay City, MI. God blessed St. Paul's with a candidate from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis upon Oehlert's departure. Pastor Christian Doehler followed the path set forth by his predecessor and served faithfully until 1890. Both men stressed the importance of the parish school for children of the congregation. It was also during the ministry of the both men that St. Paul's was once again the center for mission expansion. This time, they travelled north into Door County.

In 1884, Oehlert had received a request to occasionally serve a group of Lutherans in Sturgeon Bay. St. Paul's congregation gave him permission to do so and the result is St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Sturgeon Bay.<sup>36</sup> In addition, Oehlert also conducted services in a small town called Sawyer beginning in 1884. Doehler took over this assignment when he arrived in Ahnapee. By 1886, the small group of Lutherans in Sevastopol township were ready to file

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<sup>34</sup> Raether, History 18

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. 19

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. 19

papers of incorporation. It was decided that Pastor Doehler would preach at least nine times a year at this new congregation, today known as St. John's, Valmy.<sup>37</sup>

Looking back to Kewaunee in 1877, Nietmann had just been dismissed for reasons we do not know. At this time, Immanuel Kewaunee once again resolved to seek assistance from Wisconsin and Missouri Synods to find pastoral candidates. Not much is known about Immanuel's next pastor, J. Vollmar. He is listed as the pastor on the congregational records as of March 21<sup>st</sup>, 1877. The congregation grew under Vollmar but on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1879, he requested, and was granted, a peaceful release so that he might take a call elsewhere.

It would appear that, despite the confessional foundation laid by Brockmann and despite Article II of their Act of Incorporation concerning the Book of Concord, Immanuel was anything but a confessional Lutheran congregation in practice. Membership qualifications as of 1879 were simply that one be of German heritage and speak the language. There was no discernable Lutheran practice in place so truly, it was Lutheran in name only. In fact, the true "Old Lutherans" refused to join Immanuel during the early years because of the congregation's careless attitude toward doctrine and practice.

The summer of 1879 was the turning point in the history of Immanuel, Kewaunee. It was at this time that Immanuel appealed to the synod for a pastor. A young pastoral candidate by the name of August Pieper was assigned to the small lakeshore town. The history of Immanuel, Kewaunee describes the new pastor in this way: "He was a man of sound Lutheran principles, conscience bound in the Word of God. A fearless servant of the Lord, preaching the law and the gospel in all truth and purity, and administering sound Lutheran practice."<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Randall Styx, *St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church Valmy: a brief history prepared for the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod* (Valmy, 2000), 3.

<sup>38</sup> Immanuel Kewaunee, History

As a result of Pieper's firm foundation on Scripture, and also the Lutheran Confessions, a bitter fight ensued over lodge membership. Pieper was clearly and forcefully against lodges. As a result of this, many names were stricken from the books of the congregation. However, many of the Old Lutherans who had previously refused to join now took up membership. Lutheran practice in Kewaunee finally matched with the requirements set forth almost fifteen years earlier.

At St. John's, Rankin, Pastor Keller served until sometime in 1873. He also assisted at St. Paul's Ahnapee, as vacancy pastor, during the congregation's numerous vacancies during the late 1860's and early 70's. Pastors Zimmerman (1873-1880), Steyer (1880-1884) and Stute (1885-1890) served at Rankin over the seventeen years following Keller's departure. A new church was also built in 1875. It's interesting to note that St. John's never did hand in a constitution as requested following their appeal to join the Wisconsin Synod in 1867 (see footnote 16 above). In fact, the congregation was not officially incorporated until 1920, after joining the Missouri Synod in 1919.<sup>39</sup> St. John's Rankin continues as a member of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod today.

St. Paul's congregation in Algoma (Ahnapee) is in preparation to celebrate its Sesquicentennial in 2012. Immanuel Kewaunee is celebrating 145 years of God's grace in 2010. God blessed the early Lutheran settlers of Kewaunee County with opportunities to hear his Word and receive the Sacraments from Confessional Lutheran pastors of the Synodical Conference beginning in the mid-1850s. He also brought the congregations through trial and difficulty pertaining to lodges and false teachers. We pray that God continue to guide these congregations and the pastors that serve them today and in the future.

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<sup>39</sup> St. John's, Built 8

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