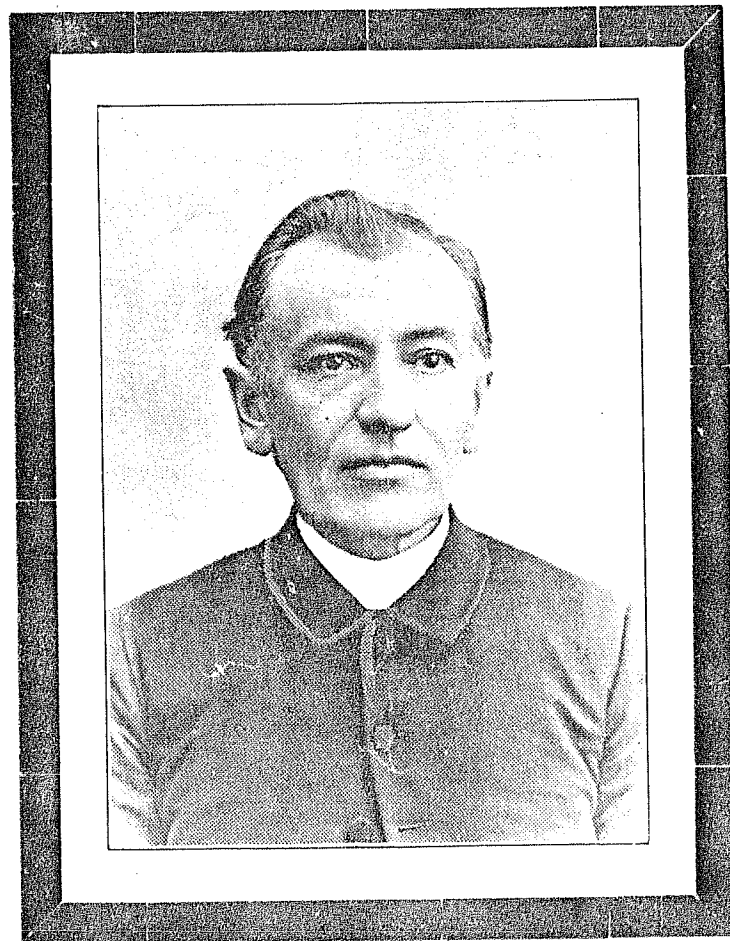


The Parson from the Prairie
Heinrich J. Vogel
1842-1910

Daniel A. Witte

Professor Martin Westerhaus
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, C.H. 373
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Pastor Hy. Vogel.

Geboren: 2. April, 1842.

Gestorben: 7. Juni, 1910.

This is the story of a Lutheran pastor named Heinrich J. Vogel. He was not a famous pastor. The histories of the Iowa Synod and Wisconsin Synod, in which he served, barely mention him.¹

But Heinrich Vogel's story is still worth telling. It is a story of commitment to the truth. It is a story of joys and heartaches. It is the story of a man who touched thousands of others with the gospel. And it is the story of a man who would probably be quite embarrassed to have his great-great grandson writing about him. It is the story of a humble servant of the Lord.

I. The student on the prairie: 1842-1863

Heinrich J. Vogel [HINE-rik FOH-gel] was born on April 2, 1842 in Hof, Bavaria to Georg and Christiana (née Benker) Vogel. Little is known of his early years. He had at least two siblings: sisters Selma and Sophie (Anna Sophia Magdalena was her full name). The Vogels were part of the Lutheran church in Hof.

Heinrich attended elementary school and technical school (the *Gymnasium*) in Hof until 1855. That year he was also confirmed in the Lutheran church.

In the summer of 1855 Heinrich, his parents and others in the family emigrated to the United States. No record of his journey remains, but a diary of a cousin named

¹ Johannes Deindörfer mentions Vogel only in several clergy rosters in his *Geschichte der Evangel.-Luth. Synode von Iowa und andere Staaten* ["History of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Iowa and Other States"] (Chicago: Wartburg Publishing House, 1897). See pages 124, 347-350.

J. P. Köhler's *The History of the Wisconsin Synod* (Leigh D. Jordahl trans., 1981, p. 193) simply notes that in 1889 Vogel was the pastoral visitor for the Synod's Central Conference. And Edwin Fredrich's soon-to-be published, updated history of the Wisconsin Synod only mentions in passing that in 1868 Vogel visited the Wisconsin Synod convention with Sigmund Fritschel. (See page 71 of the manuscript.)

One hint from the historians that Vogel had some importance: Köhler and Fredrich both omit his first name. Evidently the reader should know it!

George Christian Vogel does. If Heinrich's immediate family traveled the same route as George Christian, they went by train to Leipzig and then northeast to Hamburg. They then sailed up the Elbe River and into the North Sea. The trip across the ocean to New York took about a month and a half. After disembarking they traveled by canal boat and train to Pittsburgh. They proceeded to Chicago, and then went through northern Illinois to Freeport and Galena. After crossing the Mississippi River by ferry boat they came to Dubuque, Iowa. They settled near a town called Sherrills Mount (Sherrill today), about 10 miles northeast of Dubuque.²

Some time before their arrival in America Heinrich had already decided to study theology and to become a Lutheran minister. He had done some early studies for this in the *Gymnasium* (the preparatory school) in his homeland. Now he began his work in earnest by enrolling in the Iowa Synod's "*Prediger Seminar*" (preacher seminary). It was located in a house in Dubuque at the time, and it had one teacher, Synod president Georg M. Grossman (1823-1897).

1857 was an important year for the tiny seminary. It gained another teacher, Gottfried Fritschel (1836-1889). It moved to St. Sebald, Clayton County, Iowa in order to have more space. And it took the name "Wartburg Seminary."

The new two-story, eight-room seminary building, constructed in the summer of 1857, was located on top of a high hill in the middle of a 160-acre farm. About 90 acres were wooded, and the rest were cultivated. One could see for miles and miles from the top of the hill.

² See Appendix One for a map of this area and for pictures of some of the buildings mentioned in this biography.

Heinrich and the other nine students all worked under the seminary's steward to support themselves. For instance, they grew wheat, raised cattle for meat and cut their own firewood. Since the seminary building didn't include any sleeping quarters for the students, every night they walked 15 minutes away to a farmhouse, where they slept in two rooms on a dirt floor. According to Grossman, the students usually all walked together and talked about their studies. They had to get up early, because morning devotions were held every day at 6 AM at the nearby Lutheran church, where Grossman also served as pastor.³

Heinrich was one of the youngest students at the seminary, which had instruction all the way from what we would call high school through post-graduate training. Here is how Grossman described life in the classroom:

"I am certain, if you could just once see us sitting in such a familiar, peaceful way, if you could observe the close attention with which our pupils follow the flow of my lectures, as especially our younger pupils (ages 15 & 16)⁴ with their eyes full of sincerity hang on every word that comes out of my mouth, you would surely be as happy as I am. I thank the Lord my God that he has assembled only this kind of people in our institution who, as with one heart and soul, are united in offering themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ in everything and totally live for him and his church. Our faithful Savior has crowned our living together with true blessings, with joy, peace and unity. I am especially happy to notice the many kinds of traces of spiritual life which God's mercy is producing in the students. I find that a spirit of love, harmony and peace pervades the seminary. When the prayer-bell rings at various times of the day and people are audibly praying throughout our whole house, I feel lifted up in my innermost soul. I know that I am in the middle of a group of

³ These details about life at the seminary in St. Sebald come from an 1857 report by Grossman found in Georg J. Fritschel's *Quellen und Dokumente zur Geschichte und Lehrstellung der ev.-luth. Synode von Iowa u. a. Staaten*, ["Sources and Documents on the History and Doctrinal Position of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of Iowa and Other States"] (Chicago: Wartburg Publishing House), p. 185ff. The report was originally printed in the Iowa Synod's newsletter, *Kirchen-Blatt* (1857, number 7).

⁴ Vogel was one of these.

Christians who truly pray."⁵

Grossman goes on in the same report to give a few details about each of his students. He writes,

Of the ten students at least six or seven can discuss theology in a complete, learned, linguistic and scientific way. Above all the three youngest, who probably will remain in our institution for quite a while yet, have made it their goal to become, with God's help, soundly learned men, 'firm in the saddle.' . . .

Our ten students are as follows: . . . 8. **Heinrich Vogel** from the congregation I am now serving in Sherrills Mount. It seems to me that among all my pupils he is the most gifted—a quiet, mild, cheerful young man."⁶

Vogel's autograph book from his seminary years sheds a little more light on his character. On October 15, 1863, his father wrote in artful German script:

1 Timothy 4:16

Watch your life and your doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

This is so that you can remember your dear father
Georg Vogel.

Heinrich's mother and sisters wrote similar remembrances. Evidently they were a godly family.

II. The pastor in Ohio: 1864

Some time at the end of 1863 Vogel passed his examinations to be a candidate for the holy ministry. He was first sent to help Pastor J. J. Schmidt develop a congregation in the vicinity of Pettisville, Ohio. When little came of this, he was asked to go to

⁵ Fritschel, *Quellen und Dokumente*, p. 186. The translation is by the author of this paper.

⁶ Fritschel, *Quellen und Dokumente*, p. 187-188. The original description of Vogel reads, "**Heinrich Vogel**, aus meiner jetzigen Gemeinde Sherrills Mount, wie mir scheint, unter allen meinen Schülern der begabteste, ein stiller, sanfter, gemütvoller Jüngling."

Toledo. The Iowa Synod already had one congregation there, Salem.⁷ But so many Germans were settling on the other side of town that it looked like a second congregation could be founded.⁸

Vogel began his work in Toledo about the middle of February, 1864. He hunted up German immigrants, especially railroad workers and their families, and told them about the plans to found a new Lutheran congregation with a school. On February 26 Vogel was ordained in an evening service by Salem's pastor, Johannes Dörfler.

After a few months Vogel had contacted enough people to begin holding services and teaching classes to the children. The new congregation's first meeting place was at a tiny building on the corner of St. Clair and Harrison Streets, which was purchased from local Methodists. At first about 70 families said they were willing to join the new congregation. But when it became apparent that setting up a congregation would require financial commitment, only 50 families remained. They incorporated under the name Evangelical Lutheran St. John Congregation.

The constitution of St. John's shows what kind of theological stance Vogel promoted:

Of the Congregation's Doctrinal Standards

We, the members of this congregation, pledge ourselves to

- a) all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments, the revealed Word of God, as the only rule and guide of our faith and life;
- b) the confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, as they are contained in

⁷ Salem was founded in 1855 as part of the Buffalo Synod. In 1859 it joined the Iowa Synod.

⁸ S. Poppen's *Vierzigjähriges Jubiläum der ev. luth. St. Johannes Gemeinde zu Toledo, Ohio* (Toledo, 1904), the 50th anniversary booklet of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Toledo, includes some details:

"Our countrymen, who were mainly manual laborers and common workers, settled in especially large numbers in the so-called "hill" (11th Ward). Because the railroad depot and other opportunities were nearby, this area offered the best prospect for steady work" (page 25, author's translation).

the 1580 Book of Concord, especially the unaltered Augsburg Confession and Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism, as the pure, error-free exposition of God's word and will—and we and our descendants wish to prove faithful to this faith and confession by the grace of God.

In our church and school, therefore, we make use of only such books as agree with the word of God and the confession of our church. On the other hand, we condemn all doctrinal mixture which, in opposition to the truth, conflicts with the pure evangelical teaching. We will not admit into our fellowship people who are part of openly erring churches and sects, nor people who are part of anti-Christian secret societies such as Free Masons, Odd Fellows, and the like.

Of the Office of the Ministry in the Congregation

We recognize the holy office of the ministry for the administering of Word and Sacrament and for the spiritual care-taking of the congregation as God's holy arrangement, and we honor and regard it as such.

Our pastors must prove faithful to the confession of our church and be members of the synod which our congregation belongs to. When they are ordained and installed they should publicly and solemnly promise to teach in faithfulness to the Lutheran confessions and to treat the confessions in just such a way.

Of the Congregation's Synodical Affiliation

Our congregation stands with its pastor in affiliation and under the oversight of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Iowa and Other States, and we know that we are bound, if at all possible, to send delegates to synod conventions.

Of Discipline in the Congregation

If a member of our congregation falls into sin and is in danger of losing his soul, we will treat him with Christian love in accord with Matthew 18:15ff and Galatians 6:1ff.

Members who are obviously unrepentant after they have been given sufficient time to come to their senses and turn back, will be excluded from the congregation. The sins which led to the discipline and exclusion must be clearly proved from God's Word to be sins.

Whoever is excluded from the congregation forfeits all church offices (including the Trustee office) and all church privileges and rights.

Someone who has been excluded can and should be received again as soon as he repentantly acknowledges his sin and honestly confesses it.⁹

The first order of business for St. John's was to find a bigger building. They bought property on the corner of South Erie and Harrison Street, and started building a 24 x 40 foot brick structure. The construction work proceeded so rapidly that the building was

⁹ Poppen, S. *Vierajähriges Jubiläum*, p. 26. Author's translation.

dedicated by July 17, 1864. It was intended to be a school, but at first it had to serve as the church.

Then financial troubles set in. The property cost \$400, the school house \$1410—a total of \$1810. Most of the congregation members were new in the country and were poor, so a considerable debt remained. The press of the debts caused fears and quarrels. Some members withdrew.

Discouraged, Vogel did something surprising. After only five months at St. John's, he left.¹⁰ He not only left the congregation, he left Ohio and returned to Iowa. St. John's floundered for a time, but Pastor Johannes Deindörfer (1828-1907), one of the founders of the Iowa Synod, came from Iowa to straighten things out. He arrived in Toledo toward the end of January 1865.

III. The pastor on the Iowa prairie: 1864-1867

Vogel, meanwhile, took over as pastor of Deindörfer's former congregation—Zion of Windsor Township, Fayette County, Iowa.¹¹ This congregation had been founded by Bavarian Lutheran settlers on Christmas, 1859. They met in a 18 x 25 log house. The upper story served as a school room and church, while the bottom floor held the pastor's quarters.

When Vogel arrived in late fall 1864, Zion had only fourteen members. But Vogel had plenty to do. He also served St. James of Fort Atkinson and Eldorado (founded in

¹⁰ According to Gerhard S. Ottersberg's doctoral thesis, *The Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Iowa and Other States: 1854-1904* (Lincoln, Nebraska, 1949), p. 193, Vogel left Toledo without telling Dörfler why. He left so abruptly that Dörfler even feared foul play.

¹¹ Today the congregation is located in West Union, Iowa.

1861—in 1867 the Eldorado group took the name St. Peter) and St. John of Crane Creek, later called Lawler (1860). The four congregations were twelve to twenty miles away from each other. Vogel spent many hours traveling by pony and cart to serve his scattered field.

The Lord blessed Vogel in many ways while he was in Iowa. In 1865 he was married to Miss Augusta Gropp of McGregor, Iowa at the Iowa Synod church there. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. August Gropp, immigrants from Erfurt, Saxony. Heinrich and Augusta had their first son, Hermann, in June 1866.

The congregations on the prairie also grew under Vogel's leadership. For example, by the end of 1867 Zion grew to 45 members, and St. James went from 31 communicants to 128.

During these years in Iowa Vogel acquired many of the memories that he used to write "*Das Pfarrhaus auf der Prairie*," or "The Parsonage on the Prairie."¹² This fictional account of a young pastor's experiences on the Iowa prairie seems to be semi-autobiographical. For instance, it relates in quaint fashion how young Pastor Martin Paulsen met and married his wife Marie, a beautiful Lutheran girl from another town in Iowa. (Could Heinrich have remembered how he courted Augusta?) There are many other parallels.

One true story from this part of Heinrich Vogel's life relates to his sister Sophie. A

¹² *Das Pfarrhaus auf der Prairie: Eine Erzählung aus dem Leben und Wirken eines deutsch-amerikanischen Pastors, erzählt von Onkel Heinrich*, first appeared in the Wisconsin Synod's *Gemeinde-Blatt* on November 15, 1912. The story was serialized in 16 installments, concluding in the July 15, 1913 issue of the *Gemeinde-Blatt*.

In 1916 Northwestern Publishing House of Milwaukee, Wisconsin printed the whole narrative in a book of 106 pages.

The author of this biography has completed a translation of the story.

young Lutheran immigrant named Michael Reck (1835-1910), trained in theology at Neuendettelsau in Bavaria, had become the Iowa Synod's *Reiseprediger* (traveling missionary) in southern Minnesota. Reck fell in love with Sophie Vogel, but when he approached her parents, Pappa Georg said he should marry Selma, the older daughter. Shades of Jacob and Rachel and Leah! In the end true love won out, and Michael and Sophie were engaged to be married in the spring of 1867.

Then a hitch developed. Michael found out that his ministerial responsibilities would not allow him to be in the Dubuque area on the wedding day. He got word to Heinrich, who was supposed to tell the rest of the family. But Heinrich forgot. On the big day everyone came except the groom. After sorting everything out, the families rescheduled the wedding for the fall, but then Christiana Vogel, Sophie and Heinrich's mother, became sick. Georg insisted that his daughter could not get married: she had to stay home to take care of her mother and the house. The wedding was rescheduled once more, and Michael and Sophie were finally united about a year after their original wedding day, on May 24, 1868.¹³

IV. The pastor in Madison, Wisconsin: 1867-1875

In October 1867 Heinrich Vogel was called to St. John's Lutheran of Madison, Wisconsin after J. Deindörfer turned down the call. Vogel was promised a salary of \$250 per year. He became St. John's first full-time pastor.¹⁴

Earlier in 1867 St. John's had bought property for a new church on the corner of

¹³ The Recks eventually had ten children. Sophie died in 1900, and at least one of her children, Marie (1882-1972), came to Jefferson, Wisconsin to live with Heinrich and Augusta.

¹⁴ St. John's was one of the first congregations in the Iowa Synod. It was founded in 1855.

East Washington Avenue and N. Hancock Street. The new building was 50 feet long and 32 feet wide with a full basement. There was also an altar niche which was 12 feet long and 16 feet wide.

The new property left the congregation with no living quarters for Vogel and his family. They had to rent a home, and at first Heinrich had to pay the rent out of his own pocket. Later the congregation established a rent fund for the pastor.

As he had done in Iowa, Vogel served several congregations in the Madison area. Besides St. John's there, he also shepherded St. John's of Westport, Immanuel of Blue Mounds, St. Martin's of Springdale and St. John's of Middleton. The last congregation was added during Vogel's pastorate. In 1873 Vogel had the second largest parish in the Iowa Synod—542 souls.¹⁵ His was also the only parish with five congregations.

As in Iowa, Vogel taught school. Four days a week he taught in Madison, and once a week he taught at one of the country congregations.

In Madison Vogel's talent for writing became evident. Beginning in late 1871, he wrote many articles for the *Kirchen-Blatt* ("Church Newsletter"), the semi-monthly magazine of the Iowa Synod. (See Appendix Two for a list and synopses of the articles he wrote.) Church history was one of Vogel's favorite subjects.

Another bright spot in Vogel's life at this time was his little daughter Sophie (Sophia Cäcilie). She was born on November 20, 1870.

Eventually the burden of serving five congregations was too much for Vogel. In 1874 he became sick, and his strength collapsed. For about a year he was unable to

¹⁵ Some other statistics: In 1873 his congregations had a total of 105 voters and 286 communicants. In 1874 there were 107 voters and 296 communicants (*Kirchen-Blatt*, 1874, p. 134, & 1875, p. 78).

work. In the spring of 1875 Vogel resigned from the ministry, but it is not clear whether he did this primarily because of his health or his convictions.

The second reason requires some explanation. At this time Vogel found himself in opposition to some of the teachings of the Iowa Synod. When he had this change of heart is not known. In 1868, for example, Vogel traveled to Milwaukee with Sigmund Fritschel (1833-1900), leading theologian of the Iowa Synod, to visit the Wisconsin Synod convention. Evidently the two men agreed theologically. None of Vogel's 1871-1875 *Kirchen-Blatt* articles show any misgivings about the synod's doctrinal positions. But by 1876 Vogel was opposed to men like Fritschel. He seems to have agreed with a group of men led by Johann Klindworth (1833-1907), a professor at the Iowa Synod college at Galena, Illinois. Klindworth and his followers were sympathetic to the doctrinal position of the Missouri and Wisconsin Synods.

The controversy was quite complex, but some of its biggest questions were:

- 1) Is the Christian church invisible? The pro-Missouri side said "Yes"; the pro-Iowa side said, "No, it is both invisible and visible."
- 2) Does Revelation 20 describe a heavenly millenium or an earthly one? The pro-Missouri side said, "Heavenly"; the pro-Iowa side said, "Heavenly, but we will not dissociate from someone who says, 'earthly.'"
- 3) Is the papacy the Antichrist? The pro-Missouri side said, "Yes"; the pro-Iowa side said, "That's a strong possibility, but the Antichrist may be a particular individual still to come."
- 4) Are there doctrinal issues which Christians may disagree about, yet still remain

in fellowship? The pro-Missouri side said, "No"; the pro-Iowa side said, "Yes—matters which the Lutheran confessions do not settle."¹⁶

In the summer of 1875 the battle came to a head at the Iowa Synod convention held in Madison. Vogel, although no longer the pastor in Madison, attended the convention. Klindworth and his party asserted that the Iowa Synod was straying from original Lutheran teachings. The majority disagreed, however. They declared their allegiance to 8 points ("The Madison Theses") which expressed the traditional Iowa Synod views on the authority of the Lutheran confessions, church fellowship, the Antichrist and open questions. Sixteen dissenters then left the synod.

Vogel was not one of them, but by the spring of 1876 he too withdrew from the synod for doctrinal reasons. Another teaching that may have troubled him was the doctrine of election.¹⁷ The controversy about this subject in the midwestern Lutheran synods didn't officially erupt until the 1880s. But the from 1871 to 1873 Gottfried Fritschel and C. F. W. Walther, Missouri's leading theologian, had already written many letters attacking each other.¹⁸ Vogel was probably aware of the issue.

Basically, Walther insisted that election was *to* faith. In eternity God decided that certain people would come to faith and remain in faith. He made this decision solely because of his grace and for the sake of Christ's merits. Fritschel, on the other hand,

¹⁶ For a fuller explanation of the disagreement from the Iowa point of view, see the 1873 "Davenport Theses," (from Iowa's synod convention) translated and printed in J. L. Neve's *A Brief History of the Lutheran Church in America* (Burlington, Iowa: 1916), pp. 440-444.

¹⁷ A family tradition says that this was the reason he left the Iowa Synod.

¹⁸ See E. Clifford Nelson's *The Lutherans in North America* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), p. 313ff.

said that election was *in view of* faith. In eternity God foresaw which people would come to faith and remain in faith, and because of this he chose them for salvation.

Vogel sided with Walther in this and the other areas of concern, and he left the Iowa Synod for the Wisconsin Synod. At first Vogel had no congregation to serve. For several months (perhaps including some time before he left the Iowa Synod) he and his family lived in the Watertown, Wisconsin area. Then in May 1876 he received a call to serve Zion Lutheran of Columbus, Wisconsin, and he accepted.

V. The pastor in Columbus, Wisconsin: 1876-1881

On May 28, 1876 August F. Ernst (1841-1924), president of Northwestern College, Watertown, Wisconsin, installed Vogel as Zion's pastor. Vogel also served as the congregation's grade school teacher.

The main event during Vogel's pastorate at Zion was the building of a new 40 x 70 foot church, which still stands today. The church was dedicated on November 3, 1878. Built of stone, it cost \$5,200, and it is topped by a 125 foot high tower.

Inside the tower is a bell with a story all its own. On February 2, 1873, Kaiser Wilhelm of Prussia had presented the congregation with a cannon and four other artillery pieces. He had captured them from the French in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 and 1871, and he donated them to Zion so that the weapons could be cast into a bell. The pieces arrived in America on July 4, 1876, and were sent by train to Columbus. In April 1878 they were sent back to Baltimore to a master bell craftsman named George Paulus Schmidt, who had 50 years of experience making bells. He added a little Indian tin to the bell to aid its sound, and the McShane Bell Foundry shipped Zion their

bell in May 1878. It weighs 1,600 pounds, and bears the Latin inscription: "*Vivos voco, mortuos plango, fulgura frango.*" ("I call the living; I mourn the dead; I break the lightning!") Metal that once sent men to their death now invites men to life.¹⁹

In Columbus Heinrich Vogel also renewed his writing pursuits. From October 1877 on, especially in 1878 and 1879, he wrote several dozen articles for the Wisconsin Synod's semi-monthly magazine, *Gemeinde-Blatt* ("Congregation Newsletter"). In addition to articles church history, his favorite subject, Vogel wrote some fictional articles. He liked to answer practical questions by means of a story. (See Appendix Three for a list and synopses of these articles.)

On January 29, 1879 Heinrich and Augusta were blessed with another son, Leonard (Leonhard Friedrich Christian). All total the couple had six children, but three do not seem to have survived childhood. It is not know when or where they were born or what their names were.

VI: The pastor in Jefferson, Wisconsin: 1881-1910

In the spring of 1881 Heinrich Vogel received a call to serve St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church of Jefferson, Wisconsin. Zion did not want to let their pastor leave, but he accepted the call. One factor that may have influenced him was that many of St. John's members were Bavarians, just as he was. Quite a few were even from Hof, his birthplace.

Vogel and his family arrived in Jefferson on June 10, 1881, and on June 12 (Trinity

¹⁹ Information about the new church building and the bell are from Zion's 75th anniversary booklet (1958) and a booklet commemorating the centennial of the building (1978).

Sunday) he was installed as pastor by C. J. Körner, pastor of St. Peter's Lutheran, Helenville, Wisconsin.

Vogel's ministry in Jefferson was filled with blessings, but he and his family also experienced grief. On June 7, 1883 Sophie died, possibly of tuberculosis. Her body was buried in the church's cemetery, known today as "Christberg." The tombstone reads, "*Das Mägdlein ist nicht tot, sondern es schläft.*" ("The girl is not dead but asleep"—Matthew 9:24.) Despite God's comfort, the death was very hard on the family. Augusta almost had a breakdown.

Several years later Heinrich and Augusta adopted, somewhat unofficially, a girl about Sophie's age named Grace. She came from the Lutheran children's home in Milwaukee, and she was a type of replacement for Sophie, especially in helping Augusta. Grace lived with the family until after Heinrich's death in 1910.

Heinrich was very busy as St. John's pastor. For the first time in his years of ministry he wasn't responsible for teaching grade school, but he had many other duties. One of these was to visit other churches in the Central Conference of the Wisconsin Synod.²⁰ Holding the position of pastoral visitor was an honor, and it shows that Vogel had the respect of his fellow pastors.

The people of St. John's also held Heinrich Vogel in high esteem. An elderly man who still remembers Vogel recalls that as a pastor he was "above average—very

²⁰ According to Joh. P. Köhler's *The History of the Wisconsin Synod* (Leigh D. Jordahl, trans., 1981), p. 193, Vogel was the conference visitor in 1889. It is not known when he received the position or how long he held it. Other conference visitors at the time included Philip Köhler and August Pieper.

dedicated and very well-liked."²¹ The seventy-fifth anniversary booklet of St. John's describes Vogel similarly:

He made an indelible impression on the congregation, and to this day his memory is revered to a degree as is the good fortune of only a few to enjoy. A man of quiet and unassuming manner and of a lovable disposition and a sermonizer of more than ordinary ability, he quickly captivated the hearts of his people.²²

Vogel also had a sense of humor. When his eight-year old son Leonard asked him to sign his autograph book, Heinrich wrote,

*Gehorsam ist besser als opfer.
Ihr Vater und Mutter*

H. Vogel — Jefferson 8-2-87

In English:

"To obey is better than sacrifice" (1 Samuel 15:22)
Your father and mother

H. Vogel — Jefferson 8-2-87

As in Columbus, one of the big events during Vogel's years in Jefferson was the construction of a new church building. By 1895 the congregation had grown to the point that the old building did not have enough capacity, so they set about to build a much larger church. Julius Heimerl, an architect from Jefferson, drew the plans for a 79 x 100 foot structure. It was built of brick and sandstone with a field-stone foundation, and it

²¹ Clarence Frohmader, 91-year old former bank president in Jefferson, still remembers Pastor Vogel from his youth. In a personal interview with the author on February 8, 1992, Frohmader also recalled that Vogel did not insist on his own way at congregational meetings. He was quiet when it came to discussing non-spiritual matters.

Even the local newspaper, *The Jefferson Banner*, was aware of Vogel's mild-mannered character. In 1906, on the occasion of his twenty-fifth anniversary at St. John's, the newspaper reported: "The relations between the pastor and members have always been of the most friendly and harmonious character, and in looking back upon his labors Rev. Vogel can rightly feel that he has been a faithful servant of God who, while of a conciliatory nature, has never faltered to do his duty as he saw it."

²² *Diamond Jubilee: Evangelical Lutheran Church of St. John, Jefferson, Wisconsin, 1851-1926* (Jefferson, 1926), pp.12-13.

includes an 80-foot east tower, and a 125-foot west tower. The latter contains a large clock with three bells.

The interior of the church is also impressive. The ceiling, 36 feet above the floor, consists of a double arch, two side arches, and a peaked dome. The pews in the nave seat 800 people, and there is room for over 150 more in the balcony. Electric lighting, a rarity in those days, was installed from the outset. A mighty Kimball pipe organ was also included. The total cost of the building was approximately \$27,000.

The new church was dedicated on December 15, 1895. Vogel led the morning service in German. The opening hymn was "*Tut mir auf die schöne Pforte*" ("Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty"). Philip von Rohr (1843-1908), president of the Wisconsin Synod, led the prayer of dedication. After an anthem by the mixed choir, Adolf Hönecke (1835-1908), director of the synod's Theological Seminary in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, preached the sermon on the basis of Matthew 11:2-10. He expressed his joy that the congregation was going to worship and serve God in their beautiful new building.

In the afternoon there was another festival service, this time mainly in English.²³ Pastor August Bandler of Milwaukee preached on Matthew 7:24-27 and told the assembly how to build on a firm foundation. Later in the service Pastor Vogel addressed everyone and stressed that to God alone belonged all glory, both on this glorious day and in the future.

In the evening there was one more service. So many people came that some had to

²³ It does not seem that Heinrich Vogel was very fluent in English. Clarence Frohmader, mentioned earlier, recalls that Pastor Vogel would have his son Leonard translate his sermon into English for him if he needed to preach in English. Then Pastor Vogel would read the sermon from the pulpit.

be turned away. President von Rohr preached on Revelation 21:1-3 under the theme "Our Houses of God are Courts of Heaven." He emphasized that in God's house people meet God through the gospel.

On October 6, 1901 there were two more dedication services because artists had recently finished painting the church's interior. At the front of the church on the left they depicted Jesus and Peter on the Sea of Galilee, and on the right an angel strengthening Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. Vogel preached in German in the morning service on Psalm 84:1-2. He stressed that the Lord's mercy to sinners is what makes a church truly beautiful.

Five years later St. John's was the site of another celebration. On Tuesday evening, June 12, 1906, exactly twenty-five years becoming St. John's pastor, Vogel was honored with a silver anniversary service. The congregation gathered to thank God for all the work their pastor had done among them.²⁴ Thirteen other pastors from the Central Conference of the Wisconsin Synod also attended. At the end of the service the pastors gave Vogel a valuable multi-volume lexicon, and the president of the congregation gave him a sizeable monetary gift. The Ladies Aid Society²⁵ had already shown Vogel their gratitude by purchasing a new suit of clothes for him. Pastor Vogel concluded the evening by thanking everyone for their love.

²⁴ The *Jefferson Banner* reported that in the course of 25 years Vogel had preached 2000 sermons, baptized 1216 persons, confirmed 888 children, married 393 couples, and conducted 470 funerals. Each year, therefore, he averaged 80 sermons, 49 baptisms, 36 confirmations, 16 marriages and 19 funerals. St. John's was one of the largest Lutheran congregations in Wisconsin at this time.

²⁵ Known originally as *Die Frauenverein* (the women's guild), it began in 1904. Augusta Vogel was its first president.

In early 1909 Vogel began suffering the illness that proved to be his last. The disease caused Vogel much pain and kept him from carrying out his ministry fully. For example, toward the end Vogel had to conduct the Sunday worship service from a chair. He was so weak that two elders would carry him from the sacristy to a place in front of the altar.²⁶ Still, he never complained publicly. He thanked God for his trial and often expressed the hope of dying in God's grace.

When the illness worsened in early 1910, the Ladies Aid Society and other members collected money to send Vogel to a sanitarium for four weeks. When he returned after Easter (March 13) he seemed to have regained his strength, and his family hoped he would be well again. But his improvement did not last long. His strength gave way visibly. On May 20, Pentecost Sunday, Heinrich Vogel performed his last public act of ministry—he helped bless the confirmands, and he urged them with earnest words to remain true to their Savior.

After that Sunday Vogel could not leave his sick bed. This condition lasted three weeks. Finally, on Tuesday afternoon, June 7, Vogel received what he had hoped for. With his loved ones surrounding him, Heinrich Vogel quietly fell asleep in the Lord. He was 68 years, 2 months and 5 days old.

On June 10, the same day Heinrich Vogel and his family had arrived in Jefferson 29 years before, his funeral was held. Pastor Julius Haase of Friedens, Randolph, Wisconsin led a devotion at the parsonage. Shortly after 2 pm the public funeral was held inside the church building. Pastor Otto H. Koch of Zion, Columbus preached in

²⁶ This is another of Clarence Frohmader's recollections.

German, and Professor Hans K. Moussa of Northwestern College preached in English.²⁷ Six fellow pastors served as pallbearers.²⁸ According to the local newspaper, Vogel's funeral was probably the largest ever seen in Jefferson.

At the grave site in Union Cemetery Pastor August F. Nicolaus of St. Paul's, Fort Atkinson officiated. The congregation mourned for their pastor, and they insisted on paying all funeral and burial expenses.

Still, the person who missed Heinrich Vogel the most was his faithful wife Augusta. They had been married 47 years. One can sense her feelings for her husband in her decision that his body be buried in Jefferson at Union Cemetery. He had asked to be buried a few miles outside of Jefferson in the Christberg cemetery. Augusta did not carry this out, however, because she wanted to be able to visit the grave site regularly. Every Saturday she went to the cemetery to put flowers on his grave, and when she became too old to walk that far, she sent her granddaughters to do it for her.²⁹

VII. The pastor in perspective

Today if you visit Heinrich Vogel's grave you will find a large marker that says "H. Vogel." This too, is not exactly what he wanted. On October 7, 1903, when Vogel wrote down some instructions for his burial, he requested,

²⁷ Moussa succeeded Vogel as St. John's pastor. He served in Jefferson from 1910 to 1924.

²⁸ These were Pastors Fredrich of Helenville, Ohde of Whitewater, Bergmann of Milton, Pankow of Waterloo, Klingmann of Watertown and Guenther of Oconomowoc. All were members of the Central Conference.

²⁹ These granddaughters were Leonard's daughters Leonarda and Gertrude. Leonarda and her older brother Heinrich had both been baptized by their grandfather.

Augusta Vogel died on October 29, 1929, less than a week short of her 83rd birthday.

If my death is reported in a secular or church newspaper, include no more than the facts below. If my grave should have a memorial, which is completely unnecessary, let it in any case be a very simple one. Don't inscribe anything else except the name, the birth and death dates, and Ephesians 2:8.³⁰

Thus it reads: "*Aus Gnaden seid ihr selig geworden durch den Glauben, und dasselbige nicht aus euch; Gottes Gabe ist es*" ("By grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God").

Clearly, Heinrich Vogel was a humble man. Elsewhere in his burial instructions he asked that his funeral involve no pomp and no eulogies. "At the grave site don't talk about me at length," he wrote. "Just have a scriptural order of committal." He also added, "The judgment concerning my life and efforts I await from my heavenly Father, who has covered my sins with Christ's merit."

Heinrich Vogel was also a faithful pastor. He cared deeply about his people. An example of this is a meditation he wrote which was printed in the Jefferson newspaper shortly after his death:

The Street which is called Straight

Travellers to the ancient city of Damascus tell us that the street called "straight" is really very crooked. Originally, however, the name was more appropriate, for it was once a beautiful avenue running directly through the city from east to west. But the street called "straight" was a busy street, and the rapidly multiplying shops of those grasping Eastern tradesmen began to send out irregular projections on both sides, encroaching upon the highway and gradually changing its direct course.

Do you remember how it was when you started out in the Christian life? Didn't you resolve that your course would be unswerving, your life clean and holy? How is it with you now? Is that life all you have purposed it should be? Or have you allowed pride, ambition, pleasure and other lusts of the flesh to pervert that life? Has it any longer a right to be called the "Christian" life? Can the street be called straight?

³⁰ This and other quotes from Vogel's burial instructions are the author's translation.

If not, what can be done about it? How can the street be made straight again, the life to be made holy? Your own conscience will tell you. Push back the invaders. Some of them are all right in their places. Don't let them twist and choke up and disfigure the beautiful avenue of your life. Draw closer to Christ. Learn from him how to be in the world and yet not of the world. Then your street may run through the noisiest, most distracting part of this earthly life of ours and remain peaceful, beautiful and pure.

—One of the last thoughts of the Rev. H. Vogel³¹

Finally, Heinrich Vogel was a man who trusted and loved his Savior. Perhaps the easiest place to see this is in the four poems he wrote for the *Gemeinde-Blatt* in 1885 and 1886. (See Appendix Four.) One of them is entitled, "*Gott liebt mich*."

Gott liebt mich

Gott liebt mich! Dieses höre
Welt, Teufel, Höll' und Tod.
Dies ist mein Trost; ihn störe
Mir keine Erdennoth.

Gott hat mich hoch geliebet,
Eh' ins Leben trat;
Und nun ich lebe, giebet
Er Gnade mir um Gnad'.

Und wenn ich einstens sterbe,
Nimmt mein HErr JESus mich
Hinauf zu selgem Erbe
Und liebt mich ewiglich.

³¹ The simplicity of this meditation and of much of Vogel's writings may leave the reader with impression that Vogel was not a deep-thinking theologian. But that would not be correct.

For example, in October 1908 an article by Vogel appears in the *Theologische Quartalschrift* ("Theological Quarterly"), the official theological journal of the Wisconsin Synod. The article is entitled: "*Was lehrt die Konkordienformel von dem Verhalten des Menschen bei der Bekehrung? Eine Konferenzarbeit, die auf Wunsch der Centralkonferenz der 'Theologischen Zeitschrift' mitgeteilt wird*" ("What does the Formula of Concord Teach about a Person's Condition in Conversion? A Conference Paper Shared with the 'Theological Times' at the Request of the Central Conference"). See Volume 5, number 4, pages 197-217.

God Loves Me

God loves me! Listen up
World, devil, hell and death.
This is my comfort;
No earthly need can disturb it.

God loved me dearly
Before I ever entered life;
And now, throughout my life
He gives me blessing after blessing.

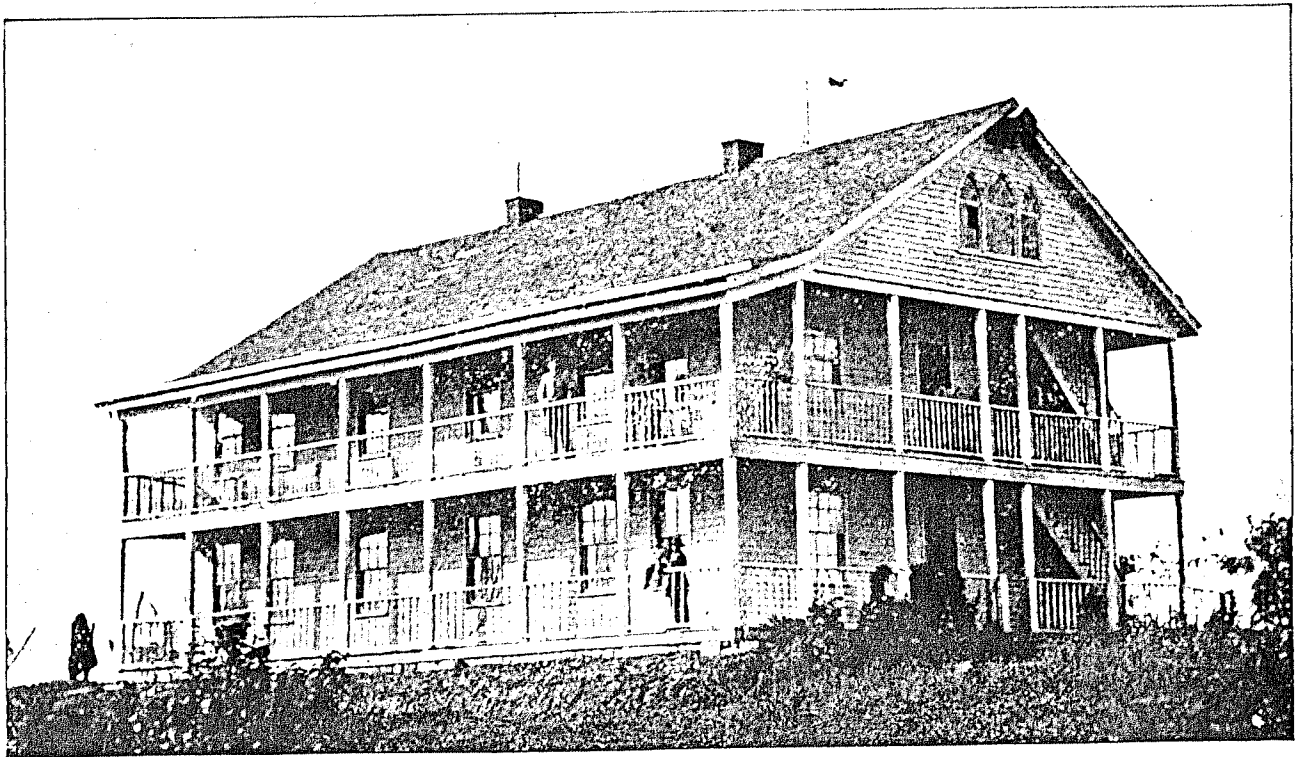
And when I die someday,
My Lord Jesus will take me up
To be his blessed heir
And will love me forever.

So he shall!

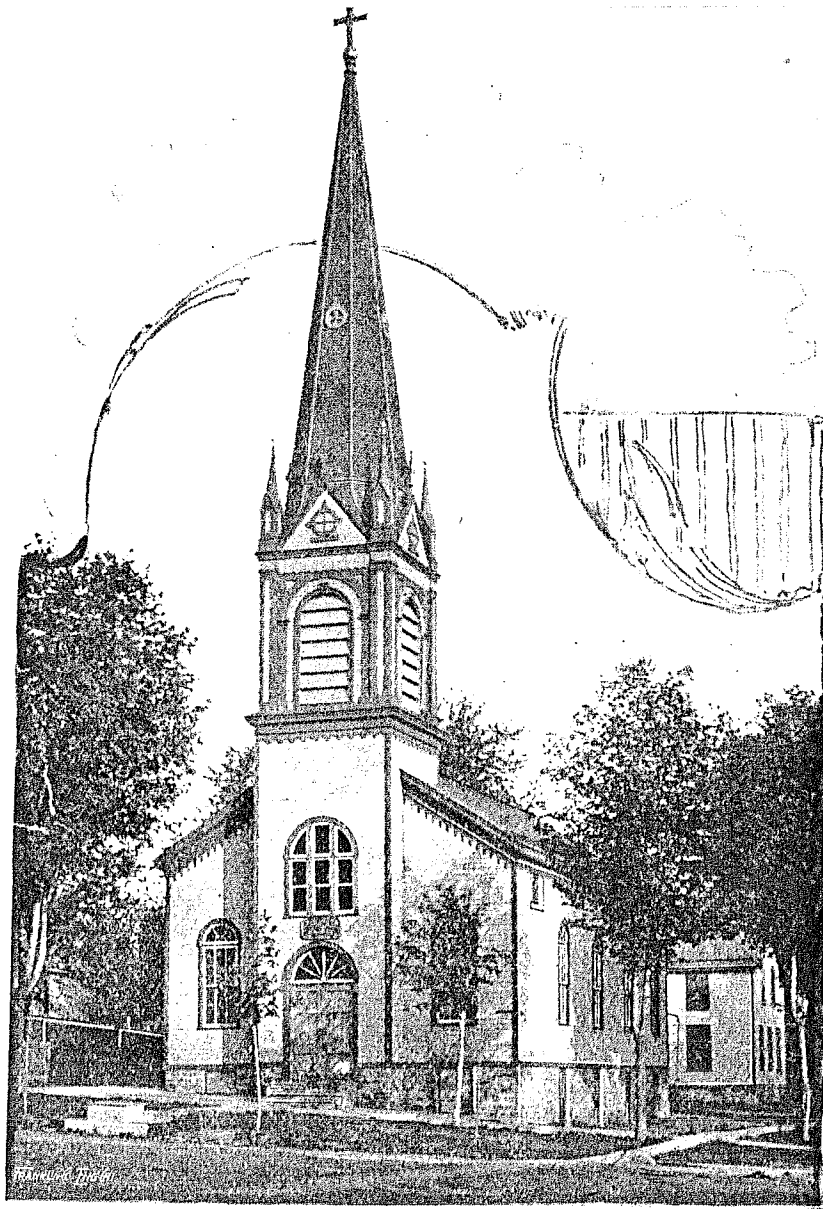
Appendix One



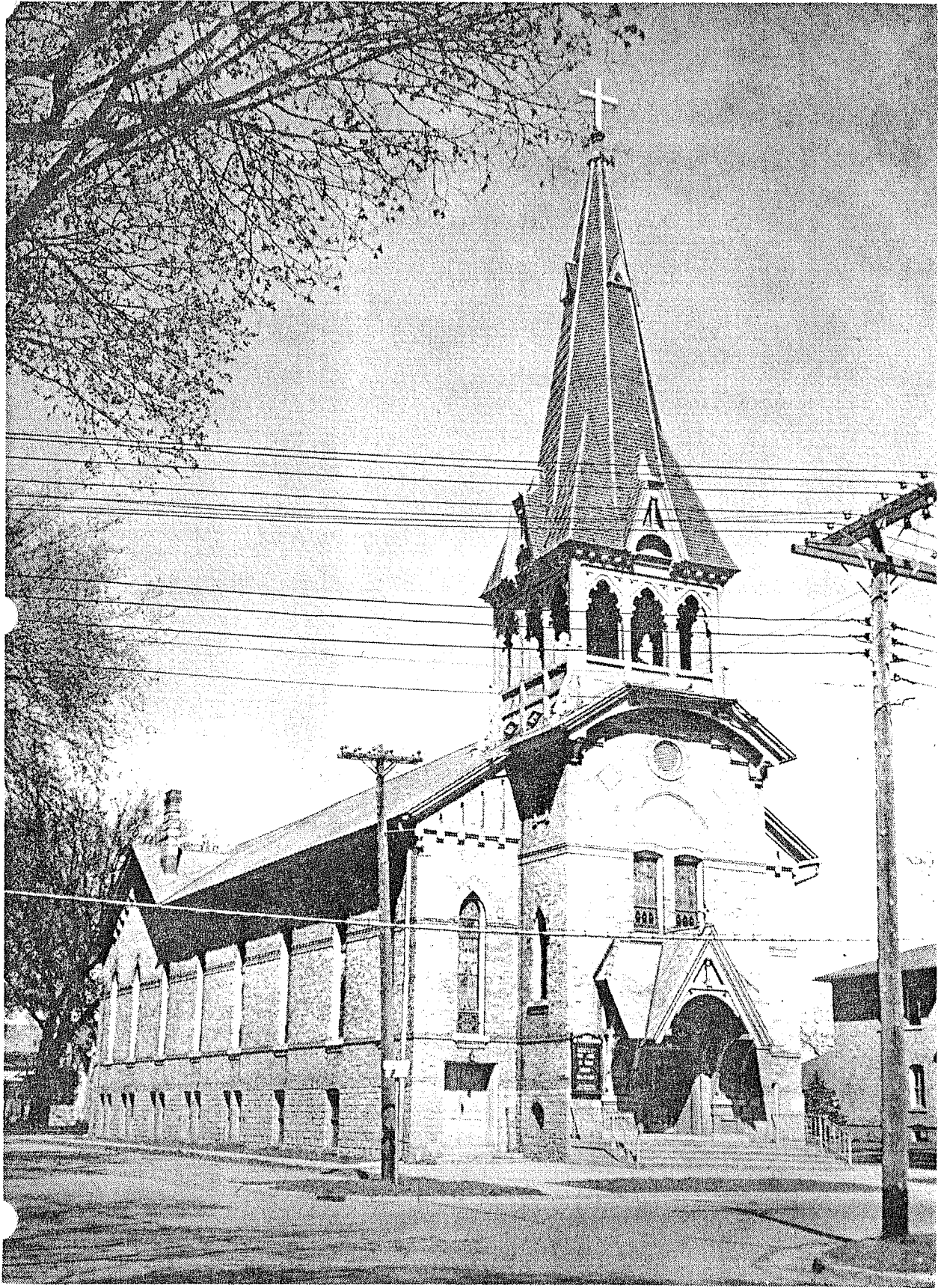
(from Gottfried Fritschel's *Quellen und Dokumente zur Geschichte und Lehrstellung der ev.-luth. Synode von Iowa u. a. Staaten* [Chicago: Wartburg Publishing], p. 137)



Wartburg Seminary at St. Sebald, Iowa, 1857



St. Johanneskirche, Madison, Wis.



Zion Lutheran Church — Columbus, Wisconsin



St. John's Lutheran Church — Jefferson, Wisconsin

Appendix Two
Feature Articles in the *Kirchen-Blatt* of the Iowa Synod

1. *Gemeindegottesdienst* ("Divine Worship in a Congregation")
September 1 - October 1, 1871; February 1 - May 1, 1872
An explanation of the value of liturgical worship by viewing a contemporary Lutheran service, Old Testament worship at the temple, early New Testament worship, and worship at Luther's time
2. *Blicke in einen römisch-Katholischen Katechismus* ("Some Looks into a Roman Catholic Catechism")
October 1 - October 15 - November 1 - November 15 - December 1 - December 15, 1872
A survey of questions and answers given in a Roman Catholic catechism, pointing out its errors
3. *Bibel und Natur* ("The Bible and Nature")
March 1 - March 15 - April 1 - May 1 - May 15, 1873
A discussion of how God created all things and all people; based on Genesis 1-2
4. *Züge aus dem Leben eines christlichen Königs* ("Vignettes from the Life of a Christian King")
September 1, 1873
5 brief stories from the life of Prussia's Friedrich Wilhelm IV, showing what a fine Christian he was
5. *Das Buch der Bücher* ("The Book of Books")
March 15 - April 1 - April 15, 1874
A survey of the early church fathers, proving that the New Testament was written by the apostles and was completed before 100 A.D.
6. *Unser Arbeitsfeld im südlichen Minnesota* ("Our Field of Labor in Southern Minnesota")
March 15, 1874
A summary of the work of Iowa Synod traveling preachers in Minnesota, especially that of Michael Reck, Vogel's brother-in-law
7. *Eine Rechtfertigung der Wunder der Schrift* ("A Vindication of Scripture's Miracles")
March 15, 1875
A brief summary of the conclusions of a scientist from Zurich; he realized that the Bible's miracles can't be explained by human laws
8. *Aphorismen, d.i., buntes Allerlei aus alter und neuer Zeit* ("Aphorisms, that is, All Sorts of Subjects from Old and Modern Times")
June 1, 1875
An examination of several figures from church history to see whether they were serving Christ or Satan
9. *Ist's Pfarrertyrannei* ("Is it Tyranny by the Pastor?")
July 15, 1875
A fictional conversation between Albert and Christlieb about whether Albert's pastor is too domineering
10. *Sonntagsfeier* ("Sunday Holiday")
July 15, 1875
An appeal not to work on Sunday so that one can attend church

Appendix Three
Feature Articles in the *Gemeinde-Blatt* of the Wisconsin Synod

1. *Zum Reformationsfeste* ("For the Festival of Reformation")
 October 15, 1877
 A meditation on God's grace to the church through Martin Luther

2. *Aus der Kirchengeschichte* ("Out of Church History")

<i>Ignatius</i> ("Ignatius")	December 1, 1877
<i>Polycarpus</i> ("Polycarp")	January 1, 1878
<i>Origenes</i> ("Origen")	February 1, 1878
<i>Athanasius</i> ("Athanasius")	February 15, 1878
<i>St. Augustinus</i> ("Augustine")	May 15, 1878
<i>Muhamed</i> ("Mohammed")	June 15, 1878
<i>Bonifacius</i> ("Boniface")	August 1, 1878
<i>Der erste Kreuzzug</i> ("The First Crusade")	October 1, 1878
<i>Die Waldenser</i> ("The Waldensians")	November 1, 1878
<i>Johann Hus</i> ("John Hus")	January 15, 1879
<i>Die Husiten</i> ("The Husites")	May 1, 1879

 Stories of some of the most important figures of ancient church history

3. *Die Evangelisch-lutherische Kirche in Ungarn* ("The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Hungary")
 May 15 - June 1, 1879
Österreich ("Austria")
 June 15, 1879
 Brief histories of the Lutheran church in two countries which are mainly Roman Catholic today

4. *Was willst du Werden? Etwas für die christliche Jünglinge und deren Eltern* ("What Do You Want to Be? Something for Christian Young People and their Parents")
 August 15 - September 15 - October 15, 1879
 A fictional conversation between a pastor, some boys and their fathers about choosing one's vocation

5. *Bei wem dienst du? Ein Wort für Knechte, Mägde und Arbeiter* ("Whom are you serving? A Word for Servants, Maids, and Workmen")
 November 15, 1879
 A fictional conversation between a pastor and Johann, who is employed by an unbeliever

Etwas für Frauen, die Schlechte Männer haben ("Something for Ladies who Have Bad Husbands")
 December 1, 1879
 A fictional conversation between a pastor and Frau X, who wants to leave her husband because he has been coming home drunk

Für Männer, welche Zänkische Frauen haben ("For Men who Have Shrewish Husbands")
 December 15, 1879
 A fictional conversation between a pastor and a man who feels as if he needs to get away from his wife for a while

6. *Kirchenfair* ("Church Fair")
 March 1, 1879
Kirchenfair noch einmal ("Church Fair, Once More")
 April 15, 1879
 An accusation that an Iowa Synod congregation in Dubuque was sinning and blending in with the world by hosting a money-raising church fair

7. *Eine Gemeindegründung* ("The Founding of a Congregation")
 April 1 - June 1 - July 1, 1880
 Fictional story of Hans Glaubrecht ("John Orthodox") and Peter Ehrlich ("Peter Honorable"); they help found a Lutheran congregation in an American settlement; things get off to a rocky start because of the opposition of Squire Kunz, but eventually the truth wins out

8. *Prüfet die Geister* ("Test the Spirits")
 June 1, 1881
 A fictional account of how a less-than-orthodox pastor troubles a congregation of German immigrants; the moral of the story: "We should have paid better attention to our catechism."

9. *Gott wills!* ("God wills it!")
 April 1, 1883
 An encouragement to spread the gospel on the basis of Matthew 28:18-20; the title is a quote from Pope Urban II, when he sent off the first crusaders

10. *Sieh nicht hinter dich!* ("Don't look behind you!")
 August 15, 1883
 Another encouragement to reach out with the gospel to the heathen; the title is from Genesis 19:26

11. *Ein Kalendargespräch* ("A Calendar Conversation")
 January 15, 1905
 A fictional conversation between Hans (John), Michel (Michael) and Onkel Heinrich (Uncle Henry) about the *Gemeinde-blatt Kalendar*, which was a type of synod almanac; it contained a church year calendar, among other things

Gespräch von drei Bekannten über ein Logenbegräbnis ("Conversation between Three Acquaintances about a Lodge Burial")
 April 1, 1905
 A fictional conversation between Hans (John), Michel (Michael) and Onkel Heinrich (Uncle Henry) in which they conclude that a lodge burial is not a Christian burial

 C.M.A.
 September 1 - September 15, 1905
 A fictional conversation between Hans (John), Michel (Michael) and Onkel Heinrich (Uncle Henry) about a dangerous new lodge for young men called "The Coming Men of America"

12. *Die Endlose Kette* ("The Endless Chain")
 April 15, 1906
 An explanation why a "Christian" chain letter which the author received was not Christian at all

13. *Valerius Herberger* ("Valerius Herberger")
 October 15 - November 1, 1907
 The story of an admirable Lutheran preacher and hymnist (1562-1627)

Appendix Four

Poems in the *Gemeinde-Blatt*

In the left column are Heinrich Vogel's poems. In the right column is a translation of the poem, but without rhyme or meter. The last poem, "Nach Dir nur, HErr, verlangst mich" has two translations, the second of which attempts to be more poetic. All translations are by the author except the final one, which is a tandem effort between Professor John Jeske of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and the author.

Morgenbitte

Abba, lieber Vater
Sei du mein Berater,
Sorge du allein;
Laß mein Werk gelingen,
Wollen und vollbringen
Dir gefällig sein.

Deinen Geist mir schenke,
Daß ich wohl bedenke
Meine Lebenszeit;
Lenke meine Sinnen,
Geist des HErrn, von hinnen
Nach der Ewigkeit.

Hilf mir auch, mein Leiter,
Daß ich froh und heiter
Trag' des Tages Last.
Wollest deinen Segen
Auf die Arbeit legen
Bis zur Abendrast.

Gemeinde-Blatt, December 1, 1885

Gott liebt mich

Gott liebt mich! Dieses höre
Welt, Teufel, Höll' und Tod.
Dies ist mein Trost; ihn störe
Mir keine Erdennoth.

Gott hat mich hoch geliebet,
Eh' ins Leben trat;
Und nun ich lebe, giebet
Er Gnade mir um Gnad'.

Und wenn ich einstens sterbe,
Nimmt mein HErr JESus mich
Hinauf zu selgem Erbe
Und liebt mich ewiglich.

Gemeinde-Blatt, July 15, 1885

Morning Prayer

Abba, dear Father,
Be my Counselor—
You alone be responsible.
Let my work succeed,
And may what I want to do and what I get done
Be pleasing to you.

Grant me your Spirit
That I may wisely consider
How I spend my lifetime.
Direct my senses,
Spirit of the Lord, away from this life
Toward eternity.

Help me also, my Guide,
That gladly and cheerfully
I bear the burden of the day.
If it is your will,
Bless my work
Until the evening rest.

God Loves Me

God loves me! Listen up
World, devil, hell and death.
This is my comfort;
No earthly need can disturb it.

God loved me dearly
Before I ever entered life;
And now, throughout my life
He gives me blessing after blessing.

And when I die someday,
My Lord Jesus will take me up
To be his blessed heir
And will love me forever.

Ermunterung

Ringe, Seele, dringe vorwärts unverrückt,
Laß nur, was dahinten, stets nach vorn geblickt;
Stets zum Kampf gerüstet, schreite muthig fort,
Bald ist ja gewonnen der ersehnte Port.

Richte, Seele, weder rechts noch links den Blick,
Vorwärts unverdrossen, nimmer sieh' zurück;
Was du schon bestanden, hemmt den Schritt nicht mehr,
Aber vorne stehet noch der Feinde Heer.

Darum frisch gewappnet, an das Schwert die Hand!
Kämpfend nur erreichet man das Vaterland.
Sieh', die Überwinder jubeln froh dir zu;
Kämpf! nach kurzem Streite folget ew'ge Ruh'.

Gemeinde-Blatt, May 1, 1886

Nach Dir nur, HErr, verlanget mich

Nach Dir nur, HErr, verlanget mich,
Mein Gott ich hoffe nur auf Dich
Im Leben und in Sterben,
Ich harre Dein in aller Noth,
O sei du bei mir, wenn der Tod
Nun wird den Leib verderben.

Nach Dir nur, HErr, verlanget mich,
In Deine Hand befehle ich,
O Jesu, meine Seele;
Sie ist ja Dein Geschenk allein,
O laß sie zu Dir gehen ein
Aus dieser Kummerhöhle.

Nach Dir nur, HErr, verlanget mich,
Und meine Seele freuet sich,
Wie sollte sie wohl trauern;
Sie hofft und weiß, Du läßt sie nicht,
Du führest sie zur Heimat licht,
In Salems goldne Mauern.

to the tune "*Kommt her zu mir*" (TLH 263)
Gemeinde-Blatt, September 15, 1886

Encouragement

Struggle, my soul, press on undismayed,
Only leave what's behind, ever looking ahead;
Ever fit for battle, march forth confidently.
Soon you will reach the goal you long for.

Look, my soul, neither to the right nor left,
Go forward cheerfully determined—never look back.
What you have passed through no longer slows your step,
But ahead still stands the enemy host.

So, newly armed, put your hand on your sword!
The only way to attain our Fatherland is by fighting.
Look—the conquerors salute you with joy.
Fight! After a short battle comes eternal rest.

Lord, for You Alone I Long

Lord, for You alone I long;
I hope alone in you, my God,
In living and in dying.
I wait for you in every need,
O, stand beside me when death
Destroys my body now.

Lord, for You alone I long;
Into your hand I commend
My soul, O Jesus.
It is nothing but a gift from you—
O, let it enter into your presence
From this sorrow-hole.

Lord, for You alone I long,
And my soul rejoices,
As much as it ought to grieve;
It hopes and knows that you will not leave it
You will lead it to the bright home
Inside Jerusalem's golden walls.

Lord, for You Alone I Long

For You alone I long, O Lord;
I hope alone in you, my God,
While living and when dying.
I trust in you in every need,
O, stand beside me now I plead
In hours so sorely trying.

For You alone I long, O Lord;
Into your hand I now commend
My soul, O dearest Jesus.
'Tis nothing but a gift from you—
O, let it go and be with you
Where glory never ceases.

For You alone I long, O Lord;
I offer you my praise in song,
I, who deserve but sadness.
You never ever shall me leave.
O, lead me to my home above,
To golden gates of gladness!