

The History of
The Foundation of Trinity Lutheran Church
Brewster, Massachusetts

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Library
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Stan M. Aufderheide

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The history of the Lutheran congregation at Brewster, Massachusetts, begins with Rev. Christian A. Moldstad. Rev. Moldstad was born October 29, 1882 in Deforest, Wisconsin. In 1904 he was graduated from Luther College, Decorah, Iowa. From there he enrolled in and was graduated from Luther Theological Seminary in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1908. His ordination took place in St. Marks, his brother's church in Chicago.

Rev. Moldstad served the Boston Norwegian Lutheran Church for twenty years. He then received and accepted a call to Fairview Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Here he remained for nine years. The Evangelical Lutheran Synod had established a college in Mankato, Minnesota, Bethany Lutheran College, to which Rev. Moldstad was called to teach. He continued teaching for nine years. After this, he officially retired and moved to Cape Cod, Brewster, Massachusetts, where he began the Brewster Lutheran Mission which met in his home for twenty years until his death in 1972.

Rev. Moldstad had married Stephanie Biewend, the daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Adolf Biewend of Trinity Lutheran Church in Boston. They had four children; Hope, Arden, Jay, and Roba.

How It All Began

Time: January 3, 1976:

Setting: The Hope Davis Compound, Cape Cod, Massachusetts

Situation: Private wedding reception of Dean Aufderheide and
Kerryn Kragel

Attending: George and Hope Davis (Hope Moldstad), Jay Moldstad, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Grieves, Paul Chamberlin, Rev. and Mrs. H. F. Aufderheide, Col. USAF (Ret.), Stan Aufderheide, Christine Aufderheide, Paul Hoyer

The wind howled feircely outside ripping its way through the New England woods, screaming at any obstacle in its path; *It* created a heightened feeling of warmth from the fire. The mood was relaxed after a hectic and festve day. The pastor's youngest son had been married earlier, and now, in the confines of bour-bon and gin, tensions evaporated.

After a round of New England oysters, an assortment of goat's-cheese, and an array of hors dourves, all were seated comfortably in the livingroom. Dean's new bride was painting the air with a melody from Bach on the grand piano in the corner. The furnishings were obviously expensive. The room was nicely done, with an appropriate mixture of modern spaciousness and provincial ornateness.

Hope Davis (Moldstad) was said to worth^{be} approximately fifty million dollars. Since the church, ~~was~~ in which Dean and Kerryn's was~~the~~ first marriage, had just been completed that Fall, the conversation soon shifted from the wedding, the honeymoon, to the establishment of a conservative Lutheran congrega-tion on the Cape.

"How had it all begah?" Stan asked inquisitively.

"A generation and four worlds ago," replied Hope. Her eyes seemed to glaze a bit, and you could almost see her mind wind

back the ~~years~~. She was an elegant lady, with the haughtiness and smugness only the very wealthy knew. And yet her eyes betrayed a suppressed kindness, a hidden sympathy that only years of poverty and personal suffering could precipitate. She had indeed tasted of life, both the bitter and the sweet.

"We were very poor," she continued, "yes, very poor. Living off only the scraps and crumbs of others. My parents never complained though, and through the years they managed somehow to save enough pennies for a down payment on the old Captain Knowles homestead." (on the corner of Main Street and Lower Road in Brewster, across the street from the present church building) A slight bitterness was in her voice, perceptible only to those who have known the humiliation of forced charity. It seemed strange to hear this well-preserved woman, surrounded in scintillating opulence, to speak of worn out, hand-me-down clothes, tattered coats, and holey shoes.

"That was in 1945, wasn't it dear," added George Davis. He was a handsome looking man with finely tailored black hair, greying symmetrically at the temples, which added just the right effect for expressing dignity. While Hope's eyes beamed with sagacity, George was rather a puppet. A playboy puppet. He was Hope's second husband, and had married her just in time to save his near bankrupted Marina. (Plymouth Marine, Inc.) Hope's first husband was the source of all her wealth, and after her second marriage she was shrewd enough to have placed the Marina, along with everything else, in her name. George was a Mason,

and therefore, was not a voting member of Trinity Lutheran Church, he was however, very active in its construction since it was principally Hope's money which had financed the edifice. He had a uxorious relationship with Hope, yet it was well diguised through propitious formality, which nicely fit with his sybaritic propensity.

"That is correct, dear," Hope said rather formally. She paused as the maid brought in another round of drinks, and replenished the depleted tray of finger foods. Hope was a very private person, and it was perhaps a combination of the festivity and alcohol, augmented by her affection for Rev. Aufderheide and his wife, which loosed her tongue on this occasion. The glaze reappeared in her eyes as Hope continued, intermittently casting a glance here and there to reassure herself that her audience was captivated.

"Early in 1945 my mother, Stephanie Moldstad, returned by rail to her home town, Boston. She and my father had, years earlier, fallen in love with the Cape, and decided that this would be their final earthly destination. My mother was extremely penurious, obtaining a dollars worth for a penny. She knew that they could not afford the down payment on a house, and live off my father's meager retirement pay. So, she invested their money in the old Capt. Knowles homestead, and renamed it "The Manse." She decided they could convert it into a boarding house, living frugally off the income."

Hope paused, the memories flooding her eyes.

"That was very daring and brave of her," Rose, Rev. Aufderheide's wife said encouragingly. "I mean to have travelled

all that way by herself, and then to have closed a housing purchase." Rose's voice melodiously echoed with one who knew just exactly what kind of courage such action demanded. Herself a child of Australian wealth, she had left her home 'down-under' and had travelled by ship to America, forsaking the security and roots of her country, to be with the man whom she loved. Rose and Hope had become fast, intimate friends, each shrewd judges of character.

"When did Rev. Moldstad join her," Paul asked petulantly?

"It was in 1946," Hope answered demurely. "They set up house and began taking in boarders. The nearest Lutheran church was in Boston, so my father, being a devout and dedicated man, held family worship services on Sunday mornings in the large sunporch of "The Manse" livingroom. Soon, the houseguests began attending. I don't know if they felt obligated, or came out of convenience sake, or what motivated them. My father was still a very adroit and powerful orator. As the number of worshippers increased, "The Manse" became known locally as the "Brewster Lutheran Mission."

The pioneer members included Walter and Florence Shedd, Charles and Christina Ray, Gladys Bearse and daughters Nancy and Marilyn, Edgar and Millie Speight, and Mrs. Gray.

With a tone of almost purile jealousy, Hope continued, "My sister Roba taught Sunday School. Her sister-in-law, Valerie Hause and Nancy Eaton played the piano for services. During the summers attendance swelled to often more than seventy people."

"Wasn't that quite a bit of strain for him?" Christine interjected.

"A rolling stone gathers no moss," Dean sententiously declared.

"That is quite correct," Hope said. "My father was an industrious man, deeply committed to the German work ethic. Besides, the ^{of retirement} ennui^a would have driven him to an early grave. However, most of his work was preaching on Sunday mornings, and only occasionally was he called on for a wedding or funeral. On very special occasions, the congregation gathered together for lunch at #The Manse.# "

"Were you at home at this time," inquired Stan perceptively?

Hope's countenance became doleful, her tone disconsolate, and her voice sounded as though it were generations old as it said, "No, no, I was married for quite a few years by now. I married for wealth. I had developed an antipathy for poverty and all the humiliation that goes with it. I desired the irenic result of money."

"Him who pays has the say, eh," again the sententious voice of Dean.

"So I thought," Hope said remorsefully. "But everything comes with a price. And the poetic justice, or the irony I should say, is that the very thing I had attributed to poverty-- anxiety, the wealth I married only intensified. My first husband was an alcoholic unbeknownst to me at the time of our betrothal. And for twenty-five years I lived in an insipid emotional vacuum. When I finally reached my breaking point and

was about to file for divorce, my husband's vice had taken the toll off his liver and he died. I then of course, met and married George. She cast an innocuous glance at George, who beamed attentively.

"Would you, if you could, do it differently," asked Chris commiserately?

Hope's eyes leveled at Chris, as though there were no one else in the room, and she said with conviction and verity, "I would never, never marry for money. Marry the man, not his pocketbook."

The maid entered, refreshing everyone's libation.

"What happened to your father," Paul asked petulantly?

Hope continued, grateful to return to the original subject. "In 1966, my mother died and sister Jay (who never married) assumed the responsibility of caring for my father and my terminally ill sister, Roba, whose husband had died precociously. The mission's attendance began to dwindle in correlation to my father's deteriorating health. In 1970, "The Manse" was regretfully sold and a new, smaller, more convenient home was built on the Lower Road. There, with the assistance of Rev. Paul Madsen, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, my father continued to conduct services until June of 1971. He was eighty-six and he officially turned his beloved mission over to Vicar Martin Tiegen, who was sent to Brewster from the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The rest of the story of course you know." And in her final way she said, "It is history."

The History

With the arrival of Vicar Martin Teiger, arrangements were

made to rent space in Brewster Town Hall for Sunday worship services.

Vicar Mark Marosick and his wife Linda followed Vicar Teigen in June, 1972. Linda was young and eboullient. She played the piano for services, taught Sunday School, and organized the Ladies Aid.

In July of 1972, Hope and George Davis permanently made their home on the Cape. They of course joined the Mission Church. Realizing the need for a proper place of worship and educational facility, and remembering her parents' dream of constructing a small New England style church on their two acre lot across the street from "The Manse" (which they still owned), the Davis' began a thorough investigation of all the possibilities.

In February, 1973, The Brewster Lutheran Mission became Trinity Lutheran Curch, organized and incorporated under Massachusetts state laws, and subsequently became a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. All things looked copacetic.

Then disaster struck. In June of 1973, Vicar Mark Marozick's year ended, the Synod did not assign a replacement vicar, and ended the monthly stipend. The Church's finances were already in deplorable condition, and there was only a handful of members. Hope Davis was extremely reluctant to step in and financially bail out the congregation, as she decided it was unwise for the Church to depend on her alone financially.

Many felt that this situation would spell the doom of

Trinity Lutheran Church.

However, the tiny nucleus of Christians refused to give up. Herb Grieves, Ben Bean, Ed Speight, and Paul Chamberlin prompted the Davis's to continue into their investigation into ways and means to build an edifice. They hoped that having an established building would draw many locals into the congregation. Paul Chamberlin conducted services every Sunday, aside from teaching high school full time.

The Davis's conferred with their attorney, with architects, builders, and parishioners. The church structure, due to local ordinances, had to comply with certain outward appearances. Eventually a plan was formulated: Hope Davis would deed the two acre lot across the street from her parents' home to Trinity Lutheran Church. She would also gift to the Church her inherited antique gun collection of the late Barton J. Thompson, the sale of which would produce funds sufficient to establish the "Hope T. Davis Building Fund".

In consideration of these conveyances, Trinity Lutheran Church agreed to transfer into the Building Fund a legacy received from pioneer members Walter and Florence Shedd, and a substantial sum of money amortized in small monthly installments.

George Davis organized, supervised, and became Chairman of the Building Committee. The Ladies Aid, members, and friends, contributed time and money for such items as an organ, chancel furniture, furnishings, and equipment.

Ed Speight built the altar, lecturn, and pulpit with his carpentry skills.

Plans and specifications were soon in print and interest in the project grew.

In July of 1974, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod assigned Vicar Howard F. Aufderheide to Trinity. The arrival of Vicar Aufderheide, who was ordained as Pastor at Trinity in May, 1975, was timely indeed. His organizational and administrative skills acquired in military service proved indispensable in the building of the church.

Finally on February 2, 1975, contracts were signed with local builders and ground-breaking ceremonies were held on the site. Seven months later, August 3, 1975, the building was ready for use.

This statement of confession was printed on the back of the Commemorative Booklet.

Our Church

"The members of Trinity Lutheran Church believe the Bible to be the inspired, inerrant, and authoritative Word of God, in which He has revealed Himself, His will, and the only way to eternal life. We believe that God is eternally existent in three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We believe that Jesus Christ is the very Son of God, in His birth of the Virgin Mary also as true Man, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious, atoning death on the Cross whereby He paid for the sins of the world, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His return on Judgment Day in power and glory.

We believe that through the regeneration of the Holy Spirit,

man receives the forgiveness of sins by faith in Christ as a free gift, by the grace of God alone, and not by any merit of his character or his good works.

We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; the saved unto the resurrection of life with God in eternal glory, and the lost unto the resurrection of eternal damnation. We believe in the spiritual unity of all believers of all times in our Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior."

Officers of the Congregation of August, 1975 were:

Herbert H. Grieves.....President
 Norton A. Bean.....Secretary-Treasurer
 Paul T. Chamberlin.....First Elder
 Violet Feidrich.....President, Ladies Aid
 Christine Bean.....Sunday School Superintendent

Through the years of dedication and efforts of a small nucleus of Christians bore into fruition the dream of Rev. C. A. Moldstad, 1904 - 1972.