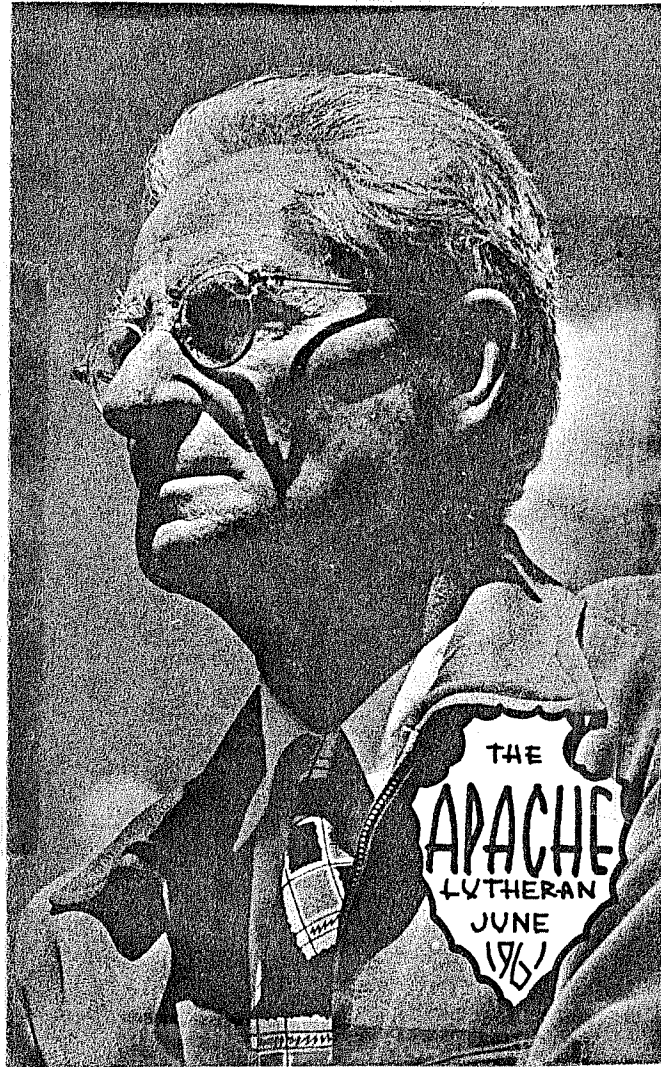


The Reverend Missionary E. Edgar Guenther: The Lord's Faithful Servant in bringing
the Gospel to the Apaches



Church History Paper
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May 24, 1990
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Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Library
11831 N. Seminary Drive, 65W
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E. Edgar Guenther: The Lord's Faithful Servant

Remember your leaders, who spoke the Word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. Hb.13:8

The writer to the Hebrews gives us the reason why we study history. God commands it. It is beneficial for our faith and life to examine the lives of the Lord's servants in the past that we, the Lord's present day servants, may learn from them and receive encouragement and hope. Such history is a heritage from the Lord to be treasured by us today that we may more effectively train future servants of the Lord to spread the Gospel of His Grace into all the world until the end of time.

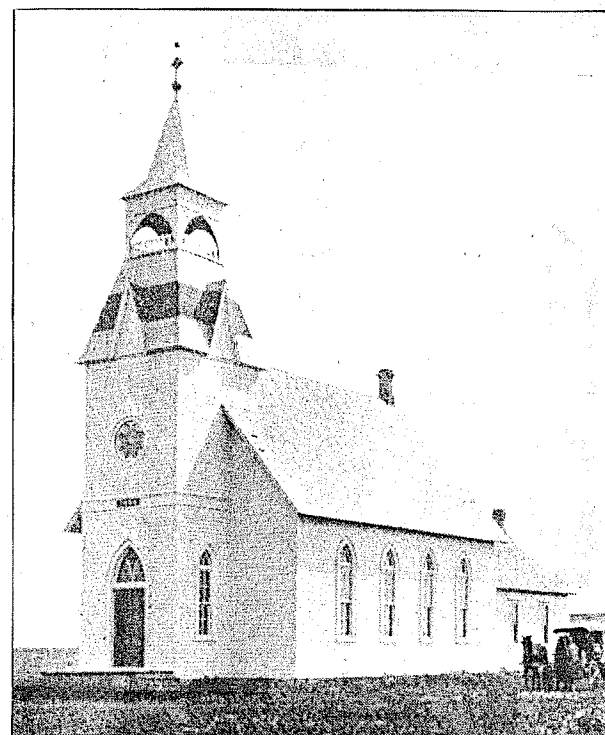
E. Edgar Guenther is such a servant of the Lord, the study of whom will prove most profitable. Before beginning the actual history of his life and fifty year ministry among the Apaches, I would like to mention one of his favorite Bible passages, John 10:16, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring and they shall hear My voice and there shall be one fold and One Shepherd." We shall see that even from his childhood Missionary Guenther wanted to play a role in fulfilling this promise of the Savior and that his faith in these words of the Savior was confirmed by his own fruitful ministry among the Apache Indians.

E. Edgar Guenther was born on June first 1885 in Rauville South Dakota. His father had been born in Goldlauter Germany. After serving for a while as an apprentice for a gunsmith, his father headed for America aboard a steamship. There he settled in Reedsburg Wisconsin. Guenther's mother, Emma Rau, was born in Honey Creek Wisconsin, near Reedsburg. Her father Ludwig Rau had served in both the Prussian and Union armies. In 1879 Ludwig Rau headed out for the South Dakota territory. He settled near Watertown. Here he staked his claim to a homestead: a tract of a 160 acres that was very difficult to work. A year

later he helped to build a railroad going through the area. The surrounding township was named Rauville in his honor.

Soon after this Guenter's father moved to this part of South Dakota, where he met and married Emma Rau. He also worked a homestead near Rauville. They started out extremely poor as Guenter writes, "with a horse with the heaves and a kitchen table with crooked legs." Early stories from this time include memories of his father building a smoke house out an eight foot snow bank, his mother telling him of the time someone stole the bedding out of his crib, and his own recollection of watering both their own and their neighbor's cattle: a very tiresome chore. In his pre-school days he also remembers hoeing up Indian potatoes, while imagining himself to "be a real Sioux." The poverty of the family meant few toys for little Guenter except for his inventive imagination. It also meant the constant gathering of "Dakota coal" (buffalo chips) for the heating of the house.

From his mother Edgar learned stories of Jesus and His love for children. Upon such stories he would often meditate as he saw the glory of the Lord in creation. The Guenter's worshipped every Sunday at their little church in Rauville, St. John's. Here the women and younger children sat on the left, while the men and older boys sat on the right. Guenter's father sat alone up front because he was the "Vorsaenger", who started off the hymns unassisted. This church had a crystal chandelier and a combined altar and pulpit. The Pastor who served there and another congregation some miles away was Pastor Luebbert. Guenter remembers him as a "saintly man" and a consecrated giant. But his most compelling



St. John's Rauville

memory is of the picture of Jesus' head bearing the crown of thorns. For him that was the embodiement of all Paul says in 2 Cor. 5:21; "For God made Him who knew no sin, to be sin for us so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."

In the fall of 1890, he started attending the grade school—a little white country school house two miles away. He remembers the teachers of that time as expecting more out of their pupils; such as at an early age not only being able to spell the words but also to pronounce them correctly. This school did not waste time with fluff for their assignments but moved the students quickly into poetry, history, geography, and arithmetic. The books for school were all purchased by the parents. He remembers three teachers in particular. One was a farmer's son who taught them to write business letters. Another was a beautiful teacher who insisted they write beautifully. The third was a large man known for his practical discipline. Outside of school hours his time was consumed in the daily chores around the house and farm. For his "allowance" he took up such money-making chores as raising potatoes, cauliflower, skinning rabbits and gophers.

There was a German Lutheran Sunday school conducted by Mr. Fred Tacker, a wealthy farmer, that he attended. He remembers vividly the passages they memorized. During the 1897-98 school year he attended Confirmation class. The teacher was a farmer who had studied to be a teacher in Germany. The man was very good at drilling the Catechism into them but not a very good evangelist, says Guenther. At the age of 12, he was confirmed by Pastor Luebbert on Palm Sunday. After Confirmation there was little "post-graduate" study and he was thinking of becoming a soldier. The thought of being a teacher or minister never entered his mind. But at the very next Mission Festival, Prof. Ackermann of New Ulm preached. That same night the Prof., the Pastor and his father met and decided that he would go to D.M.L.C.—only the second boy from South Dakota ever to go to a Synodical school.

When he arrived in New Ulm, the first man he met was Prof. Schaller. Prof. Schaller asked him if he intended on studying to be a pastor or a teacher. Guenther was caught off guard not knowing what to say since he hadn't thought of being a teacher and couldn't imagine himself presuming "to walk in the footsteps of a saintly man like Pastor Luebbert." Grasping for straws he announced he would be studying business. Prof. Schaller was not pleased. Guenther's impressions of New Ulm were that the founding fathers had determined the students should not be softened by "res quae ad effeminandos animos ducunt." There were therefore many hardships for the students such as barrel bathtubs and gathering their coal and wood from outside for their heating.

After his first year of completed schooling Guenther received a diploma in business and an invitation from Prof. Schaller to return next year, which he did. In his second year he learned to know the faculty better which consisted of Profs. Schaller, Ackermann, Montgomery, Reim and Burke. With the completion of his years at New Ulm he faced the decision of teaching or preaching ministry. Influenced by Prof. John Meyer and accompanied by four other classmates, he headed for Northwestern in 1905. Here he stayed with a Mr. Radtke and was welcomed heartily by faculty and students alike. The faculty included Dr. Ott and Dr. Earnst. Of his years at N.W.C. Guenther recalls only one rebuke from a professor and he has great praise for his fellow classmates. Among them were Kowalke, Paul Horn, Wagner, Westerhouse, John Schaefer, Schneider, Ewald Graf, Oswald Hensel, Paul Kirsch, John Schneider, Arnold Sprehn, Edward Zell and Paul Hensel.

After graduation none of the graduates considered it a foregone conclusion that they were going to go to the Seminary. Guenther intended to go to Madison and work for a newspaper. But after spending the summer in South Dakota and hearing of Prof. Schaller taking a call to the Seminary, he decided to go to

Sem. as did most of his classmates. The old seminary he attended was on a corner of the Pabst farm in Wauwatosa. All the departments were sheltered in one building as at D.M.L.C. The dorms were named Highland, Boulevard, Zoologen/Gasse and Ketzler/Allee. He stayed in the last one mentioned. Of his seminary days he has many fond memories, especially of the faculty, men who "walked with God." Of J.P.Koehler he writes:

He could lead us theological recruits to the heights of Mount History and with a sweep of his hands conjure forth a panoramic outline of human events (either ordained of God or tolerated of Him for a purpose) from the dawn of history to the present day. Just as deftly he could illuminate the entire panorama with the light of Holy Writ, so that God's great plan of Salvation for mankind was clearly outlined, hovering like a rainbow over the scenes of human turmoil. We students never doubted that his prophecies of the future course of history in the world and church would be literally fulfilled. His one concern for us was that we might be "rooted and built up in Christ Jesus the Lord established in the faith."

Of Pieper he writes, "He was the Boanerges of that era... (determined) to set us on fire with the Gospel and instil in us the courage of our convictions." Schaller was the "winsome" one, a man of "warmth and simplicity."

Guenther does make mention of one "controversy" during his sem. days. He mentions in connection with this that Prof. Pieper once said, "Lehrstreit never germinates in principles but in personalities, even as was the case in the Gnadenwahlstreit." The case that Guenther relates involved one man substituting for another in the morning devotion, at the other's request. This man was accused of "in ein fremd Amt gegriffen zu haben." The accused was publically disgraced. Guenther deplored the whole proceeding and later regretted not coming to the man's defense.

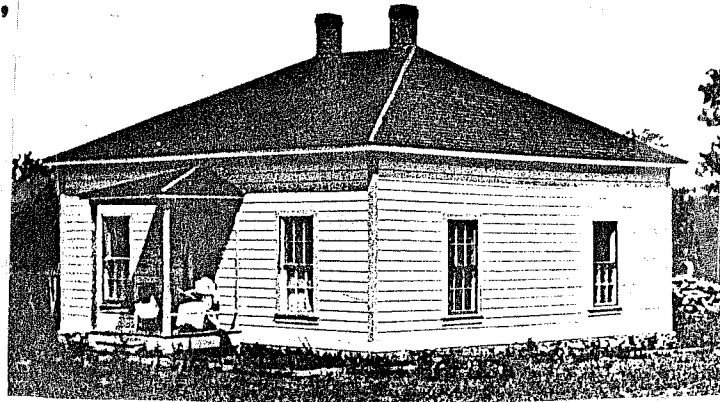
During his final year at Seminary the calls were of course handed out. Guenther had buried himself in his studies throughout the year, preferring not to think about the possibility of a call to an organized congregation in "Pumpkin Center or Grace, Milwaukee." But his kind of call found him; for one evening late in Nov. 1910 a letter was read at the supper table from the

executive of Indian Missions. It asked for a volunteer for the Apache Mission in Arizona. Guenther relates, "Here was my call. I rushed over to Professor Schaller and eagerly told him I was all set to go to Arizona." Prof. Koehler's final words of encouragement to him were, "Es ist etwas grossartiges an einem verlorenen Posten zu stehen." After buying some supplies, he had another meeting with Schaller who advised him that it was "not good for him to be alone." Although students were discouraged from "entangling alliances" in those days, yet during a two week absence he went to Arcadia Wis. and on Thanksgiving Day asked Minnie Knoop to marry him. She said yes. Pastor Schaller married them at St. Johns in Arcadia on Dec. 28 1910.

Just before they were married, they received a letter from Pastor Harders in Globe telling them of the many hardships involved in his call. Two weeks later on Jan. 10, 1911 they arrived in Globe. After his ordination, he stayed in Globe observing Harder's work. His stay was prolonged though when heavy snows made a trip to East Fork impossible. He then had the opportunity to really learn from Pastor Harders, a man he greatly admired. Mrs. Ruth Kessel, one of Guenther's daughters said that her father never spoke of Pastor Harders without referring to him as "the sainted reverend Harders." Guenther himself says of Harders, "He loved his fellowman because he loved his Savior; it was the passion of his life to have his fellowman come to the knowledge of the Truth." *(Guenther, Report to Synod 1949, p. 14)*

But still he was eagerly awaiting the chance to get to East Fork. On March first came word that the snow was melting. Unfortunately this led to flooding which washed out a crucial bridge. With no other alternatives he and his wife took what little money they had and started on a long route around the mountain pass. They went from Globe to Bowie to Deming N.M. to Albuquerque to Holbrook Arizona. It was a trip of 700 miles and still they were 90 miles from East Fork. These last 90 miles would also be the toughest to travel.

After 30 miles of travel and a night under the stars with the bugs at Snowflake and a second night 30 miles later in a freezing cold "hotel" in Showlow, on the third night they finally arrived in Whiteriver, the headquarters for the whole reservation. Although the Superintendent discouraged them, they set out that same night and arrived at East Fork, where they were unceremoniously greeted by some hound dogs. Their home was rather small with no modern conveniences of course. It took until April 5th for their own stove, supplies and Minnie's hope chest to arrive from Milwaukee.



First house: In East Fork

Pastor Guenther expected to be installed at his church but there was no one to do it. Instead he preached his first sermon there on the Prodigal Son with Jack Keyes interpreting. At least one person was affected by his first sermon. A little boy named Rivers Kessay told the Pastor after the service, "I love you." and walked away. Missionary Guenther very early in his ministry discovered that he would need to buy a horse. After one service there was a horse salesman there with an offer. He mounted the horse and went on a wild bucking spree. Somehow he managed to stay on but he bought two different horses instead. He soon used his horse on a long trip to Conference in Globe. It was an eventful trip. On the way down his milk turned into butter. On the way back his trousers wore out. A little while after he got back he went up the East Fork ten miles to watch a forest fire. When he got there he found himself pressed into service, for which he received fourteen dollars.

The call which he had received covered quite a large area. It was 50 miles wide and a 100 miles long-air miles that is; of course travelling miles were alot farther. The nearest missionary to him was in Cibeque, 50 miles away.

That was a trip that took all day by horse and five hours by Model T. Reaching the Indians with the Gospel was all the more difficult since they live scattered throughout the whole reservation, not grouped together.

Guenther's evangelism consisted of camp calls. They were something like house calls but a bit more intense. Guenther compares them to Paul's work at Philippi on the river. (Acts 16:13-15). Mrs. Kessel says her father came 'not as one trying to cram the Catechism down their throats lest they be damned, but as one who presented the God of love. This approach worked. The Apache Indians, one of the most warlike tribes, who had only seen the treacherous side of the white man were overwhelmed by the love these missionaries had for them. This love convinced them that these were men of God. A camp call might go like this: After arriving and chatting for a while, he would find a suitable place for the service. Minnie would set up a portable organ and begin playing. After a hymn there would be a sermon and prayers. He would give them some literature and then move on. E.A Sitz writes,

From Mr. Guenther I learned how to make the Gospel clear to Apache listeners. He would sit on his heels under his big hat and begin to draw with a stick on the ground while he was talking. Even restless children would come to watch and listen. He told of God's great love for all people. He would say how God looked from heaven and saw how the people lived in much sin and did that which was bad. God was very sorry to see how these sinners were all marching on in their sin to the deep canyon burning with fire, called hell. Then he would tell how God sent His only Son, Jesus Christ to this earth to save the sinners. Then he continued, "When Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem, the angels sang a song of joy, 'Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will toward men.' And when Jesus became a man He went among the people and did many miracles. He healed the sick. He gave sight to the blind. He even raised the dead. Jesus told the people the right way to live. But Jesus also said that He had been sent by God the Father to save them from sin and death."

Then Mr. Guenther went on to say, "God took the sins of all the world, yours and mine too and loaded them onto His Son Jesus Christ. He bore that heavy load. What is more Jesus had to pay for all these sins. Money and cattle and corn

could not pay for them. He had to pay with his own blood and pain and death on the cross. When Jesus was nailed to the cross, God punished Him there for the sins of the world. Where there is sin God must judge. He judged Jesus so hard for the sins that He cried out, 'My God My God why hast Thou forsaken Me? Jesus suffered the pains of hell fire on the cross for you and me. But because He suffered, God can and does forgive us our sins.

When Jesus died on the cross, two men who believed on Him took Him down. They were Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. They wrapped His body in fine linen and laid Him in a grave hewn out of the rock. They rolled a great stone against it. But thanks be to God, the third day Jesus rose from the dead. In the next forty days Jesus showed Himself to His friends many times and talked with them. One time He talked to more than 500 at one time. Then He ascended into heaven from the top of the Mount of Olives. His disciples watched Him go up until a cloud hid Him from their sight. Now He sits at the right hand of God and rules all things.

Jesus will come again on the clouds of heaven in glory with all the mighty angels. All the dead will hear his voice and come out of their graves. Jesus will judge the whole world. Those who believe in Him as their Savior will go into heaven. They will live in joy and happiness forever.

Now, Mr. Guenther would say, "I am sure we all want to live in the new heavens and the new earth. There everything will be good and happy. Ask the Lord Jesus to take you there." So Mr. Guenther would talk. We know that there were those who heard him and came to believe in Jesus. We shall see them and Mr. Guenther on that great day when we shall all stand before the throne of Jesus Christ. (Apache Luth. Oct. 1968 p.6,7)

This approach shows that Guenther had taken to heart Koehler's earlier advice to Mayerhoff, "preaching consists not in presenting doctrine but in telling the story of the Savior." (History of Synod: p.200)

But not^{only} was he assigned to evangelize the entire northern reservation, his call also included the ominous words, "So bald wie moeglich eine Missionschule eroeffnen." Actually this meant reopening the school that had shut down in 1906. This would prove to be a very difficult task. He knew only one word of Apache, few Indians knew any more words of English. There already was the Government school that had most of the Indian children enrolled. This school also fed and clothed the children. So to begin with he had no books, desks, building, money, equipment or pupils. In addition to this he had Harder's words ringing in his ears, "Ask for nothing." meaning from the Synod lest they shut you down and "Promise nothing."

to the Indians lest you disappoint them and lose their trust.

But he was not to be discouraged. With continual persistence he urged the Apaches to bring their children to the school. Finally one man, Y-24 (Government identification number) consented to send his son Charlie. A few other friends and relatives followed. By the time school started they had 16. Throughout the year others would come also, Government rejects at first, but as the fame of the school grew more and more, parents began to bring their children in, both for the quality of the Christian education and the love they were there receiving. One of the first things they did was to assign them English names. They now had pupils, they needed a building. The church served as the school building. One of the rooms in his house served as the cafeteria. At first they paid for these meals out of their own pocket, later the Synod went hog wild and granted them 50 cents per pupil a month. (like trying to feed a horse with a thimble, he says.) Mrs. Guenther in addition to being a teacher was also the cook, server and dishwasher. The next assignment was to get desks; After borrowing a two harnesses and a wagon from the Government, he hitched up his horses. They went up to the nearest sawmill 20 miles away and picked up as much scrap lumber as they could which the man there gave them gratis. Several trips like this had to be made. With this lumber he spent many a late night fashioning desks and tables with his tools from home. Now the final problem to be resolved was the gathering of books. They purchased an Oliver typewriter from Montgomery Ward and paper from wherever they could get it. With this nightly printing press, they cranked out their lessons in catechetical form being sure to use simple, concrete, illustrative and understandable examples. Guenther and his wife were the teachers. When he was away for days at a time on camp calls, she would teach by herself.

In addition to teaching she cooked the meals for the Apache children, washed their clothes, bathed them and in her spare

time raised a family. She tells of the time the Lord gave her strength to teach until Friday, excuse the school children for one week, give birth to one of her many children that weekend, (no doubt without a doctor) and one week later go back to the classroom carrying the infant in a basket. (Apache Luth. June 59 p.42)

The quality of the education was so good that they never had to ask for pupils again and Mr. John Brown the Superintendent of the Phoenix school system, upon seeing theirs, offered to print their lessons on the school press. This school was the forerunner of the Boarding school and High school. Guenther also conducted a Sunday school at Whiteriver with 350 students.

Guenther's first baptism was of Robert Chino. He was the son of Chief Chino. The boy was ill with Tuberculosis. After several visits with him with the Word of God, the boy himself asked to be baptized. He was baptized just before his death. By the way to get to this boy Guenther and his wife both had walked five miles one way on foot. Tuberculosis was not the only disease afflicting the Indians. Whooping cough and Pneumonia also hit them hard. During these times the Indians would get up early in the morning and head for the valleys in the foothills hoping the sickness would not follow them. During one such epidemic in 1914 Guenther and his wife would spend many a weary day traveling throughout the country to minister to the sick and dying. Guenther assumed the role of doctor. He would trap skunks, rendering the fat and mixing it with turpentine and coal-oil. His wife would add some of her precious perfume to give the concoction a pleasant odor. Through their great effort many youngsters were saved, including all of their school children, though yet some several hundred others died on the reservation. Missionary Guenther remembers in particular one little girl named Nina, the daughter of a medicine man who came through the tragedy alright. This fact he considered testimony to the Lord's power to perform miracles today.

Guenther's first Christmas in Apache land was also memorable. Preparations were made early. Candy, nuts, popcorn, and bags from Montogomery Ward were ordered. Special clothes from back East were sent and also Mrs. Guenther made some. A special service was planned for Christmas and parts were memorized. All the special supplies arrived on time-in Holbrook. But the freighter promised to bring the supplies from there to East Fork only as soon as the mountains were passable. It wasn't until early March that he was able to arrive, at which time they celebrated their late joyous Christmas .

Although Guenther met with great success in his ministry, the Devil was not idle either. One of the charlatan medicine men, P-5 created quite a stir once. He claimed having seen a vision that told him the end was near and only Apaches that bought a bag of cotton seed from him and were dressed in white would be saved. Needless to say when the day arrived they were all poorer and he was nowhere to be found.

Such sad moments as that were offset by the many happy ones. In February of 1912 Guenther's firstborn, Wenonah arrived with Edgar functioning as the physician. At this point a former friend of the missionaries stepped into the picture. She was an old Apache woman only identified as B-3. This lady's only child, a little girl had died in 1911, after the missionaries had reached the girl with the message of Jesus. When this woman found out that Mrs. Guenther was often busy at school or church, she decided they could use some help at home with the girl. She came into school one day, unannounced, picked up



the child and went straight to the Guenther home. She became like a housekeeper and nanny to not only this child but all nine of Guenther's children. Her love for the Guenther's prompted her to call them, "my daughter" and "my children". The Guenther's in response called her, "my mother" which in Apache is "Shi-mah".

With the arrival of Wenonah, the Mission Board upped his salary four dollars a month. About this time he also requested from them a buckboard for travel purposes, but his request was denied. After much searching though he was able to track down an old one in Cibique. With this he relates that he had several close calls such as remind one of the Apostle Paul's statement, "I have been in danger from rivers" (2 Cor. 11:26) On the trip down to Globe after Harder's death, they found themselves at a bridge that had been half wiped out. They had to take apart the buckboard, transport it by rope across the river and then reassemble it on the other side. On this he would compose his sermons while travelling to Whiteriver and back to East Fork. On one of these trips he found a Medicine man P-7 conducting a "service" with many of his members present. After an emotional outburst against this, next Sunday the church was again filled with his members.



to a camp call

In the year 1916 Guenther bought a car. The purchase came in very handy as the next year they took a Sabatical back out east to Milwaukee via South Dakota. The trip took 3 months. Around this time he was released from classroom duties. This freed him up to do more camp work around the reservation and to hold classes at the government school. He also started preaching at Ft. Apache to the Scouts there. After one such occasion he remembers a man asking to be baptized, and he was.

In 1918 another serious epidemic of Influenza broke out on the REservation causing the Indians to head for the hills and leaving a trail of dead in its wake. Rev. Guenther left his home and headed to Whiteriver where he teamed up with Dr. Loe to assist him in his medical outreach. On arriving at a camp, Guenther would prepare a place for the Indian to rest while Dr. Loe administered the medicine. Afterward he would present the Gospel to them. After combatting the illness at North Fork, they headed to Cedar Creek 25 miles away where conditions were equally bad if not worse. This kind of routine, tiring both men and their horses, kept up for three months during which time Guenther saw none of his family except once when his wife brought him a pair of trousers at Whiteriver.

In this catastrophe the Lord continued to work through his ministry. Alchesay, Chief of all the White Mountain Apaches was a man the Reverd Guenther had wanted to meet for some time. He had been a distinguished scout under General Crook. Guenther had heard he was a man of very strong likes and dislikes so he waited for the Lord to arrange their meeting. One day when Guenther was out by himself looking for the sick to minister to, he found Alchesay sick with the flu. He provide him with some bedding, medicine and had a short devotion. The next day when Dr. Loe came to him, Alchesay asked why the "tall missionary" (Iv-nashood Ndaezn) had not come along. And so he came and introduced him to the Great Physician of body and sould, the Lord Jesus. Alchesay by the grace of God was led to believe whole heartedly in the Savior. A fruit of his faith was his deep and lasting friendship with Missionary Guenther. This friendship was displayed when Guenther started a church in Whiteriver. To build the church, he had to present a petition to the Superintendent of the Reservation from the Indians. After Alchesay put his thumb print on the paper, the petition easily obtained enough names for the building to begin. When the church was dedicated in 1922, Alchesay exorted the 100 newly baptized members of his tribe to be dilligent in their church attendance. (This is the church whose cross Guenther strapped to his

back and carried to the top of the steeple.) Alchesay remained faithful upto his death in 1928. Guenther's sixth child was named Arthur Alchesay in honor of the chief. He is presently serving in Whiteriver just as the chief had hoped.

During the time of W.W. I Guenther like all and any Germans were subject to accusations. There was a man of unstable character who accused him of being a spy. After a search was made of Guenther's house, the only incriminating document that could be found was his ordination papers. He did have a picture of the Kaiser in his room though. But this picture was only there to cover up a hole in the wall. After much fuss had been made and he had even been dragged down to jail, he was exonerated and apologized to, much like Paul at Phillipi. (Acts 16:39)

After the end of the influenza epidemic Guenther moved from East Fork to White river. This was the chief city on the reservation. Here his brother-in-law Arnold Knoop came to live with him. Here also in the winter another flu broke out among the school children, confining 400 to bed at one time. Guenther again helped with the sick until he himself was laid up for six weeks. Near the end of that time he struck out one night to visit an ill friend. On the way back he caught cold and was laid up for six more weeks.

When he was healthy again, he was back at work in Whiteriver. Church services were first held in the end of the Agency carpenter shop. Later the Church was built. Other duties of Guenther at this time included the regions of North Folk, Canyon Day school, ^{and} Cedar Creek. At the last two of those he held weekly Bible classes at the government school. At Whiteriver 350-400 students were instructed. Guenther got teachers from wherever he could. In six years there were 1200 baptisms from this school alone.

The Mission Board recognized his need for assistance and began to send out vicars and associates. In addition to his missionary duties, in 1917 Guenther had been elected Superintendent of the Missions in Apacheland. He succeeded Harders. He held this post until 1936.

Another project of his was the start of the orphanage. It was the first of its kind in the Southwest. Very early in his ministry, he had noticed a terrible outgrowth of Apache idolatry. Any Apache babies born with defects were killed or abandoned at birth. One day for example he was called to an Apache camp two miles away. There was a debate going on about what to do with a baby born with six fingers on each hand. The grandmother said they should kill it now. Guenther instantly grabbed a knife, ran it through the flames and cut off one of his fingers on each hand. The baby's life was saved. Also twins were in danger of dying. A mother who had twins was considered to be an adulteress. To avoid embarrassment she would kill or discard one of the two. There were also problems with babies whose mothers had ^{died} or whose mothers had not the means to care for them.

Under these conditions Guenther let it be known that they would take such infants into their house. This was the situation until March of 1922 when they were able to purchase a school, residence and pumping plant at East Fork for a permanent orphanage. Six babies were admitted. Mrs. Eli Beardsly was one of the first caretakers, as were the Knoops and Paster Wehausen. The Supt. Charles L. Davis wrote about the orphanage, "It is an oasis in the great desert life of Apache babies." In the course of time it became a model facility.

Early on he also realized the advantage of having a boarding school of 'rather restricted enrollment' for those 'spiritually promising pupils who had graduated the day school' in hope that they might then serve as native helpers and teachers assisting the missionaries. In the summer of 22 Missionary Nitz was called as principal of the school with only two students enrolled. The missionaries front porch served as the girls dormitory, while the chicken coop served as the boys. By the fall of 28 enrollment was up to 28. In this year a permanent girls dormitory was built. The school continued to struggle along but never quite achieved its great goals. On June 1st of 1944 it was dissolved.

In Sept. of that same year it was reopened and again started to pursue after the high ideals of its founders.

In April of 1923 Guenther began a publication entitled the Apache Scout. Scouts in Apache language are people who go before to clear the way for others. So also this magazine was to be a forerunner like John the Baptist to prepare the way for the coming of the Savior to the Apaches. The magazine served as a missionary tool putting devotional literature into the hands of the Indians. It helped the various mission posts and missionaries be informed of the progress made throughout the different fields on the reservation. It was also meant to raise the consciousness of the whole Synod to the work being done in Apacheland. Guenther remained its editor and primary source of articles for more than 30 years. (Actual dates 1923-36, 39-52) In 1952 some people in the Synod objected to the name "Scout" associating it with the Boy Scouts and the name was changed to the Apache Lutheran.

Another of the medicine men, the worst one, who opposed Guenther's ministry was Silas John. Actually he was the son of a medicine man who when Guenther first met him in 1911 had amicably received religious instruction and even served as his interpreter. A few years later he left the mission field in pursuit of his own interests. In the twenties he again emerged on the reservation as a medicine man with a new religion. It was a synthesis of old Apache religion, Christianity and his own ideas. He created quite a stir as hundreds of Indians rallied to him. Guenther was forced to publically criticize him. Opposition between the two continued until in 1933, ^{when} Silas John was imprisoned for murdering his wife.

During the decade of the thirties the solid foundation which Guenther had earlier laid with his camp calls was seriously challenged by the increasing immorality among the Indians. Guenther to a large extent blamed the federal

government for stripping the Apaches of their dignity and forcing them into a "gimme" mentality. The white man also brought such evils as drink and Hollywood's parade of lust. These factors all combined to make the reservation more immoral and violent. Guenther again was forced to publically criticize the Indians for this. Needless to say not all of them would receive this favorably.

With his resignation from the post of Superintendent in 1936 he could again get out and do more work among the Apaches directly. His spirits were raised that year when he was honored for his 25 years of ministry among the Apaches. 350 Indians and 75 whites showed up in appreciation of his work. With this renewed vigor he returned to work although his health was somewhat failing and doctors urged him to take more rests. By 1941 he had helped build a church in Canyon Day. In 1942 he began holding services at McNary. In the summertime services were held under the pines and in the winter time in the Indian homes. Guenther asked Synod for help to build a church but to no avail. So much like Harder's New Jerusalem in Globe, he was compelled to finance the operation privately. A lumber company donated the lumber, while friends supplied the rest. A lumber company also supplied a Parish Hall. By 1945 the church was built. However during the building of the church he suffered a severe heart attack and was forced to rest up for six months. Yet scarcely two years later he was organizing another mission in the towns of Maverick and of Cedar Creek.

Over the years the influx of heterodoxy was also a problem. In 1923 the Romanists had come in and later the Assembly of God and the Mormons did too. Another fact that plagued the missionary was the feeling that the Synod was never totally behind the work in Apacheland. Hoenecke and Koehler had expressed some reservations and criticisms in the very beginning. (K.p.198) Also in 1949

the government no longer allowed the missionaries to hold instruction classes at their schools. All of these factors plus poor health led to a mild depression that year. But in 1950 his spirits were again revived when the White Mountain Apache Indians officially adopted him into the tribe—an honor never given to any other white man. He was given full fishing and hunting privileges.

By this time it was evident to all that he needed a rest. That rest was provided when his son Arthur Alchesay Guenther was installed as assistant pastor in Whiteriver. He continued to serve the congregation at McNary and never fully retired. He spent much time travelling around the reservation, visiting friends and giving personal and spiritual counsel.

In the winter of 1960 he became seriously ill and was taken to Tuscon's hospital because of its lower elevation. On March 1961 he was given the Medallion of Merit by the University of Arizona. Pastor Guenther had sent 7 of his 9 children there. Although near his end, Guenther was allowed to return to the reservation one last time in April of 1961. Over 1500 Apaches and Anglos gathered at Whiteriver to take part in the celebration of his 50 years in the ministry. After the celebration he returned to Tuscon where he died on May 31st, just one day before his 76th birthday. Funeral services were held in Tuscon and Whiteriver where more than 600 Apache friends turned out. He was buried in the Whiteriver cemetery.

In ending this biography/history, the passage from John comes to mind: "Jesus did many other things as well." (Jn. 20:25) Certainly not everything that the Reverend Guenther did is recorded here either. Also another quote comes to mind. It is Luther's statement that the Gospel is like a shower passing overhead for a time and then moving on to another place. When applying this illustration to Missionary Guenther we must say that through him the Lord brought forth a veritable thunderstorm in Apacheland, quenching the thirst of all for the water of life and causing a beautiful garden of believers to grow up there, "oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of His splendor" Is. 61:3

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