

THE SPLIT IN THE CHURCH AT KEWASKUM

MARCH 28, 1898

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I. Introduction and Thesis

The notice in the April 2, 1898 edition of the weekly Kewaskum Statesman appeared in the community news notes and contained only thirty-three words, but it described an event which resulted in the split of a family--a body of Christians which had worshiped God as the St. Lucas Evangelical Lutheran Congregation. The few words which described this tragedy read

A special meeting of the Lutheran congregation was held Monday relative to building a new parsonage. A majority favored the proposition, and as a result several of the opponents withdrew from the congregation.<sup>1</sup>

The editor or reporter who wrote these words obviously knew little of the goings on in the congregation. In the weeks and months preceding the divisive meeting there is not to be found any mention of trouble among the Lutheran congregation, and in the months that followed there are only glimpses of ill will between the congregation and the party that split off from the body.

The break-up of families for financial reasons does not seem unusual to us today. We know that it's one of the most cited reasons for divorce. But was it as simple a problem as these thirty-three words imply? Was it simply a disagreement on whether or not the congregation should provide adequate housing for its pastor and his family? Was it simply a dispute over money? There's sufficient evidence to suggest otherwise.

Although the specific details that led to the "Spaeltung" (split) have gone to the grave with those who were there in

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the 1880s and 1890s, there are, as stated before, pieces of evidence which point to the rumored and reported causes as simply symptoms of a far greater problem which existed within this congregation during those early years. Confessionalism, that is, the faithful adherence to the teachings of God's Word, will often result in not only the division of families, but of congregations.

## II. The Calm Before the Storm

Like so many other villages, towns and cities in Wisconsin, the Village of Kewaskum derives its name from the Indians who inhabited the land before the arrival of European settlers. This village was named after a Potawatami chieftain who dwelt in and around the area in the first half of the 19th century. The name means "a turning" or "his tracks are toward home". Oddly enough, it would also be a fitting description of St. Lucas congregation's early history.

Kewaskum is located in Washington County on the Milwaukee River about 7 miles northwest of the city of West Bend, and roughly 40 miles northwest of Milwaukee. German immigrants began arriving in the area by the 1830s, both from the eastern United States and from Europe. They found an undeveloped territory--a new land filled with equal portions of opportunity and challenge.

Most settlers found few churches and fewer pastors awaiting their arrival. This scarcity of church and clergy resulted in recognized differences in both doctrine and

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practice often being set aside as Protestants of differing faiths, or those of unionist religious background, worshipped together whenever the infrequent visit was made by some itinerant preacher. Such toleration was not uncommon among German immigrants to this country because of the Prussian Union under which they had been forced to worship in Germany. Just as common as it was in those difficult times to find Lutheran, Unionist and Reformed worshipers in the same congregation, so also was it common to find Lutheran, Unionist or Reformed clergy ready to preach and administer the sacraments to such religiously blended gatherings. But such a watered down treatment of doctrine and spiritually dangerous practice were not to continue in this country where religious freedom was guaranteed, as was the separation of church and state.

Nevertheless, in those early years many congregations were established as unionist. This took place before and after the creation of church bodies which had been formed along confessional lines, and were able to supply pastors and teachers who subscribed to those confessions. As a result many a predominantly Lutheran congregation only put off facing the agonizing, but necessary, step of practicing what they, as a majority, confessed to be true. The day of reckoning was inevitable--a day on which faithfulness to one's confession would lead to the dividing of church and family; a day of experiencing what Jesus spoke of when he said,

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I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn "a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law--a man's enemies will be the members of his own household." Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. (Matthew 10:34-38)

In the year 1847, the Washington County area was surveyed by a Missouri Synod man who determined that the field didn't warrant the establishing of a congregation. Sixteen years passed before another Lutheran clergyman, Pastor F. F. Opitz, arrived in the area and gathered together Lutheran families to form a congregation.<sup>2</sup> The church's historical record reads (translated from the German):

And so it happened that already in the year 1863 our congregation was founded as an evangelical Lutheran (congregation) by pastor F. F. Opitz.<sup>3</sup>

As it turned out, the "evangelical Lutheran" title was loosely applied to the congregation in those early days. The membership had not yet subscribed to the Lutheran Confessions. Had that taken place, there might well have never been a split. For its doctrinal position would have been well-defined from the beginning of its organization. As is too often the case, however, the ideal and the real stood far apart.

During those years preceding and following the services of Pastor Opitz, St. Lucas had also received the occasional services of Pastor A. Denninger, Sr. of Addison and a Missouri man, Pastor P. Schilling.<sup>4</sup> These three men planted seed that

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would later bear fruit in the form of Lutheran confessionalism, but the clear expression of such confessionalism was yet years away.

After the departure of Pastor Opitz, the fledgling congregation was temporarily without a pastor. This was a difficult period in the church's history. The spiritual nurturing of the congregation was infrequent, and the shepherd's who visited them during those days were of varying stripes of Protestantism.<sup>5</sup> The record reports that

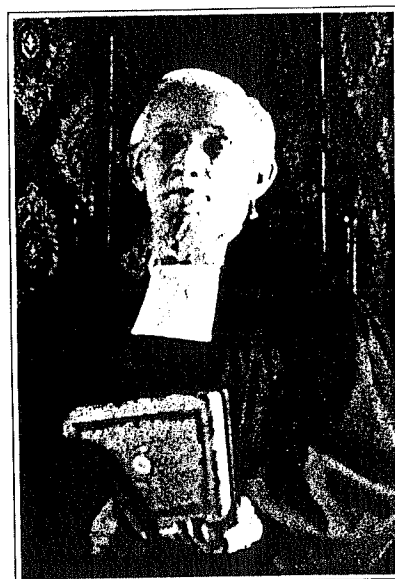
For a time, because the congregation was without a pastor, pastors preached varied or different confessions in their midst above all Reformed and United Protestant.<sup>6</sup>

Imagine the confusion that must have swept over the congregation. Although loosely grounded in Lutheranism from the beginning, the congregation had experienced everything from the spiritual feeding of the very conservative and confessional preaching of early Missouri pastors, and the not-too-Lutheran, but confessional early Wisconsin men, to the the uncertain and clearly non-sacramental teaching of United Protestant and Reformed preachers. Dividing lines within the small congregation were inevitable under these circumstances. A clear statement of their confession was needed, for their identity as a congregation could no longer remain uncertain if the group was to grow and prosper in the faith.

The first step was the acceptance of what was described a "sogenannte protestantische Kirchenordnung" in the booklet

prepared for the congregation's 50th anniversary celebration. This "so-called protestant order (of worship and regulations)" was introduced and accepted to deal with the dissension which had arisen in the congregation.<sup>7</sup> One can only speculate as to what dissension had arisen, but given the doctrinally blended environment and the disagreements in practice that must have naturally surfaced as a result of these, it seems safe to assume that the differences rested in the natural friction that one would expect when Reformed and Lutheran worshipers are brought together under one roof.

This general protestant "Kirchenordnung" seems to have been a compromise attempt to maintain peace and unity in this mixed congregation. For a while it succeeded, and under it, the congregation obtained the services of Pastor P. F. Hilpert, a Lutheran. He led the congregation a step further by persuading them "to embrace the evangelical Lutheran confession and likewise the Lutheran church order."<sup>8</sup> This the congregation did on August 20, 1877, thus marking the official date of its charter as an evangelical Lutheran church. The time for decision had come and like the children of Israel responding to their leader, Joshua, they chose to fear the LORD and serve him with all faithfulness." (Joshua 24:14ff)



Pastor P. F. Hilpert

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The "Unionist" problem was not unique to St. Lucas. The Washington County congregations apparently had been a haven for Reformed-type confessions and constitutions in outwardly evangelical Lutheran congregations. At an 1857 meeting of Wisconsin Synod pastors in the Theresa area--men who had been appointed as a Constitution Committee by the Synod--Pastor "Koehler...called attention to the varying confessional status of the Germans around West Bend, and it was decided that only Lutherans were to be served and that those of the Reformed faith should be left alone."<sup>9</sup> Perhaps this position was a factor in the difficulty St. Lucas experienced in acquiring a pastor of its own in those early years. Moreover it might well have been instrumental in convincing at least a majority to accept the evangelical Lutheran "Kirchenordnung."

The church union problem was not isolated in Washington either. For the 1868 report of the Synod appointed Constitution Committee recommended to amend Paragraph 3 on church union to include condemnation of "the serving of mixed congregations." Following a short debate on the matter, the wording was adopted.<sup>10</sup>

Apparently the majority of the St. Lucas members took their new church order and confession seriously. They made it official also at the County Courthouse. The original deed to the church property had identified the owners as "protestant". The congregation corrected this misnomer by selling the church property to itself and by so doing the deed was changed to

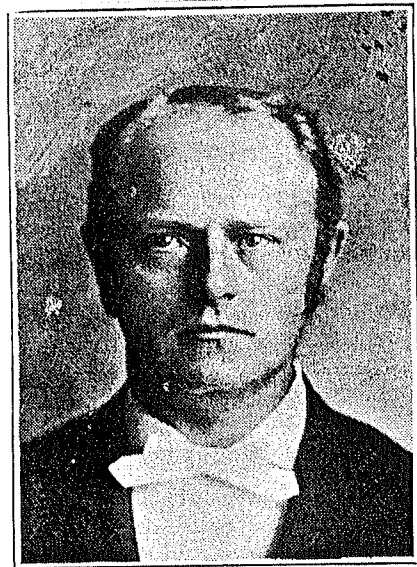


reflect its new owner as "der ev. luth. St. Lucas Gemeinde."<sup>11</sup>

Pastor Hilpert continued to serve not only St. Lucas, but also four other churches in Washington County. He had been called to serve as "Reiseprediger" (traveling preacher) there in 1868, and he continued in this capacity until 1884 when he accepted a like call to Renville County, Minnesota.<sup>12</sup>

Despite the fact that she benefited from the services of Wisconsin Synod pastor P. F. Hilpert for seven years and had adopted a confessional Lutheran position under his leadership, St. Lucas continued to remain unaffiliated with the then 34-year-old Lutheran church body. The ministry of Pastor Hilpert and St. Lucas had both been blessed during these years. When he accepted the call to Minnesota, the congregation felt that they needed and could support a full time pastor.

Over the summer following Pastor Hilpert's departure, St. Lucas had enlisted the help of theological candidate, Frederick Greve. On August 20, 1884, as the summer was drawing to a close, the congregation issued him a call. Greve accepted the call on condition that he be allowed to complete his studies at the Synod's Theological Seminary, then located at Eimerman's Park in Milwaukee. The congregation agreed but countered with the stipulation that candidate Greve continue to provide



Pastor Frederick Greve

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word and sacrament until he could assume his position on a full time basis. The young man agreed. He continued to serve in this minimal way and completed his studies around the end of the year. On January 11, 1885, Frederick Greve, was ordained and installed into his office by his professor, Pastor A. L. Graebner. This began what would be a long, productive, and eventful ministry at St. Lucas in the Village of Kewaskum.

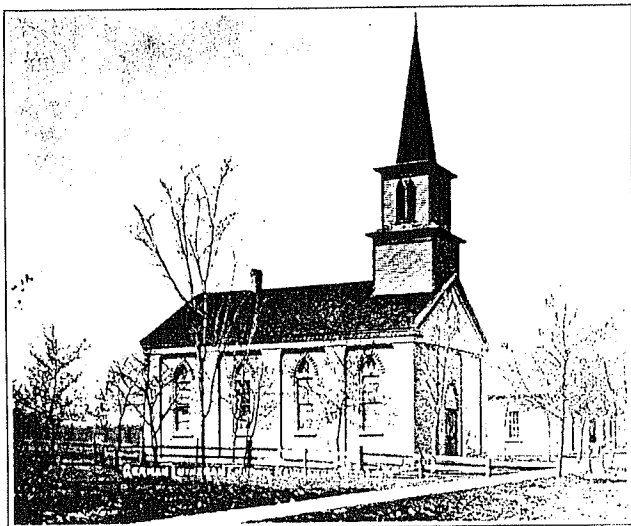
St. Lucas had made quite a "Kewaskum"--a turning--in the 28 years since the church's first recorded baptism. Though outwardly it appeared that unity under the Lutheran confessions had, by God's grace, been attained, trouble was brewing. There was resistance to the "Kewaskum" that had taken place and was continuing to take place as this small body of believers moved ever closer to full agreement with the symbols of their Lutheran faith.

### III. The Storm

The miracle of God's grace stands out clearly in the history of this congregation. It guided an unorganized group of German immigrants with a mixture of religious orientations and led by pastors of varying theologies to seek and to confess the truth and to follow men who did the same. Where God's grace had abounded, there the devil worked ferociously to produce casualties among those who did not make use of the armor of God with which they had been equipped.

Pastor Frederick Greve's first ten years at St. Lucas

were marked by many blessings. In his first year, the congregation of sixty-two members (probably voting members) demonstrated its concern for the Christian education of its



The Old Church, built 1870

children by building a parochial school adjoining the 15 year-old church building. Two years later, in 1887, it purchased a parsonage across the street from the church and school. And finally in 1894, St. Lucas applied for and was welcomed into membership in

the Evangelical Joint Synod of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan and other States.<sup>13</sup> All seemed well in this house of God and family of believers, which had grown to 95 voting members. Things, however, were not as they seemed.

On that Monday, March 28, 1898, the voting members of one congregation gathered in their church to hear a motion to build a new parsonage for their pastor. The votes were counted and the measure was approved by a majority. The opposition to the proposal did not assent, including the president of the congregation. The dissenters, about a third of the voting membership, made it known they were withdrawing from the congregation and they walked out. If there had existed any doubt of an undisclosed division in the body

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before that meeting, there was certainly none after it.

#### IV. Theories on the Cause of the Storm

When and where the trouble began to show itself, and by whom it was instigated, cannot be established. Unfortunately the minutes of the Voters' assemblies for those early years are gone--most notably the those of that divisive meeting. It's not even known if this was one of the regularly scheduled quarterly meetings required by the congregation's constitution.

The Kewaskum Statesman, in its April 2nd edition reported that it was a "special meeting"<sup>14</sup> and apparently the purpose for its "special" status was to consider the proposal to build a new parsonage. The newspaper report would lead one to believe that the issue centered on the matter of building a new parsonage, or the cost associated with such a project. This notice in the paper is the only evidence to support such a theory.

Another theory focuses on the personality of Pastor Greve. During my vicar year at St. Lucas (1988-89), I made shut-in calls to two of its members who were alive when the split occurred in 1898. Alfred Seefeldt, who is now 93, was only two years old in March of 1898, and although he has no personal recollection of the events that led up to the walk out, he related to me the following account told to him by his mother:

Two tavern owners (specifically John Schaefer and Henry Schneider) were members of the congregation. They both

had barns (livery stables) in which people (members of the congregation) coming in from outlying areas would stable their horses while in town. If the men didn't have time to get cleaned up and dressed for the 9:00 a.m. service, they stayed at the tavern while their wives and children went to church. Pastor Greve wanted the tavern owners to close their taverns on Sundays during the service or they'd be kicked out of the church. But before they could be excommunicated (They'd had apparently refused.), they and others left the congregation and formed Peace Church.<sup>15</sup>

This account was essentially corroborated by another shut-in member of the congregation, 92 year-old Louis Backhaus. He noted that in those days some members had to come many miles on Sunday mornings to attend worship services. For the farmer this meant harnessing the horses and hitching them to the wagon. This apparently was a near impossible task to perform and remain clean, and the procedure was often reversed when he got to the livery stable in town. For many this was often an excuse for not being at the worship services. The wife and children were dropped off at the church and the farmer proceeded to the livery stable and the adjoining tavern where often he remained until it was time to pick up his family and return home. Pastor Greve was displeased with this and wanted the tavern owners to close down on Sunday mornings, but in those days that would be like closing the bus terminal or train depot, an especially critical problem in harsh weather.<sup>16</sup>

Both of these gentlemen were baptized and confirmed by Pastor Greve, and although both remember him as very strict, and not reluctant to use the rod to correct his misbehaving

students, their respect for their former pastor was evident by the manner in which they referred to him. Neither of them recalled anything about the "new parsonage" issue.

The evidence available leaves us with three possible causes for the split in the congregation, although it may also be some combination of these:

1. Pastor Greve may have been a legalist and as a result may have pushed his weak members from the church by an over zealous application of the law.
2. The cost of building a new parsonage may have been more than many were willing to bear and/or they considered a new parsonage unnecessary, and therefore poor stewardship.
3. The congregation, though it had adopted a Lutheran confessional position, still had among its ranks some with Reformed or Unionist leanings and the new parsonage vote was simply the last straw in a string of decisions by the congregation that led these people to leave.

Let's consider each of these individually.

#### 1. The Legalistic Pastor Theory

A biography of Pastor Frederick Greve would make for an interesting church history paper. I wish one had already been written. The problem for the writer of such a paper would lie in the fact that there's not much available to tell us about the man other than a few biographical notes in the brief history of the congregation, three letters in the Synod's Archives and his obituary from the Northwestern Lutheran. So, we'll have to focus on Greve, based on these sources alone, as we consider what kind of pastor he was.

His obituary gives us a little information that might

help in characterizing him:

Pastor F. Greve...faithfully served the Lord in the holy ministry as pastor of the church at Kewaskum, Wis., for thirty-nine years...[He] was called to his eternal home November 1, [1939] at the age of 78...[He] was born...at Schneverdingen, Hanover, Germany. His early education he received in the schools of Hansahlin, Germany. At he age of seventeen he migrated to America and entered Northwestern College at Watertown, Wisconsin. Completing the course of studies there in five years [1882] he matriculated at the Theological Seminary of the Wisconsin Synod. After finishing this course he...accepted the call of the church at Kewaskum...[and] on January 11, 1885, he was ordained and installed...by Rev. A. Graebner (a professor at the Seminary at the time). Pastor Greve served this congregation as pastor and as teacher in the parish school until 1923 when he felt he was no longer able to serve a large congregation in the manner he should like to, and therefore asked the congregation to grant him a release...The same year...he came to Jordan, Minn., to spend the remaining years allotted to him.<sup>17</sup>  
Pastor F. Greve came from a section of Germany where

there had been significant resistance of the Prussian Union and rationalism by Lutherans, most notably Claus Harms (1778-1855) the pastor at Hermannsburg. His sons, Georg L. D. T. Harms (1808-1865) and Theodor Harms (1819-1885) carried on in the footsteps of their father and were in active ministry when Frederick Greve was growing up in Schneverdingen. Perhaps the faithfulness to the Lutheran Confessions by these men, and the impact it had on Hanoverian Lutherans, took part in shaping the character of the young man who at 17 years of age immigrated to Wisconsin and almost immediately began preparing for the ministry.

That ministry for which Frederick Greve began preparing would be entirely invested in one congregation--St. Lucas,

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Kewaskum. The man who officiated over his ordination and installation into that ministry was none other than one of his teachers, Professor A. L. Graebner. There must have been a special bond between the professor and his pupil. For twenty-five years later, this same A. L. Graebner, then a professor at Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, came to Kewaskum to preach at the silver anniversary of his former student's ordination, installation and marriage.<sup>18</sup>

For thirty-nine years Greve labored for the Lord at St. Lucas. Over eight of those first years he served a congregation that was independent, not choosing to affiliate with any synod, even the one which had trained its pastor. Was this just the not-so-uncommon reluctance of Germans to give up their independence, or something more troubling within the ranks of the membership?

When Greve began his ministry he was only 25 years old, but he was not lacking in an ability to lead. Under his leadership the church continued to move forward. In his first year his people built a parochial school because of their concern for the Christian education of their children. In 1894 the congregation took another step toward full confessional unity by joining the Joint Ev. Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan and Other States. And despite the split in the congregation, the church, which lost approximately 40% of its members, still managed to build an addition to the parsonage. The Diamond Jubilee booklet put it this way:



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God was with the remainder [of the congregation] and his blessings rested on their labors, so that in the same year they were able and willing to make an addition to the parsonage at a cost of \$1200.00. This amount meant a great sacrifice for the remaining eighty members.<sup>19</sup>

This effort on the part of the remaining members says something about the pastor. These people obviously cared enough for him to prevent this blow to the church from deterring their resolve to provide adequate housing for him and his family. It should be noted that this may have been a compromise. The Kewaskum Statesman reported that a "new parsonage" had been proposed in that March 28 meeting, but the church's brief history here speaks of only a addition.

As for Pastor Greve, there is really nothing to substantiate the characterization of him as an iron-fisted, insensitive pastor who ruled his congregation with dictatorial authority. Indeed, just the opposite seems to be true of him. He endeared himself to the faithful he served. The descriptions of him during and after his many years of ministering to this flock are words of praise which ring of his dedication to his calling and his congregation. In the booklet commemorating the 50th anniversary, the writer recorded the mutual sorrow that was felt when the time came for their pastor's retirement

So the congregation, with difficulty for her also, granted [Pastor Greve's] wish and released her beloved pastor according to the will of God's rich grace.<sup>20</sup>

Twenty-five years later the writer of the Diamond Jubilee

booklet added

Under the able leadership of Pastor F. Greve the congregation increased year after year. After a faithful service of thirty-seven (actually 39) years, Pastor F. Greve, because of health and age, was compelled to resign his office as shepherd of the flock. On September 9, 1923, he delivered his farewell address to a large audience. Truly, God had signally blessed his efforts here at St. Lucas! Surely, this ambassador of Christ was entitled to a well deserved rest!21

We of the W.E.L.S. can understand how a faithful Lutheran pastor might be labelled legalistic, because we have often found ourselves being tagged the "strict ones" in a not-so-complimentary manner. Whatever negative statements might be made against Pastor Greve, there's no disputing the fruitfulness of his labors, despite the split in the congregation. The statistics for St. Lucas reported in the Synodical Proceedings ("Parochial-Bericht") show a steady and continuous growth in the congregation following the split in 1898.22

The Seefeldt and Backhaus accounts, which reported that Pastor Greve had attempted to have the taverns closed on Sunday morning, may very well have been true. Pastor Greve's concern about his member's who, by their absence, were not receiving the means of grace would have been most proper. His desire to close the taverns during worship services may have been the only solution he could think of for removing this temptation. The communion statistics in the Synodical Report before the split and after the split do show that the number of guests receiving communion actually increased after the

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split, even though 40% of the members had left the congregation.

If Greve had been an intolerant legalist, he certainly left no evidence to prove it. He was, of course, a strict adherent to the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions. If he had been an intolerant legalist, it seems unlikely that he would have continued to serve the same congregation right up until he retired some 25 years later. We must look elsewhere for an answer.

## 2. The New Parsonage Theory

Those who read the Kewaskum Statesman on Saturday, April 2, and had not been at the special voters' meeting at St. Lucas on Monday, would have concluded that this group of Lutherans had argued over the spending of money for a new parsonage. They would have assumed that the opposition to the motion to build, rather than abide by the will of the majority, had severed their relationship to the congregation. It sounded reasonable, but like the story about the tavern owners, this too, seems like only a symptom of what was likely a more serious problem.

This "new parsonage theory" greatly weakens in what followed the split among those who had left St. Lucas. On June 11, the Statesman reported:

NEW CHURCH.--Last Monday evening a meeting was held, at John Schaefer's place, which resulted in the organization of a congregation to be known as the "Deutsche Evangelisch Frieden Gemeinde." The organization starts with 30 members, and they have already commenced the work of excavating preparatory to building a brick church

36x61, with a basement.<sup>23</sup>

The group that walked out of that meeting in March, allegedly because of the passage of the proposal to build to new parsonage, had, in less than six weeks, begun building a new church. The Statesman two weeks later added the following:

--The new, German Evangelical Friedens congregation held a special meeting at John Schaefer's place on the 19th inst. to select a plan for the new edifice. Architect Wipperman of Plymouth received the job of drawing the plans and specifications. The building will be of the same style as the Fillmore [Reformed] church, except that a basement will be added for use as a school and furnace room.<sup>24</sup>

The speed with which this group moved leaves one wondering if there had been some planning going on for a long time. One hundred and fifty-three days after the first organizational meeting, this group dedicated its new church building. The cost of building a new parsonage (about \$1,200.00) pales in comparison with the project undertaken by German Evangelical Peace Church. Under the architect's sketch of the newly constructed church building, the Kewaskum paper reported on November 5:

The total cost of the building is \$4,000.00, aside from the labor done by many of the 35 devout members of the congregation, and not including the acre of ground purchased for a cemetery 1 1/2 miles northwest of here.<sup>25</sup>

The building of a new parsonage may have been the only scheduled item of business at the Voters' Meeting March 28, but it certainly doesn't seem that it was the only thing on the agenda of some who were there. At best the issue of the

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new parsonage might be viewed as "the straw which broke the camel's back," but it hardly seems possible that it was the cause of the split. The root of the matter had to go deeper.

### 3. The Lack of Confessional Unity Theory

If the St. Lucas voters had acted rashly in their decision to proceed with the building of a parsonage to the detriment of the church's primary mission of proclaiming the gospel, or if the pastor was intolerant in his zealous application of the law, would these, even if both were true, be sufficient reason to forsake one's confession of faith? Of course not, but that's exactly what happened.

That group that gathered in John Schaefer's home formed an Evangelical Reformed congregation. They secured the part time services of a Reformed pastor, Rev. Grunewald, of the Fillmore church in the beginning. He conducted the dedication service on November 6, 1898. Soon the Peace congregation had its own Reformed pastor, and although the congregation did not officially join the Evangelical and Reformed Church until 1946, they had cooperated with this denomination from the very beginning of the congregation's organization. In 1957, their church body united with the Congregational Christian Churches to form the new denomination, the United Church of Christ. Although the U.C.C.'s Statement of Faith, adopted in 1959, could be understood in different ways, it doesn't say anything a Lutheran would necessarily disagree with. According to the U.C.C.'s constitution, however, local churches are neither

bound by this Statement of Faith nor required to accept it.<sup>26</sup>

By the time that Pastor Greve retired in 1923, Peace Church had been served by five different pastors. All but one of them resigned. Could it be that these people, who were obviously weak in doctrine, were also contrary in spirit?

The one pastor during this time that did not resign was Rev. Fred Mohme. There was a substantial increase in membership in the congregation during his tenure.

Alfred Seefeldt told me the following story about Pastor Mohme and Pastor Greve:

Peace Church had purchased a parsonage which just happened to sit adjacent to St. Lucas and almost directly across the street from the home of Pastor Greve. When Pastor Mohme left his home on Sunday morning for Peace Church the most direct route took him right in front of St. Lucas. As he passed by he and the members of St. Lucas were quiet, not even exchanging looks, or acknowledging the other's existence. Pastor Greve's home sat up on a rise just above the flood plain of the Milwaukee River. One winter day, he noticed the arms of someone, who had apparently fallen through the ice, frantically trying without success to climb out of the icy water. Pastor Greve rushed down the bank, carefully crawled out on the ice and pulled the person out of the water. It was Pastor Mohme's son. When the Reformed pastor learned of his son's rescue, he came to Pastor Greve's home and thanked him. From that time on it was noted by people that Pastors Greve and Mohme would often be seen sitting on the porch of the St. Lucas parsonage discussing one thing or another.<sup>27</sup>

#### IV. Conclusion

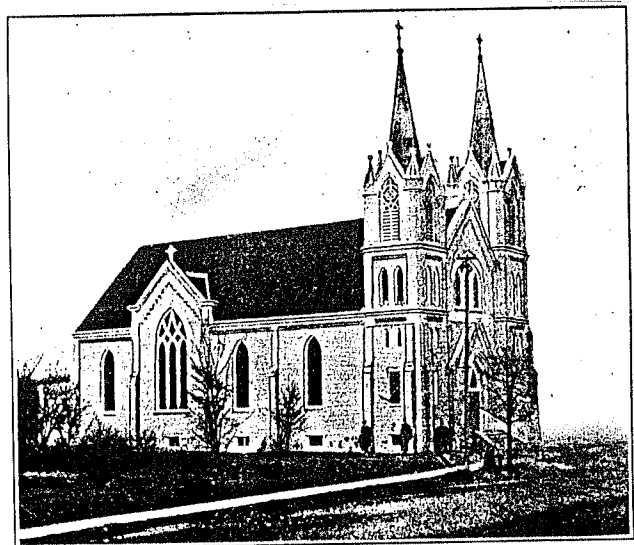
There are essentially two kinds of turning, a turning toward something or someone and a turning away. In 1898, in the Village of Kewaskum in a small congregation of German Christians both kinds were seen. One continued in its turning

toward the truth in God's Word and in its restatement in the Lutheran Confessions. The other was a turning away from the same.

It is ironic that this group which broke away should call itself Peace Congregation, in light of what Jesus says in Matthew 10, "I have not come to bring peace, but to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law--a man's enemies will be the members of his own household." It happened in Kewaskum in just this way.

Although I cannot prove it, I believe the surviving evidence and what has happened since the split, certainly supports the position that what divided this congregation in 1898 was essentially a difference in religious beliefs.

When St. Lucas bound itself to an evangelical Lutheran confession, it set its "tracks toward home." When the Christian sets out on this course, he can expect to face the "old evil Foe," as Luther called the devil in his great battle hymn. So, it was at St. Lucas. The congregation was not spared the inners struggle



The Present Church, built 1913

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with the forces of evil. The congregation's anonymous historian says better than I can:

Then where God's word was preached loudly and purely, there the archenemy of the church, the devil, with all power and cunning, sought to hinder and destroy the work of the Lord.<sup>28</sup>

But the Lord won the victory. By his grace, St. Lucas has continued on that narrow path with its tracks toward its heaven home to this very day.



FOOTNOTES

1. Kewaskum Statesman, April 2, 1898, p. 3.
2. Zur Goldenen Jubelfeier der ev. luth. St. Lucas Gemeinde, 1877-1927, Kewaskum, Washington County, Wisconsin, p. 3.
3. Ibid., p. 3.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p. 4.
6. Ibid., p. 3.
7. Ibid., p. 4.
8. Ibid.
9. John Philipp Koehler, The History of the Wisconsin Synod (Sauk Rapids, Minnesota: Printed fro the Protes'tant Conference by Sentinel Printing Company, 1981), p. 71.
10. Koehler, *ibid.*, p. 165.
11. Zur Goldenen Jubelfeier der ev. luth. St. Lucas Gemeinde, 1877-1927, Kewaskum, Washington County, Wisconsin, p. 4.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid., p. 5.
14. Kewaskum Statesman, *op. cit.*
15. Alfred Seefeldt, member of St. Lucas Ev. Lutheran Church, Kewaskum, Wisconsin, personal interview on the history of St. Lucas, Spring, 1989.
16. Louis Backhaus, member of St. Lucas Ev. Lutheran Church, Kewaskum, Wisconsin, personal interview on the history of St. Lucas at Cedar Lake Home, West Bend, Wisconsin, Spring, 1989
17. L. F. Brandes, "Pastor Frederick Greve," The Northwestern Lutheran, Vol. 26, No. 35, December 3, 1939, p. 397.

FOOTNOTES, continued,

18. Zur Goldenen Jubelfeier der ev. luth. St. Lucas Gemeinde, 1877-1927, Kewaskum, Washington County, Wisconsin, pp. 5.

19. The Diamond Jubilee of St. Lucas Evangelical Lutheran Church 1877-1952, Kewaskum, Washington County, Wisconsin, p. 5.

20. Zur Goldenen Jubelfeier der ev. luth. St. Lucas Gemeinde, 1877-1927, Kewaskum, Washington County, Wisconsin, p. 9.

21. The Diamond Jubilee of St. Lucas Evangelical Lutheran Church 1877-1952, Kewaskum, Washington County, Wisconsin, p. 6.

22. The Synodical Proceedings of the Joint Synod of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, and Other States, years 1894 and following.

23. Kewaskum Statesman, June 11, 1898, p. 3.

24. Kewaskum Statesman, June 25, 1898, p. 3.

25. Kewaskum Statesman, November 5, 1898, p. 3

26. Erwin L. Lueker and Frederick E. Mayer, "United Church of Christ," Lutheran Cyclopedia (St. Louis, Missouri: Concordia Publishing House, 1954), p. 785.

27. Alfred Seefeldt, member of St. Lucas Ev. Lutheran Church, Kewaskum, Wisconsin, personal interview on the history of St. Lucas, Spring, 1989.

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