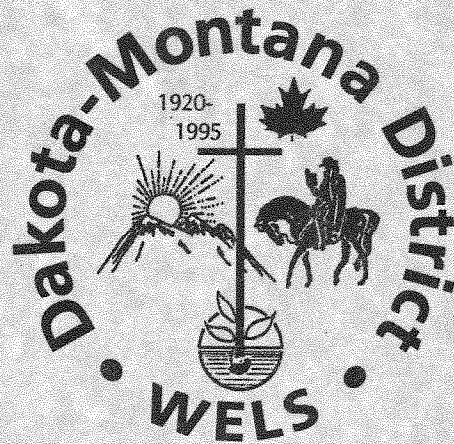


Dakota-Montana District



1920 - 1995
Seventy-Five Years
Of God's Blessings

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INTRODUCTION

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 forever. Hebrews 13:7-8

During my first years in Mobridge and Glenham I had the privilege of serving a particular shut-in who was over 90 years old. Her story, typical of many, deserves to be told. As a young lady she married and settled on a homestead across the Missouri River. Though only 50 miles from home, she and her husband were virtually isolated from family and friends the first years of their marriage. What she missed most, however, were regular Sunday worship services and the other activities of a local church. In a few years she and her husband helped other homesteaders who moved to the area to found a new congregation. With time their ranches and families flourished, and their church grew along with these. Years later things changed. The “dirty thirties” thinned out the homesteads. The diesel locomotive and truck replaced the steam engine and horse drawn wagon. Farms and ranches got bigger and bigger, while families and towns got smaller. Not long after she and her husband retired to Mobridge their church in Trail City was closed. All of this in one, albeit long, lifetime.

That has been the history of the Dakotas: movement, change, growth, decline, challenge, opportunity, and blessing. But always, the Word of God has been present and reaching out to believers and unbelievers alike across the years and the miles. Today many district congregations exist which could not be imagined years ago, and many more areas need to hear the message of the Gospel. The making of history and the saving of souls will not end until the Lord of history returns.

This volume recounts the histories of dozens of congregations, hundreds of pastors past and present, and the thousands of lives they have touched. As the writer to the Hebrews says, it is good for us to remember the adventurous efforts of others past to see God’s guidance and blessing. Such scenes will stir us and future generations to follow in the steps of our forefathers eagerly and persistently. To share the unchanging Gospel of forgiveness and life with a restless, dying world is the command of Christ and the very purpose of each believer.

While there will be challenges and changes, our direction, strength, and expected blessing always remains the sole possession of our loving Savior, Jesus Christ. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. May he always be with us and prosper our efforts to spread salvation.

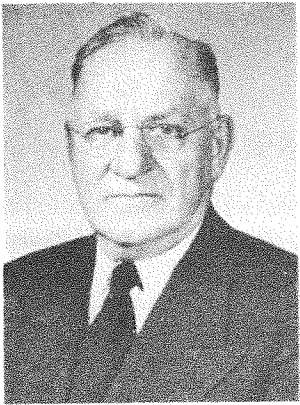
We offer our great thanks to all who actively contributed to this anniversary celebration. We think first of Pastor Emeritus Reginald E. Pope who initiated the observance and served as our festival speaker. Following are our three able historians: Pastor Emeritus Herbert A. Birner; Professor Emeritus Wayne B. Ten Broek; and Pastor Alan W. Gumm. The latter also served with anniversary committee member Pastor Douglas L. Free arranging the program for the banquet. Our gratitude is likewise extended to Pastors Jon A. Baumann and Steven E. Persons who prepared the festival service. Thanks are due each of the pastors, teachers, or members who contributed to the present work. A special thanks to our third committee member, Roger Frey of Mobridge, who along with myself, compiled and edited this history and arranged the banquet.

We offer our fervent prayer to the Lord of the Church’s history that our local, district, and synod mission efforts will not only go down in history but continue until the end of time. To write the Gospel in the souls of those redeemed by the blood of Christ—that is the most important history of all.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Peter J. Naumann

Dakota-Montana District Presidents



*Wm F. Sauer
1920-1928*



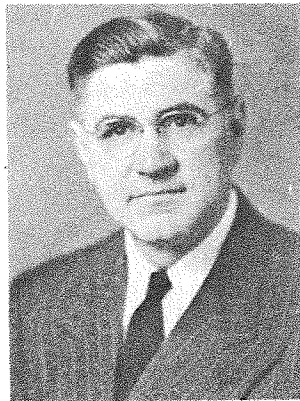
*J. Paul Scherf
1928-1934*



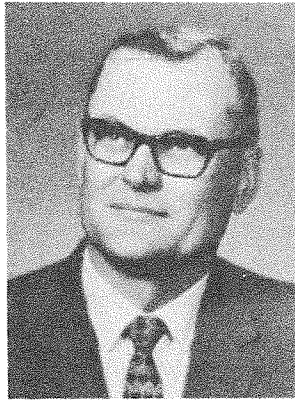
*Edgar R. Gamm
1934-1938*



*Walter T. Meier
1938-1946*



*Paul G. Albrecht
1946-1958*



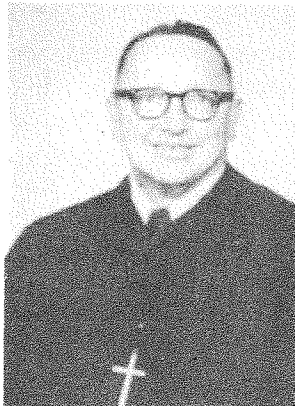
*Walter A. Schumann, Jr.
1958-1966*



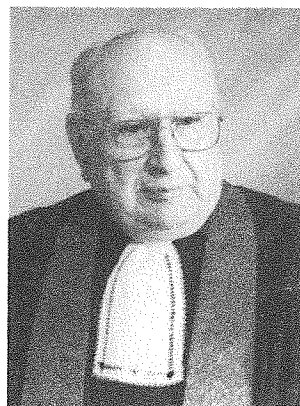
*Arthur P. C. Kell
1966-1980*



*Wayne I. Schulz
1980-1984*



*Edward J. Werner
1984-1990*



*Reginald E. Pope
1990-1994*



*Peter J. Naumann
1994-present*

The Saga Of A Mission District—Dakota-Montana

The First Ninety Years (1880-1970)

Prepared By Herbert A. Birner
Who Lived And Worked In The District From 1920 to 1969

Read at the Dakota-Montana District Convention June 14-16, 1994
Revised for publication, 1994

In the back bedroom of our home hangs this original HOMESTEAD CERTIFICATE NO 4904 — Application 20000 issued to Charley Anderson. This instrument belongs to my wife. Her grandfather was Charley Anderson. Documents like this could be found in hundreds of homes visited by the missionaries of the MINNESOTA SYNOD in the 1880s and 90s. It was the Act of Congress of May, 20, 1862 that caused an exodus of Lutheran Germans and Scandinavians to journey from other states and Europe to the Dakota Territory for free land together with the opportunity to prosper.

Said Charley Anderson was not a German. He came from the State Church of Sweden. Charley spoke no German and the Minnesota Synod missionaries spoke no Swedish. So the two never got together. If a German Lutheran had not married Charley's daughter, who knows what my wife might have been. The avowed purpose of the Minnesota Synod was to gather into congregations displaced German Lutherans. As this history shall reveal they did a very good job. Later, in the twenties of this century, we began to pick

up a few Scandinavians when the German Lutheran boys looked on the Scandinavian girls and beheld their blond beauty. But we also lost our German girls, because in those days women followed their men into their churches. Evangelism had nothing to do with it.

Charley's land contract was dated Dec. 28, 1889. The land contract still reads "Dakota Territory." But in November of the same year the territory had become the states of North and South Dakota. At that time the Sioux Indians ceded parts of their reservations west of the Missouri River, which were opened for settlement in 1890. The great "Dakota Boom," a period of rapid settlement occurred between 1879 and 1886. It is interesting how many of our early Dakota congregations had their birth during that very period of time. Also, the movement of German Russians into the West River Country began about 1890 when the Sioux Indians ceded some of their reservations back to the U. S. government. Truly the Lord is gracious. He followed his people into their new homes with Word and Sacrament.

Let Us Talk About The Makeup Of The Dakota-Montana District.

This will help us see how God shapes his history. In fact, this is what mission boards have to take into consideration even today. In a manner of speaking, Dakota-Montana has always been a mission district. My memory of it for seventeen of the 27 years I served as a district pastor was making out reports for the mission board. In some respects it was adversarial—me versus them. Of course, I am speaking from my own sinful standpoint: The bottom line was numbers, numbers of souls and communicants and voters and money. In my mind that decided how good a missionary I was. I am certain that that was also the feeling of my contemporaries. I found myself dreadfully lacking. The same pressures were put on me that are put on

home missionaries today: "Go out and make more calls." Throughout the years I have followed in the Statistical Reports of the synod the history of the congregations I have served. It still gives me a perverse pleasure to see that the men who followed me did no better than I did. Indeed the Savior said, "Compel them to come in," but he didn't promise he would force them to come in.

It is not my assignment to write a doctrinal paper, but since I opened the Pandora's Box let me try to close it. The Apostle Paul certainly had all the self-doubts we pastors have. Why did he so often fail among his own nation? It wasn't because he refused to carry out the commands of his Savior. I would recom-

mend that all of you read and study carefully Romans chapters eight through eleven. There lies the answer to the conundrum why we so often fail in an area. There lies the answer: It is found in God's Election to Grace. In those four chapters, where we find one of our better mission texts, Paul comes back again and again to that thought. I'll quote only from Romans 8:29 & 30: "For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified." Moreover, only "God knows those that are his;" only God knows how many of his elect are out there. It is not for us to know lest we say in our hearts, "There are only a few out there, why should we go?" But it is also true as Paul points out, God opens and shuts doors. But he does want the elect called into his kingdom. That's why Jesus compares his Church here on earth to fisherman who catch all sorts of fish. So, if you and I don't call in God's elect, God will call someone else to do it. That's our mandate. "Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful."

Certainly the number of God's elect are limited in a district of limited population. The numbers that missionaries report to their District Mission Boards are decided by many things. We call these things "demographics." Every mission board deals with them when they present their requests for money in Milwaukee. They talk about population, the economic health, the industries, the movements in and out of a region where they want to do mission work. The argument is that if these things look good there will be some of God's elect there. It is a human judgment which may have some basis in fact. Further than that we cannot go.

Over the years the demographics of the Dakota-Montana District have decided when and how much a congregation will grow, and just as often when it would stop growing despite all the efforts of the missionary. We certainly see this in broad outline as we review the 115 years of our history of which I shall try to capsule the first 90 years—till 1970. Let's take South Dakota as a model. Today, there are three population regions: the eastern in, the central man-made great lakes and the western Black Hills. It is in these regions that some of our older congregations are still prospering. Why? Because the people are still there.

But back in the 1880s to the 1920s in the James and Sioux River areas it was different. The land act opened these fertile regions to farmers who came from near and far. Farming was a labor intensive operation back in those days. Families were large to do the work. The norm was 160 acres—a quarter section. There

were often four farms to a square mile with as many as 24 people or more. One could start a church in a country school house and it would prosper. Many did, as I learned when I read the mission board's minutes back in the 60s. Several years' drought could also affect congregational growth. The "Little House on the Prairie" books give a good picture how things were in the early years of our district. But then came the tractor, the combine, the duck-foot plow, etc., so that by 1970 the 160 acre farm had grown to an average of 975 acres, according to my encyclopedia. Nor does it take a large family to operate such a farm. That's why once prospering congregations in east river South Dakota have grown static, or smaller, or have been closed. Don't blame the pastor.

Where we went and what we did was also decided by other matters—not always noble. In our early work the German language was the important thing. It wasn't always because the missionary did not want to preach in the English language. It was the tyranny of the people themselves who argued that, "Der Heilige Geist kann kein English," (The Holy Spirit can't speak in English). Back in the 60s, when we were trying to open the Alberta, Canada, field we had to let a young man go because he was committed to keeping alive the German language and culture.

Another thing played in: We had a gentlemen's agreement with the Missouri Synod not to open opposition congregations, especially in the cities. This went on into the 50s. Among brethren that was fine. So we did not go into the larger towns until a start was made in the 50s.

Nor when looking at the growth of the district should we ignore the roads and the railroads that led into and opened areas of influence. Even the modes of transportation played their part. As Prof. K. G. Sievert reports in his 1970 history, the first missionary, Christian Boettcher, complained to his superiors that his work was hampered because his horse had sore feet. Horse drawn vehicles travelled about five miles an hour; so in some areas there was a church every ten miles. Along came the Model T Ford; now two congregations could have every Sunday service. Now it is sensible to have congregations 50 or more miles apart because of the modern auto. My own father, when he came into the district in 1920 relied on a spur line of the Northwestern Railroad to serve his three congregations. Trains on that 40 mile line ran four times a day back and forth. When the congregations bought him a Model T Ford things changed; now he could serve each congregation more often. But in winter time he sometimes went back to the train. So even the weather played its part in district work.

Pre-District Days And Now

A Mrs. Paul Schwantz, aunt to our Pastor Wilbur Dorn, gave my father a copy of the 1909 GESCHICHTE DER MINNESOTA SYNODE (History of the Minnesota Synod). It is a most valuable source of information concerning pre-district days. It contains historical profiles of many of the congregations which existed at the time we became the Dakota-Montana District in 1920. Much of the information which I shall pass on in this part of my history comes from this book. The Dakotas were the mission field of the Minnesota Synod and then after 1917 of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin And Other States. In fact a disproportionate part of WELS mission funds were spent on the Dakotas.

What I am going to try to do is call the role of the congregations and preaching stations that existed at the time we became a district. If I miss some, forgive me. The History of the Minnesota Synod depended on pastors sending in profiles of their congregations. As happens in cases like that not all pastors responded. In fact one of the glaring omissions is that of the important St. Martin's congregation at Watertown, the city where Charley Anderson's land title is recorded. I shall try to pick up some of the congregations that were omitted, but my sources are limited. In listing the congregations I shall number them (1), (2), etc., to give you an idea of how many existed when the district was formed. You'll be surprised as I was.

(1) Let's start with Christ of Marshall, Minnesota. At the time the district was formed towns along the boarder could decide which district they wanted to join. A Pastor Edgar Gamm, a teen's missionary in the west river country and later pastor at Marshall gives us some information regarding the congregation. Marshall was the platform from which Missionary Christian Boettcher started his work in the Dakotas. He travelled as far west as Redfield, SD, a distance of about 140 miles by horse. This earned him and later missionaries the name of Reisprediger, literally translated "riding preacher." In fact that name was used in the district's German mission reports as the name for missionaries up to the 1936 district mission report given by Chairman Theodor Bauer. A mission trip took six weeks to make by horse and buggy. So you can see how often these people had services. Prof. K. G. Sievert told how an old lady in his congregation at Grover would board Boettcher in her sod hut. When he came she would send her sons out into the countryside to tell the people that the pastor had come. It made no difference what day he arrived; the next day was church day, also held in the sod hut. People came by

ox-cart, by horseback, and by horse and buggy. Babies born since the missionary was last there were baptized. There were instructions, which were sometimes turned over to a knowledgeable layman. The day was well spent and the missionary travelled to the next place.

It is also interesting to note that Boettcher thought of Marshall as an inhospitable place where he could not support his family, so he moved over toward Taunton. But even so, work was begun in Marshall as early as 1876 and 1877. Boettcher arrived there Dec. 20, 1878. Really, it was not before 1896, twenty years later that Christ of Marshall came into being. Its story is interesting, but this is not the place to tell it, lest I get bogged down. Marshall was in the Dakota-Montana District till 1942, when it finally joined the Minnesota District.

(2) Another Minnesota place was St. Peter's of Balaton. It remained in the Dakota-Montana District till 1930. Christian Boettcher started this congregation in the 1884-85 winter. The dates I give you will not always be the dates the congregations organized. Congregations, like babies didn't begin with names. I find Balaton interesting because the Rev. Paul Scherf, second president of the district, pastored there from 1905 to 1921. From there he was called to Roscoe, where he served till about 1940, just before he died. He was a colorful character, who served his district well. I'll tell some of his story later.

(3) St. John's of Arco, Minnesota. This congregation had its birth about 1900 when the Northwestern Railroad passed through and set up the town site. Most of its life, it had every other Sunday services. It was closed about 1954.

Forgive me again if I digress, as I shall do often. What I report here happened in other places and impacted on our mission work. In 1900 the Northwestern Railroad ran a 40 mile line from Tyler, Minnesota, to Astoria, SD. It set up four town sites along that line: Arco, Ivanhoe, Hendricks, and Astoria, all of which came into existence at the same time. My father in 1920 was called to serve congregations at Hendricks, Arco, and Tyler. They all were original congregations of the Dakota-Montana District.

(4) Tyler, Minnesota, Immanuel, organized in 1905. A congregation that was supposed to grow because it was in Lincoln County, Minnesota, and because it was a railroad division town. But as every mission board eventually finds out, it does not work that way. Tyler was the stronghold of the Danebod Synod—Danish Lutheran. It had an academy there. It was also a lodge town, as were many that we entered. Lodges also sold insurance, and it was hard to get someone to give up his insurance policy. That's why

the Aid Association for Lutherans was founded—to fight fire with fire. As a little boy I can remember my father bemoaning the lodge problem in Tyler. Even to this day the congregation, now a member of the Minnesota District, only numbers about 100 communicants.

(5) Hendricks, Minnesota, Trinity. It was started by Boettcher in 1890 and organized as a congregation in 1890. It did not move into Hendricks until 1910. It built its church there in 1909 and the first child baptized in the new church was our Pastor Wilbur Dorn on October 2, 1910. Prior to its move into Hendricks it was known as “New Grove,” because it worshipped in the consolidated school four miles south of Hendricks.

I was four and a half years old when my father was installed there in 1920. “Swede” Dorn, cousin to our Wilbur Dorn, picked us up in Argo Township, SD, where we had stayed with Pastor Henry Sprenger while waiting for our furniture to arrive from Missouri. Upon arriving the first thing I laid my eyes on was our coaster wagon. That was my introduction to the Dakota-Montana District.

Again, I digress. Hendricks was a solid Norwegian town. When we arrived there it had four Norwegian Lutheran Churches, representing three Norwegian Synods—the Old Norwegian Lutheran Church, the Haugi Synod, and the Free Lutheran Church. All were prospering. The German settlement was south of Hendricks around the New Grove School. When we came to town we were known as the German Lutheran Church. No one cared what synod we belonged to; it was enough to know that we were German. Ethnic feelings ran high.

Why move to Hendricks, where ethnic feelings were still very strong? Well, William Dorn (Grandpa to us), founder of New Grove, was fluent in both German and Norwegian. One of his sons was a very successful implement dealer in Hendricks. Grandpa Vierhuff, another founder of the congregation lived in town. Why not? The church did grow. One mission festival it even had a Norwegian sermon. The church was so tightly packed that at times we children were seated on the steps leading to the chancel. There was a Sunday School class every other pew—teacher, class; teacher, class; etc. One of my teachers was Bill Dorn’s mother, Martha, truly a Christian lady.

In 1929 the church was enlarged. Its dedication and the stock market crash came at the same time. That had very little impact on the congregation, but the depression that ended Herbert Hoover’s presidency and the bank holiday of Franklin Roosevelt (1933) did. The congregation lost the little money cushion it had as did many other congregations as well as members. The church debt became an albatross around the

congregation’s neck. The pastor’s salary was reduced as were many other pastors’ in the congregations. The “dirty thirties” with its drought and dust storms did not help. Tensions between pastor and congregation grew. The congregation stopped growing.

But it wasn’t the tensions that did it. What happened to Trinity of Hendricks happened everywhere. All around Hendricks were 80 and 160 acre farms. There were farmsteads four to a square mile. New farm machinery changed things. Now when I visit the area most of those farm places I knew as a child are abandoned. I tell the story of Hendricks because it is the story of many another place in our district.

Hendricks is still a part of the Dakota-Montana District though it is in Minnesota. The only other congregation of our district in Minnesota is at Moorhead, another Norwegian stronghold, seat of one of their colleges.

(6) Across the boarder from Hendricks was Argo Township, St. Paul’s. Many of its people, like at Hendricks had come from Door County, Wisconsin. It too was Christian Boettcher founded about 1880, but it organized itself in 1883, seven years earlier than Hendricks. It was a strong, viable congregation till the “dirty thirties.” Two things led to its downturn. One was a pastor who had Protes’tant leanings and wanted to commune lodge members. The other was the great change in farming operations after World War II. It disbanded in the 70s and many of its members transferred to Brookings.

Two items of interest. Argo had an old tracker action pipe organ. In the 40s they electrified it by building a box with the blower outside. When the organ was played in winter it pumped in, frigid, outside air. I had cold feet for two years while serving the congregation from Estelline. The last I heard was that the organ was moved to Brookings and was in use there.

The other item of interest: When I served it, it had 95 souls. It had afternoon services, yet attendance always ran about 90.

(7) White, SD, Zion. This was a filale of Argo. Its organization date was 1896. It was formed by people from the Argo congregation. When its pastor left the synod in 1936 it went over to Missouri. We shall tell more of its story later.

(8) Hidewood Township, Zion, between Estelline and Clear Lake, SD, organized in 1898. There was no write-up about this congregation in the 1909 history. The author knew many of its members. It went over to the CLC in 1959.

(9) Along the South Dakota-Minnesota boarder is the very small town of Ward, SD, Immanuel. My

history tells me that it was started by reisepredigern, among whom may well have been Boettcher. It was organized in 1886 by a Pastor Polzin, whose name appears in the histories of several congregations. Like many of these early congregations it once prospered. It was served from Elkton and still is.

(10) Elkton, SD, Trinity. Polzin also organized this congregation in 1889. It hosted several district conventions in the 20s and 30s. Back in those days district conventions started on Wednesdays and ended the next Tuesday evening. Sunday was a big day. Congregations in the neighborhood of the convention congregation would call off services. In 1934, this author, just out of the 12th grade at DMLC, was present at the convention in Elkton. The morning service was in the German language. At the service we sang the German hymn, *Fahre fort! Fahre fort!* (literal translation, Ride forth.). After the service two young preachers were kidding one another. One was our late Professor Blume. The other was that year's candidate, Edward Krueger, "Cutie" to his friends. Krueger, having just graduated from the Seminary had received a fine new Graham Paige car, a luxury vehicle in those days. I overheard Blume saying to his friend, "Cutie, don't you know what we sang today in church. We didn't sing, 'Fahre Graham Paige;' we sang, 'Fahre Ford! Fahre Ford!'" Blume drove a beat-up old Model A Ford.

(11) Moving north again, we come to Altamont, SD, St. John's. It's founding date, according to statistical reports was 1887, which would also place it among the Boettcher founded congregations. It too was once a flourishing church. It was served from various places—last of all from Clear Lake. It closed its doors in the 60s. The town is a ghost town that still exists, but barely.

(12) Gary, SD, First (and only) Lutheran. (Why are there no "Second or Third Lutherans?") This was a new kid on the block when the district was organized. It was not organized till 1924. It was then served from Altamont, which did have a resident pastor for a while, a Roy Volmers. As a child I remember him for his Star car, which had a hole in the roof, because the shot gun he carried between the seats while hunting had gone off.

Gary is a parish that has held its own throughout the years, and we can't figure out why. We have known the congregation ever since we came to the district. It has to be God's Word, because it is not the area. It was one of the congregations, which in the 30s called a candidate for \$25 a month, supplementing his salary with food, fuel, etc.

(13) Dempster, SD, St. John's. Its organization date is 1912. For a while it also was a part of the Altamont, Gary, Dempster Parochie, as they called it. It

never had a pastor to itself but was shoved in with this or that congregation. Yet it survives to this day. It was once my congregation, so I had better be careful what I say. But let me tell you a story about one of its pastors. For a while it was served by a colorful Otto Klett. He was known in the Estelline-Dempster community for his little dance band. In those days the Missouri Synod was dead set against dancing, but Wisconsin took a more lack-a-dasical attitude. One of my wife's music teachers told me about Klett's band. A pious Norwegian, she didn't know whether to praise or condemn it, but she danced to it.

(14) Havana Township, SD, St. Paul's, about ten miles south of Goodwin. Another Deuel County congregation, which had its moments of glory. Our Wilbur Dorn once served this congregation. It has a big write-up in the 1909 history. Organized in 1885 it already existed in 1881, another Boettcher preaching place. It was the mother of the Goodwin congregation and may have helped found others. It once had its own parsonage.

Let me tell an interesting incident from the 1909 history: Before it had either a church or a parsonage, a meeting was held in the district school house. Conducting the meeting was a Pastor G. Albrecht. Present at this meeting was also a Pastor Hupfer. The congregation was without pastor. At this meeting Pastor Hupfer was called by acclamation. He accepted the Call at the same meeting, and in the same meeting was installed as pastor of the congregation. He served two years till 1890. The next pastor was a C. Albrecht. The history reads, "It was not clear whether he was officially installed as a minister and caretaker of souls, but he served till 1894."

Havana's doors were shut about 1951. If you pass the place today you will notice a clump of bushes growing where the church once stood.

(15) Closely associated with Havana Township was St. Peter's, Goodwin, SD. It started as a daughter congregation. It was organized in 1898. It prospered and had its own pastor till 1970. Now served from South Shore it continues to hold its own and has a communicant membership as large as it ever had. It is often alleged that in order to prosper a congregation must have a resident pastor. The history of the district proves that is not true. It is the Gospel in Word and Sacrament that builds and keeps alive a congregation—not the number of societies or organizations it has.

Among the pastors of Havana and Goodwin is also our veteran Pastor Wilbur Dorn.

Today, the little town of Goodwin is known for its golf course for beginners.

(16) Watertown, SD, St. Martin's is the biggest parish in our district. For some reason this congregation was not written up in the 1909 History of the Minnesota Synod. After we read this essay to the District in June of 1994, we received a history of St. Martin's from which we will draw a brief profile. In the early 1880s Missionary Christian Boettcher did work in the areas of Germantown, Rauville, Mazeppa Townships, and Watertown. St. Martin's was organized in the home of J. C. Miller on January 24, 1886. Its pastor at that time was J. Johl. Her first church was dedicated on September 14, 1902. During this time she was served together with the afore mentioned congregations. A house was built for her first resident pastor in 1905.

In 1911 Pastor William Sauer became her pastor. He would be the first district president elected in the summer of 1920. Other district presidents who served the congregation were W. T. Meier in the 40s and Walter Schumann, Jr. in the late 50s and early 60s. Her day school was started in 1957.

(17) Grover Township, SD, Immanuel. It has also been listed as Oxford and Hazel, SD. It too was Boettcher founded as I mentioned earlier. Its organization date was August 10, 1884. In the 1909 history its little church was called a jewel. It still is today.

Grover had its moments in the history of the district. The first Dakota-Montana District Convention was held there in 1922. It has given our synod a number of pastors including our last synod president, Carl Mischke. The profile of the congregation in the 1909 history ends with the prayer: "May our faithful God watch over the congregation so that many may be led to Christ." That prayer has certainly been answered in the case of this congregation as its history proves.

One sad note: In 1959 this congregation was split by its pastor forming a Church of the Lutheran Confession congregation in Watertown. This writer attended a very stormy meeting there, where the two sides were separated by the center aisle of the church. The controversy split not only friends but also families who had given pastors to our synod.

(18) Henry, SD, St. Paul's is also a Boettcher congregation. It was started in 1882 and organized in 1884, the same time as Watertown. Its membership rose and fell with droughts and bad times. But it had this going for it. Being a village it had the parsonage. Henry, over the years, has been yoked together with a number of neighboring congregations. At present, Grover is served from Henry. Our Prof. Wayne TenBroek was pastor there in the early 1940s, and from there was called to the academy at Mobridge.

(19) Raymond, SD, Bethlehem. Another Boettcher place organized by Pastor Johl in 1884. If one

looks quickly to the north while driving along 212, one can see Raymond. Here is another congregation that suffered much from droughts and bad times. The history states, "In 1908 the congregation built a parsonage and a barn. On October 31, 1909, the young people of the congregation bought a nice clock." One wonders whether the clock was not a broad hint to the pastor to shorten his sermons. In 1909 the congregation had 195 souls. Compare that with about a 126 today. This is the area of South Dakota where the people have moved either east or west. The second vice-president of our synod, the Rev. Robert Zink was assigned to Raymond in 1959.

(20) Bailey's Lake, Emanuel, 18 miles northeast of Raymond, organized in 1899 by a Pastor J. R. Baumann. It was served from Henry and later from Raymond. In 1923 Bailey's Lake reorganized and moved to Clark, since that was the center of activity. It was renamed, Peace.

(21) Crocker, Clark County, SD, St. John's. Crocker is a little town northeast of Raymond. It was organized in 1910 and served from Raymond. The 1909 history states that when the school was moved to town the congregation moved with it. Its name appears in early district proceedings. The demise of some of these congregations never appears in any report.

(22) We are getting a little ahead of ourselves. Let's move back to the area north of Watertown. I'm going to have to confess that my information may not be too exact in speaking of the next three congregations. For one thing their beginnings are closely bound together. Then too, some of the information given in my 1909 history was not written for posterity but for those in the know, who were living at the time. So unless one was there one is left in a quandary.

The first congregation is Germantown Township, Codington County, SD, St. Luke's. Christian Boettcher was there; that is clear. The congregation shows a 1888 organization date. Its first church was also built in 1888. The 1909 history shows a very large and grand parsonage which overshadows the little church. It was once a prospering place. Now it is listed as Summit 11 SW and goes by the name of St. John's.

(23) In 1889 a group of people broke away from the Germantown congregation and became St. John's of Rauville. They built their own church. My history was not very clear concerning its organization. Rauville too had its moments of glory and hosted a district convention. It is now listed as 10 miles north of Watertown. As a child I became acquainted with one of the Raus from Rauville. He was caretaker of the hospital at Hendricks, MN, and his wife was the first nurse there.

(24) The third early congregation in that region was Mazeppa Township, SD, also St. John's. I found two dates for its organization, 1888 and 1890. It built a church in 1897 and a few years later it built a school-house. One must be careful and not equate that with a day school. Other congregations had such schools, such as St. Paul's, Argo Township. These schools supplemented the public schools during the summer months with lessons in catechism, Bible History, and German. There were no Sunday Schools as such. Confirmation classes in the winter time were virtually impossible. Then too, German was taught, because the child in the public school was taught only in English, and was in danger of losing his German. It was considered sacrilegious to teach religion in English to these German people.

Mazeppa too had its moments of glory and hosted a convention. When it disappeared from the 1969 Statistical Report, Bethlehem on the north side of Watertown took its place. In reality, St. John's of Mazeppa became Bethlehem of Watertown.

(25) South Shore, SD, Immanuel, organized March 6, 1905. Its first pastor was R. Polzin. Polzin seems to have gotten around a lot. This writer remembers preaching the sermon at the dedication of its present parsonage 30 years ago. It was also the seat of one of your bishops, Edward Werner. This church has grown and prospered throughout the years.

(26) Let's move again to the Grover area: West Badger Township, SD, St. Peter's. It was served for years from Grover till about 1960. It seems the CLC controversy killed it. West Badger Township also seems to have been a Boettcher endeavor, because it has a founding date of 1883. It had its own little church but never grew to any size.

(27) Stuck far out in the country was Hague Township, SD, Clark County, Bethlehem. Its people too had been gathered together by Christian Boettcher. It was organized in 1884 by Pastor J. Johl. The 1909 history admits it was not very large and that was true of its entire history. The history closes with the prayer of its then Pastor M. C. Michaels, "Moege der Herr auch ferner in ihn wohnen und sie auch fernerhin segnen." (May the Lord also dwell within her in the future and continue to bless her.) The prayer was answered in that she did celebrate her 100th anniversary and closed her doors soon after.

Of the 27 congregations I have listed over 20 owe their birth to Christian Boettcher. He, no doubt, worked in other places of which we have no record.

The Yellowstone Trail Congregations And Their Spin-offs In Pre-District Days

We are now entering German Russian country. I quote from Prof. Sievert's paper read to the District Convention of 1970: "Ethnically these people were German. Their forefathers had been lured to leave their fatherland by the promises made to them by Catherine the Great of Russia. In appreciation of what these people might mean to her, her manifesto promised anyone who would come to Russia free land, and this land free of taxes. She promised these people religious freedom and freedom from all military service. These promises attracted many German peasants, especially those from south Germany. The Crimean Peninsula and the area about Odessa were most attractive to them." The German Russians this writer dealt with came mostly from Bessarabia. The promises made to them by Catherine were later broken, and that brought them over here.

They were different and their German was also different. We were told at DMLC that one could not misspell German and that it was spelled like it was spoken. Well, it depends on how it is spoken. The German Russians spelled it the way they spoke it. "P" became "B" and "K" became "G" Take the word "kaput" meaning broken. They spelled it "gabut."

After World War II, when people from the U. S. were sending "Care Packages" overseas, relatives of my people at Faulkton and Ipswich, SD, would send begging letters. My people, not being able to speak or read German would bring them to me to translate. They did not know how poor my German was, but I was the educated preacher. I learned by reading the letters aloud to myself.

Their Lutheranism had been diluted by the Greek Orthodox. They were very pietistic. They did not like to have their preacher used "canned prayers," as we used to call written prayers, but wanted ex corde ones. Pastor Edgar Gamm reports, how before 1920, a group of German Russians threw him out of their prayer meeting, because he sought to instruct them. Yet they were Lutheran at heart. My father, who served them in the McIntosh area told me, how though they had been served by the "Congregessor" as they called the Congregationalists, still they insisted that their children be taught out of Luther's Catechism, which the Congregationalists adapted. This was in the 40s. They were also superstitious. My roommate at DMLC, Allen Hoff, later also a pastor in the district, used to regale us with stories of ghosts and queer happenings, which he swore were true.

In this new area of South and North Dakota, the names which most often appear are G. Lahme and R. Volkert. G. Lahme started work out of Redfield, SD. As already pointed out this was the western most outpost of Christian Boettcher.

Let me digress again for it will help us understand the district better. It would be interesting to know more about Redfield and our work there, but very little seems to have been written. A Pastor R. Volkert lived in and worked out of Redfield in 1887. This writer could find the name of no church there. It is interesting to note that Christian Boettcher seems to have had no immediate success in Marshall, Minnesota, the platform from which the eastern South Dakota congregations had their start, and we see the same thing at Redfield, SD.

Many years later, this writer was told that in the 1930s WELS opened a mission in Redfield and closed it on the same day because Missouri had opened a mission there about the same time. Because Missouri did the towns and we the country, we pulled out. Not even Missouri had much luck in Redfield back in the 40s, when we still fraternized with Missouri. This writer remembers speaking at a mission festival in a struggling LC-MS mission in Redfield.

So Mission Board—even demographics mislead us.

The history of the western area of our early district again shows how important district school-houses were in giving us places to worship, if no church could be built.

(28) A case in point is Gale Township, Peace, organized in 1887. For 65 years, till the last of its members joined Mound City, it worshipped in a school. I remember a mission festival there. The teacher's desk was the altar. People squeezed into the pupils' desks or sat in chairs along the wall. Since there was no piano we sang without accompaniment. The preacher would give the tone, sometimes high and sometimes low, but we sang. A few of you preachers still have to do this from time to time, I know.

Opening congregations also worshipped in many other places—in saloons, as bars were called then. They worshipped in lodge halls until the lodge people found out that Wisconsin was anti-lodge. A family with a large home would open their living room for services. Even sod huts became worshipping places as already noted.

No one said it was easy. In Mandan there was a concerted effort on the part of business people of other churches to keep us out by refusing to rent us quarters anywhere. This happened during the 30s. Other missionaries wrote their mission boards telling them how difficult it was to find a place to worship.

Sad to say, mission boards could not and did not support the men they sent out. There were no hymnals or service books of any kind. Salaries were shameful. People were expected to supply the missionary with meat and potatoes and corn cobs for cooking fuel. Some parishes were generous and others not. It was not unusual for a pastor making a call to return with a rooster in a gunny bag and a bushel of oats for his horse. Even this writer had a chopping block to decapitate live chickens given to him back in the 40s.

This also led to the movement of pastors out of the district. Young men came out filled with zeal, which soon cooled. Their wives were unhappy with the rented quarters, which sometimes were as hard to find as places to worship. Likely as not, if they were called back east to an established congregation they went, and who could blame them. They often went back poorer than they had come out. The district never did solve the problem for which it had been formed—to stop the rapid turnover of pastors. It was the people's fault as much as the synod's. But who are we to place blame? We were in it and a part of it.

Let's continue to call the roster of the congregations at the time of our district's formation. We have already spoken of Gale Township in the Mound City area.

(29) Bowdle, SD, St. John's, organized in 1891.

Pastor G. Lahme began preaching in the house of William Haupt. Later Pastor R. Volkert held services in a country school. Though organized later its church was built in 1886. In a manner of speaking it is still worshipping in the same church today. The church was renovated in 1906. In the late 1940s, under Pastor Paul Albrecht, the church was rebuilt. It was split along the roof line and widened and lengthened. An open scissor rafter system was installed. The outside was covered with Lannon stone and it became one of the more beautiful churches of our district.

Bowdle was also the mother of other congregations in the area. She was the second largest congregation of the district for years and hosted several conventions. Once her membership approached 300. Her Pastor Albrecht was district president for 12 years. Because of a split in the congregation due to her pastor and the CLC controversy her membership is down to about 125 communicant members.

(30) Theodore Township, Walworth County, SD, Trinity. Ground work was done there in 1888 and 1889 by G. Lahme and later by Volkert. The start was made in a school house. Ten years later, in 1898 a church was built. It had been built by the farmers themselves, as is said, "not for time, but for eternity." It was ship-lathed inside and outside. Solid as a rock, but the corners were not square. In the middle 1940s

the church was moved to Faulkton, SD, where this writer had been assigned. Because of its crooked corners he learned what a "try square" was for. But it made a nice church. Many of our missionaries had to also be builders and mechanics and janitors and fire builders.

Theodore was once a flourishing congregation, and was served out of Bowdle till it closed in November, 1945.

(31) Roscoe, SD, St. Paul's, organized in 1893. In point of time it was organized later than some of the congregations which follow.

The 1909 history gives an organization date of 1905 though the Statistical Report of 1993 gives the early date. What happened? It was first organized as a congregation of the Missouri Synod and was served out of Aberdeen by a pastor named Prey. The 1909 history also stated that it was served for a time by the Iowa Synod. Out in this area the Iowa Synod was very aggressive. It came into the Minnesota Synod in 1905.

Roscoe was the seat of the district's second district president, J. Paul Scherf, of whom we spoke earlier. We'll meet him again later. In 1929, just before the depression, Roscoe built a fine, new brick church. No one knows how much of Pastor Scherf's money went into it. Then Pastor Scherf bought his own house, and the little old parsonage stood in the shadow of the new cathedral. The next minister, Pastor Herbert Lau lived in the old house again. Later in the days of Pastor George Boldt, Martin Scherf, a son of Paul Scherf saw to it that a fine new parsonage was built to match the church.

This church also had its moments of glory and reached almost 500 communicants. But Dakota economics also had its effect on the parish. The 1993 Statistical Report says it had 320 souls and 278 communicants. A difference of only 42 between souls and communicants speaks of an area where the young people move out as soon as possible to seek work elsewhere. This is the story of many of the older congregations of the district in the smaller towns.

(32) Whoever heard the name "Cloyd Valley"? It had a congregation named St. Jacobus (St. James). It was organized in 1900 and also was served out of Roscoe. Cloyd Valley appears in the District Proceedings till about 1930.

(33) Sherman Township, Emmanuel's, 1908, also served out of Roscoe. In 1908 it built a concrete block church. Later it was served out of Tolstoy by Pastor William Lindloff, another long time district minister. It disappeared from the record in the early 1920s.

(34) Mound City, SD, St. Paul's, 1887. Its early history was written by Pastor William Sauer, who

became pastor there in 1905. This rather important congregation in our early history was founded by a Pastor Mundt of the Missouri Synod from Ellendale, ND in 1886. In 1888 it built its pastor a 12 by 16 foot house, like the claim shacks that many of the early settlers built for themselves. In some respects it was better than the sod huts some pastors had to settle for, although it must be admitted that the sod huts were warmer in winter. Shortly after St. Paul's was founded there was a vacancy and the Iowa Synod made a move on the new parish. Since Mound City could be more easily served from Bowdle, the LC-MS gave Mound City to the Minnesota Synod. That was in the summer of 1890. Sauer writes that in the 1890s the congregation experienced a large growth through the influx of German Russians and reached 35 voters. One can translate voters into "families." Moreover families were big in those days. Another long vacancy began in 1904 and again Iowa sought to annex the parish. After Wm. Sauer came the congregation experienced another spurt in growth and reached in 1909 315 souls and 151 communicants.

Before Mound City built its church, she, like her sister, Gale (same organization date) worshipped in a school. Then Mound City used the county court house for worship. Later, a neighbor of this writer, a court reporter, told how his uncle, the judge, in the 1940s had to clear the court room upstairs so those trapped in the rooms downstairs could get out of the court house. Must have been a big crowd.

This may also interest you. In the mid-forties, a son of Wm. Sauer, Harold Sauer, became pastor in Mound City. Still later, one of the authors of our new hymnal (1993), Theodore Hartwig, became pastor there and tried to introduce the singing of the introits and graduals. But the German Russians were not buying. A later pastor told me how relieved they were when a new pastor came, so they could go back to the old-fashioned way. In those days it did not pay to be too liturgical. This was in the late 1940s, a time when the St. James movement was rather active in Lutheranism.

The old history goes on to tell us that in 1908 Pastor Sauer obtained a vicar from the seminary at Wauwatosa and work was begun in Akaska (formerly LeBeau), Glenham (formerly Evarts), and Mobridge. But it would take time to organize the work done in these places.

(35) Zeeland, ND, Zion, started in 1888 by George Lahme from Redfield. It too was an important congregation in the early years of our district. The 1924 District Convention was held there.

On June 10, 1888, George Lahme held services in the home of David Hein to organize the parish. It

was given the name of Immanuel Congregation of Campbell and McIntosh Counties. Its area of influence also went into Emmons County. The next year when the Dakota Territories became North and South Dakota, McIntosh County was in ND and Campbell County was in SD. The place where the church was founded, called Hein after the family, was in Campbell County, SD. But when the town of Zeeland was formed in McIntosh County, on the other side of the state line, Immanuel moved into Zeeland, ND.

Early services were held in the Rasen Huetten (sod huts) of the members. The first pastor did not stay long. Then the place was served from Bowdle by Pastor Hermann Volkert. There seems to have been a different pastor every year or two. About 1892, a Pastor Julius Engel moved to Zeeland and lived in a sod house. Later he moved to Mound City and served from there.

The author of my 1909 history closes his rather long description of Zeeland and its vicinity with the observation that the congregation suffered much from frequent changes of pastor, but that in a way it was also the fault of the people who didn't see to it that their pastor had a decent place to live. When Zeeland did build a house it was rather palatial for that time and place.

Even into the sixties the congregation was noted for its insistence on German services long after the need had disappeared. But they were not the only ones. This writer conducted German services in Mobridge into the late sixties. They were reading services.

(36) Hague Township, ND, Friedens (Peace Lutheran). This is not to be confused with Hague Township in South Dakota. It was begun at an early date out of Hein (Zeeland). According to the 1952 Statistical Report it was organized in 1904, though it was served out of Zeeland long before. It disappeared from the record in the mid fifties.

(37) Hazelton, ND, St. Paul's. It's organization date is 1924, but work was begun in the general area in the late 1880s from Zeeland. It seems that a place called Hampton became Hazelton. About the same time as work was begun in the Hampton area, work was also begun in Emmons County, and places like Omio, Emmonsburg. Again my little history leaves me in a quandary about these early preaching places, which were served in the general Hazelton area.

(38) Mobridge, SD, Zion, 1912. The history of the town of Mobridge starts out with the little cattle towns of Evarts and LeBeau. Both townsites are under the Oahe Reservoir. When the Milwaukee Railroad built the bridge across the Missouri River, where Mobridge is now located, the telegrapher's place and

dateline was MO BRIDGE, short for Missouri Bridge. Many of the early buildings in Mobridge came from LeBeau and Evarts. In fact, Zion's church, which she used into the mid-fifties, when it burned down, came from LeBeau.

Mobridge was destined to become a leader in the district, when her bid for Northwestern Lutheran Academy was accepted in 1928. Her Pastor Gamm in those days was a very influential man. We will not write much about the Academy, since the assignment to do so has been given to Prof. Wayne Ten Broek. For years the Academy hosted the Easter District Pastors' Conference, which many of us older pastors remembered as a time to relax after the Lenten Season. Later, in the fifties, when its Administration Building became a reality, it also hosted the district conventions. The pastor's and professors' homes became the stopping places for other pastors and their wives as they passed through the town of Mobridge.

Though not the first to have a day school, her school has now been in existence for over forty years. It may interest some to know that this writer, when he served Mobridge, called the Academy his high school because 25% of the Academy enrollment was from Zion of Mobridge. For years Zion's young people went to the Academy free. What a hue and a cry went up in the congregation when in 1968 the synod started charging all students \$75 a year for tuition. The same thing happened when the synod closed Northwestern Lutheran Academy.

In reading the 1920 Minnesota district proceedings we see that Mobridge and Glenham called Pastor A. W. Eggert with a salary of \$1,000 a year. The year before they had received \$970.71 from the "Kasse" (cash box) as the synod's mission treasury was called.

(39) Glenham, SD, St. Jacobi (St. James). Glenham was organized in 1920, the birth year of the District, yet its history goes back to the Evarts era. In 1921 it built a church basement in which it worshipped for a time. Glenham has always been a very mission minded congregation. One of her members, Charles Schlomer served on the General Board for Home Missions for more than 30 years. Charlie's brother Walter, gave us Missionary Larry Schlomer.

Really, the town should have been named Schlomerville for various reasons. Charlie built and for a time owned the sewer system. Before the church basement was built, St. Jacobi held services in the home of Charlie's Uncle Codie. This incident will give you a smile: When this writer was installed at Glenham in January of 1963, a Mrs. Carrie Gosch, sister of the above mentioned Codie took him aside. We knew one another from the time she had served as cook and

sort of a matron for girls at the Academy, when the writer was president of the board. She said to me, "See all these children. There are 62 of them, and they are all mine except two." She was right. Moreover, four Schlomer brothers married four sisters. Did you ever try to tell apart double cousins?

This points to something else we do not see so much today. Early congregations grew much from within. Early statistical reports show many more baptisms and confirmations than today. It was not unusual to have five to ten confirmands a year in a 60 communicant congregation. But the sons and daughters of these congregations soon moved out to seek jobs.

(40) Tolstoy, SD, St. James. Organized in 1924 it had been served long before from Mound City. Tolstoy is a tiny, inland town off the beaten path. Once it had a large settlement of German Lutherans. A pastor even lived there for a time. Shoved back and forth among neighboring congregations it is now served from Akaska. I remember it from being a mission speaker there, and the few people in the pews then were pathetic. Yet it still lives on with about 20 communicants.

(41) Akaska, Zion, 1911. My 1909 history tells me that work had been done in LeBeau, which later was lost to the Iowa Synod, but then became present day Akaska. This writer remembers picnicking on the old LeBeau site with his family as the Oahe Lake was covering it. We picked up an old ink bottle which is still displayed in my wife's writing desk.

In 1950, when Akaska had twice as many communicants as today, the mission board subsidized a school in her midst. It had about 20 pupils. Just this week as I write this (4/16/94) I reminded Pastor Kermit Biedenbender's son how his father faithfully made the rounds of the countryside every day picking up and returning the students.

West River Congregations

The 41 congregations above are or were on the east side of the "muddy Missouri." That's the farming side of the river, for the most part. We move now to the "west river country," as it was known. Sad to say, parts of it were farmed when it should have been left to the cattle people. Because of this farming there was quite an influx of people after 1890, and the Minnesota Synod followed them. Two thrusts were made across the Missouri in both North and South Dakota, one from the Hazelton area, the other from Mobridge, especially after the bridge had been built, but also before, by boat.

Two names appear rather often in district mission reports: F. Wittfaut and Kowalsky. Wittfaut reminds

one of Christian Boettcher. For over 20 years, as far as this writer can ascertain, he traveled back and forth in western North Dakota and eastern Montana starting preaching stations here and there and continuing to serve the little places he founded. He was the missionaries' missionary. Prof. Sievert, who knew him well, reports, "Though completely impractical where automobiles were concerned, he drove his Model T touring car from ranch to farm and farm to ranch. His luggage in the back seat, in addition to his personal belongings for the trip, consisted of flour, sugar, and other staple supplies, which he distributed from place to place as needed. Those able to do so paid, and often charity moved the missionary to leave the goods as a gift.... The finest church he ever had was a country school house." The first church in Montana, where he worked for twenty years was built in Circle after his death. Wittfaut died on Dec. 10, 1934, at the age of 62. We are not going to try to list all the places Wittfaut worked, because many of them were personal endeavors on his part and soon disappeared from the record.

I mention Kowalsky because he was more of what the Germans called a Seelsorger, a "carer of souls." His name was Max. He never married. He started work in the area west and southwest of Mobridge and stayed till his death in the 30s. At one time or another he served nearly all the congregation there. In one report, the mission board rejoiced that he was a single man, who was satisfied to live with members in a single room so they would not have to provide a parsonage. Here was an unselfish man. In another report the district actually thought of starting a "Fordfund" (Ford fund) so people like Kowalsky would not have to use horses. Kowalsky was mentioned, but he had to later buy his own Ford.

I'm going to lump some of the early North Dakota places together, because many of them were just preaching stations.

(42) Flasher, ND, Trinity. This is a Wittfaut church that grew and is still with us today. It was organized in 1914. In 1950 it had 26 communicants. The 1992 report lists 32 communicants.

(43-47) The 1920 WELS proceedings lists the following which were served out of Flasher: Freda, Regent, Selfridge, and Keyser Schoolhouse. Then the report goes on to say that the field had been partitioned and that Burt, (which we shall mention later), Regent, and Runkel's School had been given to Candidate Walter Sprengler. This man became one of the veterans of our district, though he moved out of it for a while.

(48) Burt, ND Zion, 1919. This little congregation hung on for 47 years till 1966. One cannot accuse

the Dakota-Montana District of not taking care of its little flocks till all hope was gone. To God the praise.

Back again to the east side of the river in North Dakota.

(49-50) Streeter and Hartford, ND. In connection with this field is mentioned another man, who spent a longer period in the district, a Pastor Samuel Baer, father to George Baer, also a pastor of the district and later professor at Northwestern. Let me translate part of the report from the 1920 Proceedings: "The congregation [Streeter] has purchased a parsonage, in spite of the fact that the church treasury [the original CEF] did not help out. The missionary begs that we relieve him of Hartford, because in winter time it is an awfully long way to go there by railroad. From the railroad one must travel another ten or twelve miles over land to get there." Then the report goes on to explain that twenty miles north of Streeter a new station is being formed north of Medina. I wonder what happened to it.

(51) Carson, ND, 1908, a Wittfaut congregation. In 1920 it was served together with Elgin. It's pastor was A. Traub, who was later called as teacher at the Academy. He was installed August 4, 1918. Mention was made of the fact that the two congregations were self-sustaining and had paid the moving expenses of their pastor from Idaho. On the same day the congregation from Carson got together to meet their new pastor. They pledged the sum of \$1,000 for a parsonage, which they soon bought. That was a large sum of money. How could a small congregation do it? One must remember that people were prospering right after World War I.

(52) Down the road from Carson is Elgin, ND, Emmanuel, 1905. I don't know a great deal about this place, but it has hung on during the years and is larger now than it ever was.

(53-56) In the 1920 report this was called the "Lemmon Parochie," the "Lemmon Parish." Five places are mentioned: Lemmon, North Haynes, South Haynes, Hettinger (which we shall mention later), all in ND, and White Butte in SD. Later Haynes is added to North and South Haynes. Some of these places appear in later reports, but they were all preaching places when the district was formed in 1920. Some were served a year or two, then dropped only to be picked up again.

Lemmon, SD, St. Luke's, 1915 was the place that prospered, because the town prospered. This promising town was lost to us in 1958 due to the CLC controversy. Two of our later district presidents served in Lemmon, Walter Schumann and Reginald Pope.

(57) Paradise Township, ND, St. John's, 1910. Now here is a place that is really out in the "sticks,"

really "bad lands." When my father was called to McIntosh, he wrote back to the mission board, "Where is Paradise? I can't find it anyplace on the map." Now it is listed as Carson, 34 miles south. Back in the 40s my mother asked one of the women of the congregation why they called the place Paradise, when it was really in the bad lands of North Dakota. She answered, "If you had come from Russia, you would know why." The congregation wanted German. My father's call read "German every other Sunday." When they found out that he could speak German well they demanded and got it every Sunday.

In 1953 Harold A. Johne, now Prof. Johne, was assigned to the Carson-Paradise parish. Then President Paul Albrecht told me this story: Johne's wife had been faithfully travelling with him every Sunday to play the organ. On this particular Sunday she was days within giving birth to a child, so she stayed home. When Johne walked into the church that Sunday he was met at the door by the elders, who demanded to know where his wife was. "She had no right to let them down, when they needed an organist so bad." Johne lost his cool completely. Not even taking off his coat, he stood in the chancel, placed his satchel on the floor and gave the congregation a long and a stern lecture. Then he picked up his satchel, put on his hat and walked down the aisle and out the door. There were no services at Paradise on that day. The congregation sat stunned. The very next morning a delegation of the officers drove clear over to Bowdle to see if the district president would intercede with Johne on their behalf.

I remember preaching for a mission festival there in the 60s. Its little frame church still had the oil-lamp chandeliers, which they had electrified. Are they still there?

Back South Of The Border On The West River Side

Along the Milwaukee Line that had just crossed the river at Mobridge lay the towns of McLaughlin, Walker, McIntosh, Watauga, Morrystown, Thunder Hawk, Lemmon, Hettinger, ND, Reeder, ND, and the three Haynes, mentioned before. We did work in every one of them. Walker and Thunder Hawk were on and off again preaching stations. Mostly the missionaries complained that they wanted church services, but no one came to church. We looked at McLaughlin and walked away. Iowa was active there. I'll just list those where we had success. Early pastors William Pankow and Edgar Gamm were very active in these places in the late teens and twenties.

(58) McIntosh, SD, St. Paul's, 1914 is still with us today. Missionaries worked out from this place. The town itself was a division point on the railroad, because of its soft artesian water. When the diesel came in, it started to fade away. In 1943 my father reported to the mission board that it was becoming a ghost town. When I last visited, it was a town of 300 with most of the houses vacant. What keeps it going is that it is the county seat. Our Prof. Wayne Ten Broek came out of McIntosh. A lot of good things came out of these old congregations.

(59) Watauga, SD, Bethlehem. Though it has a 1924 organization date it was a preaching station long before then. It was closed briefly in the early 40s and opened again. Watauga closed for good in 1983. Oh, how slowly hopes die!

(60) Morrystown, SD, Christ, 1919. It too had its growth and hopes of becoming a large congregation. For a while it prospered and even had a synod subsidized day school in the 50s and early 60s. I remember a nice parsonage and church. It is now a Social Security congregation with a Social Security pastor.

I do remember a meeting of the congregation when they were calling a pastor. They were angry and faulted the district president because of the great turnover of pastors. It was not that they minded the change in pastors; it was "those high moving expenses." We told the voters, that if they would be nicer to their pastor he would stay longer. Apparently, they did not hold this against President Schumann and myself, because they tried to call both of us back to be Social Security pastors.

Into The Interior Of The South Dakota West River Country

Demographics again. The area of which we now speak covers about 13,000 square miles. It stretches from Mobridge west beyond Bison, and south down below Faith. It was opened by the Minnesota Synod about 1914. Once it had more people living in it than now, because it was opened to farming. That that was a mistake can be seen from the 1920 and 1922 Proceedings. They tell of many people moving out. Now it has many more cows than people. Only one pastor ever stayed long there. It was Pastor Max Kowalsky, of whom I spoke earlier. Three or four congregations to a pastor was the rule. Back in the late 60s a gentleman from the Timber Lake congregation scolded me because of the rapid turnover of preachers. He had liked one young man very much, but the man's voice gave out and he had to resign. He said to me: "If the mission board wouldn't give so many congregations to

our pastors they would last longer." After hearing that several times I said to him, "I'm 53 years old and preaching four times a Sunday, and I haven't lost my voice." So then I moved to Flint, Michigan where I soon started preaching three times a Sunday, all in the morning.

This brings up another reason why men did not stay in the region. It was a lonely place for wives, and that was the reason many gave for leaving. Cars wore out quickly because of the miles and the terrible roads. I was taking care of the dying Timber Lake congregation out of Mobridge, giving them an afternoon service. They told me, "If it rains stay home; we can't get to church." But I thought they were kidding, so I drove out anyway. I sat alone a couple of times before I learned. Right when it was raining the gumbo was slippery as ice, but after the rain it gummed up under the wheels and become so hard that they could not go round. This was in the 60s.

I'll pick up these congregations as they are listed in the 1922 report. Some will show a later date in the statistical reports, but all had their birth about the same time.

(61-63) Meadow, Drew, Bison. The synodical report of 1920 reports that these three had been vacant since 1918 and it was only with the greatest difficulty that they were being served. I can well believe that having had the problem thrown into my lap. Meadow and Drew appear briefly in other early reports, but the work was finally stopped. The Meadow people went to Bison.

Of the three only Bison survives today. It's name is Christ and it was finally organized in 1937, when one of my roommates, a G. Ehlert became pastor there. It's an inland town and unique in that it never had a railroad. The congregation is more prosperous today than it ever was. We wish we could give you more information concerning these congregations, but this little history is getting overlong.

(64) In reading the 1920 report again I came across another interesting name. It was up in North Dakota, a place called "Swastika." It was a preaching station in 1920.

The next three formed a tri-parish for a long time.

(65) Trail City, SD, St. Paul's, 1913. A Kowalsky congregation. It was closed in 1966. Its name was Emmanuel. (Have you noticed how many different ways Emmanuel has been spelled?)

For a number of years before it closed, Prof. Sievert served it from Mobridge. Later on, he begged me to go out and serve it on Sunday afternoons. In the 50s and 60s one family tried its best to keep it going.

Their name was Bieber. He was the janitor, the congregation president, the church opener, and the organist, who played the hymns on the old reed organ with one finger. She was the assistant janitor, the Sunday School superintendent and the only teacher. Ten to a dozen people showed up every Sunday, except when it rained and the gumbo roads kept them home.

(66) Timber Lake, SD, St. Paul's, 1915. Timber Lake is one of the "Medicine Lakes" of SD. The other that I know of is in the Watertown area. They are very alkaline and salty, because they have no outlets. All the water that flows into them evaporates and the salts remain behind.

To give you an idea of what many of these congregations are like today, consider the 1993 statistics. Timber Lake listed 52 souls and 49 communicants. It is a congregation of old people as are so many others in the district.

(67) Isabel, SD, Peace, 1942. Like all the other congregations to this point, Isabel was already in existence before 1920. The date shown for many of these places was the date they finally became a member of the district. They were not officially members of the district till they were received in a convention. At that convention they had to present a constitution.

To show how hard it was to serve these places and lure pastors out to them, let me tell of another experience. In 1965 the three places above were wished on me as a vacancy. I simply could not serve them at the time, so I was given a vicar. His name was Herbert Filter. We still see one another and talk about old times. Like most vicars he was to preach only once a month. But he preached three times a Sunday for 12 months and took care of three congregations. I saw him once a month for sermon study.

After that we were given Candidate Nathan Engel. He was given five congregations to serve. He drove about 50,000 miles a year, but we did pay his mileage for all driving. This was kind of a first. Then on top of that we asked him to go and see if he could stir up something in Pierre. Then Nathan left in 1969, and part of the vacancy (Isabel and Timber Lake) became mine again. Here was another interesting facet of being a minister in Dakota-Montana. One could expect a vacancy every three or four years.

In Timber Lake above, in the 1960s, the congregation had a secretary who could neither read nor write. After a meeting he went home and told his wife what had happened and she wrote up the minutes. At the next meeting another member would read them. One of the best elders I ever had could neither read nor write. I also had a treasurer who was as honest as the day is long. If someone told him the congregation

owed him money he would pay out of his own pocket: But he would forget to write it down. One time he found a collection from the last summer in his summer pants pocket, a year later. My final remembrance of Isabel was that it was the last on the route on the Sunday afternoon I preached my farewell to my parish and the district. I was tired after four services and the farmers were sleepy. Then there was a meeting after church, and finally the 60 miles back to Mobridge.

(68-71) Faith, Lantry, Red Elm, Dupree. Lantry and Red Elm disappear from the reports soon after 1920. Faith, SD, St. Paul, 1914. The 1920 report tells us that Faith built a "fine" parsonage in 1919. They raised \$2,632.00 for that purpose. Again, remember that this was right after World War I when the economy was booming. Never again would these western people prosper as then. It is not hard to understand why the mission board wanted to work this area in the teens of this century.

Dupree, SD, First Lutheran, 1914. Dupree was unusual from its very beginning. The work was done only in English, whereas in all other places without exception the work was done either in German alone or German and English. Dupree still exists with about 30 communicants (1993).

I'll mention it here rather than later. In 1934 work was done out of Faith in Turtle Creek and Ridgeview, thus getting us very close to the hills. Before 1920 we did not make it into the Black Hills area.

(72-77) No doubt we can add to the numbers thus far reported, but these names appear in the reports of our pre-1920 work in eastern Montana: Ismay, Terry, Olanda, DeGrand, Mildred, and Crow Rock. The only place that organized itself was Terry, MT, Trinity in 1935. The early missionary, Wittfaut, worked in many other places.

(78) Circle, MT, Salem, 1933. This place was also worked by Wittfaut. From Circle we worked out to other places later. I visited the place several times. Here is another place, like so many, where we refuse to desert the few souls under our care.

(79-84) As I was trying to close up this part of my early history before the district was organized, I once more went through the list of congregations and preaching places mentioned in the 1922 District Parochial Report. I found the following, which I had not found elsewhere. They were Oshkosch, MN; Wabbasa, MN; Gales, SD; Goose Camp, SD; and Crow Rock, Montana. As far as I know none exist today.

To Sum Up

About 1920 there were 32 pastors serving these 84 places. In 1922 President Sauer estimated the 1920

District membership at about 7,000 souls and 3,500 communicants and 1,200 voters. As pointed out earlier, "voters" was a more important figure than it is today, because it was also an indication of the number of families and contributors in a parish. So President Sauer used the figure of six members to a family to come up with the total number of souls. He also estimated that half the members of the family were communicants. It is interesting that after 1974 the Statistical Reports of the Synod no longer mention the number of voters, because the figure has grown rather meaningless.

So in 1920, each pastor served on an average 218 souls half of which were communicants or about 36 families.

Today (1993) the district numbers 77 congregations. 54 pastors 12,256 souls and 9,276 communicants. So the average pastor, if there is such one, ministers to about 227 among whom are about 172 communicants. That's only about nine souls more than in 1920. He does it more easily than the 1920s men who had open cars and mud roads to travel and more congregations. We take our hats off to these "Reisepredigern." They were riding preachers indeed. It may be well to mention something else—something we too should take to heart. These early missionaries were sent out without having a philosophy of missions other than that of the Scripture itself. There was no such thing as a chair of missions at the seminary. A few hints were given them in "Pastoral Theology." That was true also at the time this writer graduated in 1941. These men went out with the faith that the Gospel alone is the power that saves, and that when and where this Gospel is preached it will not return without accomplishing that which God pleases. And that Gospel did find God's elect in many places.

The New District, 1920.

Anyone, who writes history has a problem, especially if he was a part of that history. First, as a part of it, he writes himself into the history. That makes him subjective, because he cannot divorce himself from the history. You have seen that in this history and will see more of it. Second, if he did any research at all, he has more information than the reader wants or can take in. Third, in spite of the information he has, something is always missing, and it may be very important. So, again I remind you that this history can be skewed and not completely objective. So read on and season it with a grain of salt.

The idea of forming a new district certainly did not have its birth in 1920 or even shortly before that. In fact the idea was not that of forming a new district,

but forming a new Synod. It started about 1912 when a new conference was formed in the Minnesota Synod at Lemmon, SD. Thus in 1915 the talk in this conference was forming a "Northwestern Lutheran Synod"—a new synod. The reason was that the conference was so far from the mother synod. In fact, a constitution was written and carried to a meeting of the Minnesota Synod. Then in 1917, when the Minnesota Synod amalgamated with the Wisconsin Synod. The idea of forming a synod was changed to forming a district of the Wisconsin Synod, which would be called the "Dakota-Montana District."

Even before 1920 three reasons were given for forming a new district. We find them in the 1920 Minnesota District Proceedings:

"1. Much travel time and money would be saved when it came to attend district conventions.

"2. The area would have district officials of its own living in the actual field of labor.

"3. A more stable ministry could be envisioned, since pastors tend to remain in their districts."

For point one it was argued that by forming a new district its borders could be shrunk and much travel time avoided. This was a very real concern, because most pastors before 1920 went to conferences by train, and it often meant a number of changes of lines. In Minnesota, conferences were often established following a single railroad line. I think of the early New Ulm conference which followed the Northwestern line west. That luxury was not given Dakota-Montana men. In the later 20s this writer remembers his father preparing the 1920 Model T Ford for trips to conventions to Bowdle and Roscoe, SD, a 150 to 175 mile trip, and that over dirt roads made muddy by rains.

Point two had a great deal of merit especially when it came to mission work, for the district would remain a mission district in many respects.

Sad to say, forming a district did not help the movement out of the district at all. Often wives, uprooted from homes in Wisconsin, were given as a reason for moving back. This was not stated publicly in letters written to district presidents, but was often stated to fellow ministers. Other district presidents found good picking among dissatisfied men and their wives. Part of the problem was also the system of reimbursing pastors for their travel expenses between their congregations or shall we say, "lack of system." Men could not afford to stay in the district that demanded thousands of miles of travel a year. The system of the past few years of paying mileage has helped. At the district meeting of the Minnesota Synod in Mankato in 1920, the formation of the new Dakota-

Montana District was almost an anticlimax. Twenty-three pastors and six lay delegates met the Friday afternoon of June 25 to organize themselves. They elected Wm. F. Sauer, president; J. Paul Scherf, vice-president; Edward Birkholz, second vice-president; and Carl Schweppe to the "Resenpredigerkommission," the Mission Board, as we call it today. The meeting closed with the motion that a short reference be made to the meeting in the Minnesota District Proceedings. It was short, just a little over two pages, and of course in German, the official language of all synodical business for some time to come.

The organization of the new district was ratified by the Wisconsin Synod Convention which met from July 14-20, about four weeks later.

A personal note: My father was installed at Trinity, Hendricks, MN the Sunday of July 25, 1920, right after the Synod Convention. Thus I, as a little four and a half year old boy became a member of the Dakota-Montana District, a relationship that lasted 49 years. Hence this history.

The borders of the newly formed field were three states: North Dakota, South Dakota and Montana. Congregations along the Minnesota-South Dakota line could decide to which district they wanted to belong. Seven congregations in Minnesota joined up with Dakota-Montana.

What Were The Times Like When We Became A District In 1920?

World War I was over and times were good for both industry and farming, and most of the Dakota-Montana District members were in the farming or grazing industry. When members prospered so did pastors. Building projects were completed.

World War I helped bring about a greater use of English in our congregations. It was not what most of the German speaking members wanted, but it had been forced on some of them. For the young people it was a blessing, because their schooling was in English and they were actually loosing the ability to even converse in German. Theologically it was not a blessing, for the simple reason that most theological, instructional material teaching true doctrine was in German, and even theological students had to be taught German before they could do seminary work. As late as 1940 most lectures at Mequon were in German. Our pastors began using English works with a Reformed bent, and that has not been good for our church body. At present attempts are being made to remedy the situation. Interesting enough, it would not be until 1936 that the District Proceedings were finally printed in English,

and even the 1936 edition still had its mission report in German.

There has always been feminism ever since the fall into sin. But in 1920 feminism was flexing its muscles and winning victories in the political realm. Two amendments to the U. S. Constitution were passed in 1920, both feminine inspired.

The first was the 18th amendment, also called the Volstead Act, forbidding the sale of beverages containing more than 1/2 of 1% alcohol. It was inspired by women like Carry Amelia Nation (1846-1911), who with her little hatchet worked havoc in various saloons. German ethnic people felt that their civil rights were breached and their pastors were hard put to explain to them, that though this may be the case, yet their government's mandates were to be obeyed. The government did permit pastors to purchase communion wine from authorized dealers like drug stores and certain wineries. My great grandfather on my mother's side ran such a winery. This was the era of the "Women's Christian Temperance Union," a rather powerful organization. Even after the amendment was repealed in 1933 they managed for a while to make it illegal to buy hard liquor.

The second amendment passed in 1920 was the 19th, which gave women political franchise. In 1919, the new Pacific Northwest District reported of one of its congregations, "We have Woman Suffrage. Our committee (sic) list is our membership list." Fredrich, in his history says: "There were obvious but unreported dealings in the matter." My home town Hendricks had a Methodist woman preacher in the 1920s. Recently our synod has felt compelled to restudy the issue of women in the church as it relates to franchise and even the pastoral office. The issue is: In what ways can a woman serve her church without violating the teaching of Scripture that women must not have authority over the men in the church? We haven't heard the last of it.

So, in some respects the new era of the Dakota-Montana District ushered in theological problems with far reaching consequences.

The New District In Action: 1920-1922

Much of the information in this part of the history will be taken from biennial Dakota-Montana District Proceedings.

The 1922 District Proceedings show the district off to a running start. President W. F. Sauer was a good organizer. Back in those days conventions lasted seven days, starting on Wednesday, going over Sunday, and ending on Tuesday afternoon, after which the assembly boarded Model T Fords or trains and headed

for their fields of labor. The first convention of the district was held at Grover Township, Immanuel, August Pamperin, pastor. Back in those days Grover was the third largest congregation in the District with about 275 souls and 175 communicants. Only Watertown and Roscoe were larger. Compare that with 76 souls and 57 communicants reported in 1993.

Reason No. 3 for starting the district was to stop the movement out of the district. President Sauer reported nine installations of new men, eight of which were candidates. Five men moved out, one of which had stayed only eight months. There were seven moves within the District, accounting for 16 changes and creating some new vacancies which would not be easy to fill. Men in those days as now sought to crawl up the ladder rather than down. In 1920 the number of pastors in the district were 32. The 1922 statistics also showed 32. In 1922 the district counted 83 congregations and preaching stations.

Eleven pages of the proceedings would deal with missions. There were fifty places where work was carried on, some organized and some not. So approximately 5/8s of the district's congregations were missions. We will just list the new places:

(1) Willow Lake, Willow Lake Lutheran, 1921. It's pastor was Candidate Karl Sievert, who would spend his over 50 year ministry in the district, thus establishing a record.

Florence and Crandall, SD were opened in September 1921. Their candidate pastor would stay only eight months and move to Flint, Michigan where he would spend the rest of a long ministry in one congregation. Neither of these congregations exist today.

Ipswich, SD, Zion and Loyaltown would also be opened in September 1921 and were served by Candidate Walter T. Meier, who would later become district president. Loyaltown would never amount to anything and would close. The county seat of Edmunds, Ipswich was started with high hopes, but never would amount to much. It went over to the Church of the Lutheran Confession in 1959.

Streeter and Tappen, ND, St. John's. We mentioned Streeter, as a pre-20s congregation. It seems work had been done there from Zeeland very early. Later it was joined with Hartford, an inland town (Called "inland" because it had no railroad) on the Missouri River. It had been put together with Streeter 65 miles away. Lack of roads and railroad created an impossible situation. So in 1921 a new field was opened at Tappen and joined to Streeter, where there were both church and parsonage. But the Mission Board even then noted that Streeter was a poor place to work, while Tappen had a great deal of promise. In

spite of that we hung onto Streeter for many years. Hartford was joined to Hazelton. Here was a like situation. The Mission Board reported that Hartford only grew from within, because Iowa was so active in the community, while the town of Hazelton was very promising. Soon Hartford disappears from the record. Even the town of Hartford has been gone for years.

It is interesting to note how many of the missions were begun with high hopes, how many have passed from existence, and how many of them reached a plateau very quickly, at which they still are today. Mission strategy was to collect together Lutherans, but it was now getting harder. Many of these Lutherans had been without their church for several years. They had joined the lodges and other churches especially Congregational and Methodist. In the 40s this writer was brought to recognize the fact that many of these people had purposely fled their church at home and did not want to be bothered again with a church body which they thought was too rigid. Moreover as one who has passed through the system, as I read these proceedings, I am reminded of the Savior's parable of the four kinds of soil. Dakota-Montana soils were no different from that in other places. There also comes a time, whether we like it or not, when we wipe the bad soils off our feet and use our feet to go to other fields.

Of the first two years of our district history let us note three more things: 1. The district constitution was adopted at this meeting. Later, President Sauer would complain that it made no provisions for him to be an ex-officio member of the Mission Board. 2. Elgin, ND opened the first day school in the district the fall of 1920. It was funded by a single family of the congregation. A Miss Hinz was called. It would close the next school year for lack of funding. 3. The Elgin pastor had been taken out of the seminary after his second year, and he had to pass a colloquy before he became a full-fledged pastor. Pastor shortages would cause this to happen again and again.

1923-1924

The 1924 convention moved west to Zeeland, ND. Edw. C. Kolander was its pastor, one of two Kolanders in the district. Essayist was Prof. E. R. (Stubby) Bliedernicht. When this writer was student at DMLC we interpreted his name to mean, "Stop here not." (Later, another "Stubby" would be the school's director, Conrad Frey.) The theme of his essay was "Christian Upbringing," and was a polemic for the Christian day school. It is kind of ironic that this would be the essay after the Elgin school failed. Over the years there seemed to have been a concerted effort to give the district a bad conscience for not having

more day schools. This writer ran into the same thing in the early 1950s, when he, as a member of the district's school committee, was chided in a Milwaukee meeting for not having more than one day school in the district. He was told that the size of the congregation or its ability to support a school made no difference. Every congregation ought to have one. Committees can't always be objective, nor could they begin to understand the problems of a district like ours.

President Sauer's report again underlined the movement of pastors in and out of the district and also within the district. Nine candidates and three pastors would accept calls into the district. Two of the candidates would be from Missouri's Springfield Seminary. This was not unusual, because of Springfield's short pastoral course. This writer remembers a 19 year old vicar who about this time was sent to Tyler, MN. Later he became a Missouri Synod pastor in the Mequon area and was known to many of our people for his conservatism.

Among the three pastors who came into the district was Paul Albrecht who would later become a district president. Six pastors would leave the district. One would be called to the Missouri Synod congregation in Sioux Falls. Shifting synods was easy to do in those days. My father in 1920 had come into the district from the Missouri Synod. Six pastors moved within the district from smaller to larger parishes. One pastor would resign due to health problems.

A candidate was sent to help F. Wittfaut in Montana. He left his field at Ismay after only four weeks. Another candidate was sent to Ismay and was withdrawn after only four months. He was sent to Faith where there were more people. Thus Wittfaut, who was celebrating his 15th anniversary in the ministry, had the entire field to himself again. This writer wonders how the poor people at Ismay and vicinity felt.

In North Dakota a new station would open at Carl, because people from Winthrop, MN, had moved in and asked for services. It was also noted that many Norwegians lived in Carl, who were also invited to services. We are not told whether they came or not. Another place, Pretty Rock, was added to the Elgin, Carson, Antelope parish. All the work there was done in English, it was reported. Pretty Rock was across the border in Montana. Later in the proceedings it would be reported that Pretty Rock was lost to the Iowa Synod. Lack of funds was given by the Mission Board for not opening more fields. This writer also notes that it was hard for a Mission Board to be objective about a field especially if a family or two of Lutheran background asked to be served. It was and still is hard to say, "No." Even Carl would have a brief life. In the

1924 proceedings, we also have the report of a new parish that was put together at Aurora and Bruce, SD. Bruce had been served prior to 1920 as a preaching station of the White, Argo Township congregations. Bruce would exist until its members finally joined the Estelline-Dempster Parish.

But the history of Aurora is rather interesting. This is not a part of our written history. The Dakota-Montana mission board wanted to open in Brookings, SD, and for good reason. Many of our people were moving to this growing college town. An E. R. Blakewell was called. During World War II he would play an important part in the Spiritual Welfare division of the synod. After he was called (1921) a large group of disgruntled Missourians would ask us to come into Aurora, a little town a few miles east of Brookings. So the mission board scuttled the idea of entering Brookings. After 1948 the congregation became displeased with us and went over to Missouri. We would not go back into Brookings until the 1950s. Back in the 1920s mission boards felt we had to have a definite call from a group of people to enter an area. Thus we could go into a place like Carl, ND, with no promise and stay out of a place like Brookings. Often these were regarded as Macedonian calls, forgetting that the Macedonian call was extended through the medium of a dream and not an actual call through people.

But let's leave this biennium for a new one.

1924-1926

The District Convention was held on the east side, at Elkton, SD. Essayist was Prof. E. E. (Eek) Kowalke. Theme: "What can we learn from the shameful things that happened in Corinth?" In his presidential report, Wm. Sauer gave some interesting statistics. The district was growing. Its growth in souls was about 8.75%. Communicant growth was 8.33%. Compare that with our minus growth recently (1993). Interesting too is the fact that of the 75 congregations (not counting the 17 preaching places), only 33 were members of the synod. Even into the 40s we had congregations who wanted to hang onto their independence and thus refused to be added to the synod rolls.

Seven pastors left the district and one young preacher died. Only five came in—all candidates. Three pastors would move within the district. The pastor at Balaton, MN, would be suspended.

Another field would be opened at Windsor, ND, which was added to the Tappen-Streeter field. Windsor would be with us for some time.

We mention here another place we missed before—Athboy, SD, in the field southwest of Mobridge. Nor have we mentioned Onaka before. It had been

worked out of Tolstoy. In the Spring of 1926 it built a church.

Faulkton, SD, First Lutheran was opened in 1926. It was really the second Lutheran church to be opened in Faulkton. The first, a Norwegian Lutheran Church had failed and the new mission inherited the church building and its name. This endeavor is interesting to the writer for several reasons. Faulkton was his first place and in a way his first love. But Faulkton's opening was also indicative of other things which would happen in the synod and district in the late fifties and early sixties.

Let's start from the beginning: Wisconsin and Missouri had a gentlemen's agreement not to intrude on one another's fields of labor. Faulkton was considered Missouri territory, since there was a large Missouri Synod congregation at Wecota, about seven miles to the north. But Paul Albrecht at Tolstoy was no friend of Missouri, even in those days. He persuaded the Mission Board to let him go into this Faulk County seat. Later, as Mission Board chairman and also president of the district, he would breach this agreement by entering the Black Hills and Aberdeen and Sioux Falls. Still later he would try to lead the district in making a break with the synod, because it refused to break with the Missouri Synod when he thought it should.

Because Faulkton seemed to hold promise, Albrecht moved his residence from Tolstoy to Faulkton. But here is another irony: Faulkton did not grow as expected. During the forties, when this writer had the Faulkton-Ipswich field, he was urged to move the pastor's residence to Ipswich, because Albrecht felt it had better promise than Faulkton.

As pastor of the two congregations I remember a lot of movement of people into and out of the two county seats. Many of them were renters. About May of each year I began to wonder what happened to some of my members. They had rented a different farm away from the area. At the same time I was transferring many members to Zion (Missouri) of Aberdeen. I often said I had more members in Zion of Aberdeen than in my two congregations.

There were five churches built or otherwise obtained in the years 1924 and 1925. Two were being erected. The district treasurer reported that he had collected for synod \$28,027.84 and that he had disbursed \$37,202.32, \$9,174.48 more than he took in. Truly, Dakota-Montana was a mission district and would be for years.

A later note in the proceedings tells of a sixth candidate that had been called into the district, but had not yet been installed.

1926-1928

On January 11-12, 1928, a special district convention was assembled at Watertown, SD, to consider a location and the opening of a new academy in the Dakota-Montana District. The synod in its 1927 Convention had authorized the opening of an academy and underwritten \$5,000 for its first biennium.

It was the conferences of the district that had pushed for such a school, arguing that it would help the district in various ways. So, at this convention, even though the matter had not been discussed in a previous convention, the purpose of the meeting was to pick out a site for the school from the offers of four towns, and the congregations in these towns.

(1) The city of Bowdle was willing to donate a 30 acre site west of the town, plus \$8,000 free water for five years and free sewer connection with no charge for use. To this the Bowdle parish made the following inducements: \$5,000 in cash and a furnished schoolroom 28 X 50.

(2) The city of Elgin, ND offered 40 acres of land, free light and water for a period of five years, plus \$10,000.

(3) Mobridge offered its "West Side School" because it was building another, but it would have to remain at its site in 1929 and the new school would have to pay the fire and tornado insurance, a sum of about \$60.00. The above was the school district's offer.

The Mobridge Commercial Club sweetened the offer by promising to pay for a 20 acre site.

To this the Mobridge congregation obligated itself to buy the "West Side School" and move it to a new site without expense to the synod.

(4) The town of Roscoe boasted of all the money they had in their treasury and of the low mileage rate. Even though they had no sewage system, they would put one in when the "Lutheran College" would locate there.

The Roscoe Independent School District offered the free use of their old school, and were sure that it would be donated to the "College."

Also 69 people of Roscoe were willing to subscribe in five years \$31,450 inclusive of a tract of land worth \$3,000.

It is interesting to this writer to note that three of the towns, Bowdle, Elgin, and Roscoe were of the opinion that the district could build a college in their town. Only Mobridge was clear on the idea that an "Academy" was to be built.

To this writer the Mobridge offer was the least generous, but the location at Mobridge seemed better

to the voters at the special convention. Out of 64 possible votes Mobridge received 51, Roscoe 7, Bowdle 4, and Elgin 2. By September of that same year Pastor K. G. Sievert of Grover had been called to be teacher and the classes were being held.

If the start up of the school was fast, its closing in 1979 took place even quicker. While preparing for the Fall school year, the synod at its convention closed the school before it could open for the 1979-1980 year.

This writer was closely associated with the school for a number of years, first as a member of its board of control and later as pastor to its teachers and students. It was a sad day for the district when the Academy closed, for many reasons.

At this special convention we find the name of a congregation that had not appeared in any of the reference material available to us. It was Bethlehem of Cottonwood Township in the Roscoe-Bowdle area. The five pastors who had moved into the district since the last convention were received into membership

The regular 1928 summer convention met at Zeeland, ND. In 1927 President Sauer had accepted the call to Grace of Milwaukee and so the mantle of the presidency had fallen on the First Vice-president J. Paul Scherf. Let me profile him: He was quite an entrepreneur. When pastor at Balaton he sold pianos and tombstones. I know, because he sold his wares to the people of the Hendricks parish, and my parents bought a Packard piano from him. In Roscoe he got into the grocery business which he turned over to his grown sons. In this store was a loft containing his office. During the 1930s depression he became the village banker. Though he did have to foreclose on farms no one held this against him, since he was so fair-minded. He made it possible for many of them to buy their farms back. While the people there were "so hard up" they could always go to his grocery store and "charge" their purchases. As I already told you, it was during the late 20s that Roscoe built its fine church and much of Scherf's money went into it. No one ever found out how much.

It might also interest you to know that our late synod president, Oscar Naumann, was his nephew.

This 1928 convention was interesting in that it discussed and also adopted the resolution of the synod regarding baccalaureate services. These services fostered unionism and mixed church and state. School boards and superintendents of schools would proposition town pastors on a rotation basis to serve as baccalaureate service speakers. Our men would sometimes serve, especially if they were given the option of conducting the entire service without the help of a sectarian clergyman. Thus the synod's stand on unionism was

being developed. Otherwise the regular convention was sort of anti-climatic to the one held earlier in the year.

The Balaton, MN, congregation that J. Paul Scherf had served for years, before he came to Roscoe, was released to the Minnesota District. Nine new men entered the district in the past biennium. There were eight moves out of the district. A young Pastor Peter Schlemmer of Flasher, ND, died. The number of moves within the district was ten.

No new missions were formed. Attempts were made to form new preaching stations 14 miles south of Hazelton, ND, and 20 miles south of McIntosh on the Grand River. Apparently nothing came of these endeavors.

1928-1930

The 1930 convention would meet at Roscoe, SD, in their fine new church. For that day it was a show place. On Convention Sunday everyone would travel to Mobridge for the dedication of the "Whongebeaude" at the Academy. "Whongebeaude" has the idea of a place where the Academy family would live. Later it would be a boys' dormitory, but for a number of years it would serve as a dorm, living quarters for the cook and handyman and tutors. In it would also be the kitchen-dining room—an all-purpose building.

Seven new men would enter the district that biennium. One would be called as a professor at the new Academy to share teaching duties with K. G. Sievert. Four men would leave the district. The next ten years would show less movement in and out of the district because of the Great Depression. It started in 1929 with the collapse of the stock market. By 1930 self-sustaining parishes would be begging the Mission Board for subsidy help.

Mission Board reports are always interesting reading for this writer, and it is easy to find fault until one remembers that he was in the same boat. The Mission Board gloated over giving the news that the movement within the district had slowed down, being unable to see the future. In 1930 they were still operating with the mission philosophy of Boettcher and Lahme. If a few displaced Lutheran people were found in an area adjacent to where they were working they would open a new preaching place. New preaching places were started at Reeder, because Missouri had abandoned a field there. It's story is rather interesting. Hartford, connected with Hazelton, closed and a new place was opened at Buchanan School, but it wouldn't last long. Also in North Dakota, preaching would begin at Cleveland, and Streeter would be dropped because it was in Iowa Synod territory.

Bison, Meadow, Drew, Coal Springs, Athboy, Timber Lake, Trail City, Isabel: For some strange reason hopes continued to run high for this area that was still being farmed, but should have been left to the grazing industry. Except for Max Kowalkse, who had been out there since the teens, it was virtually impossible to keep a pastor there for over a year. Yet it was the hope of the mission board that a railroad would come into the area and economic conditions would improve. But it was not to happen. The era of building railroads was also coming to a close which meant that demographics would change. Where there were once eight congregations there are now three, but the same old problems remain: How shall they be served?" In Montana there were 9 stations where 2 are today.

It was also reported that there were 60 mission stations in 20 parishes. Sixty-five percent of the work in 1930 was being done in English.

In the 1909 history a Pastor Hellbusch was at Raymond, SD. He was a rather successful missionary. For a number of years he disappears from the record. In the 1930 report we learn that he confessed his sins and could now be communed again. However, because of his sin he could not continue serving. He could however be called to another parish. We mention this here, because we later became acquainted with the man in the early 1950s. Once again his case had come before the district and he became a member of St. Martin's, Watertown.

His sin was that of drunkenness. He had moved to Castlewood with his family and had a family church there. From Castlewood he worked south into the Bruce-Estelline area, before the congregation at Estelline was established about 1936. He was an independent. Later when this writer was pastor at Estelline-Dempster, we often heard of him. In fact the writer's father-in-law was confirmed by Hellbusch. The people he served were well indoctrinated. But they often joked about Hellbusch, and how on communion Sundays they could not be sure what shape he was in. He often said to them: "Don't do as I do, but do as I say." We mention the man to show how God continues to work through Word and Sacrament, even when administered by sinful men.

The Dirty Thirties And The Depression

One must have lived during the period known in our western states as the "Dirty Thirties" to know what they were like. I was a student at New Ulm from 1930 to 1934. One hot Fall night we went to bed. Open were all windows and doors in our rooms to get as much air as we could. Then we slept the sleep of the blissfully ignorant. During the night a dust storm blew in from

the Dakotas over a hundred miles to the west. We woke up with dirt blacked faces and sheets, with a trail of good Dakota soil through the room from window to door and out into the hall and the room across the hall. Out in the Dakotas the fields were as bare as the roads. When the wind blew hard, day was turned into night because of the dust. Cars drove with their lights on. What grew when there was a little moisture was Russian Thistles. It was surmised that the seed for these thistles had been brought over to the states years before in the straw mattresses of the German Russians. Farmers cut the thistles and put them up to help the cattle survive. Many farmers gave up and left—no crops and no money.

The time was also known as the "Great drought of the Thirties." It lasted and lasted. Milk producers could not sell their products and poured them out on the roads. Farmers dug trenches and lined up their starving cattle and hogs and shot them.

Congregations and their pastors, our synod schools and their teachers felt the repercussions. Salaries were first cut ten percent and then another twenty percent, and many pastor's salaries went below that. Treasurers of congregations would give their pastors what came in on a Sunday in the collection plate. For the writer's father this was often only six or seven dollars on a Sunday. About 1936 candidates entered the district for a cash salary of \$25 a month to be supplemented with a cut of meat when the farmers butchered, plus garden produce and fuel, like corn cobs for the cook stove. As stated before, much movement within the district and synod stopped. Those who had a place that could support them hung onto the place. Those who didn't had no choice but to stay, because there were no calls.

The synod entered the 30s with high debts. The interest would almost crush the synod. We could write much more, but with this in mind let's enter the decade of the thirties.

1930-1932

The 1932 Convention met north of Watertown in Rauville Township. President Scherf mentioned the economic depression and urged that it not hinder mission expansion. But it was. The Mission Board reported that the lack of money was hindering expansion. The Buckeye congregation close to Tappen closed its doors because so many people moved out. The same happened to Onaka. Said the mission chairman: "Its church stands empty and the insurance has been canceled." Pretty Rock also closed.

But the will to open congregations was still there. Eyes were set on Baker, Montana, and Ives School.

But apparently we were never able to open in Baker. Out in Montana we made a deal with Missouri. They took two of our fields at Benrock and Volt and gave us two unnamed fields close to Crow Rock. Cohagen, Timber Creek, Watkins, and Brockway were now served in Montana by a second man, so Pastor Wittfaut had a helper. It is no mystery to this writer why so few of these places have survived in eastern Montana. There are just not that many people. An attempt was also made to open at Ridgeview 75 miles east of Faith. We also entered Jamestown, one of the larger towns of ND, and there we prospered. Selfridge was opened for the second time. The winter of 1932 was bad in many places and few services were held.

Earlier, this writer spoke of the fact that we were never able to establish ourselves in Redfield. In 1932 we read of the attempt that was made to open there in May of 1931. A man was called into the field, but was sent instead to Jamestown and Windsor.

Six Candidates entered the district, one a tutor at the Academy. Two men left the district. A third man resigned.

We meet again with the Hellbusch case. He refused to leave Castlewood and was denied pulpit fellowship and the right to commune.

One other thing merits mention—the large number of students in our school receiving support from the synod. From the Dakota-Montana District there were eighteen in 1930-31 and 22 in 1931-32, each receiving over \$140 a year. Board and room and tuition in our schools at this time was \$120 a year. So many of these students were also receiving travel allowances. They were to work it off doing work like dish washing, yard work, hall sweeping in the dorms, etc., at 25¢ an hour. To this day this writer kids his wife telling her he washed many more dishes than she will ever wash. This support of students would continue in spite of the bad times. How things have changed!

We would like to talk about a new place at Marmarth, a new endeavor in 1931. It was joined to two places that had been served from Hettinger. For various reasons the place never prospered, yet the Mission Board tried to do something there till 1952. In some respects it is a story of misplaced zeal for missions. It started with a Norwegian settlement that the board wanted to work, but that fell through. A candidate was sent out in 1931, but by 1932 he had resigned. Oil had been discovered south of the town, and the hope was that the town of Marmarth would grow, because already then it was becoming a ghost town. But oil discovery, as we also learned later at Winnett, Montana, does not mean an influx of people. After the

wells are put into production it takes only a few people to keep them going. Those who dug the wells move on.

An older man, a Pastor Bode was sent there in 1942 from Zeeland. The man should never have been sent there. He reported a membership in 1942 of 31 souls and 20 communicants. In 1944 the report states that there were 74 souls and only 14 communicants with 26 in Sunday School. In 1946 P. Kuehl served it from Reeder and reported 35 souls and 13 communicants. In 1948 another candidate E. Semenske served it and reported 20 souls and 5 communicants.

Then in 1950 another man, an R. Steffenhagen, was sent to live in Marmarth (like Bode). He claimed 69 souls and 33 communicants and 30 in Sunday School. These numbers, going up and down like a yo-yo cause this writer to wonder. We will come back to Steffenhagen shortly. The 1952 mission report merely says of Marmarth that it was a difficult place. In 1953 Marmarth was “discontinued.”

In my research for this paper, I came across a letter written in 5/22/74 by Mission Board chairman Wayne Schulz to Norman Berg in Milwaukee in which he talks about some lots in Marmarth on which the synod was paying taxes. Schulz wrote that he had been through the place several times and it was a ghost town. In trying to find out about the lots the synod owned he had also come across the correspondence of a missionary in 1950, who also called it a ghost town. This writer also remembers stopping in Marmarth in the 1960s and talking to some people there, and saying to himself, “What a ghost town.”

Marmarth was the case of a few Lutheran families who took advantage of WELS’ earnest desire to serve displaced Lutherans. From the large confirmation classes for so few communicants it was evident that they had children they wanted confirmed, and then they dropped out. They were for the most part ranchers who lived in town in winter and went out to the ranches in summer. They just wanted free services when it was convenient for them to come, which was not often.

Then there is the sad case of the last man we sent out there. Again, like Bode, he should never have been sent there, but due to certain circumstances, he needed a place to go. He had a child, whose need for medical attention had gotten him greatly into debt. When he got to Marmarth, he could not find a place to live, and there was no place to worship—no hymnals, no Sunday School literature, nothing. He asked the mission board whether he could order supplies, and they told him not to make a debt at the publishing house which neither he nor the synod could pay. The poor fellow

wrote back again complaining that he could not unpack his household goods because there was no place in the town to rent. He added that the former house rented by the synod for Bode in the early forties was not for rent, because the rancher who owned it said he wanted to use it himself that winter.

To make a long story short, I don't know anything either about the lots the synod owned in Marmarth as late as 1974.

1932-1934

For the second time the District Synod, as the convention was often called, met at Elkton. President J. Paul Scherf bowed out and Edgar Gamm from Mobridge was elected chairman. He had been in the district from the middle teens and had made a name for himself in getting the Academy established at Mobridge. He can be described as "a mover and a shaker," an interesting character. We learned to know him rather well. All his life he suffered from asthma, but it did not slow him down. He would serve till 1938.

Five men entered the district—all candidates, three pastors and two tutors for the Academy. Bowdle would open a day school and called a Clara Mehlberg, a district girl. Pastor E. Rekow from the Marmarth parish resigned in April 1934. Pastor Ralph Gamm, a younger brother of Edgar, the president, died as he traveled home to see his sick father. The mission report tells us that 19 workers were serving 57 places. Workers' salaries in the mission field were reduced another 20%. There were three men now working the Montana field, but Watkins and Cohagen were closed. Cohagen was picked up by the Iowa Synod. Old Iowa with its doctrine of open questions and rather lackadaisical attitude towards the lodges caused us a lot of trouble in those days. Olanda, which had the same trouble with Iowa was picked up by us again.

During the biennium we opened in Mandan. A candidate Ernst Krueger was being sent to Mandan. Eventually we would establish a nice congregation in Mandan, but the start would be hard. No one would rent a place to worship to the conservative Wisconsinites with their anti-lodge stance. There was a concerted effort to keep us out.

Services were also held in a place called Crimmons and Kowalsky added Bader School to his field. It was 14 miles north of Timber Lake and for a while he served 60 souls in two languages. How different the area is today. As today in the Dakota-Montana District, fields were constantly realigned trying to find the perfect combination to make a self-supporting parish.

A statistical report was also added to the Proceedings. The district was growing. It counted 9,572 souls and 4,914 communicants. There were 70 congregations and 20 preaching places. 363 children and 33 adults were baptized. 91 adults and 276 children were confirmed. Compare those baptisms and confirmations with today. In 1993 there were 230 children and 13 adult baptisms and 184 children and 81 adults were confirmed.

1934-1936

The economy of the nation had hit rock bottom. Except for the Mission Board report the whole proceedings were in English—a sort of first in the district. Really, it was overdue, because most of the work, was now being done in English, except in a few German Russian congregations. Some like Zeeland and Mobridge would hold on till the late 1960s. A seminary student from Mobridge in the 1960s would tell this writer, that his father, one of the holdouts, did not even think in German anymore. This writer's mother, who was proficient in German would visit and talk to the old German ladies in German, only to be answered in English. In spite of this, during the Summer months in the late 60s at Mobridge, we had Missouri Synod old people who traveled over 100 miles from the Pierre area to attend 7:30 A. M. German services

Six candidates entered the district. Some had waited two years for a call. A Rev. F. Reuter of Argo Township and White was suspended from the district and synod because of his stand concerning serving Communion to lodge members, alleging they should be given Communion to strengthen their faith. He was a well liked pastor and because of this White would later join Missouri and the Argo congregation would loose members.

Long time Montana Missionary F. Wittfaut died on Dec. 9, 1934. Thus would pass a legend.

Mt. Calvary, Estelline, SD was opened in July of 1934 with 75 souls and 30 communicants. Some of this was due to the Pastor Hellbusch work we described earlier. Dempster was added to the parish.

Leith, ND. The Mission Board reports: "Leith is the second orphan that has been set before the door of the Mission Board."

We meet in the 1936 Proceedings for the first time the congregation at Valley City, ND, which had been organized the year before. Of it the Mission Board reports, "Wachstum sehr langsam; solte eine Kapelle haben." (Growth very slow, should have a chapel.) It was served out of Jamestown.

In the biennium 28 souls and 47 communicants were added in the mission field.

1936-1938

A new president was elected—Walter T. Meier of St. Martin's, Watertown. He had come into the district as a candidate in 1921 and so was a 17 year veteran. A rather quiet, unassuming man, he was a hard worker. He would hold the office till 1946.

The president's and the Mission Board's reports indicated a change that was taking place in the district. To make a comparison, mission work in the district had been like water filling a valley, proceeding ever westward and slightly northward, first along what is now highway 212 and then going north into highway 12. When it reached the Missouri River it began to spread out west and south of Mobridge and west and north of Mobridge into North Dakota and then into eastern Montana. A branch also spread north into east river North Dakota. Now, for all practical purposes the basin was full. It was hemmed in on the north and the south by Missouri and Old Iowa. It took mission boards a while to realize this. A new policy was in order.

Then the good Lord got in on the act through the depression that troubled not only the country, but also the church. People had to face the hard fact that the Dakotas and Montana could not support the old one quarter section farm. Drought and low prices caused many to leave our mission area to seek their fortune elsewhere. The 1938 mission board report indicates that of the 26 mission parishes only six showed growth and another 13 or 14 showed a loss of members, sometimes substantial. That was but a reflection of what was taking place in the other parishes of the district. These people would not return and the farms in the east river country would get larger and larger while the cattle men would take over the west river country.

No new fields were opened for the first time in a long while. Pastor Max Cowalsky, the twenty year veteran in west river South Dakota, had to resign because of a complete physical breakdown. For years the area he served had been the field of hope, but no more. Five candidates came into the district plus two other pastors. But more moved out than in. Seven men were released to other districts and two resigned. It was kind of a low point in Dakota-Montana.

1938-1940

Things were looking up again when the 1940 Proceedings came out. The Mission Board reported an increase of 736 souls. Four candidates came into the district and one pastor came in from Nebraska. Prof. R. Fenske would be called to head Northwestern Lutheran Academy and would serve until his retirement.

Six men transferred out. The Mission Board started paying a travel allowance for Sunday travel—3¢ a mile. The Mission Board had a problem: What about the self-sustaining parishes that were not receiving salary subsidy from Synod? What was their status—mission or indigent? A salary code was suggested for missionaries in the hope that it might induce self-supporting congregations to follow the example of the synod and pay their pastors an equivalent salary. According to the code, salary for single men would start at \$75 and married men would receive \$90, with a child subsidy of \$3 a month after the child was 6 years old. Raises were foreseen after 5 years and 10 years. When this writer came on the scene in early 1942 his wages were \$75 a month plus \$8.16 a month for driving 70 miles on Sunday. For other trips he was on his own. If he would have married he would have received \$100 a month. Children were worth about \$3 a piece.

Services were discontinued at Crow Rock, Montana. Valley City was opened for the second time. Miner, SD, is opened again. A station was opened at Leith, ND. In 1928 Faulkton built a new parsonage and the missionary moved there because it was felt that Faulkton would boom. Now Ipswich was regarded as the place of promise and the talk was of moving the missionary up there. We mention this because in the eight years we pastored the two there wasn't that much difference between the two. Both had reached a plateau and would remain there. Ipswich had a lot of Bowdle and Roscoe people moving in and out—mostly renters.

A canvas was made of the Black Hills, especially the north hills. We decided to open in the towns of Sturgis and Lead. Because of a protest on the part of the Missouri Synod we stayed out of Lead and started in Sturgis. Thus would be opened a new mission area, but going would be slow.

In the 1940 Proceedings a short report appears on the "COMMITTEE ON 'CURRENT UNION ENDEAVORS.'" It was signed by John Brenner, Chairman, and Joh P. Meyer, Secretary. It spoke of meetings held with the Missouri Synod at the turn of the year concerning Missouri's desire to enter into union with the American Lutheran Church. (The old Iowa Synod, of which we have been speaking was a part of this church body formed about 1930.) Iowa had long advocated a doctrine of "Open Questions." According to ALC's way of looking at things, any doctrinal difference that might stand in the way of union was an open question and not very important.

We doubt whether this report made much of an impression on the district, but it was the beginning of a controversy which would shake the district to its foun-

dations. We will come back to it when we report on the 1950-60 decade.

The Forties

Prof. Sievert in his little history describes the third decade of our existence as a quiet period in the life of the district.

The dirty thirties were over. Beautiful Lake Hendricks on the Minnesota-South Dakota border had completely dried up and a farmer had actually planted oats in its basin. But now it was full again. So were the marshes and pot holes. Fields and pastures were green. Many farmers bought back their places, and paid off the debt with the first crop. Hope ran high.

Salaries were rising, as we mentioned earlier. A 1941 standard Ford cost \$910, unless one bought it from Martin Scherf, who wrote off his profit. At the end of the decade the same car would cost about \$2,000. No preacher had car or health insurance. Many doctors treated pastors and their families for nothing. Pastors were not required to pay Social Security and few earned enough to pay income taxes. In South Dakota there was a tax on household goods, about nine or ten dollars a year unless one had a fine piano.

The synod's debts were finally paid off early in the decade under the leadership of Synod President John Brenner. The synod went strictly on a "pay as you go" plan. That meant that no Mission Board gave permission to build anything unless the money was in the synod's treasury. Naturally it hampered expansion, but it also stopped foolish expansion. When one would rise at a Synod Convention to speak of our mission call to "preach the gospel to the whole creation," President Brenner would point out, "When God calls he also provides the money. Where is the money?"

As the decade of the forties rolled in so did the clouds of World War II. In 1941 our nation would be drawn into the fray. The district's young men were called into service. The synod refused to call chaplains and the "Spiritual Welfare Commission" was called into being. Because there were no young men to hunt them, the pheasant population exploded. Clark Gable came out to Clark to hunt pheasants. I doubt he went to church there.

1940-1942

In the last ten years district conventions were getting shorter. They were down to four days.

New members in the district were candidates who had graduated in the years 1937, 1939, 1940, and 1941. Two had waited four years for a Call. None had been assigned at graduation from Thiensville. The total number was ten. The 1940-1942 biennium had

been one of great movement within the district. There were 17 transfers within the district itself.

Past District President John Paul Scherf died on September 6, 1940 at the age of 69 years. He had served district congregations from about the year 1904.

The mission report speaks of five new openings. Carpenter, SD, in the Raymond area opened, lived a brief life and died. Piedmont, in the Hills area likewise. We would open in Rapid city over the vigorous protests of the Missouri Synod. The start would be very slow. I remember preaching there in the mid forties in a tiny rundown church with trees growing out of the foundation in the shadow of one of Rapid City's hotels. I remember a family from the Grover congregation living in Rapid City, who willed it to grow and helped keep it alive. Now "Rapid" is one of the jewels in our crown, the district's second largest congregation.

We would also open in Carrington, ND, which would also live a brief life and die. Three congregations, formerly with the ALC would come over to us in the towns of Isabel, Trail City, and Athboy. Our district would rejoice, not realizing that this was a harbinger of things to come. Demographics in the district were changing. In many areas where we worked, population would decrease and we too would shut congregations. The time was coming when our future would lie in going into the cities and bigger towns of the district.

We would hear another report of THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON UNION MATTERS. But more of that later.

1942-1944

Only one candidate came into the district. He was Wayne TenBroek, who would later serve us so faithfully at our Academy at Mobridge. Nor was there a lot of movement within the district. In case you are interested, the base salary of single missionaries was raised to \$87.00 per month. We did not talk about inflation in those days, but that is what it was. We were not that much better off. All in all it was a quiet two years.

1944-1946

Walter T. Meier gave his last report as District President. The new president was Paul G. Albrecht. He had come into the district in 1924 after brief pastorates in the Indian Mission and at Graceville, Minnesota. A man with a strong personality, he would shape the affairs of the district for the next twelve years. Toward the end of his presidency he would seek to bring the district out of the Wisconsin Synod.

Nine Candidates would enter the district that biennium, thus assuring that the Dakota-Montana District would remain a young men's district. In the late 60s this writer was asked by a friend at a seminar how come he knew so many fellow pastors. His answer: "I come from the Dakota-Montana District." Besides the large numbers of candidates there was much movement of pastors within the district. We can also identify with the small congregations who complained bitterly that pastors did not remain with them.

Pastor G. Schlegel of Mobridge passed away and the district lost a long time pastor and officer. He was also father-in-law to Immanuel Frey, the late president of the Arizona-California District.

Preaching stations were opened at Kelly School, ND, close to Valley City and Medina out of Windsor. Neither would have a long life. Here is evidence that the old way of forming a congregation out of a few Lutheran families in the middle of nowhere was coming to an end.

A canvas was made of the vacant area between Dakota-Montana and the Pacific Northwest in the hope of expanding westward. Pastor John Wendland was called as a general missionary to the area. The fruits of this canvas would begin to appear in the early fifties.

Missionaries' and professors' salaries were raised another 25%. The Academy Board called for a girls' dorm, and a change in the White Building to accommodate a growing student body. The Mission Board bewailed the fact that there was a shortage of pastors. Four years earlier the synod had just finished placing the young men who had waited for Calls.

1946-1948

Again the district had many changes of men within its borders. Five candidates were received besides nine other changes in pastorate. A professor was added to the Academy in the person of Armin Schuetze. Fourteen men were released to other districts. Thus the movement within and out of the district would continue. The young men, who came into the district from the seminary were idealistic. They brought in a great zeal for missions and were for the most part called into the "mission" (here read, "indigent") congregations. But it was like one old rancher who finally accepted the constant change of pastors said, "we broke off their horns." But it was a good thing for the young men and made realists out of them.

Three men celebrated twenty-fifth anniversaries. Of two of them, the president, said, "Although they are not the first of whom this could be said, they belong to that very small group to whom this tribute can be paid." Their entire ministry had been in the Dakota-Montana District.

Two schools were opened that biennium, one at Zion Akaska, the other at Our Savior of Jamestown.

Vida, Montana, a new field was joined to Circle. Baker and Ekalaka were to be canvassed soon. Here too we see a shift in Mission Board policy. Things were changing. Bryant, SD, close to Willow Lake was closed. Places like Bryant were opened because they appealed to the sympathy of a neighboring pastor. It is easy to say now, but they should have been encouraged to drive to and strengthen the nearest congregation. This writer also pleads guilty. The idea of these people was, "That's the pastor's job. He can drive. Let him come to us."

The White case comes to the fore again. We bring up the White case, which started when its pastor went over to the Protes'tants and White went over to the Missouri Synod, because of the attitude of our new president towards the Missouri Synod. The case had been closed but opened again on a technicality. Eventually the presidents of both synods would be drawn into the case and it would be closed. It was a harbinger of things to come. Again this is easy to say after the fact.

1948-1950

At the convention in 1950, the Centennial of the Wisconsin Synod was noted.

Again there were 17 changes of pastorates in the district affecting many more congregations. Eleven of the men were candidates. Eleven men also transferred out of the district including one candidate who had come into the district that biennium.

One parish disappears from the record when Aurora went over to the Missouri Synod and Bruce dissolved. New fields were opened at Baker, Ekalaka, White Sulphur Springs, and Livingston, Montana. The only one with us today (1994) is Livingston.

A third and fourth day school were opened in Mobridge and Morrystown, SD. The district now had four schools three of which were partially subsidized by the Synod. Of the four only Mobridge remains.

President Albrecht's son, who had come into the district as a candidate, went over to the Protes'tant Conference, and this hapless writer had to deal with the case, earning himself dishonorable mention in the Faith-Life publication of the Protes'tants. There is no mention of this in any proceedings.

The Trouble Decade—The Fifties

Before this decade would end, Dakota-Montana would be shaken to its core. In 1958 the district in effect would be asked by its president whether it wanted to continue with the Wisconsin Synod or form

a new church body. It wasn't as cut and dried as that, but that is what it amounted to.

To see the smaller district picture one must first view the larger, synodical picture. In 1930, the ecumenical movement within the Lutheran Church had brought into being the American Lutheran Church. The new body made overtures, especially to the Missouri Synod, to join. Wisconsin was also invited, but did not show that much interest. Missouri drew up a document of union, called the "Brief Statement." No one has ever found fault with it to this day, but for the ALC it was too rigid. So, in 1938 the ALC came up with a union document they called the "Doctrinal Declaration," which was to be viewed as a settlement of past differences. To put it another way, they viewed the Brief Statement of Missouri in the light of their Doctrinal Declaration. But as Wisconsin told them that involved a denial of the truth.

So Missouri's Fort Wayne Convention told their doctrinal committee to come up with a single document of agreement. This was in 1941. They came up with a document called "The Doctrinal Affirmation." That same year Missouri abandoned its former position on Scouting. Because of World War II Missouri also entered into an agreement with the ALC to commune its boys in the service. There was also a growing list of other unionistic activities.

Then in 1947 the ALC issued another "friendly invitation" contending for "an allowable and wholesome latitude of theological opinion on the basis of the teaching of the "Word of God." This was simply the old Iowa doctrine of open questions. Meanwhile, Wisconsin through its doctrinal committee was protesting.

Then in 1950, Missouri and the ALC adopted a new document of union called the "Common Confession." Wisconsin pointed out that it was full of "weasel words," so that one could read into it both truth and falsehood. Missouri eventually withdrew this document as a basis for union, but she would never disavow it. One of its great weaknesses was that it had no antitheses, which would pin down the truth.

In the early fifties former president W. T. Meier started a study club in the Eastern Conference. The course of study was the afore mentioned list of union documents starting with the excellent Brief Statement. In that way the men of the eastern conference learned what was going on.

In 1952 there was a very stormy Synodical Conference meeting at St. Paul, MN. There the Wisconsin delegates declared themselves in a "state of confession." Remember, these were delegates, not the synod. In 1953 at our synod convention, we also entered into

a state of confession. However, for the rank and file of our people it amounted to a "state of confusion." Many of us practiced a form of selective fellowship, which made us partakers of Missouri's sins.

One must also remember that our doctrinal committee was composed of the Conference of Presidents, the Mequon faculty, synod ex-president John Brenner and President Naumann. In 1955, at the convention in Saginaw our doctrinal committee came in with a very strong memorial urging an immediate break with Missouri. There was no way of misreading it. This writer was there. After the reading of the memorial, my impression was that if a vote had been taken immediately, we would have broken with Missouri then and there. But the floor committee had to deal with the memorial first. The committee brought in two reports—a majority and minority report. The majority report recommended holding the report of the doctrinal committee in abeyance until the Missouri Synod could meet in convention in 1956 to study and react to it. The minority report said we should break now. The debate was long and at times acrimonious, but the majority report was adopted by a vote of 94 to 47. 26 or 27 delegates had their names recorded as being against the majority opinion. 19 advisory delegates also recorded their "nay" votes.

What happened? If one wants to know what is going on at a convention it pays to listen in on what the delegates are saying to one another during the recesses and after sessions. Things like this were being said: "What about our relatives and friends in the Missouri Synod? What about the joint Lutheran high schools operated by associations of churches? What about Bethesda? What about troubled Missouri Synod pastors who are looking to us for help? Don't we owe them some love? Shouldn't we deal a bit longer with the commissioners of our sister synod? Maybe the Synodical Conference can help. Maybe at this convention there was another thing that played in more than we think. The convention was being held at Michigan Lutheran Seminary, which had a large number of Missouri Synod students. The head of the floor committee was head of the institution. These thoughts and feelings prevailed at Saginaw in 1955 and they would prevail for the next five or six years till we broke with Missouri in 1961. In some respects it was a good thing, especially for many of our lay people. It gave time for patient instruction. In the case of Missouri it avoided the charge that our action was premature. It kept our own synod from being polarized when the break finally came.

The 1956 convention of the Missouri Synod, taking into account the memorial of our doctrinal

committee withdrew the Common Confession as a union document with the ALC, but did not disavow it. Our entire union committee, which attended the Missouri Synod convention, saw in this a ray of hope and decided to continue negotiations with Missouri. There was a recessed convention held in Watertown a couple of weeks later that confirmed the decision of our union committee.

By this time numerous protests were being filed with our synod for not immediately putting Romans 16:17 into force and breaking with Missouri. The protesters said that Romans taught that once the marking of the false doctrine has taken place the break must come immediately lest we become partakers of the other's sin. The other side said, "But we are in a state of protest. We are not partaking of their sins. This is time for admonition. We owe it to our brothers." Bible passages flew back and forth.

In some respects the 1957 convention of Wisconsin at New Ulm was a repeat of 1955. The difference was that our union committee wanted to continue dealing with Missouri and our floor committee on union brought in a memorial to break. This the delegates at the convention voted down. Dealings with Missouri were to continue. The debate heated up even more, and it would heat up in our district.

* * * * *

We could give you the rest of the history of the conflict with Missouri, but this is enough to show what happened in our district. Our President Albrecht was on the protesting side. That in itself was not enough to condemn him, because others felt as strongly as he did and yet were coming to the state of mind where they felt we might accomplish some good, if we dealt with the Missouri Synod longer. What was happening in the case of our president was that the reports he was giving were skewed. We were not receiving the whole picture or the thinking of the union committee. Since in the district only the president was on the union committee, we had no way of checking up on him. So, many of us followed.

* * * * *

Our district met two weeks after the recessed synod convention in Watertown in 1956. Our president reported to us what had taken place at the Watertown convention, dwelling much longer on the protests than on the reasons for continuing the negotiations with Missouri. Our floor committee went along with our president, deploring the action of the synod's Standing Committee On Church Union and recommending the original 1955 report of the standing committee to

break. For most people at this time, things got a bit hazy. The 1955 floor committee said we should break, but they also said we should wait. So by the "Saginaw Resolutions" which one was meant? Thus, the stance of some of our men was beginning to change from "break" to "continue to negotiate for a time."

After this every conference, pastoral or delegate, was dominated by those who wanted an immediate break with Missouri. We heard the same arguments again and again. Some were growing suspicious and saying that the president was bringing into the district men who sympathized with him, and it seemed so. It was virtually impossible to do any district business. Even the Mission Board was paralyzed.

The 1957 Synod Convention at New Ulm was again flooded with memorials and protests urging a swift break with Missouri. In fact, among those memorials one will find one from our Eastern Conference, signed by me, its secretary, calling for an immediate break. There was another memorial, not so official, signed by a number of pastors and one layman of our district, including President Albrecht. By this time, some of us were discovering that our president was calling meetings involving those on his side. I, however, was not one of these "insiders."

Interestingly enough, the floor committee of the 1957 New Ulm convention did call for a break with Missouri. The vote to adopt failed by a standing vote of 77 to 61. From then on the doctrinal discussions with Missouri would continue under a vigorously protesting fellowship. Three men of our union committee resigned: Prof. E. Reim of the Seminary, M. J. Witt, president of the Pacific Northwest District and our President Albrecht. The first two severed their fellowship with Wisconsin. Albrecht, on the other hand, said he would no longer fellowship with those who held the position of the majority. Thus he became guilty of selective fellowship, the very thing of which we were accusing Missouri. At this convention Albrecht made a long statement of which the final sentence was, "I am fully aware of the implications of this statement as far as my district is concerned." I believe he went home thinking he could win over his district to his position and join those who were already making a break from the synod. This was happening in the Pacific Northwest and in Minnesota. What leads me to this conclusion was talk about forming a Dakota-Montana Synod. Twice I was asked by teachers of Northwestern Lutheran Academy, what I thought about forming a new synod. I hasten to add that the administration of our school had nothing to do with the idea nor were they for it. Later it would be pointed out that the thinking of the Albrecht group was to make

the Academy the new synod's college, while the new education building at Albrecht's congregation in Bowdle would be the seminary. No doubt it was no more than talk, but it shows the thinking of some.

Then in the fall of 1957 a special district convention was assembled at Aberdeen to deal with the resolutions of the 1957 New Ulm Convention. The Eastern Conference had asked for this meeting, which again implicates me, its secretary. President Albrecht gave us a long history of the controversy raging in the synod from 1953 to the time of this special session. Again, he did not note all the facts or the reasoning of the synod. By the way, this special session was held on October 22, 1957. He also gave a history of those people who had resigned from the synod. He repeated his statement made at the end of the New Ulm convention. In all honesty it must be stated that he did not ask us to break with the synod, but he did ask us to express ourselves on the resolutions adopted by the 1957 synod convention in the matter of our relations with the LC-MS.

His report was given to a floor committee. Since members of the floor committee were convinced we were not being given a full and objective report of what was taking place, they called a member of the standing committee. They then brought in a memorial which in effect rejected the Albrecht report and asked for continued negotiation with Missouri.

President Albrecht then stepped from the chair, and I, the hapless first vice-president found myself in it. He then made a statement in which he resigned as president of the Dakota-Montana District. The motion was made to accept his resignation. It was debated, and believe it or not was rejected. Albrecht was asked to serve out his term according to the dictates of his conscience. After another lengthy discussion President Albrecht said he would consider the request to serve, and he did. This serves to show, how at this particular time, our own district was polarized. Subsequent events would change the picture.

I wish now that I had kept a diary. Early in 1958, in January, President Albrecht called me by phone and asked me to come to a meeting of the praesidium in a hotel in Aberdeen. At this meeting Albrecht read to us twelve letters he received from eleven pastors and one layman protesting the district's action in Aberdeen in October, 1957. It is interesting to note that one of the letters read was from the second vice-president, who had recently been appointed to fill a vacancy. I took the attitude that if people were that greatly troubled we should indeed call another meeting of the district. A date was set—February 11, 1958, to be held in Bowdle, SD.

About a week later I learned of the semi-secret meeting which had produced these letters. It came about in this way. A fellow pastor's wife was staying at our house while their child was in the hospital at Sioux Falls. He came to visit his wife and greeted me with these words, "Herb, you should have been at that meeting in Grover."

"What meeting?" I asked. Then he told me about the meeting and the letters. One of them had been written by him. To his credit, I must say that at the February 11th, meeting at Bowdle he withdrew his letter. Later, however, Albrecht was still using these letters, including that of the young man, and called for a special committee to deal with these conscience letters.

The special meeting at Bowdle only served to polarize the district more. At the same time more and more were growing very suspicious of our president and his actions. They voted again to continue negotiations with Missouri.

The regular 1958 meeting of the district met as usual at the Academy in Mobridge. The lines were clearly drawn and it was a fore drawn conclusion that there would be a new administration in the district. Pro-Albrecht people sat by themselves in the gym. The union floor committee urged that we continue negotiations with Missouri. There wasn't much argument. A new and a strong district president was elected, Walter Schumann, Jr., of Watertown. This whole meeting was an anticlimax. The climax had really come in the district meeting held on October 22, 1957, though we hadn't realized it at the time.

My history is getting overlong. Let me sum up: Five congregations with more than 800 communicants and seven pastors left the district. A meeting of the new praesidium was called, composed of President Schumann, first vice-president Reginald Pope and this writer. We drew up a list of names of those we felt we could salvage for the synod. We are happy that we did, for some of these men rose to rather important positions in the synod. To use Prof. Sievert's words, "Now the air was cleared, and a new spirit took over the life of the district." I must also agree with Prof. G. O. Lillegard, who in an essay written for the ELS said, "There is a great difference between entering a unionistic body and being forced to leave it. The first is not permissible under any circumstances; in the later case it may be necessary to remain for a shorter or longer period of time for the purpose of testifying against error." Later in 1961, after we broke with the LC-MS, one of my members said to me, "If Wisconsin had broken with Missouri before this you would have lost us all."

Let's go back now to a biennium by biennium report of the 1950s and pick up some of the things we missed.

1950-1952

Because of the Missouri controversy there was very little action on the mission front. But that is not the only reason. We were running out of places to go in the area where we were serving. We would have to go farther afield. But some important openings would be made.

District presidents were a part of the "Union" or "Doctrinal" committee of the synod which was dealing with Missouri in its desire to join with the American Lutheran Church so that naturally we would be hearing more about the issue.

Again 5 candidates entered the district. There were 14 changes of pastorate in the district affecting about 33% of the congregations. Remember: This had been going on now for 70 years. Certainly it is God's grace that the district continued. A new name was Ringling, Mont., where a class of adults was being instructed. This is the last we would hear of it. Grace of Carrington, ND, would defect to the Missouri Synod. Also a pastor would be released to Missouri. We would see more of this because of the "Missouri controversy." People would start choosing, so to speak.

A long report would be given us regarding negotiations with Missouri by our "Standing Committee in Matters of Church Union." It was not a report of progress. We would hear of the White Case again.

1952-1954

Concerning the past biennium the president reports that "The exodus from our district the past year was unprecedented," and "As of today, ten parishes comprising twenty-one congregations do not have a pastor of their own." From the graduating class of 1954 ten were assigned to these vacant parishes. The mission chairman reported that "Comparing the names of pastors with the 1952 convention report, you will find that only six are in the same station." Then there is also the complaint we heard so often, "The low average contributions for home purposes is disturbing." Dakota-Montana was always behind. It was not ill will; it was a matter of economics. Altogether, counting the ten already mentioned, 16 candidates were assigned to Dakota-Montana that biennium. Besides that, four pastors resigned for various reasons.

The new Administration-Gym building of the Academy had been dedicated earlier in the year and the Academy was hosting the convention, as it would

till the synod closed it. The district lost more than an Academy when it closed; it lost a rallying place. The 1952-54 biennium would see the opening of three congregations in larger cities. Up to this time we could only boast of congregations in Watertown and Rapid City. Now we would enter Sioux Falls, SD, Aberdeen, SD and Billings, Montana. Since these would become some of our larger congregations, let's have a look at them.

Good Shepherd, Sioux Falls, SD. About 1950 Bethel Lutheran (ELS) of Sioux Falls built a larger church and moved their small (about 15 by 46) church to the southeastern part of the city. They started a mission but could not support it, so they sold it to WELS for \$15,000. Since we wanted into the city and could in this way enter Sioux Falls without being hassled by Missouri, we took the offer and bought the lot and the building. The building became known as the box car because of its dimensions. We also took over the missionary, but he soon left us for health reasons in September, 1953. Later, about 1962, it built what it affectionately called the "tin church," since it was a Butler building. It started a school. Still later it moved farther southeast to its present location.

Trinity, Aberdeen, SD. This congregation, organized in 1954, also had its start about 1952 when WELS decided to enter the city over the protests of Missouri. Over the years neighboring WELS congregations had been transferring many of their members to Zion Lutheran (LC-MS) in Aberdeen. The start was slow. A candidate was assigned out of the 1952 graduating class of the seminary, but he left for reasons of health before services were started. A Vicar H. Koch was sent until Candidate Warren Radtke would arrive. He too would leave in less than a year. In 1966 the church was able to support itself and after that it really started to prosper. It opened a day school in 1978.

Faith, Billings, Montana. Work was begun in mid-1953. It showed promise from the beginning. In 1969 an amalgamation of Faith with Lamb of God (ex-Missouri) brought forth a new congregation named Apostles and a Christian day school was opened.

1954-1956

This biennium only four candidates came into the district. There was some movement within the district itself resulting in ten installations. Five pastors were released from the district. One man resigned and one died after resigning. There were only a few changes in the mission field. The mission chairman reported that there was no real expansion.

During the biennium mixed conferences with Missouri pastors were held in the district. Please per-

mit a personal observation. This writer was elected secretary and was commissioned to write letters of protest for the conference to the worst offenders of those in Missouri practicing unionistic services. Some Missouri men were also troubled. But of the dozen or so contacted none bothered to reply. Here we see something happening in the Missouri Synod that eventually won the day for the unionists. It was the lack of discipline. However, these conferences also brought to the fore the differences between Wisconsin and Missouri in the doctrine of the church and ministry.

1956-1958

The 1957 Convention of Wisconsin at New Ulm decided to continue its dealing with Missouri. The debate in Wisconsin between those wanting an immediate break and those wanting to continue negotiations was really heating up. The Evangelical Lutheran Synod had already broken with Missouri in 1955. Memorials from individuals and congregations and conferences were being circulated and floor committees were hard pressed to deal with the number.

In our district two special conventions met before the scheduled, regular 1958 convention at the Academy. Both were called to deal with Missouri matters. At the one held in Aberdeen, October 22, 1957, President Albrecht made a move to resign because Dakota-Montana did not wish to follow his lead in vigorously protesting the actions of the 1955, 1956, and 1957 actions of the synod. There was also this growing feeling that he wanted to take the district out of the synod, even though this was never stated in so many words. But actions often speak louder than words.

Then the presidium called a special pastoral conference at Bowdle on February 11, 1958. Again the president was rebuffed by a majority vote of the pastors.

As stated before, when the 1958 Dakota-Montana Convention met at Northwestern Lutheran Academy in Mobridge, it was an anticlimax. Even the shouting was over. President Albrecht made only a halfhearted attempt to rally the forces. A new president was elected, Pastor Walter Schumann, Jr. of St. Martin's, Watertown.

Newly elected President Schumann brought back to the district the objective leadership it needed. A very orderly person himself, he set the district house in order.

Seven candidates came into the district plus seven pastors from other districts, but there was not much movement of pastors within the district.

Bethlehem of Watertown was organized in 1956, opened a school in September 1957, and dedicated its

church on April 20, 1958. Its pastor, A. P. C. Kell, would eventually become president of the district after President Schumann. Glendive, Montana would organize. We read that a new field at Winnett, Montana "has been divided recently. Lavina and Ryegate are to be served from Billings, and the other places are calling a candidate." Requests were being made to begin a mission at Fargo, ND.

The floor committee on doctrinal matters did not enter into the "Missouri controversy" other than to mention it. Instead it sought to set up machinery to deal with the protests in our own midst. The result was the so-called Committee of Six. This committee was composed of two pastors and one layman of each conviction.

1958-1960

A special convention met January 26-27, 1959, at the Academy to hear the report of the Committee of Six. For all practical purposes they reported an impasse. There were two divergent convictions in regard to the "marking" in Romans 16:17. After a long debate the district, by a vote of 47 to 31, declared that it stood on the resolution that our synod's negotiations with the Missouri Synod were Scripturally correct.

Hope was fast fading that there would be any more progress in dealing with Missouri. All forums for discussion seemed to be failing—Conference of Theologians and Synodical Conference. The district resolved, "That should the impasse continue, the necessary steps be taken by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod to sever fellowship with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod."

In the regular convention of 1960, President Schumann reported that five congregations and seven pastors "reaffirmed their withdrawal."

Again, during the biennium, the movement in and out of the district would continue. Fifteen new candidates and transfers from other districts would enter the field. Eleven would leave the district. Five would terminate fellowship.

The mission at Melstone had not been mentioned before. It was started in 1958 and permission was being granted to build a chapel for \$6,000. "Initial steps were taken for a new mission in the capital city of Bismarck, ND. A group of 70 Wisconsin Synod souls form the nucleus for this mission." It would receive the name, Our Savior.

Messiah, Glendive, Montana, would be started with high hopes in 1957-58. We built a parsonage chapel (the church in what would later be the garage) in West Glendive. This part of town did not grow as projected, so that we not only found ourselves out in

the country, but out of circulation, in a place hard to find. Eventually this would lead to its dissolution.

Holy Trinity at Lavina, Montana, would be organized in 1959. It worshipped for a while in rented quarters and died.

Thus ended "The Troubled Decade"—The Fifties.

The Last Decade Of This History: The Sixties

The grief of the fifties is still evident in President's Schumann's report to the 1960 district convention. In recent correspondence with Pastor Em. Schumann (7/8/94) he wrote concerning those years: "Many, many are the times I have relived them (the turbulent years of the fifties), wondering what actions we could have taken along the way to minimize the district's losses. I have come to the conclusion that, in reality there were none. The initiative always seemed to rest with the opposition. The 'colored' reports brought back from Milwaukee, the secret meetings to which only a selected few were invited, the declarations of suspended fellowship, the exclusive Communion services, the establishment of a separate conference, the attempts to lead entire congregations out of the synod, the efforts to gain control of physical property—all were instigated by the opposition. It seemed we were always on the defensive, reacting to challenges from the other side. I must confess that I don't know what else we could have done to prevent the losses that the district experienced."

Concerning the losses President Schumann would report at the 1960 convention: "The following have terminated fellowship with the Dakota-Montana District and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod because of the synod's continued negotiations with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod:

"St. Luke's of Lemmon, S. Dak., and its pastor, V. Greve,

"Our Savior's of Jamestown, N. Dak. and its pastor, H. Rutz.

"Zion of Hidewood Twp., and its pastor, A. Sippert.

"First Lutheran of Faulkton, S. Dak., and Zion of Ipswich, S. Dak., and their pastor, L. Grams.

"Pastors M. Eibs, C. Albrecht, and P. Albrecht.

"Pastor C. Hanson tendered his resignation from the ministry to accept a secular position in Minneapolis."

President Schumann mentioned the last man because earlier he had tried to take his parish out of the Wisconsin Synod after instructing them concerning the controversy with Missouri for one week. He did not succeed and resigned.

But we pastors did profit by the experience. We had studied carefully the issues and the doctrines that had separated us, as well as the effect they had on the fundamental doctrines of Scripture. Now we could proclaim those doctrines with greater clarity to our people. Indeed, the Lord of the Church reigns, even when we think the church is being torn apart.

In 1961 the synod would break with Missouri. Most would be satisfied that everything had been done that could have been done to avert the break with our late sister synod. We shall not attempt here to retell the last three years of the controversy. We could go back to the real work to which our Savior called us.

1960-1962

The movement within and out of the district continues. It was the thing that bothered the fathers when the district was formed, and it was hoped that the formation of the district would stop this movement both within and out. Ten candidates enter, assuring that the district would remain a young man's field. One man came from another district. One pastor was suspended and went over to the Protestant Conference. The Mission Board reported that there were 30 missions grouped together in nineteen parishes. That is over one third of the congregations within the district. Congregations and preaching stations numbered 69. They were being served by forty men three of whom were Academy teachers. Altogether there were eleven congregations vacant totaling 7 parishes. There was a manpower shortage. In our dealings with the Church of the Lutheran Confession we were charged with "willful and deliberate disobedience of Scripture," especially in the area of the ministry and the call and the interpretation of Romans 16:17. No new mission stations were added that biennium.

1962-1964

President Schumann reports that "considerably fewer pastors than usual have accepted calls into other districts of the synod." Five candidates came into the district plus three from other districts. Of the three, two who had been previously in the district returned home—Pastors Walter Sprengeler and Pastor Walter Herrmann. Five were released to other districts and one left us by accepting a call into the Missouri Synod.

On the mission front we entered three new areas.

Edmonton, Alberta. Here was a German speaking congregation which was brought over to us by a student at our Seminary from Germany, a Dieter Mueller. It numbered 170 souls and 107 communicants. Its per Sunday attendance ran about 125. But all that glitters is not gold. The congregation had problems with the

doctrine of the call and ministry. We gave it a faithful pastor, but finally it defected from us in about the same way it had come to us. But it was our toehold into the Canadian Province of Alberta.

We also entered Great Falls, Montana, with great hopes that we could be successful if we came into a larger town. We built a chapel hoping that it would bring us members. It didn't work that way. Growth has been slow over the years. After thirty years the congregation numbers 102 souls and 74 communicants (1993). The mission work of the early age was gathering together displaced Lutherans. That has changed and work is slower. Only the Lord gives the increase, not the number or the kind of men we send into an area. Mission Boards often operate with the idea that a certain kind of man must be sent into the area to gather fruit.

Brookings, SD. The work that aborted in 1921 is begun again. We bought an old house and turned it into a student house and chapel. The start was slow and for a while, more or less confined to students at the State College. But now we have a fine congregation of almost 400 souls and 284 communicants (1993).

This convention and the one before it talked about dividing the Western Conference. The question was referred back to the Western Conference for study.

1964-1966

President Schumann had accepted a call to Trinity of Watertown Wis., but would preside at this convention. Pastor Arthur P. C. Kell became the next president. He told this writer he had come from Germany as a 14 year old. He entered Dr. Martin Luther College Preparatory School at the age of 18. We met the man as a ninth grader when he was a twelfth grader. He was a big man with a deep bass voice, but in many respects a gentle giant. He had come into the district to pastor the new Bethlehem group in Watertown, SD. We would travel thousands of miles together into the new Montana and Alberta fields. He would serve till 1972, a period of 16 years—sort of a record.

Only five candidates entered the district. Two men came from other districts, and nine pastors would be released to other districts. So we sent out more than came in.

The Mission Board gave one of the candidates, a Nathan Engel, five west river churches at Dupree, Isabel, Timber Lake, Faith, and Bison, SD. This was

not the first time this experiment had been made. Earlier in the 1940s, Norman Lindloff had been asked to serve five congregations in this area. Now remember, this was once considered a fruitful mission field. Later we would ask the same man, Nathan Engel, to start work at Pierre, SD. We will comment more on this later.

Earlier we had talked about entering Fargo, ND. In this biennium we would enter its twin city, Moorhead, Minnesota instead, because we were given a piece of property in that city. We now have a nice self-sustaining congregation in Moorhead. We remember dedicating the new church in Moorhead and leaving for Mobridge in a raging blizzard.

We also entered St. Albert, Alberta, a suburb of Edmonton, and the congregation was received as a member of the district in 1966. We built a parsonage. Sad to say, here we were deceived by our missionary. We found later we had no congregation but sort of a mutual camping society. Our missionary was let go for cause. The next man started almost from scratch.

St. John, Wetaskiwin, Alberta, Canada is sort of a spin off from the Edmonton endeavor. It also had its start in 1965 and today we have a self-sustaining congregation there.

We started a preaching station in Calgary, Alberta, Canada with the now graduated Dieter Mueller. He reported an attendance of 100, but the ads that appeared in the Calgary newspaper indicated that he was starting a society for the propagation of the German language and culture rather than a mission. In 1968 President Kell reported that Dieter Mueller had also been suspended for cause. He became an independent and we lost the mission, if we ever had one. Calgary made a fine start again in 1982.

Thus we found out that it is difficult to administer a field that is a thousand miles from the center of things. This writer remembers making a trip of 2000 miles to close a deal on the parsonage at St. Albert. The missionary had refused to do so because of a solid porch support that would bow when the sun shown on it. It was a five minute meeting with the contractor and the deal was closed. We made other trips to meet with the members of St. Albert, only to be told that all had left town at the time of the called meeting. These were some of the frustrations in our early Canadian field.

At the 1966 convention the district adopted a plan to divide into three conferences, and from it the Rocky Mountain Conference would be formed. It was first called The Alberta-Montana Conference

1966-1968

The president reported that 10 men came into the district of which 8 were candidates. Seven men were released to other districts and one was suspended. He also reported that three congregations closed their doors: St. Peter at Florence, St. Paul's at Grass Range, Montana, and St. John's at Altamont, SD. It was a sad day to see this old Boettcher founded congregation close.

St. Luke's of Germantown Township closed its doors and merged with Immanuel of South Shore. Thus another old and rather important Boettcher founded congregation, passes into oblivion. Goodwin would lose its pastor and become a part of the South Shore parish.

Concerning the difficulties in the Canadian fields, the Mission Board reported, "The missionaries in our Canadian fields need our prayers and all the encouragement that you can give. Not only are they far from home, but their problems are unique. Many of their people were brought up in a culture different from ours. Matters of simple democratic procedure, which we take for granted, are not understood. We opened a station at Bashaw, Alberta. Work in Edmonton, Wetaskiwin, and Bashaw was all in German.

The Montana field continued to have its distance problems. A parish consisting of Terry and Ekalaka were 150 miles apart by a good weather road. When one came to Ekalaka one came to the end of the road—literally.

The five congregation alignment we spoke of earlier becomes four as we added one to Hettinger and Reeder. Thus starts the ending of a noble experiment.

For the first time, in a mission report, the institutional work done at the State Hospital for the mentally ill at Yankton, SD, was mentioned. This work was started out of Sioux Falls shortly after Wisconsin broke with Missouri. Up to this time Missouri had been serving our patients there. The patient load of our WELS people was between fifteen and twenty. So the praesidium decided to "Put our feet where our mouth is," and take over the work there ourselves. This writer was chosen, mostly because he was closest to Yankton. We went every two weeks and spent the entire day at the hospital. It was interesting and different and our patients appreciated our concern. As we recall there was no cost to the synod. Already then we started toying with the idea of starting a congregation in Yankton. That would wait till 1972, about ten years later.

1968-1970

The Last Two Years Of This History

Your historian would leave the district in July of 1969 after living in the district for 49 years and serving as pastor for 27 years.

1970 was the golden anniversary year. The district would put out an anniversary book, which was of great help to this writer. We wish now we would have been there for the festivities. Prof. K. G. Sievert, who had been in the district for 49 of the 50 years, read a history. Pastor Walter Sprengeler, who had been in the district at the beginning and had returned, preached the convention sermon.

Let us take note once more of the movement in and out of the district. After fifty years it had not stopped. There were 13 candidates from the Seminary, and 4 pastors came from other districts. We received two pastors by colloquy. One pastor resigned, one retired, and 11 were released to other districts. The losses equaled the gains. In fact, the net gain of pastors from 1920 to 1970 was eight. But that does not make a case against the district, as we shall see.

Faith, the WELS church in Billings, Montana would join with the former LC-MS "Lamb of God," and become the WELS "Apostles." We mentioned Yankton, SD earlier. In July of 1970 we moved our District Missionary John Engel there to begin exploratory work. Prince of Peace would be established there in 1972.

Redeemer, Pierre, SD. We doubt whether even the members of this mission know much of its early beginnings. For several years the Mission Board wondered why we had never entered this capitol city of South Dakota. So about 1967 we sent Nathan Engel, who had four congregations of his own, to start services. We rented a funeral home. When Engel received a call this writer went there from Mobridge every other Sunday evening for over a year. Attendance was ten or fifteen. But both of us had so many irons in the fire that we could not do the place justice. So when Nathan Engel's brother John was called into the district as District Missionary he was sent to work Pierre more intensively. On June 21, 1970, Candidate Floyd Brand was ordained and installed as first pastor of Pierre. District Missionary John Engel was sent to do the same sort of work at Yankton.

We also did some exploratory work in Minot, ND, but nothing came of it. We also started exploratory work in Bozeman, Montana. In 1972 Shining Mountains would be organized. Another exploratory that never panned out was Barrhead, Alberta, Canada.

Thus closed the first fifty years of the organized Dakota-Montana District.

Postmortem And The Future

Let's sum up: What were our gains in fifty years?

Already in 1920 we had over 80 congregations and preaching places. We closed the fifty year period with about 72. The reason for this was that the horse and buggy age was over and people could easily travel many miles to church. Even with fewer congregations we had expanded our borders.

In 1920 the souls under our care were estimated at 7,000. We closed the era with 11,275 souls. Communicants in 1920 were estimated at 3,500 and we closed the period with 8,064. We must also remember that during that fifty year period families had become smaller, and so the ratio of souls to communicants would be less. So communicant membership more than doubled. It was about 90 a year, nothing phenomenal but it was growth.

In 1920 the district had 32 pastors. We ended the period with 40. Whereas the 32 would be serving parishes averaging 110 communicants. The 40 would be serving parishes averaging 201. The average number of stations per pastor in 1920 was 2.56. In 1970 it was 1.8.

What really would be interesting is if someone of statistical bent would total the number of pastors who passed in and out of the district in those fifty years.

There is one figure we do not know now—the number that will be in heaven because the Gospel was preached during the first ninety years. On that great day, when heaven and earth will pass away, Scripture indicates to us that those who were won by the Gospel will take their place at our side like sheaves in a field, and there will be great joy for us all. Moreover, I am certain there will also be great surprises, when we have seen how we have misjudged one another, especially those of us who served on mission boards. Mission Board members certainly ought to be humble, for great decisions rest on their shoulders.

The title we chose for this work was THE SAGA OF A MISSION DISTRICT. In many respects it remained that through the 90 years covered, and that is still its aim today. We should never become comfortable with a maintenance ministry.

The first forty years before the Dakotas and Montana became a district were years of growth in population. The aim of the early missionaries was to gather into congregations Lutherans who had moved in. They succeeded admirably. The work continued in the same vein for another forty years. Wherever we went we looked for displaced Lutherans. This does not mean that we neglected to work the unchurched. But beginning already in the twenties the work was be-

coming more difficult. The displaced Lutherans had been without church too long. Many had gravitated into the sects and the lodges. Moreover, many of these Lutherans did not want to be found. Then too, instead of growing in populations the opposite happened. No longer were fields "ripe unto harvest."

Another curb on growth was that we did not work the cities. In the fifties that began to change. We did it more or less to follow up members who had moved into the cities and gravitated into Missouri Synod congregations. But people did not want to come back to us. The history of our district shows us that we did the right thing by entering the cities, even though start-up work was often very slow and disappointing. It was a new kind of mission work, working with people who were not ready-made members. We even gave it a new name—"evangelism." We had always done evangelism work, but now, about 1970, it began to stand in the foreground rather than in the background.

Statistics can be great liars, but in this case they show us how much more difficult the work of winning souls has become. In the first fifty years of our history we won 5,776 communicants for a total of 115 a year. The last 25 years we have won only about 1,225 (estimate) communicants for a total of about 49 a year. We do not believe that we should blame the lack of money and manpower when one of our average district pastors today serves only about 170 communicants. Nor should we try to lay the blame on our pastors. They only cultivate the ground and water it. God our Savior still gives the increase.

Please permit a few more statistics to show what the district is working with when it comes to mission work. These statistics come from the Rand McNally Almanac of World Facts (1994). Of the lower 48 states the lowest in population per square mile are Wyoming with 4.7, Montana with 5.6. North Dakota with 9.2 and South Dakota with 9.3. Of the fifty states only Alaska is lower with 1 per square mile. Nor is Alberta, Canada highly populated. This is your present mission area. We did not make the roster of cities in the Almanac. This too should tell us something about success as men count it.

As I write these words two words of our Savior come to mind, both in close proximity to one another in St. Luke. In Luke 18:8 we read, "But when the Son of Man comes will He find faith on earth." The other is found in Luke 19:13, "He called ten of his slaves and gave them ten minas, and told them, 'Trade with these till I come.' (Both quotations from God's Word To The Nations). Just because the work is slow, we should not stop working as so many church bodies are doing.

It is also to our credit that we have not abandoned the souls the Lord has given us. Over the years our mission boards have sought to group congregations into self-supporting parishes. Pastors have been moved back and forth between the congregations to get the perfect "setup." It is a never ending task as the proceedings of the district tell us, but there are areas where we cannot make such a plan work. We are afraid that a "new plan" is already causing hardship on some of our pastors and will force closure of congregations. Again we would like to place blame on our mission boards, but we should not. The blame rests with us all and a new mode of doing church work which has grown very expensive, while we ourselves are not supporting the Synod Mission Offering. Post-

mortems are easy. We can blame lack of money and manpower. We can blame lack of zeal. We can blame demographics. We can blame poor planning and poor placing of churches. In spite of all this, the fact remains that it is the Lord who opens doors and calls. He sends us where he wants us to be, if it is only for a season. When Jesus sent out the seventy he told them to stay only where they were wanted. They were told to wipe from their feet the dust of the streets where they were not wanted and move on to the next place. It is still good advice for us day.

Lord, bless the work you have given us to do.

Amen.

Resource Materials Used For Facts And Figures

This writer knows that he will not go down in history as a careful "historian." As you read, some of you may have noticed a lack of references to "end notes." This does not mean that we have not tried to be accurate, so we give below a list of the resources we used to establish most of the facts and figures.

History of the Northwestern Lutheran Academy, Mobridge, SD. Undated, About 1945

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Hendricks, Minn. Centennial Booklet. 1990

The Wisconsin Synod Lutherans. History written by E. C. Fredrich, 1992

Geschichte der Minnesota-Synode. Fiftieth anniversary history of the Minnesota Synod, compiled in 1909.

Synodal-Bericht Verhandlungen der zweiten Versammlung des Minnesota-Distrikts, June 24-30, 1920. This also contains the proceedings of the Allgemeinen Evang.-Luth. Synode von Wisconsin u. a. Staaten, held July 14-20, 1920.

Synodal-Berichten des Dakota-Montana Distrikts for years 1922, 1924, 1926, 1928, 1930, 1932.

Proceedings of the Dakota-Montana District from 1934 to 1970.

Various Yearbooks of the WELS including most of those printed, including one from 1917. The early yearbooks were joint endeavors of Missouri and Wisconsin.

WELS Synodical Proceedings for years 1951, 1953, 1955, 1957, 1959 and special sessions during the same time.

Proceedings of the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference for 1955, 1956, 1958, 1960, 1962.

Proceedings of ELS for year 1961.

Various WELS Statistical Reports from 1942 to 1993.

Fifty Years Of God's Blessings In The Dakota-Montana District, 1929 TO 1970.

This booklet contains two essays written for the 1970 District convention written by the veterans of the district, Prof. K. G. Sievert and Pastor E. R. Gamm.

My thanks to various pastors of the district, who after I read my paper at the 1994 convention came to me with additional information and corrections. These I have sought to place into this rewrite, which is being published.

My thanks to my wife, Garnet, who put up with me and the mess on the desk next to the furnace in the basement.

My thanks to the nice person, whoever he or she is, who printed this work for the Dakota-Montana District Convention of 1994.

Finally, my thanks to the library and librarian of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, who provided me with many of the research materials that were missing from my library. Without these materials you couldn't trust a thing I wrote.

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GOD'S GRACE ON THE PRAIRIE

The History Of The Dakota-Montana District 1970-1995

To The Glory Of God
Dedicated To The Pastors, Teachers, & The Members
Of The Dakota-montana District Past, Present, & Future

By Pastor Alan W. Gumm, Gillette, Wyoming

Amazing grace! God's amazing grace! How sweet the sound of God's grace to the ears of His children! It is only by God's grace that we celebrate the forgiveness of sins and eternal life in Jesus Christ. It is only by God's grace that wretched sinners are saved from an eternity in hell. It is only by God's amazing grace that we have the hope of heavenly mansions.

It is only by God's amazing grace that we celebrate the 75th Anniversary of our beloved Dakota-Montana District. It was God's grace that led faithful, courageous, dedicated, "seelsorge" pastors like Christian Boettcher, Julius Engel, and Frank Wittfaut to the Dakota Territory. God's grace protected these *Reisepredigern* as they rode their horse and buggy for hundreds of miles in every kind of weather to proclaim God's grace in Christ to the souls gathered in little villages, towns, and hamlets. God's grace brought the district into existence. God's grace provided Northwestern Lutheran Academy in Mobridge, SD. God's grace brought the district safely through wars, drought, the Depression, controversies and a school closing. God's grace held our district in His arms and blessed us.

If you doubt that God's grace has been present, is present, and always will be present in our district, then I invite you to read Pastor Herbert Birner's fine, 50 year history of our district and to read what follows. Everything that has taken place in the life of our district for more than 75 years is born from the unmerited grace of our God.

Amazing grace! God's amazing grace! How sweet the sound of God's grace as we celebrate our 75th Anniversary of the Dakota-Montana District!

I have been asked to write the history of our district from 1970 to the present. This part of our history has never been written before. I am now getting into "uncharted waters", so to speak. I will discuss what God's grace gave to our district by biennium.

1968-1970

These were tumultuous and rebellious years in our country. Our country was entangled in the Vietnam War. Riots ruled the streets. Drugs dragged many of our young people into unholy living. There was Woodstock, "acid rock," long hair, short skirts, bra and draft card burnings, flower power, the peace sign, psychedelic graffiti, and drugs and much unrest in our country. The men returning from 'Nam were unwelcomed and called "baby killers." Every position of authority was challenged. We walked on the moon and our country bragged of its accomplishments. Communes were set up and "free love" was encouraged among our young people. There were daily news reports from Vietnam flashing the destruction and carnage across our television screens. Draft dodgers fled to Canada and some of those "artful dodgers" enrolled at Northwestern College to avoid the draft. God knew that they were there for the wrong reasons. He kept them out of the ministry.

It was a time of unrest and rebellion. Being on the prairie of our district kept all of this social unrest from our youth for a while. But it did reach our wide-open skies and our "amber waves of grain." The only mention that there were social problems is in President Arthur Kell's report. He alluded to national unrest when he wrote: "There have, of course, been many other blessings. Only since our last convention in 1968 have the incidental blessings which we enjoy here in the form of *Lebensraum* and fresh air have been brought forcefully to our attention by the news media of the country."

It was a time of unrest in our country, but it was a time of celebration in our district. In 1970, the district praised God for 50 years of grace. Rev. W.F. Sprengeler preached the sermon of the 1970 Convention opening service. He was there when our district was born. Professor K.G. Sievert wrote a history of our district entitled "Preaching The Gospel On The Dakota-Montana Prairies."

In his report, Pastor Kell used John 15:16 as the basis for his report. He wrote: "The important thing is that we continue to preach the Gospel for the salvation and nourishment of our souls, and that we do so humbly, but faithfully, always remembering, 'Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.'"

Faith and Lamb of God in Billings merged to form a new congregation—Apostles. Trinity at Sturgis and Hope at Spearfish formed a dual parish. First at Winnett, Faith at Melstone, and Holy Trinity at Lavina formed a tri-parish.

The Mission Board reported 29 congregations served by 16 missionaries and 1 vicar. There was 1 vacancy. The 29 congregations had 1,445 communicants and 2,434 souls. Yankton, SD; Minot, ND; Bozeman, MT; and Barrhead, Alberta, Canada were exploratory. There were 50-75 people attending the services at Barrhead. We never did establish a congregation there because the group only wanted services in German. They were not necessarily interested in standing firm on God's Word.

What I found amazing was the number of WELS students at some of the colleges in our district. There were 27 WELS students at Rapid City; 30 at Spearfish; 32 at Vermillion; 60 at Aberdeen; and 100 at Brookings.

The Mission Board was seriously looking at Mitchell and Huron, SD; Grand Forks, ND; Missoula, Butte, Helena, and Kalispell, MT; Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Regina, and Winnipeg, Canada.

The Evangelism Committee reported that the first evangelism workshops in the district were held in 1969-1970. There would be a synod-wide evangelism effort (program) in 1971. The committee formed a district evangelism library. Each pastor in the district would receive the material presented at the 1970 Mission Fair at the seminary. The committee also encouraged pastors to use the synod's Soul Conservation Commission by sending names of military personnel and college students to them.

The 1968-1970 biennium saw 14 candidates ordained. Two of them were Joel Frank—Nebraska District President and our Dennis Hayes. Five other pastors transferred into the district. There were 2 colloquies, 1 resignation, and 1 retirement. Eleven pastors left the district. The convention was held at the Academy and Pastor Kell was reelected District President.

1970-1972

As the district met in convention at the Academy in Mobridge, June of 1972, there were torrential rains

and sudden flooding at Rapid City. News reports stated that hundreds would lose their lives and destruction of property could reach one hundred million dollars. Pastor Kell mentioned that in his report and then he asked, "How many more biennial conventions lie in the future for us?" Of course, only God knows the answer, but signs of the times point out that the end is near.

Pastor Kell used 2 Corinthians 4:5 as the theme for his report. "Nor do we preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." He reminded the delegates, and especially the pastors of the district of why they were there and what their calling in life was all about. What Pastor Kell said 22 years ago holds true today. May we take them to heart. He said, "We are to remember, 'We do not preach ourselves.' For we certainly are not to proclaim our own ideas and ideals or our own opinions and convictions and then perhaps proceed to rationalize and defend them and pass them off as the very essence of Christianity. No, we have but one Call and that is to proclaim Christ Jesus the Lord."

During the biennium many congregations joined together to form new congregations or parishes. St. Paul's of Argo Township, SD closed and joined Our Savior's of Brookings. Good Shepherd at Presserville Township in Montana moved to Wolf Point. Eight families of Good Shepherd in Sioux Falls, SD were granted a peaceful release to form a new congregation in Sioux Falls. St. Paul's was formed in December of 1971. Good Shepherd in Wolf Point and Salem in Circle formed a dual parish. First in Gary, SD and Trinity in Hendricks, MN did the same. Bethlehem in Watertown, SD and St. John's of Rauville Township became a dual parish. Christ of Morrystown; St. Paul's of McIntosh; Bethlehem of Watauga and St. John's of Paradise formed a 4 star parish. Immanuel of Elgin, Zion of Burt, Trinity of Carson, and St. Luke's of Leith also became a 4 star parish. St. Matthew's of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada was suspended from fellowship because of false teaching of the Scriptural truths of Fellowship, Unionism, and the Public Ministry. This took place April 15, 1971.

There were 6 ordinations in this biennium. Robert Weimer and Carl Lindemann were two of them. Four pastors transferred into our district. There were 2 resignations, 2 retirements, and 1 colloquy. Professor K.G. Sievert retired after 50 years in the ministry on June 3, 1971. He had spent 43 years at the Academy. Rev. Sprengeler departed this life and entered eternal life on April 2, 1971. Seven men left the district.

The Mission Board reported that there were 26 mission congregations and 1 exploratory field. 16

missionaries cared for 2,086 souls, 1,349 communicants. The congregation at Pierre finally was given a name—Redeemer. Barrhead, Alberta, Canada disappeared from the Mission Board report. Pastor Gilbert Bunde from Willow Lake, SD, was doing exploratory work in Huron, SD. Some familiar words were written in the District Mission Report in 1972. “Because of a backlog of requests and shortage of funds exploratory work has been reduced in all areas of the United States. Approval of the GBHM is now necessary before trial services can begin. The normal period for such services is 6 months with approval necessary for all extensions.”

There were 116 WELS students at Brookings in 1972. The Lutheran Collegians at Brookings canvassed several areas for the District Mission Board. The board was awaiting guidelines from the synod’s Student Services Committee.

The District Stewardship Board was in the process of studying stewardship policies, objectives and guidelines in connection with a directive from the Synod Stewardship Board, which was reorganized at the 1971 Synod Convention. Pastor James P. Schaefer, the Synod Stewardship Counselor, came out and explained the new stewardship program for the fall of 1972.

It seems that in the early 70s programs for congregations were being drawn up. Stewardship programs were entitled “Love Cares” and “Walk Together.” Pastor Norm Berg even wrote an essay for the “Stewardship Handbook.” The “Lending To The Lord” program encouraged members to lend to the synod for Kingdom work. The synod’s Evangelism Board was also drawing up programs for congregational use. Each congregation was encouraged to form an evangelism committee.

Twenty-four district congregations conducted religious surveys. Four children and six adults were baptized; 4 adults were confirmed; 14 families and 5 adults were in Bible Information Classes; there were 250 prospects. Even with these blessings from our Lord, there were still congregations who refused to have an organized Evangelism program in their congregations.

In the fall of 1971, the Academy had the largest enrollment in its history up to this time. There were 121 students. At the time of the convention, 115 students had enrolled at the Academy. A new president’s house, garage, football field, and landscaping were built.

Our district memorialized the synod to stop supporting Bethesda and provide a “home” to care for the exceptional children of the WELS.

Pastor Kell was reelected District President. Pastor Richard Strobel and Pastor David Krenke were the Vice-Presidents and Pastor John Engel was elected Secretary.

1972-1974

The 27th Biennial Convention of our district was held at the Academy at Mobridge, June 18-20, 1974. This was the WELS’ 125th Anniversary. Pastor Kell used Ephesians 5:20 as his theme for his report. “Giving thanks always for all things...unto God and Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” He encouraged the delegates to “give thanks always for all things as a church.”

As a district of the WELS we have much to thank our God for and Pastor Kell briefly lists how God richly blessed our district from its earliest days to the early seventies. He lists many of the preaching stations that once existed in the district but were no more. Pastor Kell also pointed out the great blessings God gave to our district through the Academy. The 1973 enrollment at the Academy was 131. An all time high! He noted that the Academy was not receiving more support from the district.

From reading Pastor Kell’s report of the biennium I get the impression that there was some serious discussion already then about closing the Academy. Unfortunately, five years later the Academy would close.

This was a very quiet biennium in our district. Seven men began their ministry in our district. Pastor Paul Heiderich was one of them. He has always had a close relationship with his car or whatever he drives. His first Call consisted of McIntosh, Morrystown, Watauga, and Paradise. He has always had more than one congregation to serve.

Four men entered our district. There was 1 colloquy and 1 teacher resigned. Ten men left the district. Many pastors from the district moved to other congregations within the district. For the first time congregations did not amalgamate or form large parishes.

The old dormitory was torn down at Northwestern College in 1973. Northwestern Prep had its own separate faculty and president in 1974. Professors L. Umnus and R. Sievert retired at Northwestern. Professor Victor Voecks passed away in New Ulm. He taught at DMLC for 43 years.

Ten new Christian Day Schools opened in our synod. Two schools closed. 26,507 students were in our synod’s Christian Day Schools. There were 9 area Lutheran High Schools.

A new lectionary was drawn up by the Synod’s Commission on Worship and the floor committee at the convention encouraged that this lectionary be studied at conferences.

Mission work in the district progressed steadily. On June 9, 1974, 27 people attended the first exploratory service at Mitchell, SD. Pastor John Engel and family moved to Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, to begin exploratory work there. He was our District Missionary.

Mission Board Chairman, Pastor Wayne Schulz said that there were 23 mission congregations and two preaching stations. 15 pastors cared for 2,119 souls and 1,304 communicants. By the way, those 1,304 communicants gave \$197,488 in offerings in 1973.

The Stewardship Program was entitled "In Joyful Response." "Lending to the Lord" showed total loans of \$3,745,249.39 as of March 31, 1974.

There were two major evangelism developments. "Talk About The Savior" was introduced. It is a Law/Gospel presentation. The second development "was the decision of the Executive Committee of the synod's Commission On Evangelism to seek a Coordinator of Evangelism."

Here's an interesting note: "The 1973 Synod Convention authorized the Academy to draw up a master plan for its facilities, envisioning an ultimate on-campus enrollment of 200 students."

A quiet biennium ended. The District Praesidium remained the same after elections. Yes, it was a quiet biennium, but soon things would change.

1974-1976

The writing on the wall was becoming clear. Northwestern Lutheran Academy was in trouble. In his report, NLA President Daniel Malchow gave some disheartening news.

The synod did give permission for NLA to look at remodeling and fixing up the campus to house 200 students, but the synod would not have the money to do the necessary work. The Commission on Higher Education stated that the Educational Institution Building Fund projected a deficit, so there would be no money for improvements. The hope was that the district congregations would contribute more to the Academy. From April 1, 1975 to March 31, 1976, the school received \$8,789.49 from the district. There was a plea for more money.

NLA President Malchow reported that August of 1975 saw 115 students enrolled at NLA. He urged each congregation to send more students to NLA. He clearly pointed out the need for more students. He wrote: "It should be apparent that if our school is going to continue as a worker training institution of the synod, we need students....If we want this school to continue and to flourish, we should demonstrate this by the students we send. If few students come from

our district, we are only paying lip service to the purpose our school is intended to serve. Then others might justifiably contend that a worker training school of the Wisconsin Synod located in Mobridge, SD, is not a sound investment."

The 1975 graduating class sent 11 to DMLC. 8 enrolled at NWC. That sounds great, but only 3 juniors, 6 sophomores, and 1 freshman were enrolled in the pastoral course at the Academy. The floor committee brought a resolution to get more students and more money from the district congregations for NLA.

The handwriting on the wall was becoming more clear. The closing of our beloved Academy was drawing near.

This District Convention met at the Academy. There were 63 lay delegates, 45 pastors, 2 professors, and 3 teachers present for the opening of the Bicentennial Convention. No, it wasn't the 200th Anniversary of our district. It was the 200th Anniversary of our country. President Kell urged the convention to give thanks and praise to our gracious God for all of His rich blessings upon our country. The freedoms of speech and worship and all the other freedoms that we enjoy are blessings that we should never, ever take for granted.

In this biennium 6 young men were ordained. Pastor Wayne Rouse was one of them. Three pastors and three professors came into our district. Four of them went to the Western Wisconsin District—Kloehn, Dengler, Russow, and Strobel. That district has never been the same since then. Pastor Kell (8/17/75) and Pastor Wilbert Schulz (6/6/76) celebrated their 40th year in the ministry. Pastor Kell was elected District President. Pastor Ed Werner and Pastor David Krenke were the Vice Presidents and Pastor John Engel was the Secretary.

We had four Christian Day Schools in our district in 1976. Billings had 16 pupils; Rapid City had 23 students; Mobridge had 56 pupils and Watertown had 115 pupils. synod-wide, 16 new schools opened in 1975 and 20 schools were scheduled to open in 1976. There were 11 area Lutheran High Schools. A youth newsletter entitled "Generations" was begun.

The District Mission Board's prayer was that "God would give our missions and missionaries an extra measure of boldness to meet the requirements of preaching the Word of the salvation of souls in our area of responsibility."

Bismarck and Brookings went self-supporting and Mitchell, was granted manpower in July of 1975. Church sites were being purchased in Huron, Mitchell, and Bozeman. Yankton's chapel was being built. A new parsonage in Brookings was dedicated. Huron and

Mitchell would soon have parsonages. There was hope to start new missions in Calgary, Lethbridge, Regina, Moose Jaw, Saskatoon, and Winnipeg. Missoula is another place that has a good nucleus of WELS people. There were still 23 mission congregations in the district.

Nine pastors from our district brought a Memorial to the district requesting that we ask the synod to appoint a committee to study the "expediency of the current practice of the WELS requesting and applying for gifts, grants, and matching funds from any source outside of WELS." This committee was to report to the ten districts in 1978. The district made the request.

This discussion concerning money received from outside the WELS, especially from AAL, would go on for a number of years. My first conference in 1980 spent lots of time, hours, in fact, discussing a conference paper about AAL.

There would be lots of discussion about AAL money, but the main topic of discussion for the next three years would be the closing of Northwestern Lutheran Academy. Another controversy would yank at the heart strings of our district's people. All those feelings that the people would have in 1979, would be resurrected in 1993 when the decision was made to close our school in Prairie du Chien, WI. But that story will come later.

1976-1978

In 1975, the synod at convention voiced its approval of the master plan for building construction at NLA. They wanted the school to be able to have an enrollment of 200 students. Some construction needed to be done. The synod recommended that Phases I and II of the master plan be undertaken when there was enough money in the synod's coffers. Building contractors and consultants were hired. The actual construction was not begun but preparations were being made. Building could start as soon as the money was available.

This exciting, hopeful time in our district was crushed at the August, 1977 Synod Convention. Shocking news spread across the district. The 1977 Synod Convention of the WELS "called for the removal of NLA from its present location to a new site, with preference to be shown toward the Southwest or West Coast." All plans for expansion, building and even the future of NLA were abruptly stopped.

From the reading that I have done, the reasons the synod decided to close NLA were as follows: 1) Small enrollment; 2) A large percentage of students did not enter NWC or DMLC; and 3) Not enough financial support for the school from the district.

What was the district going to do? A special convention was called by the Praesidium at Mobridge on January 25, 1978. The purpose of this convention was "to hear the proposals of the CHE in respect to NLA and to study their implications for our district." Because of a severe snowstorm many of the pastors and delegates were unable to attend the convention on the 25th so the convention was extended another day.

There were six resolutions formulated at this special convention. It was a call for some serious action. Two years before there was also strong encouragement for action to save the Academy, but now there was great urgency to save the Academy. Here I will summarize the resolutions. 1) Agree that there is an urgent need for more pastors and teachers; 2) Maintain the synod's historical commitment to training future church workers through the academy system; 3) Recognize the need for NLA to continue; 4) That the district assume the responsibility to carry out the master plan for NLA; 5) That every congregation in the district study the needs and plans of NLA; declare financial support to replace the music facility; and that each congregation inform the District Secretary how much they will give toward NLA; 6) That the district set the goal of 42 freshmen for the fall of 1978 and the Praesidium and faculty carry out a district recruitment program.

Each congregation was given a survey to fill out concerning financial support. Financial support for 1978-1981 promised by the congregations totaled \$177,500.00. There were 72 congregations in the district. Five congregations gave no commitment and 3 congregations did not contact the District Secretary.

The Special District Convention called for 42 freshmen. In June of 1978 there were only 8 enrolled. They were hoping for 24. The numbers of those who were enrolled in the pastor or teacher courses also declined at NLA.

NLA President Malchow concluded his report by encouraging all the district to pray for NLA and that at the same time the district should remember to pray "Thy will be done."

On May 25, 1978, the Academy celebrated its 50th Anniversary. The theme for the Anniversary and for the convention in June was "A Tree Planted By The Rivers of Water." In Pastor Kell's President's Report he pointed out that the Champion Campus at Prairie du Chien, WI might be purchased by the synod for a new school. He told the convention that NLA is like a tree that is planted by the rivers of water. If a person didn't quite believe that, then they should go out of the gym and look at the river below the Academy. Later he said, "The Living Word of God, the

saving Gospel of Jesus Christ, that is the river from which every child of God and from which also Northwestern Lutheran Academy draws its life-giving strength to grow and to blossom and to bring fruit a hundredfold.”

The synod was to have a special convention in July of 1978 to discuss the future of NLA and Martin Luther Academy in New Ulm, MN and the possible purchase of the Champion Campus. The district resolved to thank the congregations of the district for their financial commitment to take over the responsibility to carry out the master plan for NLA and that we seek the synod's approval to proceed with the implementation of the master plan for NLA. The district was also encouraged to recruit more students and to pray. Our district recommended that because of the housing at MLA in New Ulm was overcrowded and because the Champion Campus was up for sale that the synod purchase the Champion Campus. The district felt that the synod needed another prep school, not an amalgamation.

The 50th Anniversary of the Academy should have been a time of rejoicing, thanksgiving, and praise. To be sure there was much of that, but dark clouds were overhead, and the tree planted by the rivers of water was in danger of being hit by lightning. The lightning would strike at the special convention of the synod in July of 1978.

Professor Richard Strobel was the essayist for the 1978 District Convention. The title of his essay was “The Role Of The Prep School In Our Educational System.” What he wrote in 1978 was not only prophetic about what happened at NLA but also what took place in 1993 at the Synod Convention. Maybe it is prophetic of the future.

Here is his last paragraph:

“While it may seem to some that I have been belaboring a point and tilting at windmills, since we all, or at least most of us, agree that NWC needs the prep schools and that DMLC is better off with them, I do not think that I have done so. For this reason: Before us is the Champion issue, but I firmly believe that behind this there is something even more weighty, namely the question of whether we need the prep schools at all. Granted, today, at least ostensibly, we as a synod are all for the prep schools. But when one observes the synodical scene, the question arises: How about 10 or 15 years down the road? If we should one day lose our prep schools, this would have dire consequences for our pastor training course. It would mean, ultimately, downgrading this course at NWC and at the seminary. Would we want that? But even more is at stake. In 1969 CHE stated: ‘The history of many a church body that has lost its confessional position

indicates a close connection between such loss of confessionalism and a growing dependence on schools outside its control for the training of its public ministry.’ This is indeed the case, for the loss of the prep schools had this result in other church bodies going back to colonial times. Secularization began on the prep school level with the loss of the prep schools and then spread to the colleges and seminaries. This, I submit, is a price we cannot afford to pay.”

There were six men who came to our district from our seminary. Two pastors transferred into our district while 2 transferred out. Two pastors resigned and three retired. Pastor Kell was elected to his final term as District President. The other three officers remained the same.

Apostles in Billings, and the dual parish of Sturgis and Spearfish became self-supporting. Parsonages were erected at Huron and Mitchell. Chapels were constructed at Yankton and Huron. Plans for a chapel at Bozeman were underway. Exploratory services were being held at Helena and Missoula, Hot Springs and Jamestown. The Mission Board Chairman, Pastor Wayne Schulz added this to his report: “This represents a high in the recent history of our district.” How true!

The 1978 District Convention would be the last district convention held at Northwestern Lutheran Academy at Mobridge, South Dakota. August 1, 1979, the Academy doors were closed. The following congregations were organized in the 1970s: Pierre; St. Paul's in Sioux Falls; Bozeman; Yankton; Huron; Mitchell; Missoula; Jamestown; and Hot Springs.

1978-1980

I began to collect resource materials for a conference paper and for this history of our district after the 1993 Synod Convention, which voted to close our school at Prairie du Chien, WI and amalgamate (Boy, I don't like that word) it with Northwestern Prep in Watertown, WI and to move Northwestern College to New Ulm, MN, and amalgamate it with Dr. Martin Luther College. As I read through President Kell's 1980 report, I realized that what he said is definitely apropos for us today. He reminds us of some very basic things. He also points us to the future. Here is part of his report to the 1980 District Convention in Watertown, SD:

“And since that time a certain spirit of gloom has become noticeable in the district. Some members are not participating in the synodical committee meetings any longer. Here and there one gets the impression that the Gospel has been taken from us. But isn't that a rather human reaction? Is it all that bad? If you think it

is, what do you think the apostle means when he says, 'All things work together for good to them who love God?' Does he not mean to say that all things, even those which are highly disagreeable to us, under God will turn out to be the greatest blessing we may have experienced? And is that Scripture principle not applicable here too? We certainly must realize that the Lord of the Church has permitted our school to be closed. What is stopping us from praying and looking for those blessings He has promised? As a matter of fact, there is evidence for us to believe now that we are on the way to receive those blessings that will be ours if we but believe the promises of God. As a first step in that direction, an area high school committee has been organized and has been hard at work for about a year. Our failings in the past have been noted. They have been debated and vows have been taken not to repeat them in the future. The cause of Christian education as against the present humanistic training of our youth in our public school system is being highlighted on many an occasion. The fact is also being emphasized that this cause is worth sacrificing for. We don't know exactly when this regional Lutheran high school will be started or where in the district it will be located. But we do know that here lie the blessings which the Word of God promises. We know it is not too late for we know that all things work together for good to them that love God. Trusting in God's promises, we are confident that what looked like a great calamity to us only two years ago may well under God turn out to be one of the greatest blessings the Dakota-Montana District has yet experienced. May God grant it."

Martin Luther Preparatory School had a first year enrollment of 360 students which was 160 more than anticipated. Four new area Lutheran High Schools opened in 1979 bringing the total to 18.

The Mission Board reported that exploratory work was being done at Hot Springs, Jamestown, Missoula, and Helena. Mission status was granted to Missoula, Hot Springs and Jamestown. Work was begun in Calgary, Canada. Chapels were purchased for Jamestown and Bozeman. Construction was to begin for Wetaskiwin, Alberta. Names of WELS members living near Gillette and Casper, Wyoming were requested. There were 19 mission churches in our district served by 14 men. There were 1,536 souls and 1,015 communicants.

The Evangelism Commission began arranging an Evangelism Convocation in each conference during the fall of 1980.

In 1980 the synod was doing mission work in 11 foreign countries—50 missionaries.

The fall stewardship program was entitled "Love Gives." A special post-Easter synod offering collected

\$150,000 by the end of May of 1980. A 15% increase was needed for the 1981 PBS to carry out the synod's work. In 1980, the synod had already run up its borrowed total to \$31,027,043. Our district warned the synod to be cautious and use restraint in borrowing money. A new hymnal called "Lutheran Worship" was being looked at and studied by our synod's Commission On Worship. This is Missouri's new hymnal. Our Commission is studying it for possible recommendation to be used in our synod.

1978-1980 saw Pastor Gerald Blobaum and 4 other men begin their ministry on the prairie. Four others transferred in and mostly because of the closing of NLA, 14 pastors and 4 teachers left the district. There were 2 resignations and Dr. Paul Peters died on September 3, 1979. Zion in Reeder closed its doors and joined Redeemer in Hettinger, ND.

Pastor Wayne Schulz was elected District President; Pastor John Engel and Pastor Ed Werner were the Vice Presidents and Pastor Dennis Hayes was elected Secretary.

1980-1982

Since this was my first district convention I was thankful that it had been a quiet biennium and a peaceful convention. Pastor Wayne Schulz was our District President. He too, was thankful that it was a quiet biennium.

Some of the concerns brought forward were the \$10 million dollar "Reaching Out" offering, the feasibility of the synod publishing its own hymnal, the pension plan and adding a Canadian to our District Mission Board. We also heard the report of the synod's Committee to Study the Matter of Guidelines For the Formation of New Districts. (How do you like that title?) There was a possibility that the 1983 Synod Convention could adopt the report and have the Dakota-Montana District chopped up and amalgamated (I hate that word) with other districts. In essence, wipe our district off the face of the earth. Our district vehemently opposed that idea and it never happened. Thanks be to God!

It seems as if we have always had difficulty with the legislature and state education people in South Dakota. There was a bill in the SD house that if passed would have forced parents of our Christian Day School children to obtain permission each year from their local school board for their children to attend a non-public institution that is non-accredited. Teacher Dan Schmal would serve as our liaison between our District Board for Parish Education and the State Department of Education. There are six schools in our district in 1982. They are at Billings, Watertown, Sioux Falls, Rapid City, Mobridge, and Aberdeen. Total enrollment was 322.

The Dakota Montana Lutheran High School Association meets annually and is gaining support for an area Lutheran High School. Seven new Christian Day Schools opened in our synod in 1981. There are now 373 Christian Day Schools in our synod. Chapels were dedicated at Missoula, Hot Springs, and Bozeman. Exploratory work is being done at Minot, ND; Red Deer, Alberta; and Milbank, SD. Requests for exploratory work have been made for Sidney, MT and Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Evangelism seminars were held throughout our district. These seminars were for pastors and lay people. The pastor and teachers at Good Shepherd in Sioux Falls wrote and taught a completely new VBS course on sharing the Savior.

The District Special Ministries Board informed the district that "Luther's Catechism—Simplified Version" was available to congregations who had mentally handicapped children. I've used this course and it is very helpful in teaching the Word of God to those who have a difficult time learning.

Timm Meyer and I entered the district along with 3 other pastors during this biennium. There was one colloquy, 1 retirement, and 1 resignation. Five men left the district and 8 entered the district. Two of those 8 men were Pastor John Ruege and Pastor Reginald Pope. Pastor Pope had been out here during the 50s and 60s. At my ordination in Hazelton, he and Mrs. Pope reminisced about their days in the district. Their eyes sparkled as they spoke of the district. They hoped that they could return one day. At my first pastoral conference, Pastor Wayne Schulz asked for names to put on the Call list at Mitchell. I suggested Pastor Pope. President Schulz asked, "Is he a theologian?" I told him that he had nothing to worry about. Pastor Pope would be a reliable pastor. The rest, as they say, is history.

Professor K.G. Sievert, Pastor A.P.C. Kell, Pastor Walter Hermann, and Pastor Gerhard Geiger entered eternal glory during the biennium.

Messiah in Glendive, MT, closed its doors in 1980 and joined Trinity in Terry, MT.

The Praesidium remained the same after elections. 1980-1982 was a quiet biennium. By God's grace it would stay that way for a while.

1982-1984

Usually, the President's Report is in the convention folders. At this convention there was a reason why the President's Report was handed out. President Wayne Schulz requested that he be not considered for another term as President, because he had served as chairman of the Mission Board and had served as President for two terms. He wanted to spend more

time with his growing congregation and school. We were stunned, but we could understand. The District President is still a parish pastor with souls to nourish and souls to bring to the Savior. We need not forget that.

Pastor John Engel was elected District President, but he declined it. Later he would say that he did not have enough time to properly consider the position so he thought it best to decline it. Pastor Ed Werner was elected President. Pastor Pope and Pastor John Engel were the Vice Presidents. Pastor Wayne Rouse would be elected Secretary, an office he would hold until 1994.

The theme of the convention was "Sing Aloud Unto God Our Strength." This theme was appropriate for our convention. We discussed the increase in the decrease of offerings. Serious financial cuts would have to be made if offerings do not increase. This scenario would be repeated for the following 10 years. The offerings from the synod did not even come close to what the delegates at the synod convention had budgeted since 1981. Pastor Schulz encouraged us to urge our congregations to meet the challenge of higher offerings with God's help.

Another area where we would need God's strength and guidance is how to best serve the smaller congregations where they and their towns are dwindling in population. President Schulz urged these congregations and pastors to be flexible if there is realignment.

The District Mission Board was looking into the possibility of additional congregations in Billings, Fargo, Sioux Falls, and Rapid City. The board was looking at churches in Minot, Milbank, Red Deer, and Lemmon. Livingston went self-supporting and became a dual parish with Bozeman. Much work was being done in Calgary, St. Albert, Wetaskiwin, and Red Deer. There was hopeful thinking of getting something started in Saskatoon. Some synod activities from this biennium are worth mentioning because they would affect all of us. The committee appointed to study the role of man and woman completed its assignment. Pastor Kurt Eggert, a D-M alumnus, will serve as the project director for the new/revised hymnal. A large number of DMLC graduates were not assigned, but there will be a shortage of teachers in the future. The CHE authorized the seminary to proceed with plans for a new auditorium/gymnasium. Two new homes were erected on the MLPS campus. MLS initiated a new program entitled "Taste Of The Ministry" which gives seniors an opportunity to assist teachers and pastors. This program is popular with all of our synodical schools now in the 90s. We were encouraged to get involved with the DMLHS Association. Travel/Canvass/Witness teams were introduced during this

biennium. The 1981 Synod Convention authorized the synod office of Executive Secretary of Evangelism. Pastor Paul Kelm accepted the Call. "The People's Bible" began during this biennium. We voted to recommend to synod that District Presidents receive a vicar or a graduate assistant because of the tremendous work load of the District President.

Pastor Doug Free and three other seminary graduates entered the ministry in our district. Nine men left. There were two resignations, one colloquy, and Pastor Robert Weimer retired for the first time. Eight men entered our district, three of them are still here—Pastor Peter Naumann, Pastor Steve Persons, who would leave and then come back, and Pastor Norm Seeger.

It was another quiet biennium. Again, our thanks to God.

1984-1986

This would be Pastor Werner's first District Convention as President. The theme for this convention at St. Martin's in Watertown, SD, was "The Word Is Now." We heard how God's Word is our great heritage and out of love for God, who loved us first, we will share that saving Word with the people of the world.

The "Reaching Out" offering totaled \$20,011,962 by April 11, 1986. We thanked the Lord for opening the hearts of His people. Yet we also heard that the offerings for synod's work was dramatically dwindling. The administration of the synod was instructed by the 1985 Synod Convention to operate on a balanced budget. The Commission on Communication and Financial Support (CCFS) was born at the 1985 Synod Convention. The Board for Parish Services also had its birth at the same convention.

Fourteen pastors were serving 16 missions and one exploratory which was Custer, SD. CEF and "Reaching Out" dollars paid for land, parsonage, and a WEF unit at Calgary. The same for Helena, MT; a parsonage at Bozeman; land and parsonage at Milbank; and the purchase of an existing church at Hot Springs. Moorhead, Valley City, and Jamestown went self-supporting.

An "Evangelism Handbook" was produced, along with "Precious Is The Child," "A New Beginning" and groundwork for a mass media assisted outreach program was laid.

We still have 6 Christian Day Schools in 1986, although their name has been changed to Lutheran Elementary Schools. Total school enrollment in our district was 339 students.

Pastor Doug Free was our district's first CCFS chairman, a post he still holds. The CCFS is respon-

sible for encouraging Gospel-motivated "mission offerings" from the congregations of the district, "so that the important mission work and worker training that we carry on as a synod may enjoy increased financial support."

The District Stewardship Board, in a lengthy report, urged every pastor and every congregation to actively utilize stewardship materials and programs.

One particular resolution has a special place in the hearts of Pastor Jim Bolda, Pastor Bob Weimer, and myself. It was at this district convention that Christ Our Redeemer Ev. Lutheran Church of Gillette, Wyoming, left the Nebraska District and joined the Dakota-Montana District. Thank you!

Our district urged the synod to move the "Bethany Program" from Mankato, MN, to Northwestern College in Watertown, WI.

Another executive secretary was desired for Parish Services. We recommended that the synod keep doing what it had been doing and not create a new position in Milwaukee. They didn't listen!

The "Sampler" would be introduced the first Sunday in Advent of 1986. We would test the service, which, in some form, would be in the new hymnal.

Elections were as follows: Pastor Ed Werner, President; Pastor Reginald Pope and Pastor John Ruege, Vice Presidents; and Pastor Wayne Rouse, Secretary.

Eight new seminary graduates came to our district. Pastors Paul Marggraf, Tom Rawerts, Dean Biebert, and Ron Kruse are still in our district. Five men entered our district from other districts. Pastors Jim Bolda and Curt Seefeldt are still in the district. Nine men left our district. There was one resignation.

There was a lot of realignment of congregations in our district during this biennium. Milbank and Summit dissolved their dual parish. Faith and Dupree became a dual parish as well as Isabel and Timber Lake. The four of them used to be together. Flasher, Paradise, and McIntosh became a tri-parish while Morristown called a semi-retired pastor. The four of them used to be together.

Another quiet biennium with many changes in our district. We thank God for that peace.

1986-1988

In his report, President Werner urged the district to "strive to practice sound stewardship of time, talent, and treasure." Pastor Werner very clearly defines each of those gifts from God. "Treasure is the physical blessings which can be measured in dollars and cents. The Lord has given everyone something...Talent is a

bundle of unique blessings which makes each of us an important and useful part of the body of Christ.... Time is given us to reach a goal....Since much time is wasted, much talent unused, and many treasures could be put to better use it becomes obvious there is a need for 'Spiritual Renewal.'" Pastor Werner informed the district that "one of our congregations was reduced from a position of 'ready for self-support status,' to a stressful economic situation when nearly half of the congregation chose to abandon the Biblical doctrine of church fellowship." A little over 30 people left the congregation, but as time went on, the Lord blessed the congregation with renewed growth. We give thanks to God for His grace.

There were no vacancies in the preaching ministry at the time of the convention and for several months before the convention. All vacancies on the faculties of our Christian Day Schools had been filled.

In this biennium, seven seminary graduates came out here to the prairie. Pastors D. Reichel, J. Carter, S. Nowicki, and P. Paustian would find souls to care for at Great Falls, Watertown, Hazelton, and Terry respectively. Pastors M. Enderle, D. Hayes (returned to the fold), and T. Johnston came to our district. Eleven men, including myself (lapse of sanity) left the district. One teacher resigned. Wilmot and Summit became a dual parish.

The 1987 Synod Convention passed a resolution that said that "the synod conduct a Mission Outreach Program to establish a \$10 million endowment fund to be used exclusively for mission outreach." Thus the conception of the "Lift High The Cross" offering.

We had once opened 20+ new missions and assigned all of our seminary graduates. Not in 1987. Call Days used to be joyous occasions, but not in 1987, 1988, etc. because not all the men were assigned. It was bittersweet to see. And I did.

The Planned Giving Program was taking off, so more Planned Giving Counselors were called. There have been lots of financial blessings from our Lord through this program.

We had 18 missions, served by 16 men in 1988. There were 872 communicants in those congregations. From reading the history of our district there once was a time when the communicants and mission congregations were doubled. Lack of money curtailed mission work quite considerably. Missoula went self-supporting. A chapel was being built at Milbank. Custer, SD, purchased an existing building to worship in and Hot Springs received a parsonage. CEF dollars have given all of our district missions land, parsonages, and chapels. Places for exploratory were Saskatoon, Regina,

and Kalispell. Groups in Sidney, Dickinson, Redfield, SD, and Webster, SD, were being served by local pastors.

The District Board for Parish Services was formed to offer assistance to the parish pastor as he trains and encourages the congregation to render God-pleasing service. The 1985 Synod Convention set up the Board for Parish Services. Pastor Curt Seefeldt was elected chairman of our district's board. He was the first chairman and still is today. The Board for Parish Services is there to help congregations with Evangelism, Parish Education, Special Ministries, Stewardship, Worship and Youth Ministries.

Total enrollment in our Christian Day Schools in our district in 1988 was 364. Mandan, ND was planning to open a school in the fall of 1988 in rented facilities.

The Evangelism Committee presented "Gearing Up For Evangelism" to 161 participants in 8 of 9 workshops. The 1989 theme would be "Getting Everyone Involved."

Special Ministries developed the Committee on Counseling For Called Workers. The reason for the establishment of this committee is to help called workers and their families cope with all the stress and strain of the preaching and teaching ministry in the society in which we live.

The synod felt in 1987 that there was an urgent need for renewed zeal for spiritual growth and thus have renewed zeal for serving the Lord. I attended the presentation in the Southeastern Wisconsin District. There were 10 of us at the table. Eight of us had been in the D-M District. President Mischke was one of the eight. A couple of times the presenters reminded us to keep quiet and pay attention. We were "spiritually renewed." Simply and seriously, to be spiritually renewed spend more time in God's Word. The Holy Spirit will make your faith in the Savior grow.

Aid Association For Lutherans started giving block grants to our synod instead of giving grants to specific programs. The Coordinating Council set up guidelines so that we would not become dependent on those grants.

"Reaching Out" reached into our hearts and by June 30, 1988, there was \$20.9 million offered.

The churches that were organized in 1980-1989 are as follows: Helena, MT; Calgary, Canada; Gillette, WY; Milbank, SD; and Custer, SD.

The District Praesidium would remain the same as in 1986. This too, would soon change.

1988-1990

The theme for our 35th Biennial Convention of our district at Watertown, SD, was: "Heirs Together Of The Grace Of Life." This theme, taken from 1 Peter

3:7 was chosen to bring to the foreground what Holy Scripture says concerning the right relationship between husbands and wives. Christian men and women are "heirs together" of the gracious gifts of God—forgiveness and eternal life through Jesus Christ alone. Jesus died for the sins of men and women alike. Professor Wayne Mueller of the seminary presented a paper properly entitled "Heirs Together." The devotions throughout the convention carried that theme that all Christians are "heirs together of the grace of life."

District President Reginald Pope gave his report and outlined all the work before the convention. Discussion would be held concerning the feasibility of our current prep and college locations, "Lift High The Cross" offering, the Mission-Vision Statement, and a possible arrangement with the Lutheran Home at Belle Plaine, MN, to purchase the Prairie Home in Watertown, SD, which could be used as a nursing home and an area Lutheran High School with dormitory space.

Pastor Pope reported that Candidates K. McKinney, B. Mueller, J. Heitsch, and R. Rardin were ordained. Three pastors entered our district. Pastor P. Vander Galien was one of them. Twelve pastors left the district and three pastors and two teachers resigned.

Notice that I mentioned above that Pastor Pope was the District President. Instead of going into lengthy detail of what happened, may it suffice to say that Pastor Ed Werner had gotten into serious trouble with the law. The Vice-Presidents, Secretary, and involved Circuit Pastors dealt with the situation in a Scriptural manner. In his explanation of the situation, Pastor Pope urged the district to keep the Werner family and the affected congregations in their prayers. They should still be included in our prayers. It was a difficult time in our district's history, but once again, the Lord provided a wise, strong, faithful District President in Pastor Pope and our Lord once again, preserved His Word and His Church.

In 1990 we had 20 mission congregations out of 78 congregations in the district. Mitchell became interest subsidized and Wetaskiwin became a self-supporting congregation. The Organization/Planning/Accounting Manual was introduced to the mission congregations. Mission congregations could not request operating subsidy through the "Mission Program Grant Agreement."

Some of our district mission congregations were not making their monthly mortgage payments to CEF. The Board for Home Missions and the WELS Board of Trustees began looking for solutions to the lack of monthly mortgage payments. They came up with the A.D.A.M. (Adopt A Mission) Project, in which congregations

throughout the district take an offering for a district mission congregation, which was designated by the Mission Board. The money is sent to the DMB. This money would then be used for that designated mission congregation's mortgage payment to CEF.

Professor Jerome Spaude took a "Sabbatical In Ministry" and assisted the pastor and congregation at Calgary, Canada. God blessed this effort.

Pastor Wayne Schulz became our District Mission Counselor.

"Builders For Christ" would assist congregations build a parsonage, church or some other building in the hope of saving the congregation money. They are in the midst of a two year pilot program.

The Commission on Evangelism reported that 151 people attended the 1990 workshop entitled "Prospect Witness and Nurture." "Locating the Lord" would be the 1991 presentation. A district-wide outreach effort entitled "Go '91" would provide prospects for our congregations, make our members personally aware of the Great Commission, and inform the public about the WELS.

The evangelism "School Of Outreach" was being held at the seminary in June of 1990. Pastors would receive materials for Evangelism Sunday and congregations were urged to subscribe to the "Prospect Newsletter." The congregations were encouraged to plan "Festivals Of Friendship." "Precious Is The Child" will be a Christmas greeting to the nation from the WELS on television for Christmas 1991.

The Stewardship Program for 1990 was entitled "Encourage One Another."

The Commission For Communication and Financial Support reported that they were suggesting a 4.2% increase in offerings in 1991, 1992, and 1993. In 1989, of our 77 congregations, 35 exceeded their mission goal, 17 met their goal, and 25 were unable to meet their goal. Five of the 12 districts had a Planned Giving Counselor. "Lift High The Cross" offering was going well.

Northwestern Prep and Northwestern College celebrated their 125th Anniversary on September 13-15, 1990.

Our district said that the amalgamating of our two colleges "would be precipitous." We also encouraged the synod to keep the prep schools where they were.

Our district recommended more study on the 50/50 balance of voting delegates at synod conventions, the establishment of a new synodical conference, and further study of "staff ministry" by the Board for Worker Training to see if it is really needed. The name of the Alberta-Montana Conference changed to the

Rocky Mountain Conference. They will have two circuits in that conference.

Pastor Pope was elected District President. Pastor John Ruege, Sr. and Pastor Bill Russow were the Vice Presidents and Pastor Wayne Rouse was elected Secretary, again!

The sun was again shining on our district. But there would be weighty matters to consider in the future.

1990-1992

The major thrust for our 36th Biennial Convention was "Christ—The Cornerstone Of The Christian Family." Mr. Fred Matzke from Wisconsin Lutheran Child And Family Service discussed this matter with the delegates. It was really quite enjoyable. Mr. Matzke's presentation was only strengthened by the devotions of the convention: "Christ is the Cornerstone in Marriage, in Establishing Priorities, In Discipline, In Forgiveness, in Crisis, In Death, and in How the Church Grows." Pastor Pope even mentioned the U.S. Vice President and how much trouble he got in when he said the problems of society can be traced to broken homes.

God richly blessed the outreach efforts of the district. Many congregations had "Friendship Sundays." Our South Dakota State Fair booth handed out an amazing amount of material. The high point of this biennium was "Go '91," which was a monumental outreach effort with the Gospel. A good number of prospects were found for Adult Information Class. Our district grew by 46 communicants during the biennium.

At the time of the convention there were two pastoral vacancies. One was at Mandan. The other was Clear Lake. There was one teacher vacancy in Billings.

Pastor Pope reminded the convention that the mission offerings were steadily decreasing. Many congregations, mission as well as self-supporting were having a difficult time meeting their budgets. Repayment of CEF loans was a particular problem of our mission congregations. It still is.

The district convention was videotaped and a 15 minute video highlighting the convention was available for viewing. Speaking of videotapes, "The Promise" was shown to us. This video presents the Lord's work that He wants us to carry out. Eight men came from the seminary to our district. Pastors Hohenstein, Reich, Hadler, Oehlke, Nelson, and Weigand are still serving our Lord in the district. Pastors R. Eggert, D. Lemke, Niermeier, Ristow, and J. Schulz entered the district from other districts. Pastor D. Neumann and I

returned to our district. Eight pastors left, one teacher and one pastor resigned. Three pastors sort of retired. One teacher moved into our district while three left the district. Two congregations closed during this biennium—Bethlehem of Hauge Township, Willow Lake, SD, and Christ of Wilmot, SD.

The congregation at Terry, MT, went self-supporting. Jamestown and Valley City were "non-subsidized" missions. Missoula, Mitchell, and Yankton went interest subsidized. Those on mission status were Bozeman, Great Falls, Helena, Melstone, and Winnett, MT; Hot Springs, Custer, Huron, Milbank, and Pierre, SD; Calgary, St. Albert, and Saskatoon, Canada; and Gillette, WY. We had two exploratory missions—Calgary II and Edmonton, Canada.

Only because of the "Lift High The Cross" offering and special gifts designated for mission expansion were new missions begun. "A full 88% of our district's SMO is returned to our own district's missions in some form of subsidy."

The "Parish Leadership" magazine is a consolidation of "Tell," "Youthink," "Partners," "Notes and News," and "Focus On Worship." As a pastor, I am thankful the synod's Board for Parish Services consolidated all of those publications into one, because it was getting ridiculous with all these specialized publications coming to my mailbox.

1,450 copies of our district's newsletter are printed each time. When I was in another district, I subscribed to the D-M Newsletter and learned more about what was going on in the synod than I did from the other district's newsletter. Keep up the good work.

The Commission on Evangelism stated in their report that during the 5 year evangelism workshops 40 separate workshops were held. More than 800 attended the workshops. The Evangelism Commission was working on the "best of the best" workshops to be used in our congregations. "Soul Search," a video to be used with prospects was shown.

401 students attended our Christian Day Schools in our district. The District's Commission on Parish Schools presented their "Purpose Statement and Objectives." They are here to assist our congregations that have early childhood educational programs, Lutheran Elementary Schools and to help our district high school association. The CPS is also established to administrate the Student Aid Fund, work with government officials as a liaison for our congregations, and promote and procure materials for our schools. Much work went into fighting the state rulings which often hinder the God-given mission of our SD LES's. God blessed our efforts and positive results were enjoyed. Because of our dealings with the SD state government

a SD Christian School Association was formed which included other church bodies. The first president of this association was Teacher Dan Schmal. The main purpose of this association is to provide communication, cooperation and representation among the non-public schools in SD as they monitor the state educational government rulings.

A preschool conference was held in 1991 at St. Peter, MN. About 36 people attended.

“Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal”—our first WELS hymnal since 1916 is completed, but will not be available for sale until after the 1993 WELS Convention. Each delegate at synod convention was given a free copy of the new hymnal.

The Commission on Youth Discipleship reported some amazing statistics. Only 67% of those children we baptize, we confirm. Only 43% of those we confirmed remain in the church through their 20s. Only 29% of those children we baptize will be lifetime members of the WELS. 70% of those who attend LES remain in the church. 9% if they attend public school. “Our kids do need better training.”

The 1992-1993 stewardship program was entitled “My Heart And My Home.” The 1993-1994 stewardship program was entitled “We’re HIS Disciples.”

The Great Plains Lutheran High School Association reported that at their May, 1991, annual meeting, it was voted to “Call a Director of Institutional Advancement when the general fund reaches \$45,000.” This biennium saw the following activities take place in the GPLHS Association: May, 1990—“Train-A-Child Land Fund” drive was adopted. June, 1990—The site sign was unveiled at the district convention and a presentation was given at the Minnesota District Convention. September, 1990—an informational meeting was held at Marshall, MN. January, 1991—Special Education Sunday Service held in many congregations. First land payment made. March, 1991—student enrollment survey taken. May, 1991—name of GPLHS chosen. August, 1991—GPLHS literature at WELS Kingdom Workers’ Mission Fair in New Ulm. City of Watertown makes proposals for constructing detention ponds for storm drainage control. January, 1992—another Education Sunday. Second land payment made. February, 1992—The directors viewed the Gary School facility. March, 1992—New logo ideas viewed. Throughout all this time many presentations were given at district congregations.

The fall of 1992 saw Northwestern Prep drop the 1st year of Latin, so that the students have only three years of Latin. Our district encouraged the synod’s members to return to God’s Word for spiritual renewal; that the Long Range Planning Committee

“relist the objectives of the MOV statement, placing the recruiting and training of candidates second instead of fifth;” that MOV 2000+ not be used by our synod when it comes to decisions concerning worker training; that all the members recommit themselves to support the synod with increased mission offerings, that the Coordinating Council restore the lost portion of the synod budget to Worker Training; that we, as a synod recruit more young men and women for the preaching and teaching ministry; and that we encourage the Board for Worker Training to establish a committee to monitor school staff needs. Our district “affirmed” the Feasibility Committee’s report that stated that NPS and MLPS be amalgamated in Watertown, WI, and that NWC and DMLC be amalgamated in New Ulm, MN.

The district praesidium became younger with the election. President—Pastor R. Pope; V.P.’s—Pastor Peter Naumann and Pastor Doug Free. Pastor Wayne Rouse was elected Secretary, again!

* * * * *

Before I get into the 1992-1994 biennium, I would like to mention some of the events and decisions that took place at the 1993 Synod Convention. It was my first synod convention. It was a historical convention, not because I was there, but because of what took place there.

President Carl Mischke, a Dakota-Montana son, retired from the ministry. Pastor Karl Gurgel was elected Synod President.

“Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal” was dedicated and presented to our synod. Pastor Kurt Eggert, who served as the Hymnal Project Director, joined the saints and angels of heaven before the hymnal was dedicated. He once served the Lord in the Dakotas. His wife tearfully accepted our synod’s thanks on his behalf. This, too, was an historical event.

The biggest decision at the synod convention was not the moving of the convention from the first week in August to the last week in July. For some this change will affect their attendance at PPF. Pastor Bill Leerssen and I were at the microphones when someone called the question. Obviously, that gentleman never heard of PPF.

But the biggest decision made by our synod was to amalgamate NPS with MLPS on the Watertown, WI, campus and to join NWC and DMLC on the New Ulm, MN, campus. There was much discussion, comment, and glances toward heaven. The vote was so very close. Less than 20 votes separated the two sides. The votes passed to amalgamate the schools. I voted against the amalgamation. Later on, Pastor “Jeb” Schaefer would write that “no one danced on the

grave.” There were 500 people in that gym. When the results were read, it was so quiet in that gym that you could hear tears running down the faces of some of the men present. I, too, cried. The Watertown campus was my home for 8 years, as it was for many of our pastors. What has helped me resolve my feelings about this historical change was what District President Kell wrote in 1980. The Gospel wasn’t taken away from us. “If we think it is that bad,” he wrote, “then what do you think the apostle means when he says, ‘All things work together for good to them who love God?’” He wrote that a year after our beloved Academy was closed. Trusting in the Lord in every matter of life is not always so easy because of our sinful nature. Only by God-given faith can we and will we say “Thy will be done.”

* * * * *

1992-1994

“Sing To The Lord A New Song” was the theme of the 37th Biennial Convention of the Dakota-Montana District at St. Martin’s School in Watertown, SD. It was time to sing a new song. The new hymnal was being used in most of our congregations. We were on the eve of our district’s 75th Anniversary. Our district spread through the Dakotas, Wyoming, and Montana up to the Canadian provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. Soon, by God’s grace, we would be in Manitoba, Canada. It was time to sing a new song to our Lord because there were no controversies to deal with. It was time to sing a new song to our gracious and loving God because Great Plains Lutheran High School Association resolved to Call a director and with God’s blessings open our high school in Watertown, SD, in the fall of 1995—15 years after our Academy was closed. It was a time to sing a new song to the Lord for all the exciting happenings in the missions in our district—telecommunications and exploratory work in Sheridan, Cody, Powell, and Lovell, WY; the “storefront ministry” in Red Deer, Canada; exploratory work in West Fargo, ND; the increase in God’s kingdom in Calgary, Springbank, and Carstairs, Canada; and the assistance of summer vicars in Springbank and Wyoming. It was time to sing a new song because the South Dakota Lutheran Elementary Schools were going to have their accreditation reinstated. It was a time to sing a new song to God for leading 411 children into our district’s schools. It was time for us to sing to the Lord a new song. And we did!

Pastor Pope pointed us to our 75th Anniversary. He reminded us of what anniversaries mean to us Christians. He wrote: “Anniversaries by their very

nature are a time to pause and consider our course. They afford us opportunity to remember the past and consider the future, however God may lead us... For 75 years our gracious God has kept our Dakota-Montana District a confessing church, may it be our resolve and our prayer that our God and Lord will preserve our district in this manner to His glory alone. How will our district be strong in its confession? Only by its constant study and restudy of God’s Word. God’s Word will keep a church from seeking the things of the world. Our Lord has said for all time, ‘Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.’ Such study should be zealously pursued by us all.” May we take these words to heart, act accordingly, and ask God to keep us strong in our confession of His Word. Pastors Tony Hansen, Jon Baumann, John Hildebrand, and Ken Bittorf were the latest crop of seminary graduates to come to our district. Pastor Pieter Reid was commissioned as a missionary to Indonesia on January 31, 1993. Thirteen teachers were installed. Three pastors transferred into our district while we said farewell to 6 men. Two teachers left the district. A Christian Victory Service was held for Mary Sue Pleuss. One teacher resigned. Milbank and Summit formed a dual parish as well as Bowdle and Roscoe. Mound City, Akaska, and Tolstoy formed a tri-parish. The exploratory in Edmonton was discontinued.

Councilmen’s conferences will be offered throughout the district in January and February of 1995. 1,700 copies of the newsletter were being printed.

The School of Outreach was changed to the Satellite School of Outreach. “Presenters travel to different districts to provide the School of Outreach to a broader base of congregations.”

In March of 1994, the first Principal’s Workshop was held in Pierre with 5 of the 6 principals in attendance.

Work has begun on the “Altar Book” and “Occasional Services.” Plans are being made for a national conference on worship and music for the summer of 1996.

Pastor and Mrs. Tony Hansen are developing useful lessons for young children. These lessons are available for free to congregations in our district.

The stewardship program for 1994-1995 is entitled “Christianity: A Whole New Way Of Looking At Things.”

Commission for Communication and Financial Support reported that 28 congregations of our district had not sent in any offerings through the first quarter of 1994. May we storm heaven in asking God to open

the hearts of our people so that our mission offerings may meet the needs of the opportunities to spread the Gospel.

Our district's Long Range Planning Committee discussed eight ideas, but they felt that the District Council would "have a better understanding of the needs of our district and the direction in which our district is headed."

We encouraged the synod's Board for Ministerial Education to continue to study the concept of "regional centers," and proceed with caution so our prep school aren't hurt by these "regional centers." As a district we supported the synod in amalgamating the schools and we agreed with the Conference of Presidents that a special convention should not be called to reconsider the amalgamations.

God willing, we will celebrate 75 years of God's grace July 9 and 10, 1995, at Mobridge, SD. Pastor Pope will be the guest preacher. The service will be at Zion Ev. Lutheran Church in Mobridge. An anniversary book will be prepared. The thanks offering project will be the district's Student Aid Fund.

Thus far in the 1990s, only two congregations have been organized. They are Abundant Life in Saskatoon, Canada in 1992 and Mighty Fortress in Red Deer, Canada in 1993. St. Paul's in Carstairs is a preaching station.

We have always been called or classified as a "mission" district. The early pioneers of our district, like Christian Boettcher and Pastor Wittfaut, went to every little hamlet, village, town, and city with the Gospel, because they knew there were lost souls in those places who needed to hear about Jesus. They didn't consider the cost. If they did, they would not have spent weeks away from their families and literally spend hours bouncing in a buggy over unpaved trails for hundreds of miles just to bring the Word of God to people saved by Jesus Christ and to those who didn't yet know Him.

These early pioneer pastors and their families put up with a lot of hardships and made great sacrifices for their Lord. Sometimes I think we have it too easy in our day and age.

The unchurched are still with us. As Christians, we have been given the responsibility to go and tell the "good news" of Jesus Christ. Because of our modern conveniences—automobiles, paved roads, phone, faxes, telecommunications, and computers, we should be able to reach even more people with the saving Gospel than our early pioneers did. But are we? When we compare the number of pastors in our district back then with now and the population back then and now, we will see that we are not reaching out to more people, but to less.

History can help us live the future. Things really haven't changed. There are lost souls. By God's grace we have the Gospel. The Great Commission hasn't changed. We need to pray to God to give each pastor, each teacher, each member of our congregations an ever greater zeal for the Gospel and desire to proclaim that Gospel.

Money should not dictate where we take the Gospel. Yes, we are to be good stewards, but wasn't it Jesus, our Savior, who said, "Go, and make disciples of all nations.....And lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the age?" Wasn't it Jesus who sent His disciples out without any gold and silver, bag or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff? The Almighty Son of God has not changed. He keeps His promises to be with us. In order for us to continue to be a "mission district" we need to ask the Holy Spirit to increase our trust in Christ's power, promises, presence, and blessings, as we go and proclaim the Gospel to the people of our district and to the people of our world.

Pastor Peter Naumann was elected District President. Pastor Doug Free and Pastor Wayne Rouse were elected to serve the Lord and our district as Vice Presidents. Pastor Paul Marggraf was elected Secretary.

Our Congregations

In 1920, when our district began, there were 55 congregations in our district. 7,000 souls, 3,500 communicants were served by 32 pastors. In 1970, when our district celebrated its 50th Anniversary, there were 11,275 souls, 8,061 communicants, and 40 pastors serving 72 congregations. At the end of 1994, we have 12,192 souls, 9,252 communicants, 438 students in our district Lutheran Elementary Schools. There are 80 congregations and preaching stations served by 53 pastors. The largest congregation in our district is St. Martin's of Watertown, SD, and the smallest congregation is St. James of Tolstoy, SD. We have grown, but there are still many souls who need to hear about our Savior.

The Future

What does the future hold for our district? The small rural congregations will become multiple parishes or close their doors. We've seen some of that already in recent years. Some of our pastors will once again become *Reisepredigern*—in essence, circuit riders. Great Plains Lutheran High School will become the jewel of our district just as the Academy once was. To establish the school and keep it running won't be easy, but anything worth while is never easy. There will still be a larger than normal turnover of pastors in our district. History tells us that. By the grace of God,

we will still remain a "mission" district because reaching out with the Gospel is so important to us. Because of the close fellowship of our brethren in the district we will remain the envy of many districts. PFFA will survive even though synod conventions will be held at the same time. By the grace of God, we will continue to serve as the best training ground for young "whippersnappers." And, by the grace of God, we will remain firmly founded in God's Word and the conscience of the synod amid Satan's attacks to lead us into false doctrine and heresy. We don't know what the future holds, but we know who holds the future, so let us trust in the Lord to be with us and bless us.

Conclusion

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the seminary library and Pastor Wayne Rouse for providing me with the district's Proceedings from 1968 to the present. I can't forget to thank my wife, Carolyn, for helping me to gather information for this history. I would also like to thank our son, Joey, for copying and putting this paper together. In July of 1980, I was ordained and installed in Hazelton, ND. In October of 1986, I followed the Call to Wisconsin. In June of 1992, I was brought back to the district. I am thankful to our Lord that He did bring me back to the Dakota-Montana District. A day after I accepted the Call to Gillette, Pastor Wayne Rouse called me to inform me that I was going to be a delegate to the synod convention. At the end of the conversation he said, "Al, we are looking forward to welcoming you home." At the district convention in 1992, many brothers welcomed me with the words, "Welcome home." Thank you!

I have grown to love the beautiful woman called the "Dakota-Montana District. She truly is a beautiful woman. Take a look at her beauty—from western Minnesota, across the plains to the Black Hills to the Big Horn Mountains and Yellowstone, to Missoula and Glacier National Park to Banff to the Badlands to

the Red River Valley. A beautiful woman. Her heart is full of love for her own. And those who stay here, in essence, marry her. Some fall in love with her, but soon leave her for another district. Most of the time, they don't return to their first love. A few, by the grace of God, return to her. She is a special woman and we should never take her for granted.

Pastor Otto Engel, who sent me a letter about his father's work and the work of our early pioneers in our district, wrote something in his letter that is worth retelling. He said that as we review the "labors of our fathers" an old proverb comes to mind. He wrote the German, I will provide his English translation. "What you have inherited from the fathers, acquire it anew, in order to possess it." He continues by saying, "Let us study it for the sake of acquiring it anew, thank God for it and ask Him to help us to guard it jealously and pass it on undiminished to our children. Grace received is grace to share." Let's hold on to what we have in our district and by God's grace pass it on to generations to come.

It's time to say, "Amen." I have enjoyed reliving the history of our beloved district. Doing this labor of love has made me appreciate the work of our early pioneer pastors, the uniqueness of our district, and most of all, God's grace as it has been shown to us in our district through our Lord Jesus Christ. May our Lord preserve our beloved district that we may always glorify His name. The Holy Spirit will always build His Church and use us to proclaim the Gospel, so that the borders will be extended, and the stones will be added. My dear brothers, "Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction....Keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry." 2 Timothy 4:2 & 5

Soli Deo Gloria!

Our Savior Ev. Lutheran Church, Brookings, South Dakota

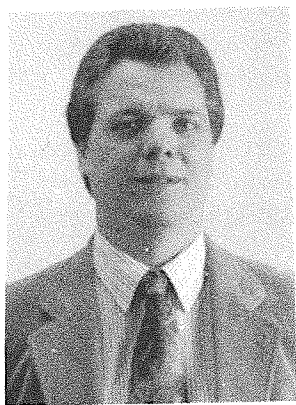


Our Savior Ev. Lutheran Church, Brookings, South Dakota

Area worshippers attended the first mission service at the WELS Student Center on the campus of South Dakota State University in Brookings in January, 1964. Mission Pastor John Brandt of Clear Lake officiated in the house purchased by the synod in 1963. Three families and a handful of students attended. Rev. Larry Ellenberger of Elkton began serving WELS members worshipping at the Student Center two years later.

Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church officially organized its congregation in the fall of 1967 when Rev. Ronald Heins was installed as the first pastor. Sunday School was held for the first time that December.

The Rev. Heins family moved into the first parsonage at 327 Eastern Avenue in the summer of 1968, and one year later, land was purchased for a future church.



Pastor Paul Marggraf

St. Paul's of Argo Township voted to seek membership in Our Savior's of Brookings in 1971 and closed the doors to the country church. Meanwhile worship services continued at a dairy science building on the SDSU campus. According to Arlene Klavetter, a vacuum hose that allowed air for generating sound on the rustic organ fell off one cold January Sunday, and Bob Stohr graciously held the vacuum hose on through a hole from the basement.

In May of 1971, a \$100,000 CEF loan was approved, and a building contract with Curtis Construc-

tion Co. was signed. Groundbreaking for a new home of worship was celebrated that August. Dedication of the new church on 8th Street South was held June 4, 1972.

Rev. Thomas Zarling was installed as pastor in 1974. Rev. Robert Jensen

became the next pastor in 1981. Oslo Lutheran Church (ELS) voted to disband in 1992 and its members joined Our Savior's. Rev. Paul Zell was installed as pastor in 1984, and Rev. John Parlow became the next pastor in 1987.

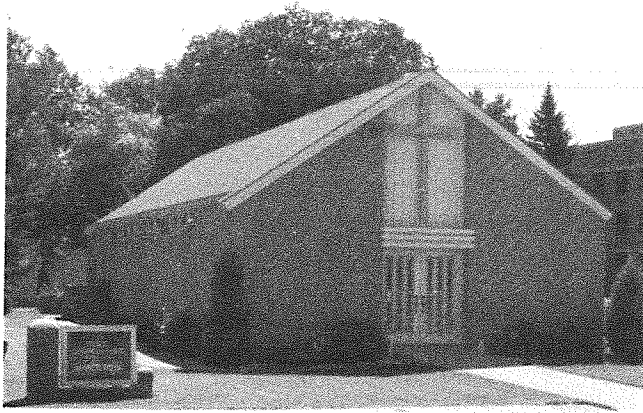
As space was tight, a church expansion project was accepted while Rev. Paul Marggraf was installed as pastor in 1990. Again a contract was signed with Curtis Construction Co., and groundbreaking was held on June 4, 1990. On June 16, straight line winds blew part of the roof off and altered construction plans. Worship for the rest of the summer was held at the University Lutheran Center on the SDSU Campus. From September through early February worship was held at the closed Bostwick's store at the University Mall. Services were held in the new social hall until March 17, 1991, when members returned to the newly remodeled sanctuary.

Dedication service of the new social hall and Sunday School rooms was held June 2, 1991 under the theme, "I will fill this home with glory, says the Lord Almighty." Haggai 2:7



Our Savior Parsonage

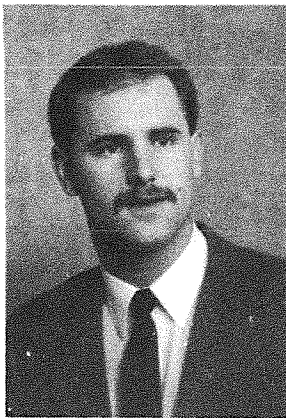
Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Clark, South Dakota



Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Clark, South Dakota

Peace Ev. Lutheran Church traces its origins to May 24, 1908, when Emanuel Ev. Lutheran Church was formed northwest of Clark, near Bailey's Lake, by Rev. M. Michaels and a group of German settlers. Under the pastorate of Rev. M. Keturakat (1921-25), the congregation at Bailey's Lake relocated to Clark in 1923 where it reorganized and adopted its present name.

For the first 20 years of its existence in Clark, the congregation conducted its services in the Norwegian Lutheran Church (ALC). By 1925 the congregation numbered about 30 communicants and prospects looked good, but the "Dirty Thirties" caused membership to dwindle to less than ten communicants.



Pastor Jon Hadler

However, with answered prayers and prosperity once again, many families moved into the Clark community and the church grew. In 1943 when the congregation dedicated its first house of worship, a one-story house, the church numbered 50 communicants and over 70 baptized souls. During the first 22 years the congregation was also served by pastors W.T. Meier (1925-28), R.J. Palmer (1928-29), G. Schmeling (1929-41), and W.H. Zickuhr (1941-45).

From 1945-48 Rev. H. Hempel used the building as a house of worship and for his living quarters. The church was served in 1948 by Rev. R.T. Beckmann from Bethlehem, Raymond. On July 14, 1952, the two congregations, having been a parish

from 1923 to 1928, formed a dual parish once again.

Later that same year, Rev. E. Hallstein (1952-53) accepted the call to serve Peace and Bethlehem. Under the pastorate of Rev. M. Schroeder (1954-59), a new church building was planned and brought to fulfillment, with a cost of less than \$31,000. On July 7, 1957, the congregation dedicated its present house of worship.

Pastor Schroeder was succeeded by Rev. Robert J. Zink (1959-63). After experiencing a one year vacancy when Pastor Zink accepted a call to Wisconsin, the congregation was assigned a vicar, Larry G. Ellenberger, who ministered to the spiritual needs of the congregation from June 1964 to July 1965. It was during the vacancy and vicarate of 1964 that the congregation reached its numerical height—168 baptized souls with 111 communicants and an average Sunday attendance of 100.

When Vicar Ellenberger returned to the seminary to complete his pastoral training, Rev. Donald Nimmer (1965-69) assumed the pastoral duties of the congregation. From July, 1969, through June, 1970, the church once again experienced a one year vacancy.

Rev. Gerhold Lemke (1970-74) was installed July 12, 1970, and during his pastorate, stained glass windows were installed in the church. The congregation celebrated its 50th Anniversary on April 29, 1973.

Rev. Wayne L. Rouse (1975-85) was installed in July of 1975. In 1979 a new parsonage was built in Clark and the old parsonage in Raymond was sold.

Rev. Ron Kruse served from 1985-89. On July 8, 1990, Rev. Jon W. Hadler, who is presently serving the members of Peace, was installed as the congregation's fifteenth pastor.

The summer of 1991 saw the closing of the rural congregation of Bethlehem Lutheran, Hague Township, Clark County, SD. Peace was blessed by receiving fifteen of its members. Today, the membership stands at 132 baptized souls with 101 communicants.



Peace Lutheran Parsonage

Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Clear Lake, South Dakota



Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Clear Lake, South Dakota

According to the verbal account of several of Clear Lake's pioneer citizens, the Word of God was proclaimed in Clear Lake, SD, as early as 1906 by Rev. Frank Ehlert, pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Havana and Zion Lutheran Church of Hide-wood. Although no written record of his activity can be found, it is possible that services were held on occasion because of the presence of several other congregations in the area.

Many charter members of Trinity still gratefully regard Donald Rossin, then pastor of Goodwin and Altamont, as the individual responsible for establishing a mission congregation at Clear Lake on October

16, 1932. About 14 persons were present at the first service held in the Farmer's Room of the Deuel County Court House. Worship services continued at the court house and then the high school auditorium until June of 1936. From June-October of 1936, services were held in the Baptist Church which was rented for \$2.00 a month. During the fall of 1936 the



Pastor Michael Enderle

old Township Hall was used. Services continued here until the new church structure was built in 1939.

In October of 1936 Trinity was joined in a parish with the Havana and Hidewood congregations. In the summer of 1939 the original church was constructed with dedication services held on September 3, 1939.

Throughout the 1930s and 1940s Trinity remained a mission congregation receiving subsidy from the Wisconsin Synod. The congregation reached self-support on March 1, 1950. Growth continued and the original church was soon enlarged and rededicated on November 21, 1952.

On October 2, 1955, a decision was reached to purchase a corner property on Highways 22 and 77 (15) as a site for a new church. A house was on the property which was moved and used as the parsonage until 1992. In six years the final payment on the property was made and a planning committee began work on the matter of building the church. The committee labored patiently

and persistently through the years. Although the final contract was not signed until January of 1967, the official ground breaking ceremony was held on Sunday November 6, 1966. The cornerstone was laid on September 3, 1967. The new church was dedicated to the glory of God on January, 1968. The congregation numbered 390 souls.

On August 27, 1978, the mortgage on the church was burned, and on May 5, 1985, the congregation celebrated its fiftieth anniversary. On November 1, 1992, the new parsonage was dedicated.

Today Trinity Lutheran Church numbers 368 souls and 278 communicants.

Pastors who have served Trinity: Donald Rossin 1932-33, Helmut Rutz 1933-35, Egbert Schaller 1935-40, Hans Schultz 1940-44, D. Kuehl 1944-47, Friedel Schultz 1947-51, Daniel Gieschen 1952-57, Albert Zippert 1958-59, John Brandt 1960-69, R.H. Roth 1969-77, David C. Linn 1977-85, William Russow 1985-92, and Michael P. Enderle 1992-present.



Trinity Parsonage

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, Dempster, South Dakota



St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, Dempster, South Dakota

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church is located in the eastern part of Hamlin County of South Dakota in the town of Dempster. It traces its history back to the later part of the 19th century when early



Pastor Gail Johnson

pastors from the former Havana congregation in Deuel County would conduct services in the Havana, Hidewood, Goodwin, Altamont, Clear Lake, Castlewood, Dempster, Estelline, and Hayti fields. Rev. E. John, who was installed as pastor at Havana and Hidewood in April of 1900, is reported to have served Dempster and

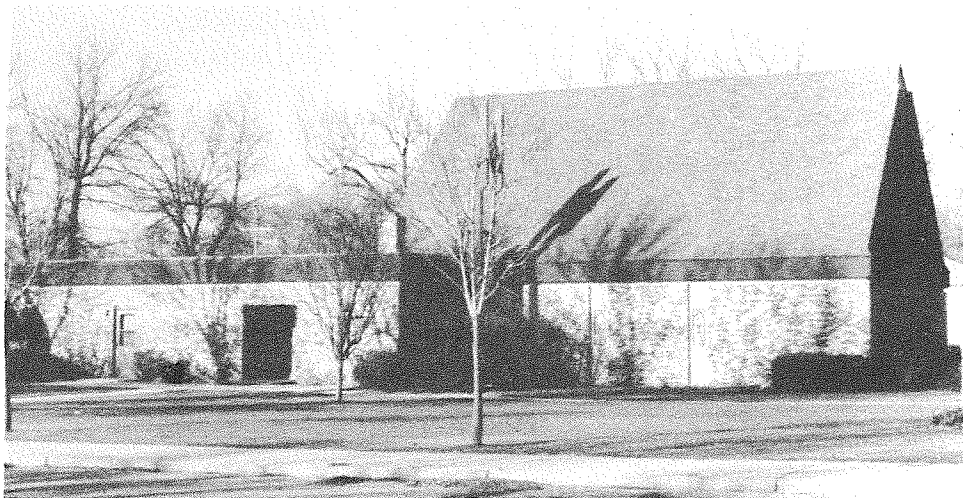
Estelline at the request of the G. Fuhlbrügge family. The first regular services were begun in the public school at Dempster in the fall of 1908. On Sunday, March 3, 1912, the Dempster congregation was formally organized as St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Dempster, South Dakota, with nine charter and voting members. In June of 1912, the newly formed congregation joined the Wisconsin Synod, and in February of 1914 was certified as a corporate entity within the state of South Dakota.

In January of 1913 the public school was purchased and moved and remodeled for use and dedicated in June of that year. Many of the beautiful decorations and accouterments within the church were given by faithful friends and members of the new congregation. During the period from 1927-1932 there were no regular services conducted at St. John's. In November of 1931 the pastor for the tri-parish of Dempster, Hidewood, and Havana moved to Dempster. The parsonage remained in Dempster until the spring of 1936. In May of 1936 the Dempster congregation was released from the parish association with Hidewood and Havana to join with the Estelline congregation in a dual parish. This joint parish of Dempster and Estelline remains the same today.

St. John's congregation, by God's grace, continues to join together regularly each Sunday for Worship Services and Sunday School. The Young People's Society meets in conjunction with Estelline and the St. John's Ladies Aid, organized in 1934, continues to meet each month. The congregation today enjoys a baptized membership of 80 children of God with six enrolled in Sunday School.

The pastors who have ministered God's Word at Dempster include: Rev. E. John, initial services - 1906, Rev. Frank Ehlert 1906-09, Rev. Theo. Engel 1909-11, Rev. W.C. Hellbusch 1911-15, Rev. Otto Klett 1916-17, Rev. O. Netzke 1917-18, Rev. A.W. Penke 1918-19, Rev. R. Vollmers 1919-20, Rev. M. Ploneit 1920-21: Rev. H. Lau 1921-24, Rev. R. Vollmers (again) 1924-27, Rev. L. Lehmann 1931-36, Rev. A. Sippert 1936-40, Rev. E. Bode 1941-50, Rev. H. Birner 1950-54, Rev. H. Witte 1954-60, Rev. H. Ellwein 1960-71, Rev. D. Neyhart 1971-77, and Rev. Gail B. Johnson 1977-present.

Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Elkton, South Dakota

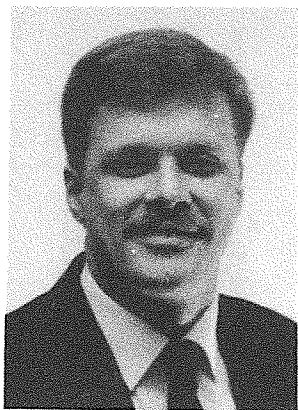


Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Elkton, South Dakota

Beginning in 1884, a number of Lutheran families from Minnesota settled in and around Elkton. Since Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church was already organized about seven miles away in Ward, SD, their resident pastor, Rev. Rudolf Polzin, served these families. Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church was formally organized in 1889. While living in Ward, Rev. Polzin also served a number of other congregations.

In November, 1890, Rev. Johann C. Albrecht was installed. In January of the following year a parsonage was dedicated. The cost of construction was \$600.

Since the congregation did not have its own church building, services were held in several other churches in Elkton. In January, 1892, the congregation decided to build a church. Members of the congregation pledged funds, and financial assistance was received from several congregations in Minnesota.



Rev. Jonathan Hohenstein

Rev. G. Schoemperlen was installed on Palm Sunday of 1892, the same day on which the cornerstone of the new church was laid. The completed church cost \$1,473 (excluding pews).

Rev. Julius Dammann (1895-97), Rev. Gervasius Fischer (1897-1900), Rev. Casimir Mikulski (1900-04). Rev. Johannes Monich (1904-08), Rev. A. W. Eggert (1908-11), and Rev. Julius Engel (1912-22) served as pastors of Trinity.

In 1922 Rev. William Lindloff was installed. By this time the congregation had grown to 271 souls and

181 communicants. In 1927 the church was remodeled and a basement was added.

As early as 1922, English services were introduced on an equal basis with the German services. By 1935 it was decided to have two Sundays with English and one Sunday with German. In 1951 the decision was made to drop the German services.

Each fall a committee was appointed to visit all

the members of the congregation and to collect food items, such as potatoes and other farm produce. These were delivered by truck to DMLC and to NLA. This was done for quite a number of years.

In July, 1950, the congregation decided to build a new parsonage. Members assisted in the construction and upon completion of the parsonage, an open house was held on Sunday, June 1, 1952.

Rev. Robert Wendland served as pastor from 1961-65. During the pastorate of Rev. Larry Ellenberger (1966-69) a new entrance was built onto the church. Rev. Keith Haberkorn (1969-72) and Rev. Dennis Schmidt (1973-79) also served the congregation.

On August 26, 1976, the voters approved the building of the present church at an estimated cost of \$151,000. The dedication service was held on May 29, 1977.

Trinity has also been served by Rev. Richard Voswinkel (1980-85), Rev. Donald Main (1985-90), and Rev. Jonathan Hohenstein (1990-present).

Membership is presently 171 baptized and 136 communicants.



Trinity Parsonage

Mt. Calvary Ev. Lutheran Church, Estelline, South Dakota



Mt. Calvary Ev. Lutheran Church, Estelline, South Dakota

The organization of Mount Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church of Estelline, South Dakota, took place on July 25, 1937. Since June 21, 1934, when a call was extended to Candidate Albert Sippert, the congregation began to be served by a resident pastor. Before 1934, the field of Estelline had been served for a number of years by Rev. W.C. Hellbusch. Already in 1900 there were Lutherans in and around Estelline who desired to have the Word of God served to them



Pastor Gail Johnson

as proclaimed by the Wisconsin Synod (the Ev. Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States). Rev. E. John and Rev. Frank Ehlert, who also served the Hidewood and Havana congregations at this time, took charge of occasional services at Estelline and Dempster. These first ministers were followed by the Rev. Theo. Engel of Lake Benton, Minnesota who served until Rev. Hellbusch began his pastorate in the area in 1911.

Following Pastor Sippert's installation at Estelline in July of 1934, the congregation was led by its pastor and temporary Board of Officers until 1937 when the congregation was formally organized. Services at this time were being held in the Christian

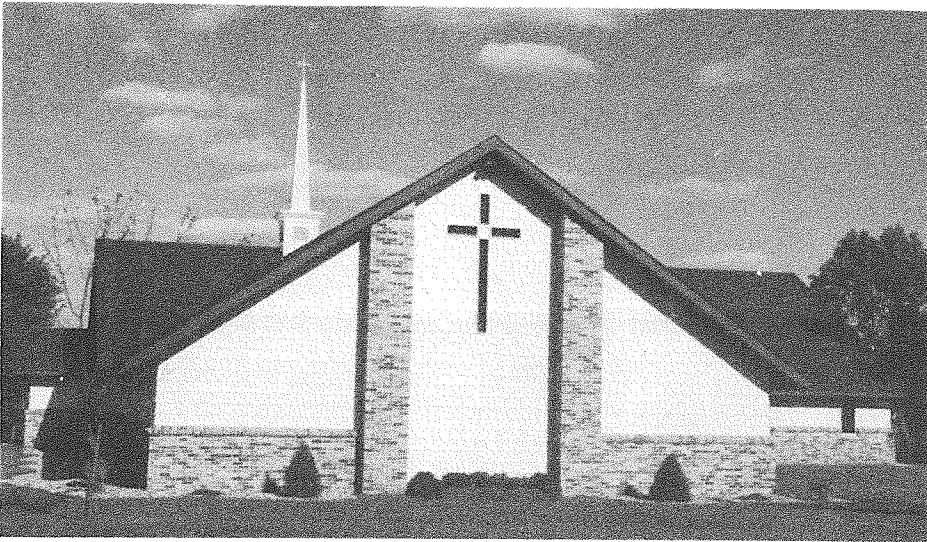
Reformed Church in the south part of Estelline. In August of 1939 the congregation bought its own parsonage on the lots where the present church is now located. Following Rev. Sippert, the Rev. Elden Bode accepted the Call to serve at Estelline and Dempster, a dual parish arrangement that continues until the present day. During Rev. Bode's ministry, the parsonage at 309 N. 4th Street was dismantled and a combination church-parsonage was rebuilt in its place. Mt. Calvary was able to dedicate its new house of worship on October 10, 1943, with the parsonage

portion of the structure being completed in November of 1943. The building continued to serve this dual function until 1979 when the pastor and his family purchased their own home in Estelline. What was formerly a parsonage continues to serve as Sunday School rooms and a preschool that is conducted by a member of the community.

The Rev. Herbert Birner succeeded Pastor Bode in Estelline in August of 1950. Pastor Birner served until May of 1954 and was succeeded by Rev. Harvey Witte. Pastor Witte served until January of 1960 and was followed by Rev. Henry Ellwein who was installed in May of 1960. Pastor Ellwein served until March of 1971, longer than any previous pastor. In July of 1972, Candidate Dale Neyhart was ordained and installed as pastor and continued to serve until September of 1977 when he accepted a Call to Bismarck, North Dakota. He was succeeded by Pastor Gail B. Johnson who was called from Hutchinson, Minnesota, and with his wife Anita and family moved in November of 1977. He is still serving today.

Mt. Calvary Congregation continues to worship each Sunday with Divine Services and Sunday School. The Young People's Society meets jointly with Dempster. The Mt. Calvary Ladies Aid was organized in 1938 and meets monthly. Mt. Calvary enjoys a baptized membership of 118 souls with 7 children enrolled in Sunday School.

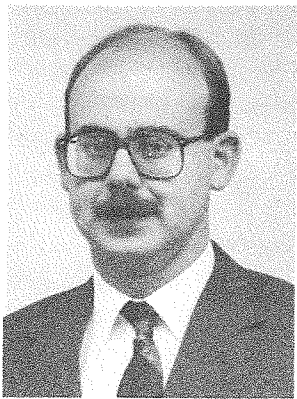
First Ev. Lutheran Church, Gary, South Dakota



First Ev. Lutheran Church, Gary, South Dakota

First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Gary, South Dakota, was organized July 27, 1924. The formation of First Lutheran followed over a year of services held first every-other week and then weekly in both German and English by Rev. Herbert Lau from Altamont, South Dakota. Monthly German services had also been held earlier by Rev. G. Benz from Canby, Minnesota, in 1916-17 and 1920-21.

The Gary congregation held services in the Presbyterian and Methodist churches and the State School for the Blind until purchasing the former Presbyterian church building in 1927. In 1931, Rev. Lau left, and Rev. Donald Rossin accepted the call to serve Gary as well as Altamont and Goodwin, South Dakota. A year later, Rev. Fritz Reuter was called to serve First Lutheran as well as a new mission in Clear Lake, South



Pastor Bruce Mueller

Dakota, with Rev. Rossin continuing at Altamont and Goodwin. In 1933, Candidate Helmuth Rutz was assigned to serve Gary and Clear Lake. Three years later the congregation purchased its first parsonage.

In 1939 Rev. William Lange accepted the call to Gary. During his pastorate the congregation's mem-

bership increased considerably to over 300 souls. In 1948 First Lutheran installed a new pastor, Rev. Harold Hempel, and constructed an addition on the church. Five years later Rev. Hempel left, and Rev. Roy Reede accepted the call to Gary, serving until 1956.

After Rev. Reede left, First Lutheran considered joining together with St. John of Omro, Minnesota. Instead, Rev. Lloyd Hanke of Omro served a fifteen-month vacancy until Rev. Gerhard Eckert was installed as pastor in 1957. He served until 1964 when Rev. Warren Steffenhagen accepted the call to Gary.

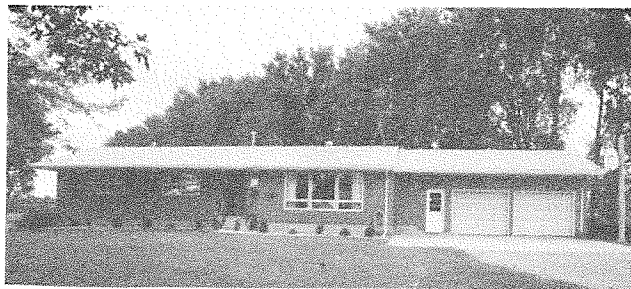
When Rev. Steffenhagen accepted a call to another congregation in 1967, discussion was again held concerning joining with St. John, Omro. Instead, the congregation

purchased a different parsonage and submitted a request for a seminary graduate. Candidate Gerald Geiger was installed in 1968. The next year a classroom/entryway addition was built on the church. In 1971 Rev. Geiger was called also to serve Trinity, Hendricks, Minnesota, as a dual parish with Gary.

The following year Rev. Geiger left and Rev. William Allwardt was installed as pastor of the Gary/Hendricks parish. Two years later the congregation constructed a new parsonage in Gary. One year later Rev. Allwardt accepted a call to another congregation.

In 1975 Rev. Edgar Gieschen accepted the call to First, Gary, and Trinity, Hendricks. After four years, the dual parish with Hendricks dissolved. Two years later Rev. Gieschen resigned from the ministry.

Rev. Dale Neyhart became First Lutheran's pastor in 1981 and served until 1989. In that year, Candidate Bruce Mueller was assigned from the seminary. In 1991 church members built and dedicated their current worship facility across the street from the parsonage. Three years later they burned the mortgage taken out for the construction of the building. The congregation currently numbers about 190 souls and 160 communicants.



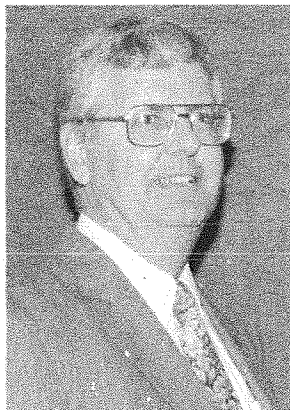
First Lutheran Parsonage

St. Peter Ev. Lutheran Church, Goodwin, South Dakota



St. Peter Ev. Lutheran Church, Goodwin, South Dakota

St. Peter's Ev. Lutheran Church, Goodwin, SD, was organized in 1898. A number of Lutheran families living in the Bemis (then Palmer) and Goodwin area joined and a new congregation was formed. Some of the farmers in the area hauled stones for the foundation and many helping hands helped to build the church which was dedicated in 1898. The first pastor to serve St. Peter's congregation was the Rev. L. Mlotkowski. At the same time he served churches in Altamont,



Pastor Dennis Lemke

Havana, and Hidewood. During the years that followed, St. Peter's merged at different times with sister churches at Altamont, Gary, and Havana. Because of a shortage of pastors and also because of increased expenses, St. Paul's of Havana closed in 1954 and St. John's of Altamont closed in 1967. St. Peter's first became self-supporting in 1954. In 1967 the congregation joined with Our Savior's of South Shore to form a dual parish which exists to this day.

Pastors who have served St. Peter's since its inception were: L. Mlotkowski 1898-99, O. Wolff 1901-09, F. Ehlert 1910-19, E. Kolander 1919-24, H. Lau 1924-31, D. Rossin 1931-37, W.F. Dorn 1938-44, A.A. Hellmann 1944-49, E.H. Semenske 1950-54, R. Reimers 1954-57, V. Thierfelder 1957-61, J. Schneider 1961-65, E. Werner 1965-90, and D. Lemke 1990 to the present.

With the help of the Sunday School children the first organ was purchased in 1901. The last confirmation class to be instructed and confirmed in the German language was in 1917. St. Peter's continued to hold monthly German worship services until 1937.

The first altar was a box-like structure with a picture of the Lord's Supper hanging over it. The present altar was purchased about 1918-19. In the early 1940s Pastor C. Found, who was serving in South Shore at the time, painted the picture that is on the present altar in memory of the churches of the district.

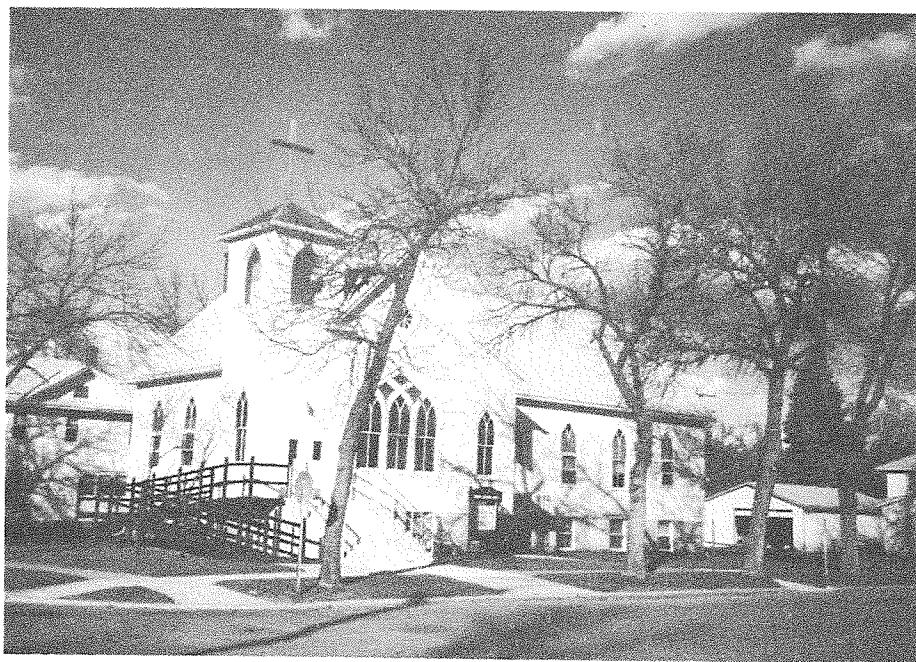
The Tabea Society was organized in 1920. The ladies adopted the name which means "helping hand." The Tabea Society has truly lived up to its name by being a help in many different ways. In the depression years they came to the rescue several times to help pay the pastor's salary. After making many small payments on the parsonage mortgage, they finally made the last payment. The released mortgage is in their files.

Other organizations that were formed and continue to operate are the Sunday School (first organized in 1923), the Young People's Society, (organized in the 1930s) and the church choir, which sings on special occasions.

The interior and exterior of the church have seen a number of changes over the years. In 1941 an outside chimney was built, a basement dug, and a furnace installed. In 1958 the congregation purchased an abandoned school near Astoria. After a number of delays, it was moved onto the foundation and the members converted it into what is now the furnace room and the Parish Hall. The first Tabea Society meeting in the "new Parish Hall" was held on November 12, 1959. In 1970 the Tabea Society celebrated its 50th anniversary, a year which also saw red carpeting and a new organ added to the church. In 1980 a new kitchen was built and two new bathrooms were installed. An extensive remodeling project was carried on in 1983-84, a project which allowed for more seating capacity. The members did most of the work and the entire project was done for about \$15,000. The entire exterior received a new coat of paint in the summer of 1993. Godwilling, the congregation looks forward to celebrating its 100th anniversary in 1998.

At the present time the congregation numbers 115 communicants and 133 souls.

Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Hendricks, Minnesota



Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Hendricks, Minnesota

The history of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church goes back to 1880 and the days of the circuit riders. The congregation was organized in 1890 with five charter members. Services were held in the District 27 schoolhouse a short distance south of Hendricks at New Grove. The first resident pastor, R. Polzin, served from 1890 until October 1898. He was followed by Pastor August Sauer (1898-01). After a brief vacancy, Pastor Sauer, then serving in North Saint Paul, Minnesota, accepted the Call to return to Hendricks and stayed until 1906. The next pastor was Wm. C. Albrecht (1906-10). On April 8, 1909, the congregation voted to build a church in Hendricks. The congregation was incorporated on March 5, 1910, and the building was dedicated on May 29, 1910.

Pastor A. Atrops served from 1911 to 1918. The first English language service was conducted during his pastorate. At that time Trinity formed a dual parish with St. Paul Lutheran of Argo Township, South Dakota. In March, 1919, Pastor H. L. Sprenger was installed and served until May, 1920.

The congregation was originally a member of the Minnesota Synod and became a member of the Wisconsin Synod in 1892 when the joint synod was formed. She became a member of the Dakota-Montana District when it was formed in 1920.

In May, 1920, Pastor A. H. Birner accepted the Call to serve Hendricks and Argo. His was the longest

pastorate lasting nearly 22 years until March, 1942. During his service, the parsonage was enlarged from a one-story bungalow to a two-story house. A 40 foot addition was added to the church to accommodate the growing congregation. Trinity retired its building debt in 1944. The congregation received limited operating subsidy from the synod until 1953.

Trinity continued to be served by faithful shepherds on both a permanent and vacancy basis from Gary, Lake Benton, and Clear Lake. Resident pastors who served the congregation were: R. E Bretzmann 1942-51, F. C. Nitz 1952-55,

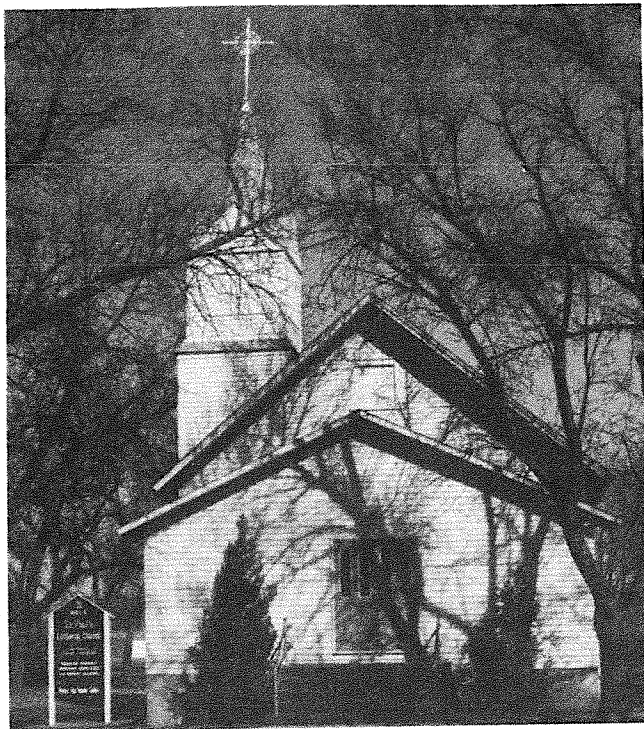
C. L. Reiter 1955-59, Vicar David Valleskey 1960-61, C. E. Cone Jr. 1961-66, L. Schroeder 1967-71, and W. H. Allwardt 1972-75.

Following a vacancy of five years Pastor W. H. Zickuhr served on a semi-retired basis (1980-84). He was followed by Pastors W. F. Dorn (1984-89) and R. A. Eggert (1991-94) who were also semi-retired. The congregation is vacant at the present time and is being served by pastor Bruce Mueller from Gary, South Dakota, while the calling for a resident pastor continues.

Trinity has observed many milestones over the years. Mrs. Albert Dorn was recognized in 1968 for having served 58 years as organist. Trinity observed its centennial on July 22, 1990. The 50th anniversary of the congregation's only son to enter the pastoral ministry, Wm. F. Dorn, was celebrated on October 27, 1985. He was the first infant baptized in the building, preached his first and last sermons there, and was buried from there in October, 1994. Four sons and daughters of Trinity entered the teaching ministry: Ralph Schwantz; Carole Lokken-Zietlow; Orlan Dorn; and Owen Dorn.

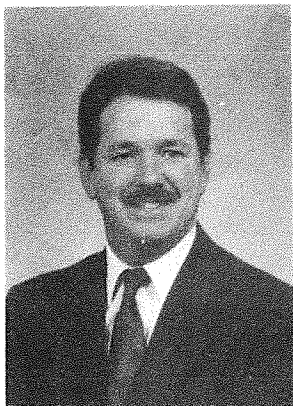
Membership has declined in recent years as younger families have moved away. Still, Trinity continues to fulfill its God-ordained purpose to proclaim the Gospel both locally and worldwide. To God be thanks and glory now and forever.

St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Henry, South Dakota



St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Henry, SD

Pastor Christian Boettcher, a missionary from the Minnesota Synod, began serving the Henry area in 1880 and founded the congregation in 1882. He held services every four to six weeks in the homes of one of the families. In 1884 Pastor Johann Johl of Rauville took charge. He was followed by Pastors Emil Luebbert and G. Lahme who served the congregation until August, 1890, when Pastor G. E. Fritzke began the work in this field. Pastor Fritzke also served the



Pastor Paul Vander Galien

neighboring fields of Grover, Hague, Bailey's Lake, Raymond, Doland, Frankfort, and Redfield. The first congregation was organized in September, 1894, with eight voters signing the constitution. St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church was chosen as the name. Pastor Fritzke left in the spring of 1895. In July, 1895, Pastor E. G. Fritz became the pastor. Services were still held in the homes and then in a schoolhouse west of Henry and then in a schoolhouse in the west part of town. The pastor lived in Henry above Mathiesen's General Store. Rev. John Baumann succeeded Pastor Fritz in 1899 and served St. Paul's for two years. The tri-parish of Grover,

Hague, and Henry was formed in 1900. Pastor Fritz's salary was \$375 per year with the congregation providing meals and fuel.

In 1902 Pastor Max Michaels began serving the parish. The current parsonage was built in that year. When Grover became self-sustaining in 1914, they sold their equity in the parsonage to Henry.

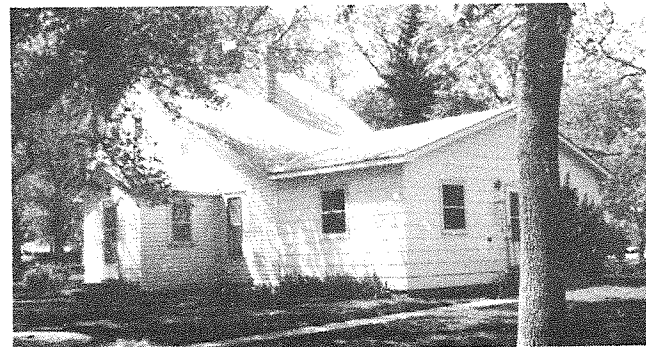
Worship service were now being held in the Methodist Church. In 1918 the current church building was erected and dedicated to the Lord on August 24. As was the case with many Lutheran churches in the District, St. Paul's began with services in only German. Transition to English began in 1918. In 1930 the ratio was two English services to every one German. In 1941 German services were once a month and in 1943 they ended completely.

Following Pastor Michaels tenure (1902-28), Pastor Gerhard Schmeling (1929-41), Pastor B. R. Hahm (1941-44), Pastor Wayne Ten Broek (1945-54), Pastor Clarence Hanson (1954-59), Pastor Paul Schliesser (1959-67), Pastor Raymond Ziebell (1969-74), Pastor Elroy Conradt (1974-85), Pastor Michael Barlow (1985-93), and Pastor Paul Vander Galien (1993-present) have served St. Paul's.

Throughout the history of St. Paul's, the congregation has been affiliated with other congregations in the area. Since 1914, when Grover became self-sufficient, St. Paul's was affiliated with Clark, Hague, and Florence at various times. From 1945 to 1967 Henry and Grover were together. When Florence dissolved in 1967, Henry reunited with Grover which is the situation to this date.

St. Paul's has the Ladies' Aid organization that was started in 1949, an active young people's society, a lively Sunday School, and an large adult choir that sings for special services. An addition was built onto the church in 1971 and an addition that was attached to the parsonage in 1979.

The congregation celebrated its centennial in July of 1994.



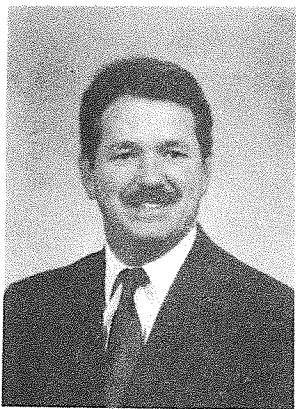
St. Paul Parsonage

Emmanuel Ev. Lutheran Church, Rural Henry, (Grover) South Dakota



Emmanuel Ev. Lutheran Church, Rural Henry, (Grover) SD

Emmanuel Ev. Lutheran Church of Grover, SD, is the oldest congregation in the district having been founded on August 10, 1884, by ten founding fathers. The families that organized the congregation had been gathered and first served by Missionary Christian



Pastor Paul Vander Galien

Boettcher who began work in the area in the fall of 1882. Prof. Karl G. Sievert describes those early years, "When the missionary came into the Grover area, he often found accommodations in Grandmother Fritz's sod hut. Her boys would ride through the countryside with the message, 'Der Pastor ist hier,' and on the morrow they came from east and west and north

and south, on lumber wagon, buckboard, or what have you . . . Services were conducted, children baptized, the youth instructed and any other religious services were given as needed. . . Services were conducted on any day of the week when the missionary got into the area."

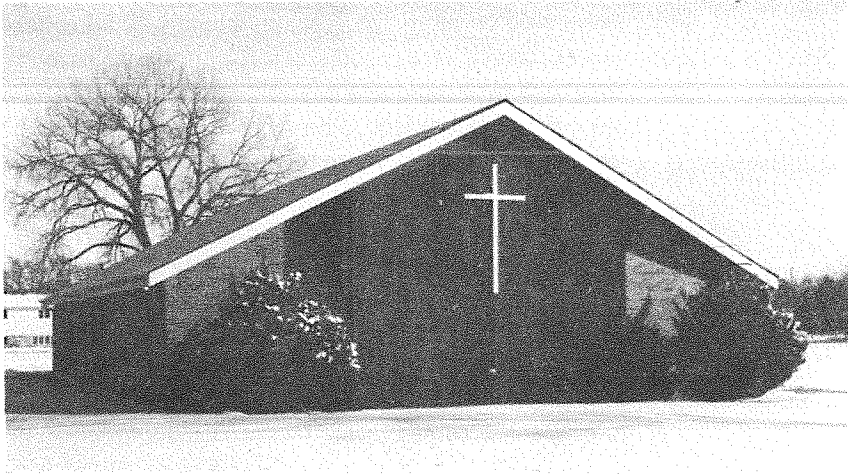
Rev. Boettcher served the area until 1884 when Rev. Johann Johl served Emmanuel out of Rauville as part of a four-point parish. At first services were conducted in members' homes and then in a newly built schoolhouse. The first land acquired by the congregation was the cemetery plot donated by one of the members in 1887. In 1888 Rev. Emil L. Luebbert began to serve the congregation from Rauville until 1897. In 1888 the congregation joined the Minnesota Synod. In 1897 Emmanuel was realigned with Henry and Hague and was served by Rev. Emil G. Fritz out of Henry until 1899 when Rev. John Baumann was ordained and installed. During Rev. Baumann's short two year stay, the congregation became incorporated and built the church building in the fall of 1900.

Rev. Max Michaels served Emmanuel from 1902 to 1914. In 1914 the congregation built the parsonage and became self-sufficient with the Rev. Theophil Albrecht as their first resident pastor. In 1917 the church building was remodeled and English language services were started.

In 1920 Rev. August Pamperin became the next pastor and served until 1928 during which time the congregation hosted the first Dakota/Montana District convention. The next pastors included Rev. Karl G. Sievert (1925-28), Rev. Walter F. Sprengeler (1928-46), Rev. Helmuth E. Rutz (1946-56), Rev. Chris F. Albrecht (1956-59). In 1959 the congregation split over dissension caused by disagreements with the LC-MS and the WELS and 22 voting members joined the pastor in leaving the congregation leaving 35 voting members. From 1959 to 1969 Emmanuel was in a dual parish with Bethlehem during which time Rev. Arthur C. Kell was the pastor. Since 1969 Emmanuel had been in a dual parish with St. Paul's of Henry with the following pastors: Rev. Raymond E. Ziebell 1969-74, Rev. Elroy V. Conradt 1974-85, Rev. Michael Barlow 1985-93, and Rev. Paul W. Vander Galien 1993 to the present.

The congregation has approximately 70 souls and 50 communicants. They celebrated their centennial in 1984. Rev. emeritus Carl Mischke is a son of the congregation.

Faith Ev. Lutheran Church, Huron, South Dakota



Faith Ev. Lutheran Church, Huron, South Dakota

The members of Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church began meeting in 1972 in a local hall. Services had started because people who had belonged to various Wisconsin Synod churches in South Dakota had moved to the Huron area. They wanted to meet in a worship forum, but they were unhappy with the unscriptural teachings and practices of other area Lutheran churches. Arrangements were made to have the WELS pastor from Willow Lake, Rev. Gilbert Bunde, temporarily serve this small group.

After inquiring about the possibility of establishing a WELS congregation of their own in the community, Rev. John Engel, then a WELS missionary for the district, came to Huron to organize the fledgling group into a formal mission. In the summer of 1973 the group began holding worship services in the Seventh Day Adventist Church.



Pastor Jon Baumann

In July of 1974 Faith called its first resident pastor, Rev. Larry Nast. He served the church until April of 1979. Under his leadership the small group was formally organized as a congregation in March of

1975. The congregation then purchased land at the corner of 15th and McClellan Drive in 1976. By November of that same year, the parsonage was completed and services were then held in the basement. Construction for the church building started soon after that. The building was finally completed in early summer, and the church and parsonage were dedicated together on June 11, 1978.

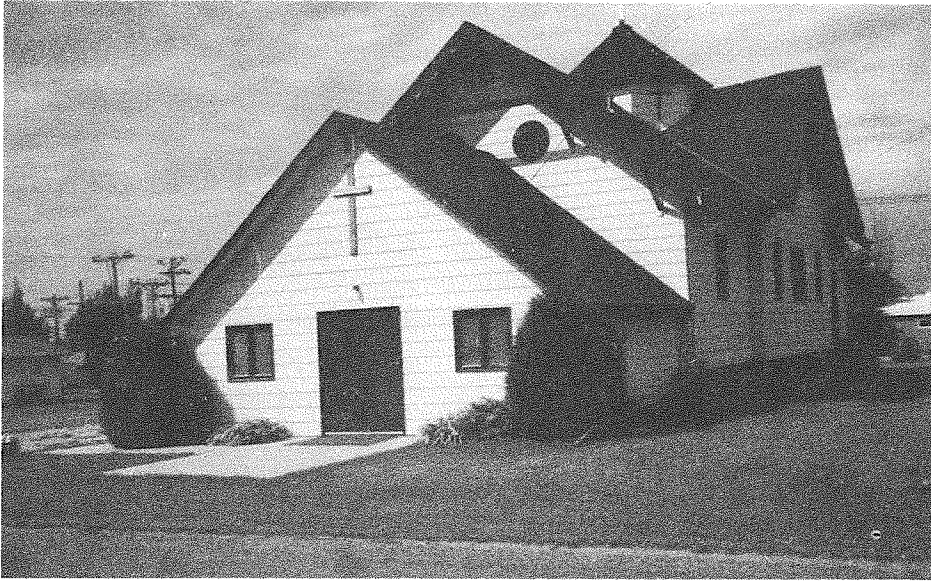
In June of 1979, Faith received Rev. Daniel Hrobsky, a seminary graduate, as its second pastor. During his tenure, the size of the congregation numbered almost 60 souls.

In August of 1985, Rev. Curtiss Seefeldt was installed as the third pastor of Faith. In 1991 Faith initiated an extensive evangelism endeavor in Huron and the surrounding area. The church was involved in **GO '91**, a synodical gospel outreach program, the synod's **Precious Is The Child** program, and it was also able to host a canvass team of college students. The total result was that almost 1,000 people in the community were contacted, questioned about their faith, and told of the pure gospel of God which Faith had to offer. In the end, through this outreach effort, and the Lord leading other WELS people to move to Huron, Faith saw its numbers grow to 105 baptized souls.

In August of 1992, Faith received Rev. Jon Baumann from the seminary as its fourth and current pastor.

Although the total number of souls has diminished somewhat, the Lord continues to bless Faith. 1994 saw a total of seven confirmands, including five adults. Membership presently totals 94 souls with 61 communicant members. Worship services have been enhanced by many different forms of music, including a brass quintet for festival occasions, and use of the new hymnal *Christian Worship*. Future plans, God willing, include becoming a self-supporting congregation before the year 2000 and adding a small entrance to the current church building.

James Valley Ev. Lutheran Church, Jamestown, North Dakota



James Valley Ev. Lutheran Church, Jamestown, North Dakota

On October 4, 1978, eight men met to organize a new Wisconsin Synod Lutheran church in Jamestown, North Dakota. The name chosen for this congregation was James Valley Evangelical Lutheran. St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church in Valley City, North Dakota, would be the parent church, and their pastor, William H. Allwardt, would serve as its first pastor.

Beginning worship services were held at the Women's Clubrooms in Jamestown and confirmation classes were held at the home of a member.

In the summer of 1979 a vacant church was purchased for \$18,000, and after much love and labor, on February 3, 1980, this small, young congregation dedicated their new building to God's glory.



Pastor Christopher Oehlke

Pastor Allwardt had served the Jamestown and Valley City congregations for eleven years, and in 1986 he accepted a call to Winner, South Dakota. In June, 1986, a call was extended to, and accepted by, graduate Kenneth H. Engdahl.

In 1987 a sister congregation from Reedsville, WI, offered an organ to us. That organ

is still in use and has served us well over the years.

May 14, 1988, found this congregation celebrating their 10th anniversary.

Former Pastor Allwardt returned as the anniversary speaker. Many area pastors and friends of the congregation helped celebrate the ten years of God's blessings and grace.

In December of 1989, Pastor Engdahl accepted a call to Knoxville, Tennessee. A call was extended to Pastor Wayne R. Uhlhorn, a graduate of the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, and on July 1,

1990, Pastor Uhlhorn was ordained and installed by his father, Pastor Ronald Uhlhorn. Pastor Uhlhorn served until 1994.

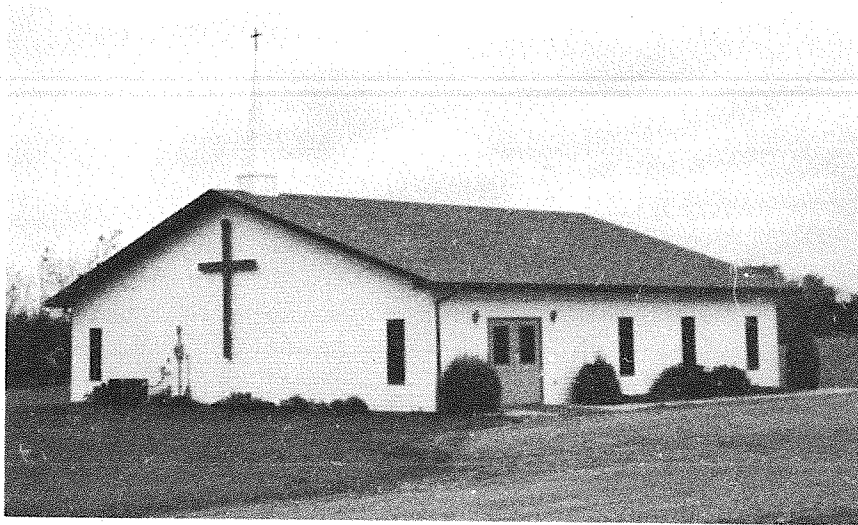
As our congregation grew in numbers, it became clear that additional room for Sunday School, confirmation class, and group activities were needed. Prayers were answered when a church group in Jamestown offered their building to us at the very affordable price of \$20,000. This structure offered us all the physical elements our congregation had been looking for. Again, congregational members abundantly poured labor and love on this building. It was a reflection of God's love and grace to us. On August 14, 1994, our first worship service was held in the new church. A dedication service was held on October 16, 1994.

In fall 1994 Pastor Christopher Oehlke was installed as the present pastor.

At the present time, James Valley Lutheran's membership is 76 souls and 56 communicants. James Valley offers Bible classes, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, LWMS, Men's Club, and a youth group. Our current mission is to reach out to those un-churched, and our new neighborhood offers an area of young families.

We are thankful for God's continuous blessings and grace as our congregation grows. To God be the Glory!

Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Milbank, South Dakota



Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Milbank, South Dakota

January 10, 1982, found a group of dedicated WELS families meeting together to discuss starting their own congregation in the growing community of Milbank, SD. This meeting produced a congregation with the name of Peace.

Following survey work in that same January, the first worship service was conducted on Sunday evening, February 28, 1982. Weekly Sunday evening services were then conducted by Pastor Dale P. Neyhart, Gary, SD and Pastor Edward J. Werner, South Shore, SD.

God's work progressed quickly. Exploratory status was granted in March, 1982. Mission status was granted in April, 1983.

It was also in April of 1983 that Peace and St. John's of rural Summit, SD, met and decided to join together to form a dual parish. This union would provide a permanent called worker for both congregations. Peace would receive assistance from St. John's in order to reduce requested synodical subsidy. St. John's would end an eleven year vacancy.



Pastor Timm Meyer

Seminary graduate, Shawn E. Kauffeld, was installed as the first resident of Peace on July 26, 1983. After searching, researching, and requesting, the funding was provided to purchase the present property on November 5, 1984. All this was made possible through the generous mission offerings of WELS members and a loan from the Church Extension Fund (CEF).

Due to circumstances, the dual parish with St. John's was dissolved in January of 1985. The struggling mission congregation in Milbank remained vacant for the next year.

God's work did not stop. Weekly worship services were conducted by vacancy Pastor James W. Luedtke, Wilmot, SD. On September 16, 1985, ground breaking for the construction of a parsonage was held.

Pastor Timm O. Meyer was installed on January 26, 1986, as the second pastor to serve Peace. On that day the newly constructed parsonage was also dedicated. Difficulties, jobs, and transfers produced a drastic, but

temporary decline in membership. Since 1987 God's mission at Milbank has shown a continual growth in congregational numbers.

God's work continued. Worship services were held regularly in a permanently converted laundromat. Ground breaking for the Worship/Education/Fellowship (WEF) facility was held on June 12, 1988. This WEF building was dedicated on September 18, 1988, with more than 200 people in attendance. Once again, WELS members, through their generous mission offerings, were able to provide the needed subsidy to help this young mission continue growing.

Peace and St. John's of rural Summit met during 1992 to discuss the possibility of reestablishing their dual parish relationship. On November 1, 1992, Peace and St. John's renewed their dual parish arrangement when Pastor Timm O. Meyer accepted the dual parish Call extended by the two congregations.

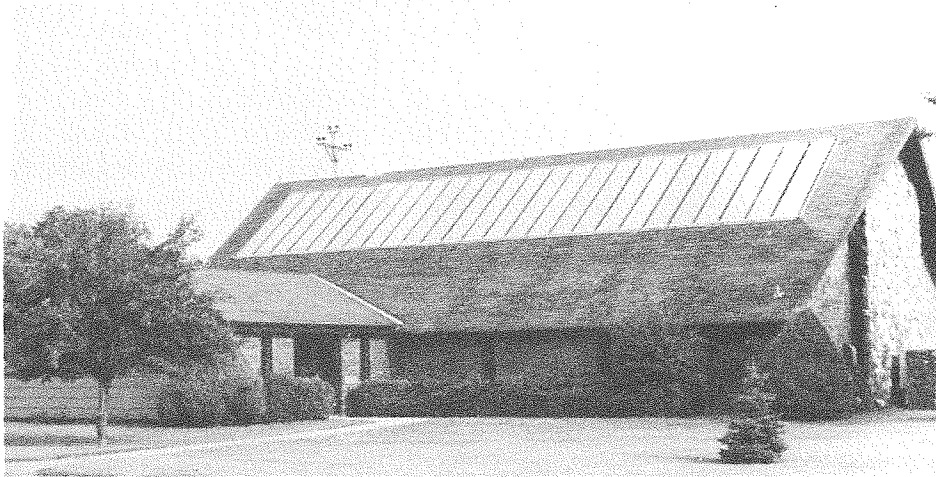
On June 1, 1993, Peace discontinued receiving any operating subsidy from the synod. The WELS still provides interest subsidy to help with repayments of the land and building CEF loan.

Recent additions include a used church organ and used oak pews.



Peace Lutheran Parsonage

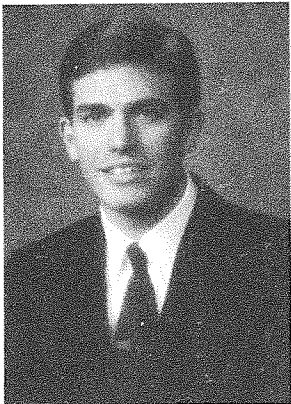
Ascension Ev. Lutheran Church, Mitchell, South Dakota



Ascension Ev. Lutheran Church, Mitchell, South Dakota

In the spring of 1974, Pastor Robert Beckmann, on behalf of a small group of Christians in Mitchell, SD, wrote to the Home Mission Board. Pastor Beckmann requested on their behalf that a study be made of the Mitchell area with the view of beginning a new congregation. After due consideration, Pastor John Engel, then serving in Huron, was authorized by the Mission Board to make this study and explore the mission possibilities that existed in Mitchell. The initial efforts culminated in a gathering of 15 people who met on Sundays for worship at the Milliken Funeral Home.

Not long after the services began, Pastor Engel accepted a Call to a field in Canada. Pastor Larry Nast



Pastor Martin Luchterhand

then succeeded Pastor Engel at Huron and resumed the exploratory work in Mitchell. The results of this study were so encouraging that by November of 1974 the General Board for Home Missions granted Mitchell "mission status." The congregation was incorporated officially on March 14, 1975. Its purpose was "to affiliate with the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod and to unite therewith to proclaim the Gospel to all nations."

In May, 1975, Pastoral-Candidate Robert Gurgel was assigned to Ascension. He was ordained and installed on July 20, 1975. While still utilizing the facilities at the Milliken Funeral Home, Pastor Gurgel and the congregation began to form plans for a permanent place of worship. By May, 1976, the congregation

in conjunction with the Mission Board selected a three acre site at 23rd Avenue and Wisconsin Street. The dedication of the parsonage was on May 22, 1977. In July of that year they began building the church. The church was completed and services began on February 12, 1978. Pastor Daniel Malchow was the guest preacher at the dedication on June 25, 1978.

The Lord called Pastor Gurgel in 1980 to serve St.

Lucas in Milwaukee, WI. Pastor Gurgel accepted the call. Pastor Daniel Hrobsky then filled the vacancy until the Lord led the congregation to extend a call to Pastor Reginald Pope who was then serving a mission congregation in Florida. Pastor Pope accepted the call and faithfully served Ascension from 1981-1994. From 1990 until June, 1994, Pastor Pope also served the Dakota-Montana District as its president. During those years, Vicars Howard Mohlke, Kenneth Fisher, Timothy Spaude, Matthew Arnold, and Stephen Melso served the congregation under Pastor Pope.

With Pastor Pope's retirement in June of 1994 the congregation called Pastor-elect Martin Luchterhand as their new pastor. Pastor Luchterhand has been serving Ascension since July 24, 1994, when he was ordained and installed.

The Lord has truly blessed the congregation in Mitchell throughout the years. In 1992 they became self-supporting. Over the years families have come and gone and faces have changed, but the Lord has continued to watch over his flock at Ascension Lutheran Church in Mitchell which now numbers 154 souls and 108 communicants. To God be the glory forever.



Ascension Parsonage

Ascension Ev. Lutheran Church, Moorhead, Minnesota



Ascension Ev. Lutheran Church, Moorhead, Minnesota

In the summer of 1964, Pastor Marvin Putz of Valley City, ND, began mission work in Moorhead. This work led to a group of believers eager to hear the truth of God's Word. On January 17, 1965, 20 attended the first worship service, which was held in a rented home at 518 Birch Lane in Moorhead. In the spring of the same year, Mrs. Thea Gullings donated two acres of land to the east of town, and on November 2, Ascension officially organized as a congregation.



Pastor Lloyd Schlomer

On June 21, 1966, Ascension formally joined the Dakota-Montana District of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Only seven months later, on January 15, 1967, the church building at 2820 12th Avenue South in Moorhead was dedicated under Pastor Putz. On June

14, 1970, the parsonage was dedicated. Pastor Martin Schulz and his family were its first occupants.

Ascension became a self-supporting congregation in July of 1985, while Pastor Richard Kanzenbach was serving the congregation. In January of 1989, the mortgage on both the church and parsonage was burned.

Entering the 1990s, Ascension remains a united community of believers, with a faith centered upon Jesus Christ and His Word and Sacraments, and dedicated to serving both members and this area with the Means of Grace. Today the membership stands at 201 baptized souls and 139 communicants.

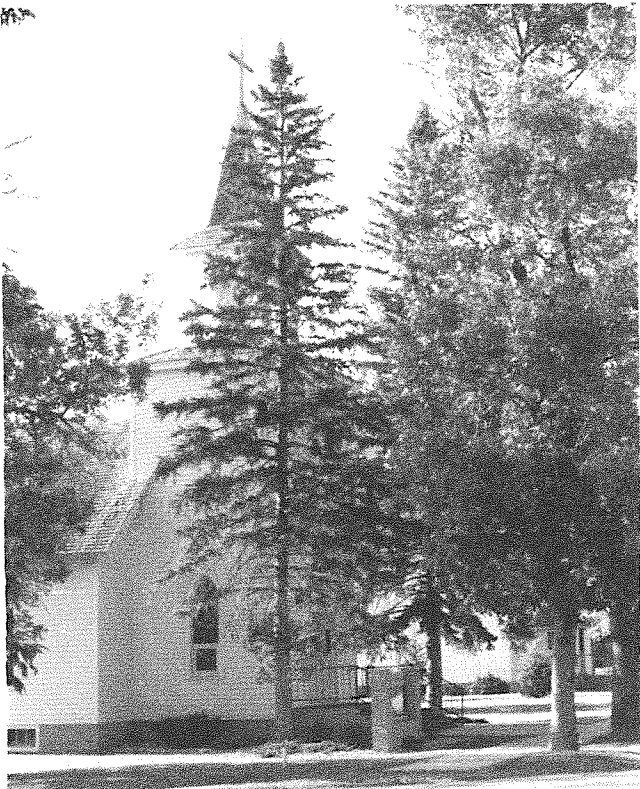
By the grace of God, Ascension will continue its ministry by sharing talents and fellowship with each other and all believers in Christ.

The following have served as pastors: Marvin Putz 1965-67, Vicar Dennis Hayes 1967-68, Martin Schulz 1968-73, Wilbert Schulz 1974-79, Richard Kanzenbach 1979-87, John Kenyon 1987-91, Robert Koester 1991-94, and Lloyd Schlomer 1995-present.



Ascension Parsonage

Bethlehem Ev. Lutheran Church, Raymond, South Dakota



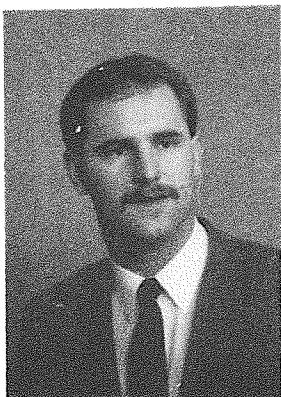
Bethlehem Ev. Lutheran Church, Raymond, South Dakota

The year was 1884; the place was Raymond, Dakota Territory, where a group of German immigrants gathered together with Pastor Franz Johl to organize Bethlehem Ev. Lutheran Church.

Between 1884 and 1908 services were held in the local school house, the home of Mrs. E. Nommensen, as well as in the hall above the Nommensen hardware store. In 1887 Pastor E. Luebbert took over the ministerial duties and served the congregation whenever he could make it to Raymond in his busy rounds as a circuit pastor.

Pastor George Lahme conducted services in 1889 and 1890, and in September, 1890 Pastor G.E. Fritzke became the first part-time pastor of the congregation. He was succeeded by pastors E. Fritz (1895-99), J.R. Baumann (1899-1900), and G. Adascheck (1900-03).

When drought hit the prairies in the early 1900s, many pioneers packed their wagons and headed back east. From 1903-07, Pastor M. Michaels served those



Pastor Jon Hadler

who remained. After prayers were answered and crops grew once again, new settlers came. In 1907 the congregation, now numbering 40 souls, decided to build a house of worship and call a pastor to serve them and the congregation at Bailey's Lake. That fall Pastor W. Hellbusch was installed and within a year the church was dedicated. Since 1909 the bell, purchased by the Young People's Society, has been inviting worshipers to gather around Word and Sacrament.

Pastor W. Kerber was pastor from 1911 to 1916. The first year of L. Koeninger's ministry saw Bethlehem become self-supporting as it also began to conduct services in English—as well as in German until 1941.

During the pastorate of M. Keturakat (1921-25), an altar niche was added, an entry with steeple was built, and a basement was dug out. In 1923 the Bailey's Lake congregation moved to Clark and became Peace Ev. Lutheran Church.

When Rev. R.T. Meier (1925-28) accepted a call, Peace of Clark joined with Willow Lake to form a parish. During the pastorates of A.W. Fuerstenau (1928-36), L. Lehman (1936-38), K. Bast (1938-45), E. Becker (1945-47) and R.T. Beckman (1947-52), Bethlehem stood alone as a self-supporting church. At the 60th Anniversary in 1944 only one founding member remained—Mrs. E. Nommensen.

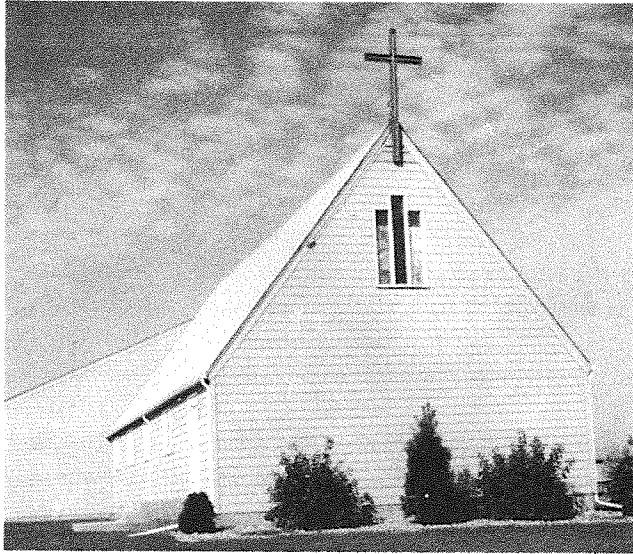
As the congregation bid farewell to Pastor Beckman in 1952, it welcomed the Peace congregation as the two once again formed a parish. The congregation was then served by Rev. E.C. Hallstein (1952-53) and Rev. M. Schroeder (1954-59). Under the pastorate of Rev. Robert J. Zink (1959-63), the congregation, now numbering 138 baptized souls and 96 communicants, celebrated its 75th Anniversary.

After experiencing a one year vacancy, Larry Ellenberger was assigned a one year vicarate. He was succeeded by Rev. Donald Ninmer (1965-69).

In 1967 the congregation had great reason to rejoice when one of its confirmands, Kermit Habben, was ordained and commissioned as a missionary to Japan. When Pastor Ninmer accepted a call in 1970, Gerhold Lemke succeeded as shepherd of the flock. From 1975 to 1985 Pastor Wayne Rouse served the congregation. In 1979 a new parsonage was built in Clark and in 1984 the congregation celebrated its 100th Anniversary—"A Century of God's Unfailing Love."

Pastor Ron Kruse served from 1985 to 1989. On July 8, 1990, Bethlehem's present pastor, Jon W. Hadler, was ordained and installed. The congregation presently numbers 119 souls and 99 communicants.

Bethel Ev. Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota



Bethel Ev. Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Wisconsin Synod, of Sioux Falls, SD, had its beginning on October 24, 1971.

Eight families were charter members. St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church was always self-supporting and never on "mission status."

The first place of worship was the Seventh Day Adventist Church on 10th and Spring in Sioux Falls. The congregation rented this until 1973. At this time Pastor James Babler was the interim pastor.



Pastor James Bolda

On December 10, 1971 Pastor John Engel, District Missionary, became the vacancy pastor until July of 1972.

The church constitution was accepted by the synod and the charter was granted on March 6, 1972.

Pastor Robert Krueger was installed and ordained as the first resident pastor on July 16, 1972.

It was in March of 1972 that ten acres of land were purchased in the southeast part of the city. Plans were to build a church on this property, but the Lord guided the congregation to purchase their own church at 610 South Dakota Avenue. Dedication was held on September 8, 1974. This was their church home until September, 1994.

Pastor Thomas Schmidt served the congregation from June, 1974 - July, 1983, followed by Pastor Douglas Free until 1989.

The congregation's present full-time pastor is Pastor James Bolda.

St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church has had an active Sunday School and Ladies Guild, as well as a church choir and Lutheran Boy and Girl Pioneers.

Membership grew from 21 in 1971 to 166 communicants and 226 souls in 1995.

In Spring of 1994, Bethel Ev. Lutheran Church (ELS) in Sioux Falls, asked St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church if they could merge and become WELS.

The offer was accepted and in August, 1994, a new congregation was formed and named Bethel Ev. Lutheran Church (WELS).

St. Paul Ev. Lutheran had a history of 23 years in the WELS.



St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church



Parsonage

Good Shepherd Ev. Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota



Good Shepherd Ev. Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Jesus says: "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me...and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen



Pastor Norman Seeger

to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd." Jesus emphasizes: "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand." [John 10:14-16, 27-29]

Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church and School's place and purpose in Christ's kingdom, as outlined in Jesus' words, is to be "Led by the Shepherd...Leading the sheep." First, we listen to the voice of our Savior-Shepherd who obtained and announces eternal life for our souls. Secondly, we share Jesus' truths with other souls he has also redeemed. Preaching and teaching God's gospel truths, our past, present and prayerfully our future focuses on Christian education and outreach.

In 1951, Bethel (an ELS congregation constructing a larger worship facility) moved what some call their

original "boxcar" church to the east side of Sioux Falls as a personal mission. Bethel's primary concern for continuing to call "other sheep" to hear Jesus' voice and receive his gift of eternal life instead of simply solidifying their own existence has been blessed by a Lord who asks us to be his witnesses in our "Jerusalem"...in our "ends of the earth." Financial reasons led Good Shepherd to be "transferred" into a WELS mission the following year.

Following this 'mission' birth, pastors Neil Jordahl, Herbert Birner, David Krenke, and James Babler led our Lord's sheep in sharing the message of Christ's salvation and gathering those souls who were hearing Jesus' voice. While listening and learning our Lord's will for their eternal life, the congregation was also permitted to construct a parsonage in 1956, a new worship facility in 1962 (the "boxcar" structure still was not demolished but sold for use by another congregation).

In the early 1970s, failure to fully listen and apply our Lord's will in our earthly lives produced human disagreements which led some of Good Shepherd's members to establish a second WELS congregation in Sioux Falls (St. Paul's, which has recently merged with Bethel). Our Lord's ability to work through his Word to extend his kingdom (sometimes in spite of us sinner-saints) is evident today as God our Good Shepherd has led two closely situated, somewhat 'competitive' congregations into two larger 'cooperative and complementary' congregations on opposite sides of Sioux Falls who will be better able to



Good Shepherd Parsonage

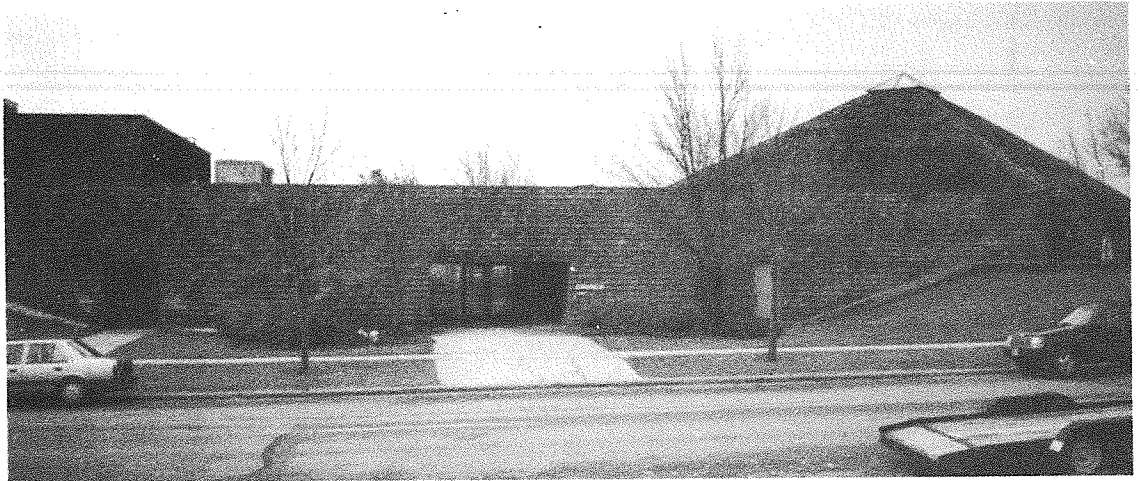
Good Shepherd Ev. Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota (cont.)

minister
Christ's mes-
sage of eternal
life to souls
throughout
our entire
metropolitan
area.

Christian
education,
particularly
the training of
our children,
received an
increased
emphasis as

Good Shepherd again focused on our Lord's forgiving love and listened to God's inspired direction under the guidance of Pastor Dennis Hayes during the 1970s. An elementary school opened in 1977 with Miss Kim Kenyon (Zaporski) teaching 25 students in grades 1-8. Mrs. Susan (Warner) Lindwurm was added as a lower grades teacher the following year, with Mr. Fred Luehring arriving as principal and upper grades teacher in 1979.

The increasing number of students, coupled with a lack of room for expansion, necessitated a relocation and expansion of Good Shepherd's facilities, which was completed in the fall of 1979. God graciously



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and School, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

enabled the purchase of property in what was then an open field on the southeast limits of a city which has rapidly built into our neighborhood. Good Shepherd's members focused their energies on providing Lutheran elementary education, but at the same time specifically built functional church and school facilities designed to accommodate an increasing congregation.

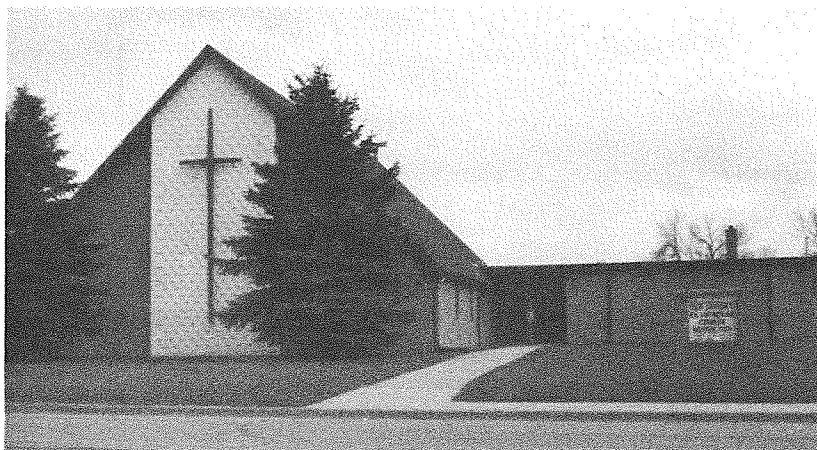
Education and outreach, teaching young lambs to truly know our Shepherd's voice while also calling out to the "other sheep" Jesus has chosen for his flock will prayerfully be Good Shepherd's purpose as long as Christ leaves us to minister his truths in this world. During the 1980s and early 1990s, Good Shepherd has added kindergarten and preschool classes. God has continued to bless his saints in Sioux Falls through the teaching ministries of Mr. Dan Whitney, Miss Brenda Richmond, Mrs. Cheryl Moss, and presently Mrs. Suzanne (Potratz) Erlenbusch, Mrs. Tamara (Speidel) Lindwurm, and Mr. Kevin Neuman, in addition to the continuing ministry of Mrs. Susan Lindwurm. Our Lord has provided pastoral leadership for his people during the last decade through Rev. Norman Seeger.

In the coming years, as we pray our Lord permits expansion of our pastoral ministry, we anticipate outreach and education and outreach and education and outreach.....being a never-ending emphasis as our Good Shepherd uses us to call the souls who will listen to his voice, to shepherd the souls who will still hear his voice in heaven. Trusting our God who has graciously guided our past will fulfil his promise to bless our future, we pray that during the remainder of this millennium, Good Shepherd's people and pastors and teachers will be "Led by the Shepherd" and will be "Leading the sheep."



*Good Shepherd Teaching Staff from left to right:
Suzanne Erlenbusch, Keven Neuman, Tammy Lindwurm,
and Sue Lindwurm*

Our Savior Ev. Lutheran Church, South Shore, South Dakota



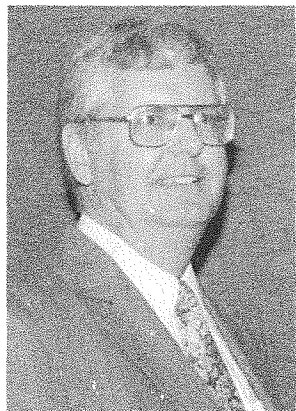
Our Savior Ev. Lutheran Church, South Shore, South Dakota

Our Savior's Ev. Lutheran Church, South Shore, SD, was the result of the merger of two congregations—St. Luke's Ev. Lutheran Church of German-town Township and Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church of South Shore. Serving both congregations at that time was Pastor Edward Werner, who was largely instrumental in leading the two churches to become one new congregation. The actual merger took place on January 17, 1967. On Sunday, March 17, 1968, ground-breaking ceremonies were held for the new church. Our Savior's Ev. Lutheran Church was dedicated to the glory of God on October 27, 1968. At the dedication

service Pastor Arthur P.C. Kell was the guest speaker. He then was serving as president of the Dakota-Montana District of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Our Savior's was built at a cost of \$76,000 (without furnishings) and the contractor was Curtis Construction Co. of Fargo, ND. Over the years a number of additions and

changes took place. A carillon system was donated to the church in 1969. In 1974 the same contractor that built the church built the present balcony to increase the seating capacity and to house the organ. A new Allen Electronic Organ was dedicated on June 6, 1979. With gratitude and thanksgiving the congregation was able to have a mortgage burning ceremony on October 26, 1980. In October of 1990 Pastor Dennis Lemke began serving Our Savior's of South Shore, together with St. Peter's Ev. Lutheran Church of Goodwin, SD.



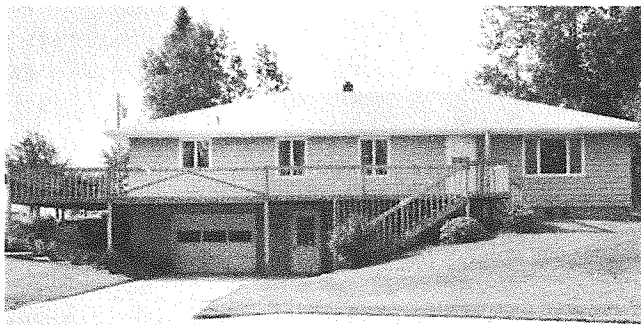
Pastor Dennis Lemke

In the summer of 1992 the congregation went from using the common cup for Holy Communion to using individual glasses. In the fall of that same year a new roof was put on the fellowship hall. A new carillon system was purchased in the summer of 1993. The congregation was privileged to celebrate its 25th Anniversary on Sunday, October 24, 1993. Guest speaker for this special occasion was the Rev. Raymond Cox. With much joy and anticipation the congregation joined sister churches throughout the Wisconsin Synod as it began using the new hymnal—*Christian*

Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal, starting with the first Sunday in Advent, November 28, 1993.

Four vicars served Our Savior's and are now pastors laboring full time in the public ministry. They are the following: Daniel Sargent, who vicared in 1986-87 and is now a world missionary in Chipata, Zambia, Africa; Andrew Bauer, who vicared in 1987-88 and is now serving two mission churches in Holmen and Galesville, WI; Philip Malchow, who vicared in 1988-89 and is now serving Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Milwaukee, WI; and Howard Mohlke, who vicared in 1989-90 and is now a world missionary in Lusaka, Zambia, Africa.

The congregation has a number of sons and daughters who are presently in the teaching and preaching ministries of the Wisconsin Synod. They are: Neil Scriver, who is principal at Shoreland Lutheran High School in Somers, WI; David Waege, who shepherds the flock at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Mishicot, WI; Mrs. Jean (Noeldner) Bakeberg, who teaches at First Lutheran School in Green Bay, WI; and Mrs. Kathryn (Werner) Noeldner, who is an instructor at St. Martin's Lutheran School in Watertown, SD. At the present time Our Savior's numbers 349 communicants and 428 souls.



Our Savior Parsonage

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, Summit, South Dakota



St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, Summit, South Dakota

St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church was organized at Mazeppa Township, Grant County, South Dakota, by a group of dedicated believers on May 14, 1888. The congregation began as St. Paulus Gemeinde but changed its name to St. John's in 1897.

Pastor Franz Johl was the first pastor. Other pastors who served until the turn of the century included: G. E. Fritzsche, Emil G. Fritz, and Emil L. Luebbert.

The first half of the 20th century included the following pastors: R. Polzin, Paul Hinderer, J. Carl Bast, Otto E. Klett, M. W. Keturakat, Gustav Schlegel, Otto W. Heier, M. Lemke, Hugo C. Schnitker, W. T. Meier, Robert W. Steffenhagen, and H. Winkel.

Those pastors who served from 1953 to the present include: William C. Nickels, B. Borgschatz, M. H. Eibs, Victor Thierfelder, Leroy Dobberstein, Arthur P. C. Kell, Norman E. Pommeranz, Walter

Herrman, Edward J. Werner, Shawn E. Kauffeld, and Timm O. Meyer.

The present property was obtained in 1891 with the church cemetery dedicated in that same year. The present church building was dedicated in 1897. In 1950 there was a significant change when the church building was turned to face south and moved a



Pastor Timm Meyer

few yards north onto a newly-constructed full basement.

It was in 1907 that the Vogelpohl and Spaeth pipe organ was installed and dedicated to the glory of God. The present congregation is still blessed each service by the music produced from this majestic instrument and its dedicated organists. Another interesting note reveals that the present altar was purchased the same year the church was dedicated (1897). God has graciously provided His bounteous blessings!

English services were first conducted in 1920. In 1920 St. John's also became a member of the Wisconsin Synod. By 1921 the congregation resolved to become an independent and self-supporting congregation. The congregation also decided to build a parsonage in 1921.

When St. John's began, the congregation was first served as a tri-parish with Watertown and Rauville until 1897.

On December 9, 1956, St. John's, Mazeppa Township and St. John's, Rauville Township reunited as a dual parish. This arrangement endured until February 11, 1972.

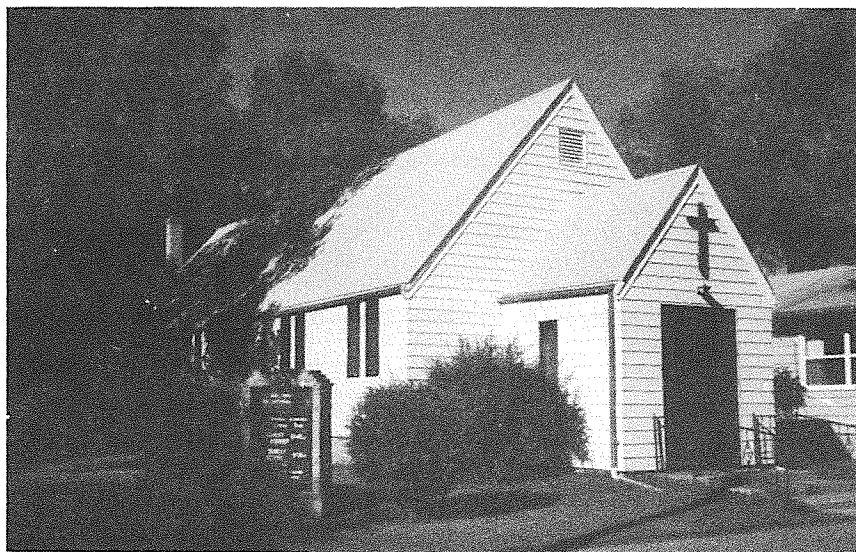
From 1972 until 1983 St. John's was served as a vacancy.

It was in April 1983 that a dual parish was established with Peace Ev. Lutheran Church of Milbank, SD. This meant that the new mission congregation in Milbank would also have a pastor and with very little Synod subsidy. This arrangement was dissolved in January 1985.

Christ Ev. Lutheran Church of Wilmot, SD, joined with St. John's as a dual parish on February 22, 1987. This working relationship came to an end in early 1991.

Presently St. John's enjoys a dual parish agreement with Peace of Milbank. This arrangement began November 1, 1992 when Pastor Timm O. Meyer accepted the Call to serve this reestablished field.

St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Valley City, North Dakota



St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Valley City, North Dakota

St. Paul's of Valley City originally was a Synodical Conference venture. Pastor J. B. Erhart of Jamestown along with of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod pastor of Wimbledon, ND, began doing exploratory work in 1934. The first service was conducted in November of that same year. It was felt that a resident pastor was needed, therefore, Candidate W. Lange was called. A few months later, however, he was called away and once again Pastor Erhart took over as pastor of St. Paul's.

By the fall of 1935 the small group of faithful decided to officially form a congregation. The constitution was adopted November 24, 1935. In January of 1938, however, the Mission Board decided to close this field, but the members were not easily put off



Pastor Christopher Oehlke

and went on to call Pastor W. Dorn. He too was only able to serve for a short time. The same year the congregation purchased the lot where the present church now stands for \$250 and also a church building seven miles west of Valley City, which they moved to the site.

In October of 1939 Pastor J.J. Wendland was installed as pastor. He served the congregation until 1948. It was during his time of service that the first parsonage was purchased.

In April of 1947 the lot next to the church building was acquired where a parsonage would later be built. During the pastorate of Pastor Wendland, a preaching station was started north of Tower City.

Pastor K. Eggert was called in 1948 serving until 1950. He was followed by Pastor E.E. Kolander, 1950-55. It was during this time that the present church building was constructed. It was dedicated to the service of the Lord on June 13, 1954. The cost of the project was approximately \$14,600.

On July 10, 1955, Pastor M. Lutz was installed as pastor serving until 1959. He was followed by Pas-

tor M. Putz 1960-67. During his pastorate the present parsonage was built, new pews were purchased, and exploratory work was begun in Moorhead, MN. Pastor N.R. Carlson followed from 1969-70. Pastor W. Russow served from 1971-75. It was during this time that the present altar, pulpit and lectern were built by Pastor Russow and members.

Pastor W. Allwardt was installed in 1975 serving the congregation until 1986. It was during his ministry in 1978 that exploratory services began in Jamestown. He also helped the congregation to celebrate their 50th anniversary in 1985. He was followed by Pastor K. Engdahl who served from 1986-90. Pastor W. Uhlhorn served the congregation from 1990-94.

St. Paul's is currently served by Pastor C. Oehlke. Membership currently totals 97 souls and 73 communicants.



St. Paul Parsonage

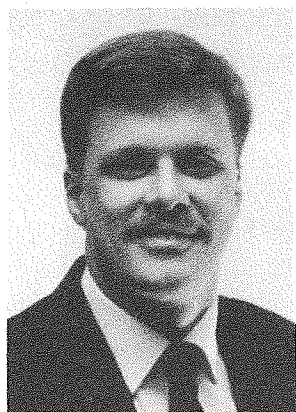
Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church, Ward, South Dakota



Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church, Ward, South Dakota

During the late 1870s German Lutheran families began to settle near present-day Ward, SD. Worship services, held in two local district school buildings and conducted by Rev. Christian Boettcher, began in 1879. On July 1, 1884, the prospective congregation purchased nine acres of land for \$50 from the South Minnesota Land Company. The first church was built on that land (on the Minnesota side of the border) in 1885 or 1886.

In January, 1886, Rudolf Polzin was ordained, moved to Ward, and began to serve as one of the synod's traveling ministers. Under his leadership The German Evangelical Lutheran Immanuel Congregation was officially organized in the same year. While living in Ward Rev. Polzin served nine congregations, including Immanuel of Verdi, MN, and Trinity of Elkton, SD.



Rev. Jonathan Hohenstein

When Rev. Polzin accepted another call, the congregations in Verdi, Ward, and Elkton called Rev. Johann C. Albrecht. He was installed on November 2, 1890, and moved into Elkton's newly constructed parsonage on January 12, 1891. On March 8, 1891, St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church organized in Lake Benton, resulting in a quadri-parish.

Rev. G. Schoemperlen was installed as pastor of the four congregations on Palm Sunday of 1892, and he served until 1895. Rev. Julius Dammann was the next pastor. He moved to Lake Benton in 1896 and began to serve a congregation in Holland, MN, along with the four previously mentioned. In 1897 Ward and Elkton formed their own dual parish and called Rev. Gervasius Fischer. He served until 1900 and was succeeded by Rev. Casimir Mikulski, who served until 1904.

In 1901 the congregation purchased land on the main street in Ward intending to move the church building. In 1902 they decided instead to build a new church in Ward. It was dedicated on November 9, 1902.

Rev. Johannes Monich served the two congregations from 1904 until 1908, followed by Rev. A. W. Eggert (1908-11), and Rev. Julius Engel (1912-22). In 1922 Rev. William Lindloff was installed and served for the next 38 years.

German services were forbidden in the state of South Dakota during World War I. In 1921 the congregation voted to have one English service per month, and in 1922 this was increased to two services per month. In 1944 it was decided to hold only one German service per month, and German services were discontinued in 1951.

During World War II, the Young People's Society sent Bibles and prayer books to the military and the Ladies' Aid bought bonds. After the war, the congregation sent cash and clothing to Europe and adopted a European family of war sufferers.

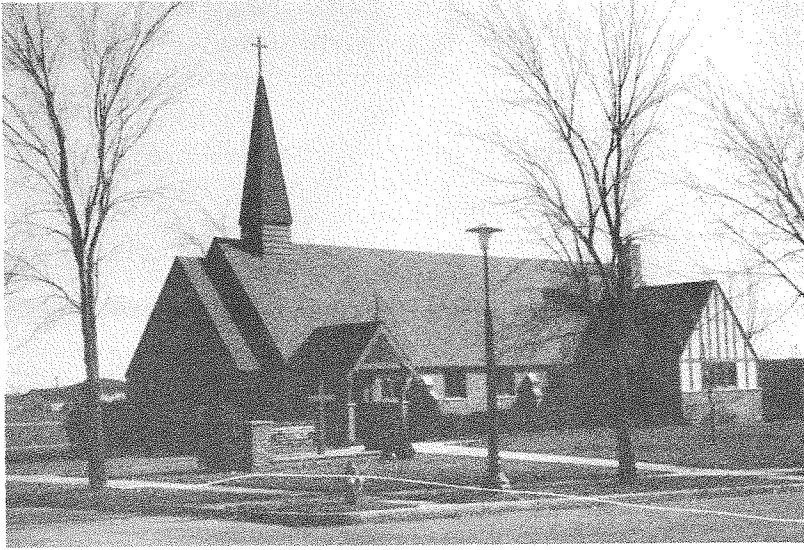
In 1959 a basement was put under the church and the entryway was expanded; the entire project cost almost \$7,000. It was dedicated, together with a new organ, on October 8, 1961.

Rev. Robert Wendland accepted the call in 1961 and served until 1965. In 1964 he conducted morning devotions on KBRK radio in Brookings. Candidate Larry Ellenberger was assigned in 1966. His call included the stipulation that he serve the Student Mission at SDSU in Brookings. A congregation was organized there and called its first resident pastor in 1967.

Rev. Keith Haberkorn served as pastor from 1969-72, Rev. Dennis Schmidt from 1973-79, Rev. Richard Voswinkel from 1980-85, Rev. Donald Main from 1985-90, and Rev. Jonathan Hohenstein from 1990-present.

Present membership includes 65 baptized and 54 communicants.

Bethlehem Ev. Lutheran Church, Watertown, South Dakota

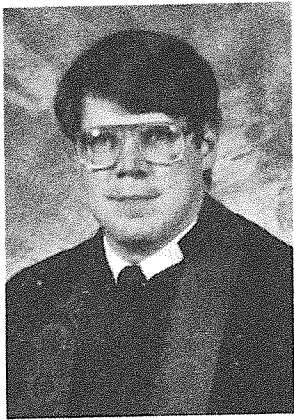


Bethlehem Ev. Lutheran Church, Watertown, South Dakota

In 1956 a group of members from St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church in Rauville Township voted to move to the north side of the city of Watertown and begin a mission there. The congregation began worshipping in a

Watertown farmer's market on October 28th of that year while their church was being built.

Pastor Arthur P. C. Kell accepted the call to serve as pastor of Bethlehem and began his pastorate on May 5, 1957. He remained pastor of the congregation until January, 1974. Pastor Durant P. Shook began his work at that time. Pastor Robert



Pastor Stephen Ristow

Weimer came in 1980, Pastor Paul Johnston in 1984, and Pastor Stephen Ristow in 1991.

In 1971 St. John's Lutheran Church of Rauville Township severed its relationship with Mazeppa congregation and was united with Bethlehem—an arrangement which still exists today.

Bethlehem had the privilege of starting what is now St. Martin's Lutheran School. The school opened in the farmer's market in September, 1957, and then it continued in the church basement for a couple years. Mr. Howard Maertz, a graduate from Dr. Martin Luther College, was assigned to teach. The congregation maintained the school for two years before St. Martin's congregation took over the project.

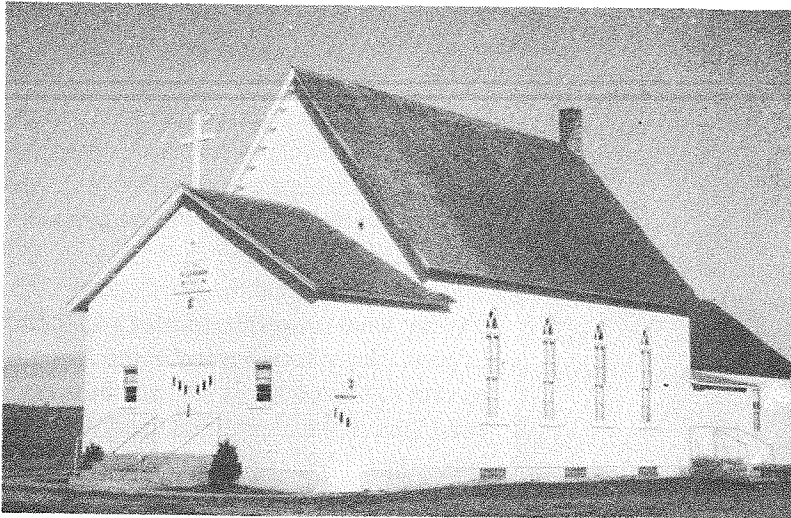
The original parsonage was located at 1212 North Maple. Pastor Kell and his family lived there until 1960 when the present parsonage was bought—at 105 12th Avenue NE, directly north of the church.

Presently the congregation has 219 baptized souls and 173 communicant members.



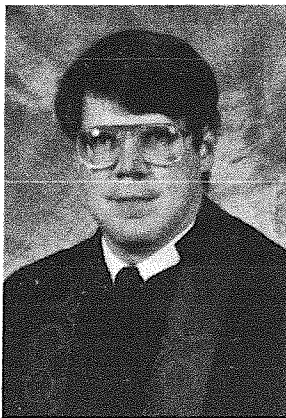
Bethlehem Parsonage

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, Rauville Township, Watertown, South Dakota



St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, Rauville Township, Watertown, SD

St. John's, Rauville Township, began as one of the many preaching places gathered and served by Missionary Christian Boettcher in the early 1880s. Mazeppa, Germantown, and Watertown were also a part of this group. Pastors Franz Johl (1884), E. Luebbert (1888) and R. Polzin (1897) in turn served this joint parish. During



Pastor Stephen Ristow

Pastor Luebbert's pastorate, the parish voted to join the Minnesota Synod (June 7, 1890).

The parish was divided in 1905. Pastor Polzin served Rauville and Watertown. Germantown, Mazeppa and South Shore called Pastor Paul Hinderer. Pastor William Sauer succeeded Pastor Polzin in 1911.

By 1919 St. John's was able to support a pastor on its own. Pastor Otto E. Klett was called to serve. Pastor J. Erhart came in 1928 and G. Schlegel in 1934. Pastor Martin Lemke came to St. John's in 1938, and Pastor B. Borgschatz succeeded him in 1945.

In 1956 St. John's congregation divided. Part of the congregation voted to start a church in Watertown (Bethlehem). The remaining members of St. John's joined with Mazeppa. Pastor M. H. Eibs served the joint parish. Pastor Leroy Dobberstein came in 1959 and Pastor Norman Pommeranz in 1963. Pastor Herrmann accepted the call to serve in 1965.

In 1972 St. John's dissolved the joint parish with Mazeppa and became a dual parish with Bethlehem of Watertown. Pastor Arthur Kell served the congregation in 1972-73. Pastor Durant Shook came in 1974, Pastor Robert Weimer in 1980, Pastor Paul Johnston in 1984, and Pastor Stephen Ristow in 1991.

St. John's dedicated its church building on August 31, 1890. A school house was built in 1900. The church building has remained basically as it was built, although the steeple was removed in 1958. The interior was remodeled in 1921 and again in 1958. A new fellowship hall was built in 1979.

In its history this congregation has had the privilege of supplying four pastors and six Lutheran elementary school teachers who have served in our synod.

The congregation presently has 67 baptized souls and 59 communicant members.

St. Martin Ev. Lutheran Church, Watertown, South Dakota



St. Martin Ev. Lutheran Church, Watertown, South Dakota

The first pastor to serve concentrations of pioneers in the Watertown area was Circuit Missionary, C. Boetcher (1880-84). Pastor J. Johl became the first resident missionary (1884-88).

On January 24, 1886, in the home of J. C. Miller, eighteen men signed the constitution as charter voting members. J. C. Miller, F. Schmidt, E. Guenther, A. Reichert, and Herman Serling were the first officers.

Pastor E.L. Luebert (1888-98) followed Pastor Johl. First mention of a Ladies Aid group appeared in 1894. During these early years, the congregation used the old Methodist Church, the old Norwegian Lutheran Church, and met in their own homes.



St. Martin Staff from left to right – Back: Alan Uher, Jason Walz, Pastor Dennis Hayes, John Freese; Middle: Mrs. Suzanne Steinmetz, Mrs. Toie Kluck, Pastor John Carter, Mrs. Karen Livingston; Front: Mrs. Jennifer Uher, Leah Steinmetz, Mrs. Lisa Haider, Mrs. Kathryn Noeldner, Mrs. Margaret Poor

Pastor R. Polzin served from 1898 to 1911. On September 14, 1902, the first church building was dedicated.

In 1905 after some realignment, St. John's Rauville and St. Martin's became a dual parish. Pastor Polzin was called to serve both congregations. With the coming of the World War I, German services were dropped and all preaching was in English.

Pastor William F. Sauer (1911-28) followed Pastor Polzin. A Christian day school was started in 1914 taught by L. Stephan succeeded by Principal A. Falde. Unfortunately it closed in

1919. Also in 1919 St. John's Rauville decided they would like to have their own pastor. Pastor Sauer moved into a new parsonage west of the church in the same year. In 1920 Pastor Sauer became the first president of the Dakota-Montana District.

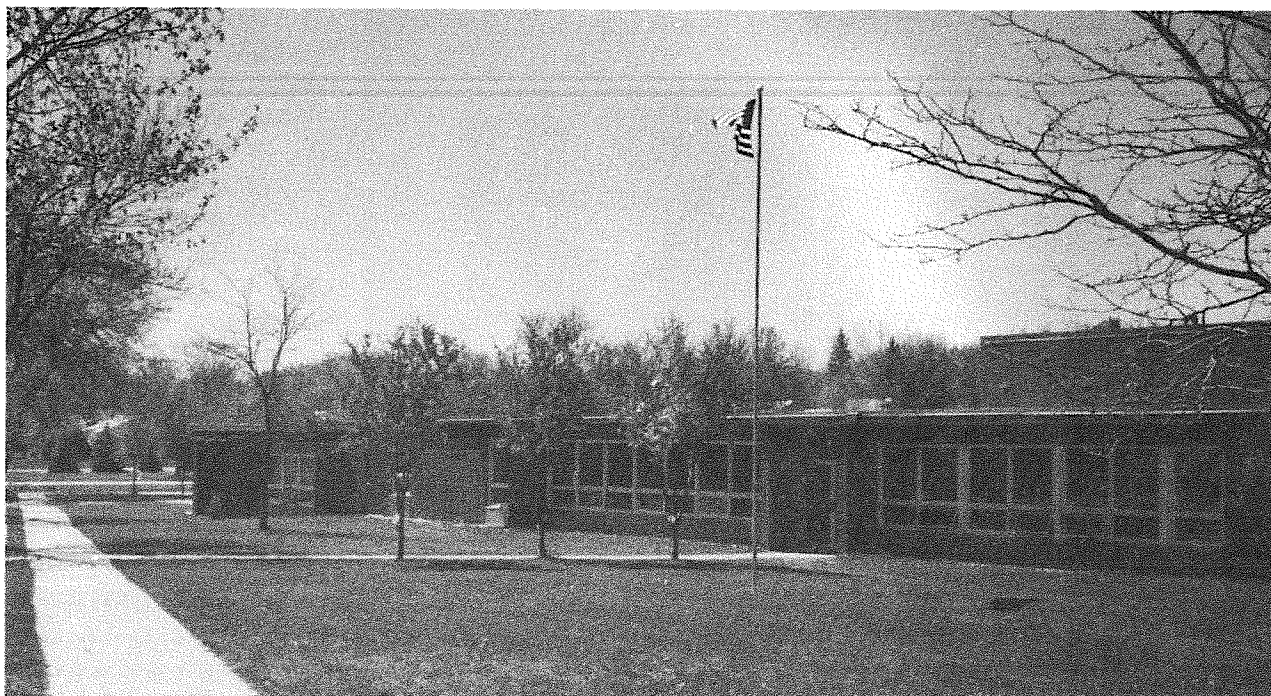
Pastor W.T. Meier (1928-56) took Pastor Sauer's place. Pastor Meier also served as district president (1938-46). The congregation voted to replace the original church building. The new building (still used today) was designed to accommodate 350 and was dedicated on January 14, 1940. It was refurbished in 1968.

Pastor W.A. Schumann was installed as pastor in 1956 and served until 1966. He also served as district president (1958-66). In 1957 St. Martin's Ladies' Club and other groups were organized.

Pastor E. Habermann served the congregation from 1967 to 1987. A new organ was dedication in 1981. New bells for the bell tower were installed in 1985. A second pastor was called to St. Martin's. Candidate John Carter Jr. (1986-present) became the first associate pastor of St. Martin's.

Pastor Dennis A. Hayes (1987-present) accepted St. Martin's call to be senior associate pastor.

St. Martin Ev. Lutheran Church, Watertown, South Dakota (cont.)



St. Martin's Ev. Lutheran School

The need for a school began with an over crowded Sunday School in the 1950s and a desire for a solution. A new parsonage was built on the north side of town and the existing parsonage was used as a Sunday School Annex.

In 1957 St. Martin's donated lots to Bethlehem Ev. Lutheran Church to begin a new congregation on the north side of town. As a result, an agreement was made to open a Christian day school. Bethlehem provided the facilities and St. Martin's the salary and housing for the teacher. Mr. Howard Maertz (1957-68) was the first teacher. School opened in September of 1957 in the rented Farmer's Market with 15 pupils. Later it was moved to the basement of Bethlehem church.

In 1959 St. Martin's erected the present school building and took over full control of the school.

After a year of vacancy, Mr. Rolland Menk (1969-78) became the principal in 1969. A gymnasium and classroom were also dedicated in 1969. In 1976, a sixth classroom was added.

In January of 1979, Mr. Daniel Schmal (1979-93) became the next principal. On October 28, 1979, the ninth grade addition was dedicated. St. Martin's retained its ninth grade until the fall of 1991.

An addition of three classrooms, a commons/dining area, and a new kindergarten room were dedicated in August of 1989.

Dr. John Freese (1993-95) became principal in August of 1993.

The following men served as teachers: Gerald Treder, David Neujahr, and Mark Eisenmann.

The following ladies served as teachers: L. Stephan, Donna Miller, Marjorie Remmers, Thekla (Schneider) Hoenecke, Mary (Umnus) Sievert, Pauline Rupprecht, Ina Hackbarth, Anita Rehborg, Leilani Ottenbacher, Sheryl Lillge, Mary Murphy, Janice (Mathis) Ewerdt, Judy Rabenberg, Ardith Roehler, Susan (Eckhart) Witt, Karen Wendt, Carol (Endriesen) Lemke, Laura Lemke, Gail (Douglas) Potratz, Jean (Kobleska) Korthals, Cheryl Raugutt, Marjean Conradt, Suzanne (Potratz) Erlenbusch, Nancy (Lau) Hasselquist, Linda Proeber, Joann Martin, Mary Schmal, Janice Kurth, Judith Wastrack, Rachel (Zenker) Gustafson, Dawn Aswege, Lisa Siebert, Gina Hoerner, and Mary Sue Pleuss.

Today the enrollment is 172 students in pre-school through eighth grade. St. Martin's has a teaching staff of eleven. Dr. John Freese—was Principal, seventh and eighth, Toie Kluck—seventh and eighth, Karen Livingston—seventh and eighth, Jennifer Uher—seventh and eighth, Jason Walz—sixth, Alan Uher—fifth, Lisa Haider—fourth, Suzanne Steinmetz—third, Leah Steinbrenner—second, Kathy Noeldner—first, and Margaret Poor—Kindergarten and Preschool.

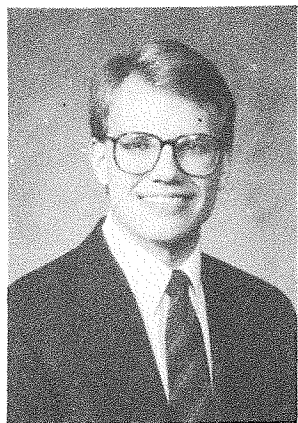
Willow Lake Ev. Lutheran Church, Willow Lake, South Dakota



Willow Lake Ev. Lutheran Church, Willow Lake, South Dakota

After a few preliminary services had been conducted by Pastors A. Fuerstenau, A. Pamperin, and O. Klett, the first missionary and resident pastor, K.G. Sievert, was installed in 1921. The missionary had a nucleus of four families. After a year, there were at least 45 adults who attended services regularly. At first, services were held in the Half-Moon Theater. In 1922 plans were made to build a chapel. However, the congregation finally purchased a schoolhouse and moved it into town about 1/2 block south of the present parsonage. On January 15, 1923, the congregation was formally organized.

On September 6, 1925, Pastor Sievert installed R. J. Palmer as his successor. The congregation adopted its first constitution on October 18, 1925, and in 1928 the congregation became a member of the Wisconsin Synod. On January 14, 1929, the congregation voted to form a dual parish with Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Hague Township—exactly five years later they would go self-supporting. In April of 1929, the congregation purchased the present property and parsonage for \$3,500.



Pastor John Hildebrant

The congregation's third pastor, H. C. Schnit-

ker, we installed on March 7, 1937. During his four year pastorate, a committee was formed to begin planning for a new church building.

Pastor Walter Zickuhr was installed on April 20, 1941. From February 9, 1941, to May 20, 1943, the Willow Lake and Clark fields formed one parish, while Hague was united with Henry once again. At this time the Willow Lake - Clark parish again went under mission support. In March of 1942, a church building was purchased from the Congregational Society at Vienna for \$433. The building finally arrived in Willow Lake on July 23, 1943. The dedication was held on August 27, 1944. From December,

1944, to September, 1945, a tri-parish was formed with Willow Lake, Hague, and Clark, until Clark received her own resident pastor. During 1948, another tri-parish was formed with Willow Lake, Hague, and Bryant.

In 1950 Candidate Arden Wood became the first man to be ordained at Willow Lake. During the following years, a good deal of remodeling was done in the parsonage and a new organ was dedicated in the church.

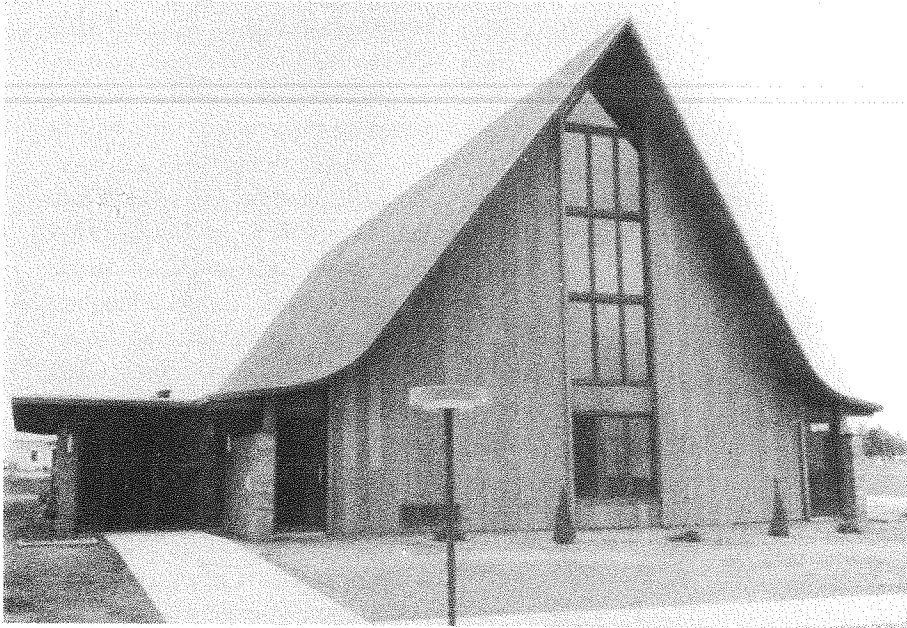
The second ordination to be held at Willow Lake was on July 15, 1956, for Pastor Wood's successor, Candidate Roland Zimmermann. During his tenure, a church council was formed, a new constitution was adopted, and capital improvements were made. In 1959 Willow Lake, together with Hague, went self-supporting for the second time.

Willow Lake's longest pastorate began on March 6, 1961, with the installation of Pastor Gilbert Bunde. Pastor Bunde served in Willow Lake for 26 years. The highlight of those years was planning and building the congregation's third house of worship. On December 15, 1968, the current church building was dedicated.

In the spring of 1987, Pastor Michael Enderle came to Willow Lake. In 1991 the congregation at Hague was dissolved. Willow Lake has been independent ever since.

The current pastor, Rev. John Hildebrant, was ordained and installed on November 29, 1992.

Prince of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Yankton, South Dakota



Prince of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Yankton, South Dakota

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church had its beginning in July of 1970, when the District Mission Board transferred the District Missionary, Pastor John Engel, from Pierre, South Dakota, to Yankton.

The first services were conducted in the rented parsonage at 508 West 3rd Street in Yankton. In September of that year arrangements were made to rent the Kostel McLeod Funeral Home at 301 Spruce Street for the worship services and Sunday School. In the early beginnings of the congregations the Lutheran Collegians from Brookings, South



Pastor Alvin Schulz

Dakota, came to Yankton to assist in canvassing.

The year 1972 was an eventful year for Prince of Peace. In this year Laurie Yun completed her confirmation instruction and was the first child to be confirmed in Prince of Peace. In April that year mission status was granted to the congregation and this meant officers had to be elected. They were Darrell Kropuenske as president, Albert Wattles as secretary, and Donald Kom as treasurer.

Toward the end of 1972, Pastor John Engel moved to Huron, South Dakota, to continue to serve the Lord in this new mission field.

In the fall of 1972, Prince of Peace was granted permission to look for land. In November the congregation called Pastor Paul Stuebs. He was installed as the first resident pastor in January of 1973.

The land was finalized in March of 1973 and plans were made for a parsonage. Ground breaking for the parsonage, at 2403 Western Avenue, was on October 28, 1973. It was ready for occupancy in March of 1974. Dedication took place on May 12th, 1974.

Approximately a week before the parsonage was dedicated, on May 3, 1974, the congregation was granted per-

mission to begin planning for a house of worship. Plans were completed and ground breaking took place on August 29, 1976. On May 15, 1977, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church was dedicated to the glory of God. The speakers for the dedication were Pastors Thomas Schmidt, Elwood Habermann, and Paul Stuebs, the resident pastor.

As the decade of the 80s drew to a close, the ministry of Pastor Paul Stuebs ended at the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Yankton.

In February of 1990, the Lord guided Eric Steinbrenner to become the next pastor of this congregation for about two years.

Pastor Alvin Schulz is the present pastor. He was installed as a semi-retired pastor in May of 1992. In this way the Lord of the Church is leading the congregation along the path to the door to heaven. As believers of the Christ, they receive the precious Word of Truth and the Sacraments to strengthen their faith.



Prince of Peace Parsonage

Apostles Ev. Lutheran Church, Billings, Montana



Apostles Ev. Lutheran Church, Billings, Montana

In the spring of 1953, the Dakota-Montana Mission Board set in motion their plans to locate a mission in Billings. Rev. Harry Wiedmann accepted their call. The first service was held on August 2, 1953, in a rented church building. In less than a year the congregation was organized and named Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church. On October 2, 1955, a temporary chapel for the congregation and a residence for their pastor were dedicated.

Pastor Norbert Meier was called to be the next pastor in September, 1957. In April, 1959, a new property was purchased where a new church was dedicated on October 16, 1960. When Pastor Meier accepted a call to serve in our Japan mission field, Rev. James Schneider was installed as pastor in February, 1965.



Pastor Paul Metzger

In 1968, in Billings, Pastor Harold Wood and a number of families left a congregation of the LC-MS for confessional reasons and formed Lamb of God Evangelical Lutheran Church. Pastor Wood applied for a colloquy in the WELS and became a member of the synod.

The two Billings congregations merged with a new name, Apostles Evangelical Lutheran Church on February 23, 1969, and built the present facilities — church, school, and parsonage — on the corner of Broadwater and 32nd Street West. Pastor Wood was called to be its pastor.

With the new church came a Christian Day School, a nursery in which God's children have been

brought up in the training and instruction of the Lord. First, it was a grade school; then, a kindergarten was added; and just recently, a preschool completes a program which offers the parents of the congregation assistance in telling the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord. While the children at Apostles Lutheran School receive an excellent education in a safe environment, the primary goal and purpose of the school has always been and, God willing, will always be to provide a Christ-centered education where our children can grow in God's grace as they study His Word.

Through the years, the congregation of Apostles Lutheran Church has been served by four pastors: Harold Wood, 1969-77; William Leerssen, 1977-85; Elroy Conradt, 1985-92; and Paul Metzger, 1993 to present. The school has had five full-time teachers and, at least, an equal number of part-time teachers: Jerome Scheitel, 1969-74; Venita Schrupp, 1974-80; Dale Marquardt, 1980-87; Daniel Plath, 1987-92; and Timothy Schuh, 1992 to present—full-time; Beth Marquardt, Beth Plath, Marjean Conradt, Cheryl Schuh, and Lois Coey—part-time. A list of lay leaders whose contributions of time, energy and resources to the work of the Lord would be too long to include, but their love for their Savior which they have shown in the love they have had for his Church and this congregation will not be forgotten.

Apostles Lutheran School & Holy Trinity, Lavina, Montana

Apostles Lutheran School

Apostles Lutheran School opened its doors in the fall of 1969, shortly after Apostles Lutheran Church was formed. The newly organized church was a combination of members from Faith (a WELS church) and Lamb of God (a group who split with the Missouri Synod in 1968). Many of Apostles' first students were transfers from the local LC-MS school.

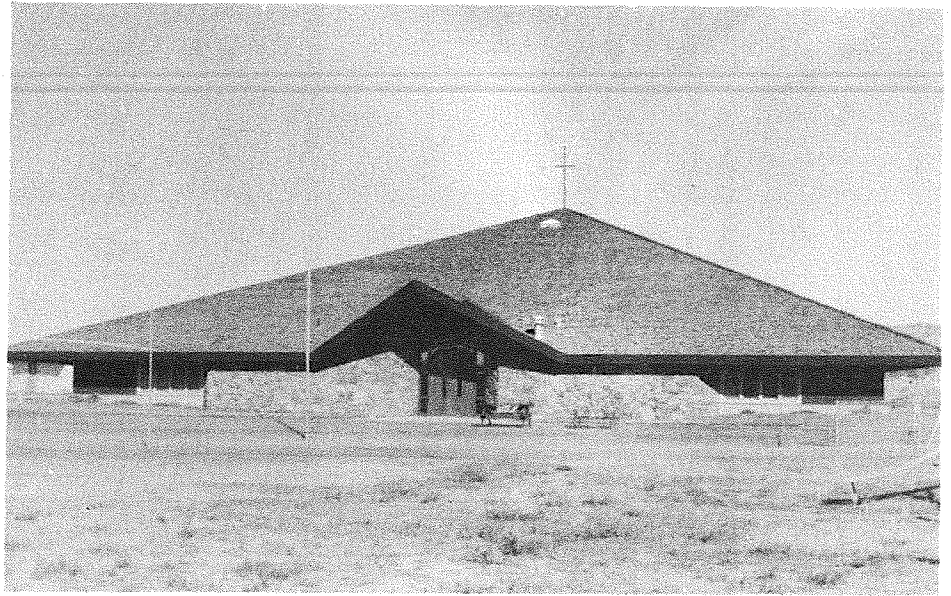
Jerome Scheitel was the first principal/teacher.

He was responsible for all the organizing, purchasing, and recruiting involved with starting a school from scratch. In 1971, the church and school moved into a new building, which was dedicated September 26, 1971. The Scheitels left for Milwaukee in 1974.

Venita Schrupp was called from Denver in 1974. She taught all grades for six years, leaving in 1980.

A first-year DMLC graduate, Dale Marquardt took over as principal/teacher in 1980. The following year, his wife, Beth, began the kindergarten program with two students. The Marquardts taught at Apostles until 1987.

In 1987, Dan Plath was assigned to Apostles School. His wife, Beth began teaching K-2 in 1989. She taught for one year until the birth of their first child in 1990, when Marjean Conradt was called to replace her.



Apostles Ev. Lutheran Church & School

In 1992 the Plaths accepted a call to Rapid City and Tim Schuh was called as the new principal/teacher. Marjean Conradt stayed on as organizer and teacher of the newly formed preschool, which began in September 1992. When Pastor Conradt accepted a call to Wisconsin in October of that year, Marjean left with him and Cheryl Schuh was called to teach preschool. With increasing enrollment, Mrs. Schuh was moved to K-2 in 1993, and Lois Coey was called to take over the preschool. The three remain at Apostles to present time.

Having just celebrated the 25th Anniversary at Apostles Church and School, we give thanks to the Lord for blessing us with dedicated workers, facilities for a school, children to fill our school and most of all the Word of God to teach these little lambs of God.

Holy Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Lavina, Montana

Addendum: Since 1979, the pastor of Apostles Evangelical Lutheran Church has also served a group of Christians gathered in Lavina, 45 miles to the north of Billings. The history of Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church has been virtually lost; the only records available are a list of the official acts of the church: baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals.

The statistical reports indicate that this congregation was established in 1959 but there are records which show that there was a group meeting in Ryegate under the name Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church from 1915 until the late 50s. Currently, eleven families (a total of 26 persons) are in the area and worship in rented facilities twice a month.

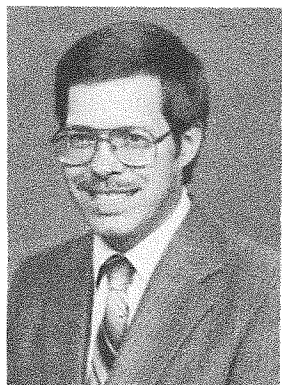
Shining Mountains Ev. Lutheran Church, Bozeman, Montana



Shining Mountains Ev. Lutheran Church, Bozeman, Montana

In 1969, Pastor Kenneth Lenz traveled from Livingston, Montana, to serve a nucleus of four families whom the Lord had led to settle in the Bozeman area. The first service was held on November 2, 1969, on the campus of Montana State University. He served until May, 1971.

Pastor David Neumann began serving in August of 1971 in the Darigold building. On January 1, 1972, the small gathering of worshipers officially became a mission congregation. They organized with fourteen communicants and eighteen souls.



Pastor Ronald Kruse

The small gathering was growing slowly numerically. Between November of 1969 and December of 1979 services had been held at the Wesleyan Foundation, Dahl Funeral Home, Ramada Inn, the Darigold building, and the Seventh Day Adventist Chapel; not to mention in members' homes as well. After having their request for a loan deferred a number of times, they continued worshipping in the Seventh Day Adventist Chapel.

In September 1979, they found an existing church building and three lots. Permission was granted by the Mission Board to purchase this property. Their first worship service at this site was held on December 2, 1979, with fifty-three in attendance. The formal dedication was held on May 23, 1982, after extensive remodeling had been completed. Pastor John Engel gave the dedication address. An organ had been given to Shining Mountains by Salem Lutheran of Circle, Montana. More remodeling continued through 1983.

In the fall of 1983, the congregation conducted an extensive mass media campaign. They made use of radio, phone calls, and follow up literature. Shining Mountains Women's Fellowship also began this year.

In February of 1984, the congregation of St. Paul's, Livingston, voted to go self-supporting starting May 1, 1984. Pastor Neumann continued to serve both parishes for the time being. The dual parish arrangement with St. Paul's was terminated September 9, 1984. St. Paul's received a graduate after Pastor Neumann accepted a call to Minnesota. Pastor Martin Baur of Helena served as vacancy pastor for Shining Mountains.

A call was extended and accepted by Pastor Richard Froehlich, formerly a chaplain in Europe, and he was installed on May 12, 1985. The next project began with a ground breaking for a new parsonage on August 4, 1985. Two months later pastor and family moved into the parsonage. Pastor Elroy Conrath, District Mission Board Chairman, was the guest speaker at the dedication service held November 10, 1985. Pastor Froehlich served the congregation until October of 1989, after which he accepted a call to teach at a Lutheran high school.

Pastor Ronald Kruse was installed by vacancy pastor Dean Biebert on November 26, 1989 and continues to serve the Shining Mountains congregation. On January 12, 1992, the new baptismal font, altar, and pulpit were dedicated. All were built to match by a member of Shining Mountains. The little group that started out so small has grown to 72 souls and 53 communicants. Currently the congregation is actively involved with mass media again. They have a weekly two minute radio devotion, use newspaper inserts, and send fliers to prospects. Often the congregation has used TV advertising. There is a growth spurt in Bozeman, and almost 125 new homes are being built in Shining Mountains' front yard. We praise God for the many opportunities He has given us to share the Gospel with our neighbors.



Shining Mountains Parsonage

Mountain View Ev. Lutheran Church, Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Calgary, a city of 730,000, has been in the hearts and prayers of our Dakota-Montana Mission Board and district officers since the late 1970s. In 1980 exploratory work began, and ultimately, St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church was organized as our WELS mission in northeast Calgary.

In 1990, due to mission needs in areas beyond the northeast, our synod's Lift High the Cross mission effort funded calling Professor Jerome Spaude from Michigan Lutheran Seminary in Saginaw, Michigan, for a year's sabbatical. Since membership was moving into other parts of Calgary and other areas of the city were growing rapidly in population, the Lift High the Cross offering funded an outreach exploratory effort in Calgary. Pastor Jonathan Schultz was called to serve through St. Paul in order to strengthen our ministry in NE Calgary as well as to explore the possibility of mission work in other areas of Calgary.

In the fall of 1993 a concerted effort began to bring God's Word through a WELS mission in Northwest Calgary. Thus our membership living in the western part of the city, and commuting a half-hour to 45 minutes to St. Paul, would be enabled to serve in a community-based mission effort as well as invite their friends and acquaintances to a local worship and study of God's Word.

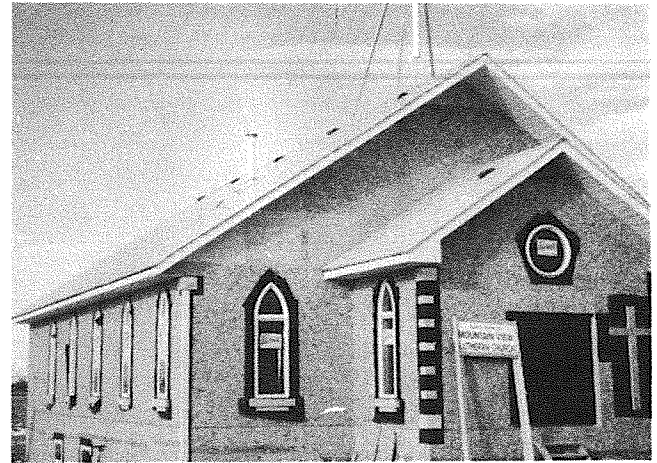


Pastor Jonathan Schultz

In order to reach more souls with the gospel, the new exploratory mission began evening worship services in a community center in

Northwest Calgary. In the winter of 1994, a generous offer of a five acre site just west of the city limit was received by the congregation. After consulting with the District Mission Board and Mission Counselor, after seeing the opportunity to serve more souls in the growing area of Northwest and Southwest Calgary, and noting the growing population in the rural area called Springbank directly west of Calgary, Mountain View Lutheran incorporated and organized as a WELS mission in June, 1994.

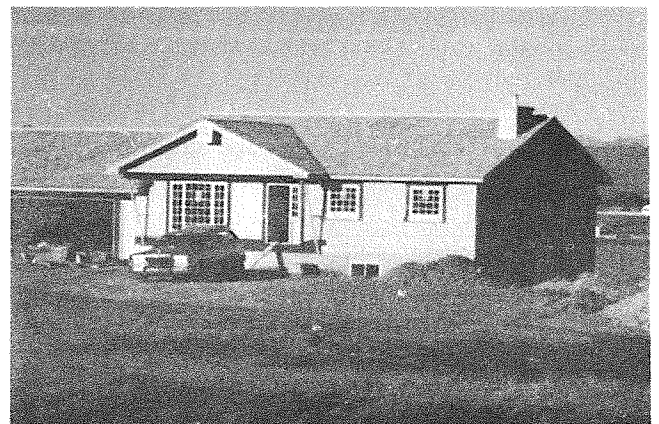
Services were begun in the Springbank Lion's Club community hall. A full exploratory ministry was initiated including canvassing, Vacation Bible School,



Mountain View Ev. Lutheran Church Under Construction

Sunday School, adult Bible classes, worship, and a mailing program to 1,500 homes. We gratefully acknowledge the help of summer vicar Jeff Halldorson, who served in the important first year outreach effort in the summer of 1994.

As the Lord leads Mountain View into 1995, a parsonage has been completed on the church's site and a church building is underway. The building will stand prominently on a hillside overlooking the Trans Canada Highway, Highway # 1 between Calgary and Banff National Park, just south of the Old Banff Coach Road exit. Mountain View's members continue to pray that the Lord will use His Word, proclaimed through its congregation's public ministry and through the lives and lips of each member, to encourage those who believe and to reach many others. Worship attendance in 1994 averaged 27, and at the beginning of 1995 there are 7 adults who will be involved in Bible Information Classes. Mountain View's first officers are Jake Halldorson, president; Norm Meldrum, Secretary-Treasurer; and Brunt Halldorson, Financial Secretary.



Mountain View Parsonage Under Construction

St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Calgary, Alberta, Canada



St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Calgary, Alberta, Canada

According to records the first worship service held in Calgary was in September of 1979. It was held in the home of Jacob and Fran Halldorson. About a dozen people were in attendance with Pastors Beyer and Sullivan from St. Albert and Wetaskiwin who would come down every two weeks for services.

In November of 1979 they moved the worship location to the Brentwood School in the N.W. part of Calgary. In May of 1980, they moved into the first of what turned out to be four community halls in the northeast part of Calgary. Services began on a weekly basis with Pastors Beyers and Sullivan alternating. In June of 1980 Wm. Heiges, a seminary graduate, was

assigned and came to serve as the first pastor in the Calgary area. The ordination and installation ceremonies were held on October 12, 1980. This is Canada's THANKSGIVING DAY.

In July of 1983 Pastor Heiges received and accepted a call to Ashland, Ohio. During this vacancy Pastor Sullivan served as the vacancy



Pastor Jeff Heitsch

pastor and travelled from Wetaskiwin each Sunday to conduct an evening service.

In September of 1984 St. Paul's received the happy news that Pastor Philip Hoyer of Brainerd, Minnesota, had accepted the call to become our pastor. Pastor Hoyer and family arrived in January of 1984.

In December of 1984 the development permit was issued and the green light was given to purchase the Castleridge property. On Palm Sunday, March 31st, 1985, two joyous events took place in the congregation. The confirmation of our first youth confir-

mand, Jeff Halldorson, and the ground breaking ceremonies for our new facilities in the Castleridge area. Construction on the parsonage began in early April of 1985 and was completed in the middle of July. On Sunday morning, July 28, 1985, the first worship service was held in the new church building in Calgary.

The Lord has continued to bless the ministry in Calgary. In 1990 Pastor Jerome Spaude and his wife, Lillian, came to Calgary to assist for a year in the Lord's work. Their presence in Calgary was a wonderful blessing and a lift for both Pastor Hoyer, his family, and the other members of St. Paul. In connection with the blessings of an additional full time worker in the Calgary area, it was seen proper to extend a full time call in cooperation with the District Mission Board. In April of 1991, Pastor Jonathan Schultz and his family accepted the call to serve as the second pastor in the Calgary area. The Schultz family arrived in May of 1991. To accommodate this second pastor a second parsonage was built on the church site in the Castleridge area of Calgary. It was also around this time that worship services started in the Carstairs area, about 35 miles north of Calgary, in the Carstairs Community Hall.

In February of 1993, Pastor Hoyer received and accepted a call to serve a congregation in Minnesota. In May of 1993, a call was extended and accepted by Pastor Heitsch to serve as the second pastor in the Calgary area. At the present Pastor Heitsch is serving the congregation of St. Paul, N.E. Calgary, while Pastor Schultz is serving the newly formed congregation of Mountain View Lutheran Church on the west side of Calgary. A new parsonage has been built in the community of Springbank and a church building is presently under construction on the same site as the parsonage. The Carstairs congregation has also formed under the name of Morning Star Lutheran Church and is presently calling for a semiretired pastor to come and serve them on location.



St. Paul Parsonage

Morning Star Ev. Lutheran Church, Carstairs, Alberta, Canada

The history of Morning Star begins in 1989 when a group of confessional Lutheran Christians, formerly worshipping in Didsbury, Alberta a community of 3,000 about 50 miles north of Calgary, attended our WELS mission, St. Paul in Calgary. They were seeking a solidly scriptural Lutheran fellowship, and after reviewing the Bible's doctrines as taught and confessed by the synod they became active members and ultimately leaders of the mission in Calgary.

A mission effort was begun in Carstairs, a town of 1,500, about 40 miles north of Calgary, in November, 1991.

Our WELS home mission program had sent a second pastor to serve through St. Paul in Calgary in order to establish satellite ministries to reach out with God's Word in areas where the outlying membership could invite their friends and do local community mission work. The first satellite area chosen was Carstairs from where a strong nucleus living in towns north of Calgary and Carstairs were driving to St. Paul Lutheran Church in Calgary. Thus the Carstairs mission effort was begun through the team ministry of St. Paul in Calgary. It served not only to nurture the believers from the towns north of Calgary, but to nurture a St. Paul family which was driving to Calgary from Red Deer, a city about 90 miles north of Calgary. The opportunity for the membership to serve local mission needs was immediately presented by the Lord as Bible information classes were taught to friends and acquaintances and other mission prospects in Carstairs and surrounding areas. With the mission work in Carstairs presenting a shorter commute for our Red Deer family, this family was able to bring three other families to worship. Through member-led Bible Information Classes they were led to



The Morning Star Congregation, Carstairs, Alberta, Canada

confession of faith and membership in our WELS mission in Carstairs. Worship attendance grew to the mid 40s, and the Red Deer families were enabled to proceed with local mission work in their community when a mission explorer was called to serve Red Deer in September, 1993. Thus the Carstairs congregation sent out a satellite mission into Red Deer.

In order to continue to grow in God's Word and to reach out with the Word of God through a community identity and community-based ministry, the Carstairs mission incorporated and organized as Morning Star Evangelical Lutheran Church in June, 1994. Pastor Jonathan Schultz, part of the Calgary team ministry, serves in its initial organizational phase. The congregation is currently in the process of calling a resident pastor through our synod's semi-retirement ministry. The prayer is that with a pastor in the community, even greater soul care and outreach can expand Christ's kingdom in the hearts of many. In 1994, Morning Star was privileged to see 7 adults and 1 youth confirmed. Worship attendance averaged 27 and adult Bible class attendance averaged 15. God truly is blessing the spread of His Word through the dedicated efforts of the Morning Star membership. Morning Star's first officers are Dick Levagood, President, Harold Schielke, Secretary, and Jim Schielke, Treasurer. Other first council representatives are Werner Reinhardt and George Pieper.



Pastor Jonathan Schultz

Salem Ev. Lutheran Church, Circle, Montana



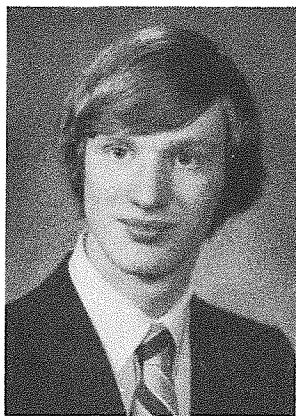
Salem Ev. Lutheran Church, Circle, Montana

In the early spring of 1933, Circle, Montana was visited by Missionary Ernest Kuehl, then living at Brockway. He had spent a year canvassing a large chunk of eastern Montana in search of souls. Circle appeared to be the most promising field. Pastor Kuehl rented a house there, and on March 2, 1933, the Evangelical Lutheran Salem congregation was organized with five voting members.

Some previous work had been done in the area by Pastor Frank Wittfaut, who eventually settled in the

Terry, Crow Rock area, and by Pastor Paul Kuske, who served Brockway, Watkins and Cohagen around 1930.

The first place of worship for Pastor Kuehl, a small school room, quickly became inadequate. Although no assistance was then available from the synod, the congregation, in a year of utter crop failure, enthu-



Pastor Phil Paustian

siastically voted to build. The church they erected was a mostly below ground level structure known as the German Church in The Basement. It had a leaky roof, a sooty coal burning stove, and a temperamental pump organ. In 1935, Pastor Kuehl was followed by Pastor Otto Heier. Pastors Allen Hoff and Oscar Lemke followed, as well as several interim pastors. There is not much information about these years.

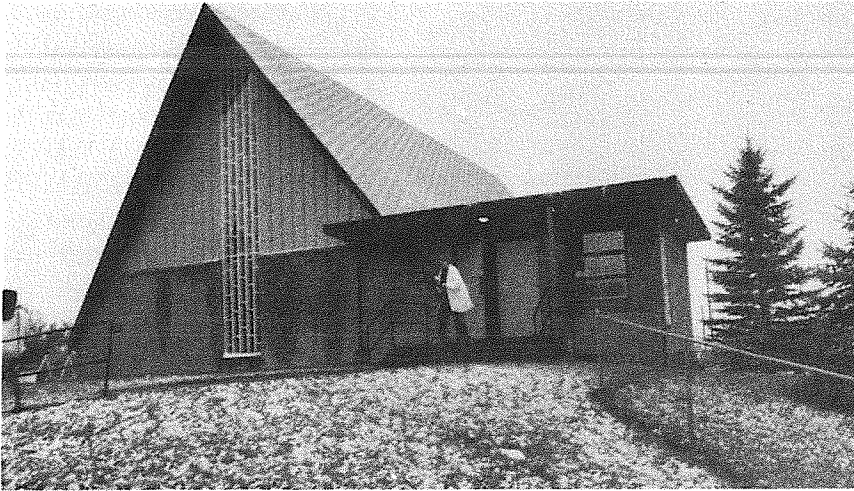
Beginning in 1948, during a vacancy served by Pastor Walther of Terry, the Good Shepherd congregation in Presserville joined the Wisconsin Synod and

formed a dual parish with Salem Lutheran. When Pastor Harry Weidemann accepted the call to serve the dual parish, he made his home in a small parsonage in Circle. Pastor Wiedemann was followed by Pastor Jerome Spaude 1954-58. The cornerstone for the present church in Circle was laid in 1958. The building was erected entirely by the volunteer labor of the members, so work came almost to a standstill during the harvest season and the winter months. The church was dedicated the following summer.

Pastors of the next 25 years were Richard Strobel 1959-63, Theo Kretzmann 1963-65, James Humann 1965-69, Paul Stuebs 1969-73, Alvin Schulz 1973-77, Timothy Lowry 1977-82, and Reuben Stock 1982-86. In 1971, when Good Shepherd moved from Presserville to Wolf Point, a parsonage was built there and the pastor was relocated to Wolf Point.

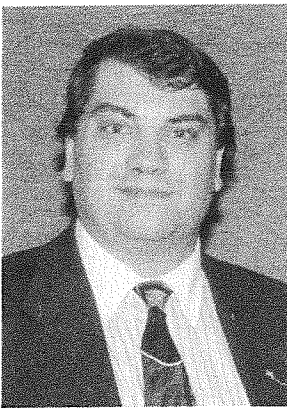
Pastor Winfried Schroeder served the dual parish from 1986 to 1990. When he took a call to Canada, the congregations voted to join in a tri-parish arrangement with Trinity Lutheran Church of Terry, served by Pastor Phil Paustian. The congregation currently has 43 communicants and 48 souls.

Mountain View Ev. Lutheran Church, Great Falls, Montana



Mountain View Ev. Lutheran Church, Great Falls, Montana

For Mountain View, the outpouring of God's grace began through Rev. David Vallesky, a WELS pastor in Livingston. He sowed the seed of God's Word in the early sixties. Rev. Roland Zimmerman accepted the Lord's Divine Call from Bismarck, ND, to serve as the first pastor. He was installed March 8, 1964. Along with his wife June and the founding members of the congregation, he started a building program. Ground breaking took place February 20, 1966. For two and a half years sacred worship had been held at the local school. Then, on August 7, 1966,



Pastor Timothy Johnston

the new Church was dedicated. Rev. Martin Janke, the District Chairman of Home Missions, traveled 600 miles from Roscoe, S.D. to preach for the special occasion. Rev. Zimmerman said farewell on May 25, 1969. Rev. Kenneth Lenz, of Livingston, served the vacancy.

Rev. John Sullivan, a 1969 graduate from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, was assigned. He was ordained and installed in early July. (His wife is Maria.) Through his faithful preaching of the Gospel, membership numbers increased to 65 souls. His farewell service was January 23, 1973. Rev. Marvin Putz was installed February 4, 1973, and left September 14, 1975. What he recalls about Mountain View reflects much of what has occurred throughout her history. From February 1973 through the fall of 1975 the membership saw an unusual num-

ber of turnovers. 90 souls were gained and 80 souls either transferred out or were released. Rev. Dave Neumann of Livingston served the vacancy.

Rev. Howard R. Nehmer arrived January 1976. Pastor Nehmer (with his wife Diane) served faithfully until he found it necessary to resign for personal reasons in September 1976. Pastor Neumann again served the vacancy.

Rev. John Engel filled the pastoral office for the longest period in the church's history. He served devoutly for nine years along with his wife Norma. Communicant membership rose from 32 to 55. The property and building saw many improvements. Pastor Engel was installed February 20, 1977. The farewell service on May 4, 1986, left the congregation with many fond memories. Rev. Jim Hoff from Helena served the vacancy.

Rev. David Reichel, a 1986 WLS graduate, (and married to Renee,) was installed on July 20th, 1986. Like those before him, he dedicated himself to the ministry of the Gospel. In the spring of 1989, Mountain View celebrated its 25th Anniversary. Rev. John Engel, now of Montecillo, MN, was the guest preacher. Pastor Reichel's farewell was July 19, 1992. Rev. R. Dennis Rardin of Helena served as the vacancy pastor.

On December 13, 1992, Rev. Timothy Johnston was installed. (His wife is Judy.) On July 1, 1993, Mountain View Lutheran Church became self-supporting. On September 26, 1993, at a special friendship celebration, a copy of the loan papers were burned. Currently, in the fall of 1994, the congregation numbers 107 souls and 85 communicant members. Here too, 120 miles southeast of East Glacier, the Lord blesses his people in the loving spirit of his Kingdom work.

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Mountain View Parsonage

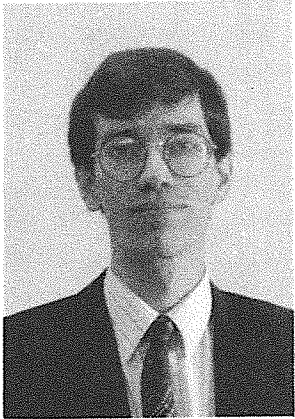
Valley View Ev. Lutheran Church, Helena, Montana

In 1864, four down-on-their-luck prospectors found gold in their pans in a gulch 20 miles from the continental divide in the heart of the Rocky Mountains. From these humble beginnings rose Helena, Montana, once home to 50 millionaires and now the state capital. In 1974, two WELS families began meeting in a living room in Helena to hear taped worship services mailed from Mountain View in Great Falls. From these humble beginnings, the Lord of the harvest has planted and nurtured Valley View Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Already in June, 1976, a peak attendance of 15 was present to listen to taped worship services. Periodic visits from the pastors in Great Falls sustained the group. On October 31, 1977, after declining the group's earlier request, the General Board for Home Missions granted exploratory status. Pastor John Engel of Great Falls drove 180 miles each Sunday to conduct

worship services, which were held in three different rented facilities over the next eight years.

Dakota-Montana District Mission Developer Loyal Schroeder came to Helena in July, 1979. By the end of 1979 the group had grown to include 32 souls and 21 communicants. Mission status was granted in September, 1980; in De-



Pastor R. Dennis Rardin

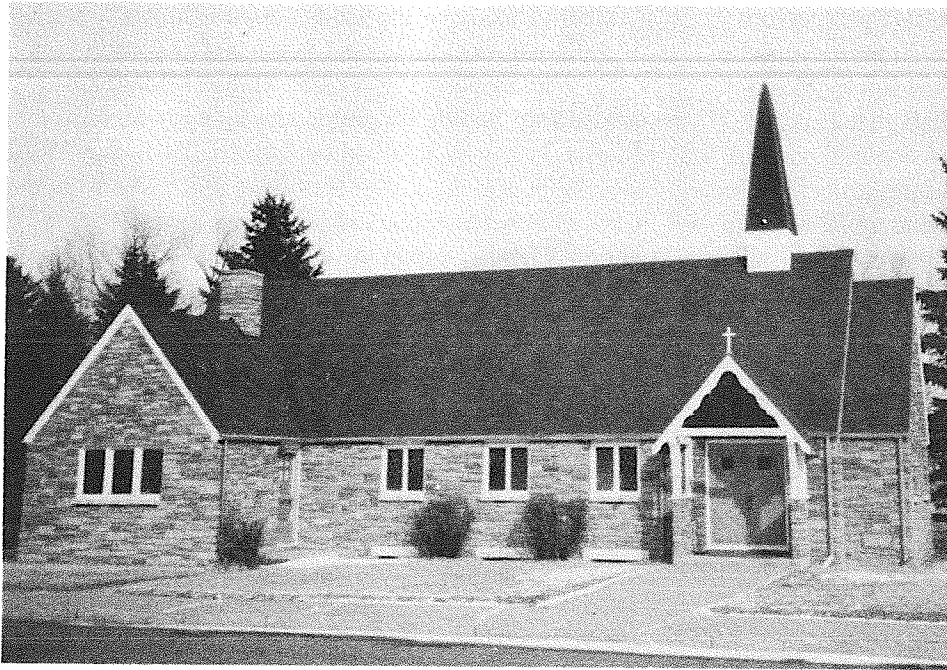
ember of that year the group adopted the name Valley View Evangelical Lutheran Church and its constitution.

With mission status came Mission Board approval and funding for permanent manpower. Pastor Martin Baur was ordained on July 26, 1981. The 55 worshippers at the Easter service in 1982, and 73 at the Christmas service, marked new highs for the congregation. Membership at the end of 1983 was 53 souls and 33 communicants.

In 1983, 1984, and 1985, under the guidance of the WELS Home Mission Board, the building process went forward from land search through the planning and construction of the buildings. In May, 1985, Pastor Baur accepted a call. Seminary graduate James Hoff was ordained on July 28, 1985. The church building, a Worship/Education/Fellowship (WEF) unit, and parsonage were formally dedicated on November 17, 1985. The Lord made this possible with a loan from the WELS Church Extension Fund and generous mission subsidies from Valley View's sister congregations throughout the synod.

By 1988, as the Church's Good Shepherd continued to gather in his sheep, Valley View had grown to 90 souls and 58 communicants. Pastor Hoff accepted a call, and on August 6, 1989, current Pastor R. Dennis Rardin was ordained and installed. At the end of 1994, Valley View has a membership of 107 souls and 79 communicants, and looks forward to continuing and expanding its efforts to proclaim Jesus' gospel in Helena, the Queen City of the Rockies. "As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work."

St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Livingston, Montana



St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Livingston, Montana

In 1948 a number of Christians in the area of Livingston appealed to our Dakota-Montana District Mission Board to start a mission in Livingston. Their prayers were answered when, after some preliminary work, the first church service was conducted on the 26th of September. Missionary Alfred Walther led them in their worship.

Shortly after this a call was extended to Pastor Walther by the Mission Board to serve in Livingston. On December 5th he was installed as the first resident pastor of the Livingston congregation. The Livingston Labor Hall served as church for that service, as it did for the services of the six succeeding years. About one year later the congregation organized with five charter members as St. Paul's Lutheran Church.



Pastor Kenneth Nelson

In June of 1952, the congregation bid farewell to its first pastor. After a few months, the Lord sent Pastor Norman Barenz from White Sulphur Springs to fill the vacancy.

By 1954 the congregation had grown to the extent that its own church was a welcome necessity.

In the spring of 1954, lots were purchased on 12th and Geyser streets with the help of a loan from the Church Extension Fund. Ground was broken on May 10th. Most of the construction of the church, within and without, was performed by the willing hands of the membership and their pastor.

By the grace of God, the new, but yet unfinished, church served as worship facilities for the first time on the eve of Christmas, 1954. Work on the church was completed in May of 1956. That same year the membership was pleased to see God bless them with a parsonage.

When the church was dedicated to the service of the Lord, 35 communicants, 56 souls, sought the blessing of a faithful God.

In 1959, Pastor Barenz was called to serve the Lord in another parish, and Gerald Hinz was sent to pastor the Lord's people.

In 1961, shortly after Pastor Hinz saw fit to leave the ministry, Pastor David Valleskey was moved to accept that call to serve St. Paul's.

The Lord called Pastor Valleskey to another flock in 1965, but then He sent Pastor Kenneth Lenz to minister to the needs of His people.

And, when in June of 1971, Pastor Lenz left to labor for the Lord in another field, the Lord brought Pastor David Neumann to take his place a few weeks later.

In 1984, after Pastor David Neumann left to serve the Lord in another field, Dean Biebert was called to serve the Lord's people at St. Paul's. Pastor Biebert served until 1990.

In 1991, the congregation called Kenneth Nelson to serve as their pastor. He has served the congregation until the present time.

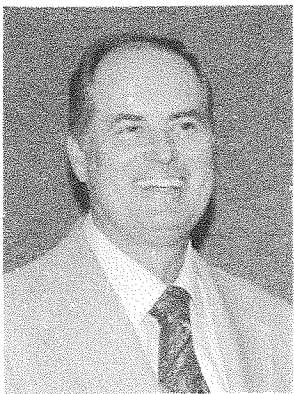
Under God's guidance St. Paul's congregation has grown both spiritually and physically over the years. Today, by the grace of God, there are 80 communicants and 110 souls serving their Lord at St. Paul's.

Faith Ev. Lutheran Church, Melstone, Montana



Faith Ev. Lutheran Church, Melstone, Montana

In 1914, Walter Leege stepped down from the train in Roundup. Fresh out of the LC-MS seminary in St. Louis, he had come to serve Lutherans in the Roundup area. Before long his ministry included an area from Roundup north to Grass Range, then east to Sand Springs, then south to Ingomar, then west back to Roundup and everything along and within that route, a route of approximately 225 miles in length. In addition he served points to 50 miles west of Roundup. What there were of roads in those early



Pastor David Neumann

years were dirt at best. Until he was able to get a car in the 20s, his circuit was traveled by bicycle. When the gumbo roads became wet while traveling, he walked and carried the bicycle. He was not a large man, but the Lord accomplished much through him for over forty years in this area of Montana.

In 1952, Pastor Leege's ministry in Roundup came to an end. Parishioners then moved him to Winnett, from where he continued to serve the rest of the points of his ministry. In 1956, his failing health caused his parishioners to seek student assistance from the WELS. Beginning in October of that same year Pastor Leege was assisted by two students from the seminary, each for a six week period. Illness finally

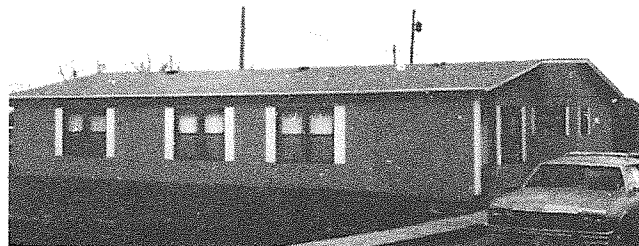
forced his retirement in July of the following year. For the next twelve months the area was served as a vacancy from Faith-Billings. In July of 1958, the call for a resident pastor was filled by seminary graduate, David D. Zietlow.

On January 25, 1959, the membership in the Melstone area organized as Faith Ev. Lutheran Church, as a part of a quadri-parish with congregations at Winnett, Sand Springs and Grass Range. The pastor resided in Winnett. Services in Melstone were held every other Sunday, alternating with Sand Springs. At the end of Pastor Zietlow's ministry, in 1967, it was decided to discontinue services at

Sand Springs and Grass Range. The new pastor then served a dual parish until March of 1969 when Holy Trinity of Lavina was added. Lavina had been a part of Pastor Leege's ministry. In March of 1979, the parish was reduced once more to just Faith-Melstone and First-Winnett when Lavina was again served from Billings. It has remained a dual-parish since that time.

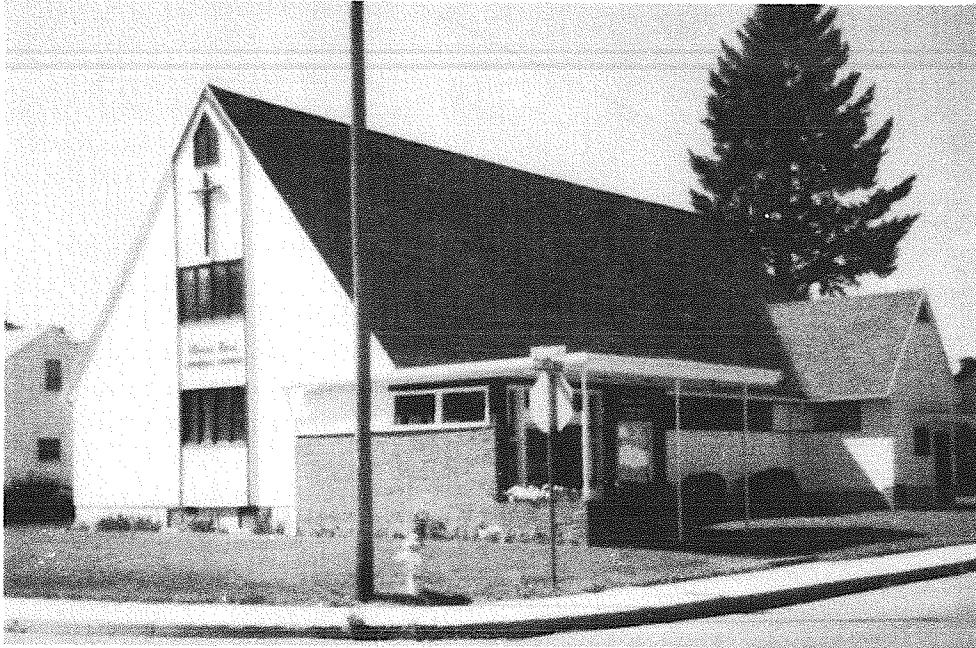
In May of 1961, the present chapel was built entirely by volunteer labor. It replaced previously rented facilities. In 1969 a fellowship wing was added. It too was constructed by donated labor. In 1984, the pastor's residence was moved from Winnett to Melstone. A double-wide home was purchased and located across the street from the church. Later a double garage was built with a 12' X 24' addition between the garage and house.

The following have served as pastors of Faith Ev. Lutheran Church, Melstone, MT: Walter Leege 1914-57; Norbert R. Meier 1957-58; David D. Zietlow 1958-67; Joel G. Frank 1968-73; Kenneth L. Wenzel 1973-79; Donald Dengler 1979-84; Joel W. Lintner 1984-87; Mark A. Lindloff 1987-92; David M. Neumann 1992-present.



Faith Parsonage

Mount Zion Ev. Lutheran Church, Missoula, Montana



Mount Zion Ev. Lutheran Church, Missoula, Montana

Mount Zion Lutheran Church was officially organized in 1977, with Harold A. Wood as its first pastor. Prior to that, a nucleus of WELS members in the Missoula area had been served by pastors from the Livingston and Great Falls congregations.

1981-82 were momentous years for the congregation. In that space of time, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, a Church of the Lutheran Confession congregation in Missoula, disbanded, with most of the members joining Mount Zion. This formed, in effect, a

merger of the two small congregations.

The Holy Trinity members brought with them the equity from their church property. This was applied toward the mortgage on the church building and parsonage on Strand Avenue, which were purchased at this time from a Missionary Alliance congregation that was moving up to larger facilities. Prior to this the Mount Zion mission had held services at the Village Red Lion and at a Seventh Day Adventist building.

The third momentous change of the 1981-82

period was the retirement of Pastor Wood and the arrival of a new pastor, Robert Koester. Pastor Koester served Mount Zion from April of 1982 to July of 1991. By this time, the Lord had brought the congregation to a size of around 90 communicants and 120 souls.

The congregation called seminary graduate Martin Weigand as its next pastor, and he has been serving there since August of 1991. In 1993, the Lord allowed Mount Zion Lutheran Church to go financially self-supporting.



Pastor Martin Weigand



Mount Zion Parsonage

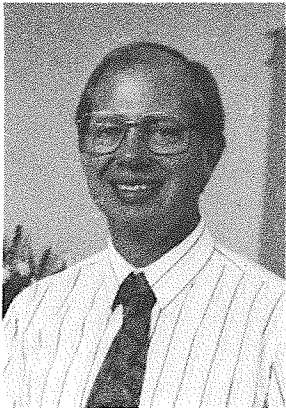
Mighty Fortress Ev. Lutheran Church, Red Deer, Alberta, Canada



Mighty Fortress Lutheran Church, Red Deer

WELS first made its presence known in Red Deer in 1981 when Robert and Joanne Thrun, with their children moved here from St. Albert, Alberta, where they had been members of St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran (WELS).

The first services were held in the Dawe School along with Bible study and Sunday school for the children. After a time services were moved to the United Church.



Pastor Steven Persons

After several years of not growing, the congregation realized that the synod would not grant them an exploratory pastor to serve full time. Pastor Sullivan from Wetaskiwin came to Red Deer once a month to guide a confirmation class. The parents were expected to be the main overseers of

the boys' education. In the evening, Pastor led in-home Bible Study with an abbreviated Communion Service.

Affiliations were made with the church in Calgary, and the Red Deer/Sylvan Lake people travelled 100 miles one way for many years.

In the fall of 1990, St. Paul in Calgary received a special blessing from the WELS Lift High the Cross offerings. Professor Jerome Spaude was sent to the congregation. In the year that he was here, "Romy" set up a lay teaching ministry in which 4 men and 1 woman were instructed to teach "New Life in Christ." Ray Whitten was one of these men. LHTC also expanded the mission work in Calgary by sending a second pastor. Calgary was chosen as a place to initiate a new concept in evangelism, the "mother-daugh-

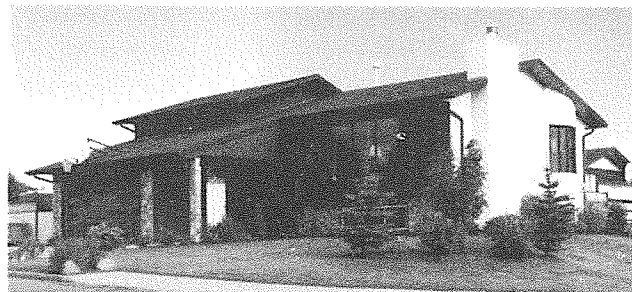
ter" concept. The first daughter was born - St. Paul (now Morning Star) in Carstairs, which was served by Pastors Hoyer and Schultz, with the members there taking over most of the responsibilities outside of the preaching area. Red Deer area members now only travelled 60 miles.

With several additions to the fledgling flock, we were soon to find out that God had not forgotten us. Early in 1992, Phyllis Whitten had been asked to write an article for the 1993 edition of the LWMS "Topics" publication. In that same year Ray Whitten was asked to serve on a new committee in western Canada that was to set up recommendations to the Synod Mission Board regarding mission development in Canada in the Dakota-Montana and Pacific Northwest Districts. Red Deer was one of these areas. The Mission Board approved exploratory status for Red Deer and a call was made on May 15, 1993, to Pastor Steven E. Persons, who entered Canada on the first day of September.

On September 5, 1993, a welcoming service was conducted in Sylvan Lake (a neighboring community to Red Deer) at the Whitten home. More than 22 people came! On September 12, Pastor Persons was installed in a service conducted at St. Paul, Calgary.

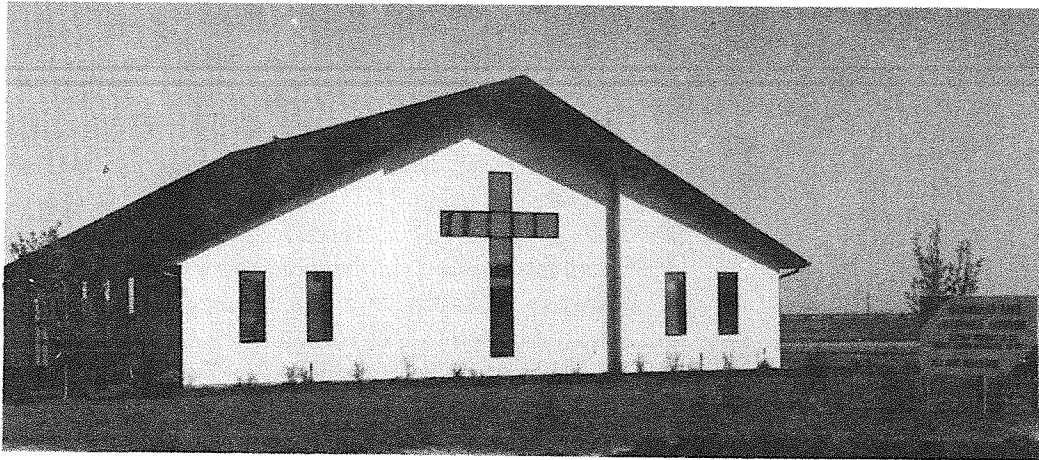
September 19 the Red Deer group gathered at the North Hill Inn for the first devotion/Bible Study with Pastor Persons.

On November 28, the first "official" full worship service was held at the newly remodelled storefront on 47th Avenue, downtown Red Deer. We received two children into God's kingdom by the waters of Holy Baptism that day! The first midweek Advent service provided the Red Deer core the opportunity to welcome guests from surrounding congregations in Alberta to join in dedicating the facility to God's glory. Thirty-eight thanked God for his grace and goodness in this "fast start" for Mighty Fortress. We currently count 23 members, of which 15 are communicants. We await God's Spirit to open the doors to the future here in the Red Deer area!



Mighty Fortress Parsonage

Abundant Life Ev. Lutheran Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada



Abundant Life Ev. Lutheran Church, Saskatoon

Abundant Life Lutheran Church in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada was begun as an outreach exploratory in May of 1989. Pastor Daniel Myers was called in December of 1988 and accepted the call. After procuring the necessary papers to immigrate to Canada, Pastor Myers and family arrived in Canada on May 2, 1989. The Wisconsin Synod then was not aware of any members in the province. There was one couple 3 hours to the South in Swift Current.



Pastor Daniel Myers

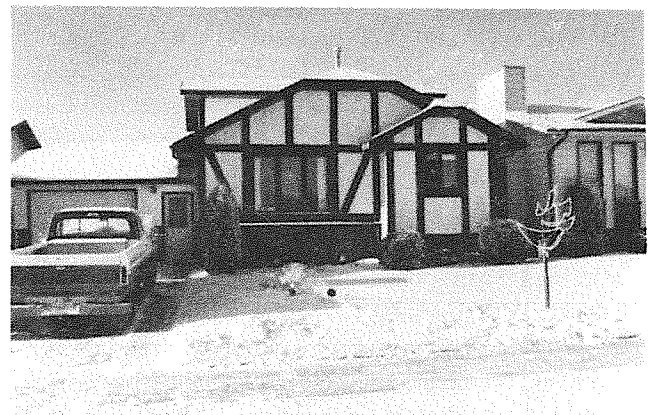
After settling in, Pastor Myers went canvassing in the neighborhoods just being developed in the Northeast sector of the city. He canvassed 1500 homes three different times in an attempt to build relationships and attract people. Pastor Myers used the advanced site purchase to buy land in February of 1990. The first service was on Palm Sunday in 1990. Sixty-eight had indicated they would attend. Thirty-eight did attend. A separate school gymnasium was used as the place of worship.

The economy in Saskatchewan is driven by agriculture as Saskatchewan grows 75% of the grain in Canada. The economy was so bad after years of little or no rain that a recession hit the area. The lumber yards, builders, and engineers that Pastor Myers talked to all agreed that this was the lowest they had ever seen prices in Saskatchewan. The fledgling group of

about seven families consulted with Mission Counselor Wayne Schulz and decided to ask for permission to build. In addition, taxes on the property had gone from \$98.17 the first year to \$987.10 the second year and to \$9,870 the third year. Once you use a building, you do not have to pay taxes.

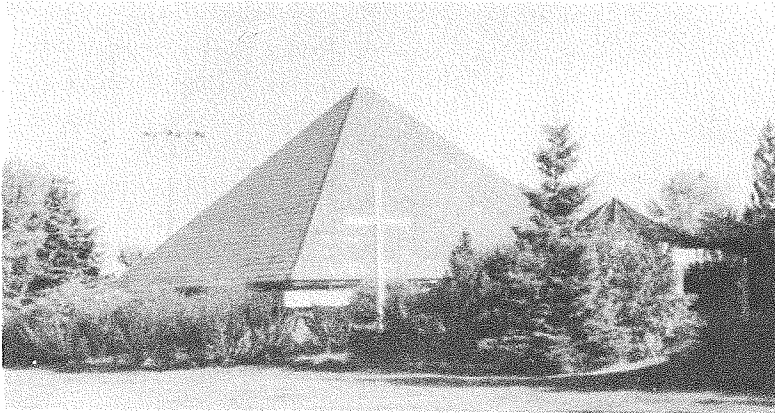
The congregation put together a request, and the proposal was accepted by the District Mission Board and the Board for Home Missions. Construction was begun after all permits were acquired on November 16, 1991. The building was finished in time for the Christmas Eve service that year and had its first baptism.

Since then, the congregation has grown to 31 communicants and 68 souls. The economy is bad again and many are moving to Alberta to the oil patch and to British Columbia in search of jobs. Pastor Myers is still serving the congregation. In September 1994, the congregation was able to acquire an extra .4 of an acre to add to its .86 acre. The city sold it at a bargain price to the congregation as they closed the road that would have gone to the east of the church. The funds for this purchase were all given as gifts, many from our Dakota-Montana District. The congregation thanks the district for its support through the years. It prays that it will be a blessing to the district and to the kingdom of God.



Abundant Life Parsonage

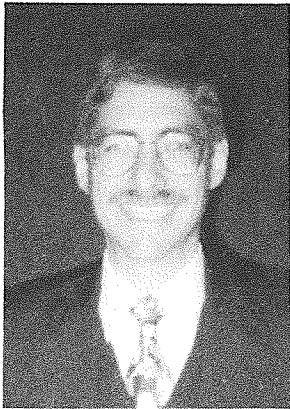
St. Peter Ev. Lutheran Church, St. Albert, Alberta, Canada



St. Peter Ev. Lutheran Church, St. Albert, Alberta, Canada

In April of 1965, The Dakota-Montana District Mission Board extended a Divine Call to Pastor Ernst Klaszus to form a Lutheran mission station in St. Albert, Alberta. Pastor Klaszus accepted the call, and arrived with his family in St. Albert in June, 1965. The first service was held on July 4, 1965. There were about ten people present. Sunday School was started in the fall of the year.

On Sunday November 14, 1965, an organizational meeting was held. The group present chose "Pilgrim Lutheran" as the name for the new congregation.



Pastor D. Thomas Rawerts

The average Sunday worship attendance at that time was 20. There were twelve communicants. Land was purchased for \$22,000, and the present parsonage was completed on August 3, 1966. With the completion of the parsonage, services were held in the dining room-living room.

Pastor Daniel Deutschlander was in-

stalled as the congregation's pastor on June 17, 1970. Groundbreaking for the present church building was held on October 30, 1970. The cost of the building was \$45,000. The dedication service was held on June 20, 1971. About 100 attended the service. In August, 1971, the church's name was officially changed from Pilgrim Lutheran to St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church. The name was changed in order to match the symbolical design of the new church building.

Pastor Deutschlander accepted a call to Evanston, Illinois, and left St. Peter's in December of 1975.

Pastor John Engel served as vacancy pastor. Pastor Engel was also doing exploratory work in the Millwoods area at the time.

In August, 1976, Candidate Roy Beyer was installed as pastor of the congregation. In the late 1970s Pastor Beyer and Pastor John Sullivan of Wetaskiwin, began serving a nucleus in Calgary. At this time Pastor Beyer also was serving a family in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. In April 1984, Pastor Beyer left St. Peter's to follow the Lord's call to Fairbanks, Alaska. At the time of his departure, St. Peter's had 65 communicant members.

Candidate D. T. Rawerts was installed as pastor of St. Peter's on August 26, 1984. Pastor Rawerts continued serving a family in Saskatoon, and in 1987, also began serving a family in Regina, Saskatchewan.

On July 1, 1987 the congregation became self-supporting and numbered 88 communicants and 115 souls. Average church attendance was in the 70s. On November 15, 1987, the congregation suffered a split over the doctrine of Church Fellowship. About half the congregation left the congregation and the synod. At the end of 1987, the congregation had about 40 communicants, and average church attendance was in the 30s. In spite of the losses and heartaches the congregation suffered, the Lord was still with his little flock to sustain her during these trying times. The Lord strengthened the remaining members and granted his healing to the congregation.

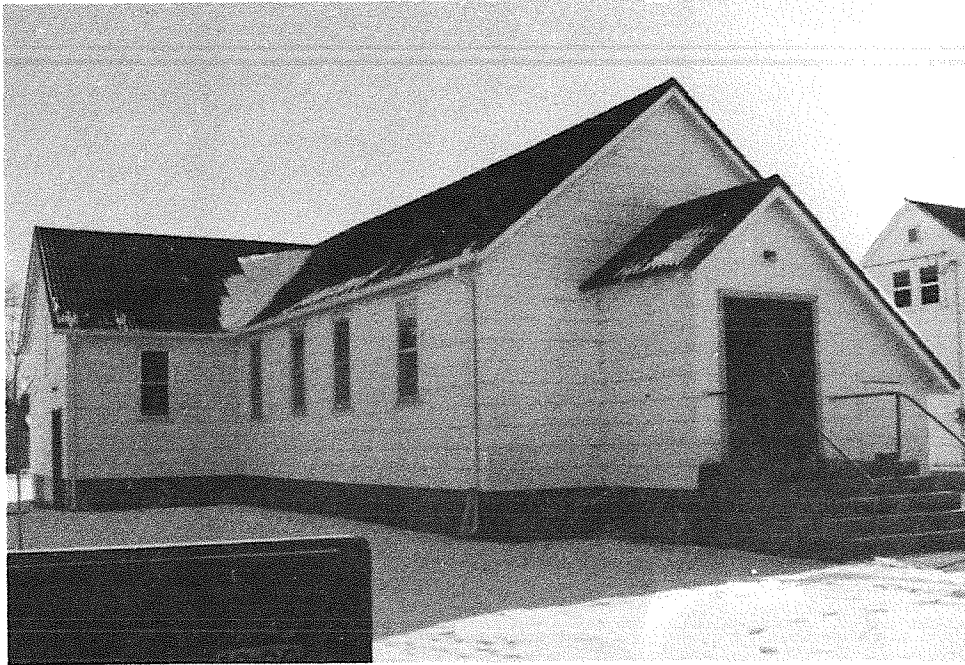
The congregation celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary during the year of 1991. Two special anniversary services were held with Pastor Roy Beyer and Pastor Daniel Deutschlander as the guest preachers.

As of September 1994, St. Peter's average Sunday worship attendance is about 60, and the communicant membership is 65.



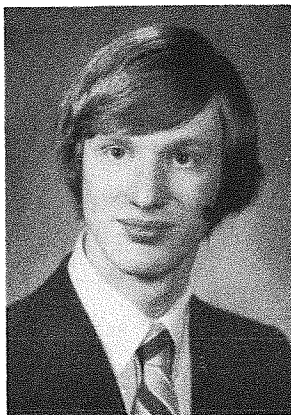
St. Peter Parsonage

Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Terry, Montana



Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Terry, Montana

Mission work for the Wisconsin Synod in Montana began around 1912, when a Pastor Hopp made a visit to the state. He did some preaching and baptizing and reported that Montana might offer some fine mission opportunities to the synod. In 1917, when O. P. Medenwald graduated from the seminary, he was told to buy a gun and a horse and head for Montana. He worked as a circuit rider in the Terry, Ismay, DeGrand, and Mildred areas. He stayed for about three years. Sometime in the early twenties, Pastor Frank Wittfaut began traveling eastern Montana. During his entire ministry, he never had a church building to worship in. The finest church he ever had was a country schoolhouse. After Wittfaut's death in 1934, Pastor R. A. Kettenacker served various preaching stations, and was the pastor here at the time Trinity Lutheran

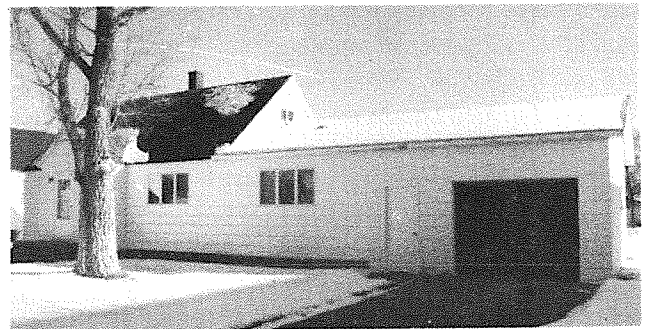


Pastor Phil Paustian

Church was organized in 1937. That same year he took a call to South Dakota. Pastor Elden Bode was Trinity's next pastor, receiving the call just an hour before his wedding. Church was held in the bank basement in German and English. On alternate Sundays Bode conducted services at Crow Rock in German and Mildred in English.

From 1941 to 1945, Pastor Hogey Bergholz served Trinity. In 1943, a home was bought to serve as our first church. Bergholz was followed by Pastor Alfred Walther, who saw the building of the parsonage in Terry. In 1949, the parsonage was finished just in time for the new pastor, Leland Wurster. He stayed here for twenty years, the longest period for any one pastor in Terry. In 1962, the church had grown to the point where the congregation felt a little crowded, and a 20' by 32' addition was added to the existing church.

After Wurster left in 1969, the church was served for one year by Vicar Donald Dengler, followed by Pastor Robert Weimer, who lived in Glendive and served a tri-parish that included Terry and Ekalaka. Pastor Howard Nehmer served the congregation from 1972 to 1975. Another emergency vicar, David Mueller served during the winter of 1976. Pastor Daniel Hrobsky served from 1976 to 1979. Pastor Gerald Blobaum was in Terry from 1979 to 1987. In 1984 the church in Glendive was sold and the money was used to build an addition on the parsonage in Terry. Pastor Blobaum was followed by the current pastor, Phil Paustian. In 1990, the church in Ekalaka was closed and Trinity joined a tri-parish arrangement with Salem Lutheran of Circle and Good Shepherd Lutheran of Wolf Point. The pastor would continue to be situated in Terry. The congregation currently has 47 members and 56 souls.



Trinity Parsonage

St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church, Wetaskiwin, Alberta, Canada



St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church, Wetaskiwin, Alberta, Canada

It was on November 22, 1964, that Pastor W. O. Loescher of Edmonton conducted the first service among the German-speaking Lutherans of Wetaskiwin, who would soon organize themselves as St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church. At first services were held in the homes, then the Odd Fellows' Hall and after that in another Lutheran church for about three years. In 1965 the congregation was organized according to the laws of the province of Alberta, and in 1966 it became a member of the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod. In January of 1967 the congregation, which up to that time had been served by Pastor Loescher, called its own pastor in the person of Pastor Richard Strobel of Mandan, North Dakota. Pastor Strobel accepted the call and was installed on April 23, 1967. In the same year, the synod bought four lots in the northwest section of Wetaskiwin. The church now stands on two of these lots; the parsonage on another and the rest is used for parking.

The next big step was the building of the church. This step began with the ground breaking on March 23, 1969, continued with the cornerstone laying on September 7 and was completed with the dedication on October 26. As to the church itself, it is of wood construction, 34 by 78 feet, with a comfortable seating capacity of 208 in the nave and about 30 in the bal-

cony The inside is paneled with ash; the altar, pulpit, lectern, and pews are oak. In general one can say that the church is of simple design, practical, yet beautiful. Total cost of the building with furnishings was about \$40,000.

In 1972 Pastor Richard Strobel accepted a call to Northwestern College in Watertown, Wisconsin. After a brief vacancy during which St. John's was served by Pastor Daniel Deutschlander of St. Peter's in St. Albert, Pastor Paul Schliesser

accepted the congregation's call and was installed as pastor the same year. He served until his retirement in 1977. Pastor Roy Beyer of St. Peter's in St. Albert served the congregation during the vacancy until Pastor John Sullivan accepted the congregation's call and was installed as its third pastor in July, 1978. In 1980 a new parsonage was built next to the church. The congregation paid off its mortgage on the church and parsonage in 1988 and in 1989 it became self-supporting. In 1990 the congregation celebrated its 25th anniversary with a special service.

In 1990 Pastor John Sullivan accepted a call to Germany to assist the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Germany. Pastor Winfried Schroeder was installed as the fourth pastor of the congregation in December of 1990. In 1995 Pastor Schroeder accepted the Call to the Roscoe-Bowdle parish in South Dakota. St. John's is presently vacant.

In recent years, the congregation installed an Allen Digital Computer Organ. The congregation also hosts the annual Reformation Rally in which the other WELS - Canada congregations participate. The number of participating congregations have grown from two when St. John's was founded to six at present. Services are still held in German and English every Sunday.

First Ev. Lutheran Church, Winnett, Montana



First Ev. Lutheran Church, Winnett, Montana

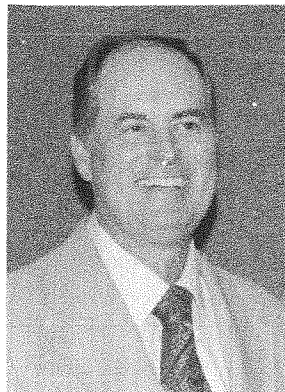
In 1914, Walter Leege stepped down from the train in Roundup. Fresh out of the LC-MS seminary in St. Louis, he had come to serve Lutherans in the Roundup area. Before long his ministry included an area from Roundup north to Grass Range, then east to Sand Springs, then south to Ingomar, then west back to Roundup and everything along and within that route, a route of approximately 225 miles in length. In addition he served points to 50 miles west of Roundup. What there were of roads in those early years were dirt at best. Until he was able to get a car in the 20s, his circuit was traveled by bicycle. When the gumbo roads became wet while traveling, he walked and carried the bicycle. He was not a large man, but the Lord accomplished much through him for over forty years in this area of Montana.

In 1952, Pastor Leege's ministry in Roundup came to an end. Parishioners then moved him to Winnett, from where he continued to serve the rest of the points of his ministry. In 1956, his failing health caused his parishioners to seek student assistance from the WELS. Beginning in October of that same year Pastor Leege was assisted by two students from the seminary, each for a six week period. Illness finally forced his retirement in July of the following year. For the next twelve months the area was served as a vacancy from Faith-Billings. In July of 1958, the call for a resident pastor was filled by seminary graduate, David D. Zietlow.

Pastor Zietlow began his ministry in Winnett serving a tri-parish, consisting of congregations in Winnett, Melstone, and Sand Springs. In 1959, it became a quadri-parish when services were also conducted in Grass Range. Only in Winnett were services held every Sunday. When he took a call in 1967, it was decided to discontinue services at Sand Springs and Grass Range. The new pastor served a dual parish until Holy Trinity of Lavina was added in March of 1969. Lavina had been a part of Pastor Leege's ministry. In March

of 1979, Lavina was again served from Billings. The parish was reduced once more to what it is yet today, First-Winnett and Faith-Melstone.

The membership in the Winnett area organized as First Ev. Lutheran Church on May 15, 1952. Their other order of business at that meeting was providing a parsonage for their pastor, which was accomplished shortly after that. Services were held in Winnett's public school house until 1955. Toward the end of 1954 a building was moved from Vananda, MT, to serve as worship facilities. It was ready for use by the summer of 1955. A fellowship wing was added to the church in 1959. In 1984, the pastor's residence was moved to Melstone and the Winnett parsonage was sold.



Pastor David Neumann

Donald Dengler 1979-84; Joel W. Lintner 1984-87; Mark A. Lindloff 1987-92; David M. Neumann 1992-present.

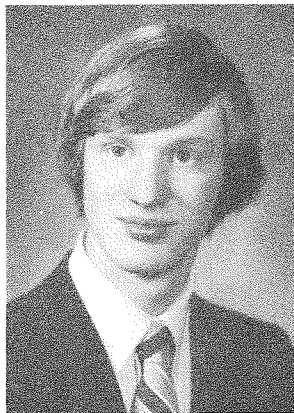
The following have served as pastors of First Ev. Lutheran Church, Winnett, MT: Walter Leege 1914-57; Norbert R. Meier 1957-58; David D. Zietlow 1958-67; Joel G. Frank 1968-73; Kenneth L. Wenzel 1973-79;

Good Shepherd Ev. Lutheran Church, Wolf Point, Montana



Good Shepherd Ev. Lutheran Church, Wolf Point, Montana

Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church was organized in 1926 as a congregation of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The church was then located approximately twenty-five miles south and west of Wolf Point. For twenty years that location was served, until the Missouri Synod decided to discontinue services there in preference for a new mission in Wolf Point. Since that meant that some of its members would have to travel as far as forty miles one way to church, and since the members felt there was good mission potential in their area, they came with their request to be served by the Wisconsin Synod. Pastor Alfred Walther, who resided in Terry and also served Salem Lutheran in Circle, was the first Wisconsin Synod pastor for the congregation.



Pastor Phil Paustian

In 1949 Good Shepherd was incorporated and established at Presserville, a small town south of Wolf Point that is now called Vida. A basement was poured and an old church building was acquired from the American Lutheran Church, which, at the time, was being used as a granary. The members did all the work of moving the building to the new foundation. For a list of the pastors who served the congregation, please read the history of Salem Lutheran in Circle.

In spite of the frequent change of pastors, the congregation, under the blessing and guidance of God, experienced a steady growth. However, as time passed, with the movement of the rural population to the cities and the establishment of larger but fewer farms, the congregation recognized the need to move to Wolf Point. A building fund was started in 1963, and in 1970 the congregation built a parsonage-chapel unit in Wolf Point and Pastor Paul Stuebs moved from Circle to Wolf Point. The chapel was designed so that, if the congregation ever needed to build a larger church, the present structure could be converted into a garage. In 1979 the congregation dedicated its new pipe organ, a portative.

In 1990, when Pastor Winfried Schroeder left Wolf Point to go to Canada, the congregations of Wolf Point and Circle joined with Terry to form a tri-parish. Good Shepherd now holds services the first and third Sunday of every month. The congregation currently has 15 communicants and 18 souls.

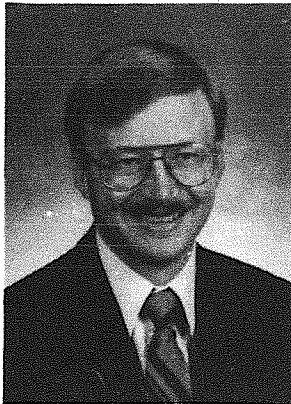
Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, South Dakota



Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, South Dakota

Trinity began in 1952 as a Dakota-Montana district mission. The group called, ordained and installed Rev. Warren Radtke as its first pastor one year later. The congregation gathered in a Seventh Day Adventist Church for worship and Bible study. On July 4, 1954, the congregation ordained and installed Rev. James Fricke.

On July 27, 1954, the congregation officially organized with 14 communicant members and purchased property on the corner of 10th Avenue and South Dakota Street. One year later in July the church dedicated a 26 X 60 foot basement chapel as a place of



Pastor Curtiss Seefeldt

worship that was its very own. On July 21, 1957, a chapel superstructure was dedicated (\$28,000) along with a new parsonage (\$16,000). Rev. Cyril Spaude became the parish's third pastor, being ordained and installed on the day of the dedication.

In 1966 Trinity became self-supporting. The group ordained and installed Rev. Wayne Schulz on July 24. On November 18, 1973, a new sanctuary seating 250 plus was dedicated. After twenty years, the Lord blessed the congregation with 381 souls and 264 communicants.

On May 2, 1976, Rev. Douglas Weiser was installed as pastor. In 1977 the voters resolved to open

high water table was eroding the basement walls. On September 30, 1987, Rev. Richard Kanzenbach was installed as pastor.

In 1988, the church property took on a new look. The original church was removed to make way for a fellowship hall and four room education wing. The sanctuary was renovated to include a balcony. The project was dedicated on November 20.

In 1989, Rev. Kevin McKenney was ordained and installed as pastor on June 18. On June 28, 1992, Rev. Curtiss Seefeldt was installed as pastor.

On June 12, 1994, the congregation praised God with a 40th anniversary celebration. A new digital electronic organ was dedicated, as well as *Christian Worship*, the new WELS hymnal. The congregation offered its thanks that by the end of 1993 the Lord of the harvest blessed it with a membership of 411 baptized souls, 305 communicants, and 48 students enrolled in the elementary school.

Not to us, O Lord, but your name be glory.
Not to us, O Lord, but to your name be praise.



Trinity Parsonage

Trinity Lutheran School, using the old church for classrooms. The school was dedicated on August 27, 1978. On July 18, 1982, Rev. Gregory Schulz was ordained and installed as pastor. One year later, the congregation decided to replace the parsonage because a

Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, South Dakota (cont.)

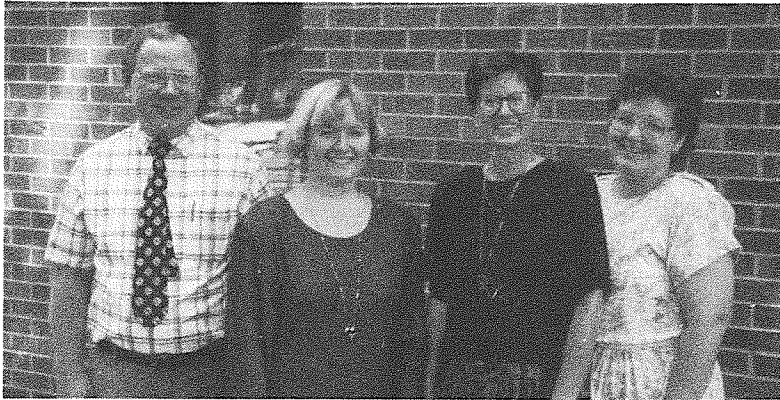
Trinity Lutheran School

Trinity Lutheran School has nurtured the Trinity family since 1978. It started in the fall of that year with 22 students, grades one through six. Since then, the Trinity family has lead more than a hundred youngsters to a closer walk with Christ and trained and equipped them for Christian service. The school currently offers classes to students in grades K to 8.

Although the congregation gave a school serious study as early as 1959, the school became a reality when the congregation could not sell its original house

of worship after a building program in 1973. This left the church with a two level structure. After study the congregation resolved in October, 1977, to open the school the following year. After renovation the structure was ready for service as planned.

In 1988, a fellowship and education addition was built. The fellowship hall gives students a play and physical education area. The education wing currently provides three classrooms and a library that doubles as an area for tutoring students.



*Trinity Teaching Staff from left to right:
Richard Brei, Constance Lake, Jeanine Aasen, Janelle Brei (aid)*

Trinity gives special thanks to the teachers who have served: Alan Draeger 1978-91; Doris Johnson (Pertzsch) 1979-80; Jacqueline Dorn (Nitz) 1980-83; Sharon Becker 1983-89; Gretchen Kempf (Wasser) 1989-90; Christine Winterstein (Kjenstad) 1990-94; Jeanine Aasen 1991 to present; Jonathan Nass 1991-92; Richard Brei 1992 to present; Yolonda Jahraus 1992-93; and Constance Lake 1993-present.

Trinity Lutheran began 1994-95 school year with an enrollment of 35. The school is expecting increasing enrollment for the foreseeable future.

Zion Ev. Lutheran Church, Akaska, South Dakota

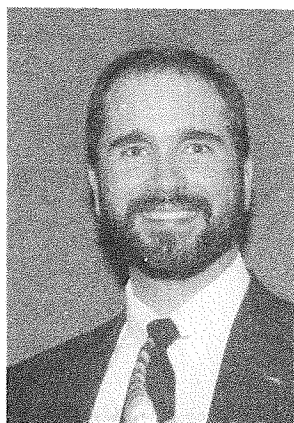


Zion Ev. Lutheran Church, Akaska, South Dakota

In 1899 Pastor William G. Albrecht served a number of congregations including Akaska, Tolstoy, Bowdle, LeBeau, Java, and Mound City.

Pastor Hans Eggert served from 1902-05. Pastor W. F. Sauer served from 1905-10. Zion initially held church services in homes. Later, they had services in a school house.

In 1910 Theophil Albrecht became the first resident pastor at Akaska. A year later on February 25, 1911, a congregation was formally organized at Akaska.



Pastor Tony Hansen

In the fall of 1914, Arthur W. Fuerstenau came. Zion acquired its first church building. It was bought from the Baptists at LeBeau and moved to Akaska. Pastor Fuerstenau served until 1928.

Theodor Bauer served from 1928-36. The present church was built at this time. It was dedicated on December 11, 1928. Rev. Harvey Heckendorf served the congregation from 1936-40. In 1940 Pastor Benjamin A. Borgschatz came to serve. In 1942 St. James, the congregation in

Tolstoy, and Zion aligned. Pastor Borgschatz left in 1945.

Rev. Ralph Gehrke served from 1945-48. In 1946 Zion Lutheran Christian Day School opened.

Rev. Lloyd Huebner served Zion from 1951-54. Zion built a new parsonage under the guidance of Pastor Huebner. It was begun in 1952 and was completed and dedicated in 1953.

During the pastorate of Rev. Kermit Biedendener, who served from 1955-60, the Christian Day School showed its largest growth.

In 1961 a new organ was purchased and much needed bathrooms were installed during the pastorate of Rev. Edgar Gieschen (1960-63).

Rev. Walter D. Herrmann served from 1963-67. During his ministry Zion's interior was renovated.

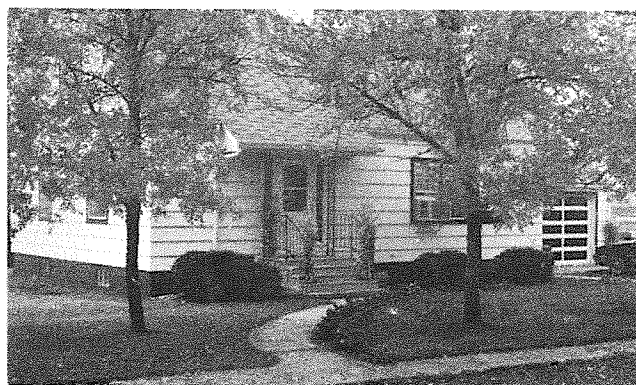
Rev. Daniel Deutschlander served Zion from 1968-70. Durant Shook served from 1970-74. David Linn served Zion from 1974-77.

Rev. Alvin Schulz came in September of 1977. Monday, August 15, 1983, will live in infamy. On that night, a severe storm hit Akaska. From that storm a bolt of lightning hit the steeple of Zion destroying the steeple with fire and doing damage to the bell. After the fire, Zion was remodeled again, most notably with the new steeple and carillon which sounds very much like the old bell. Pastor Schulz left in 1992.

Rev. Tony J. Hansen has served Zion since 1992 to the present. A new organ has been purchased as well as the new hymnals, *Christian Worship - A Lutheran Hymnal*.

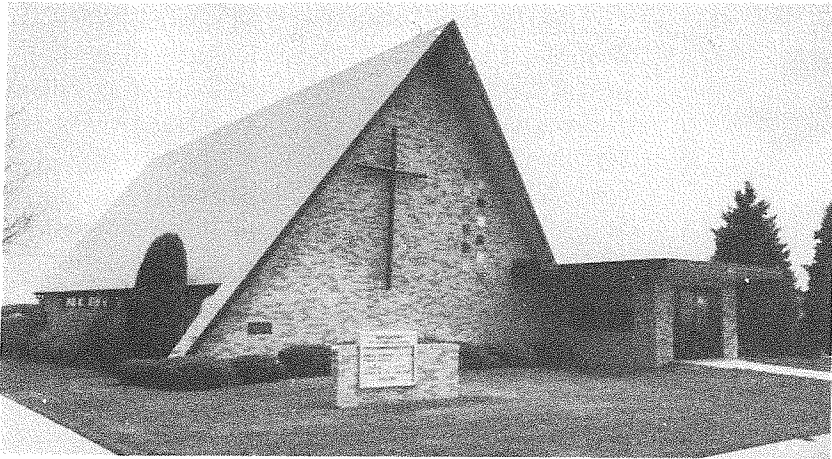
Zion, along with her sister parish St. James, Tolstoy, has realigned with St. Paul, Mound City as of February 27, 1994.

At present, Zion numbers 73 baptized members and 59 communicants.



Zion Parsonage

Our Saviour's Ev. Lutheran Church, Bismarck, North Dakota



Our Saviour's Ev. Lutheran Church, Bismarck, North Dakota

Our Saviour's Ev Lutheran Church, Bismarck, North Dakota, a daughter congregation of The Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Mandan, North Dakota (founded in 1935), held its first WELS service in Bismarck on May 8, 1960. Pastor Reginald E. Pope of Our Redeemer served this mission congregation until October, 1960.

Pastor Roland F. Zimmermann (1960-64) was the first resident pastor. The congregation incorporated in January 1961 and purchased property on the corner of 18th Street and Divide Avenue. The first annual report of the congregation showed that on December 31, 1960 there were 76 baptized souls and 41 communicant members. Pastor Zimmermann was the guiding inspiration and leader in the construction of the parsonage (dedicated in 1961) and the church (dedicated in 1963).



Pastor Carl Lindeman

Pastor George Rothe served the congregation from 1964-71. The congregation grew during these years and numbered 140

baptized souls and 71 communicants when Pastor Rothe accepted a call.

Pastor Robert Pless (1972-77) received the call to Our Saviour's through the assignment committee of WELS. The congregation went self-supporting on July 1, 1974, and a new Baldwin organ was dedicated on February 6, 1977.

Pastor Dale Neyhart served the congregation from 1977-81. On July 13, 1980, the congregation observed the 20th anniversary of its founding.

A few additions and improvements were made during the years of Pastor John A. Ruege Sr. (1981-93). In 1982 a sound amplifying system was installed in the church. The church basement was finished and updated in 1984. A year later the narthex, nave, and chancel were completely carpeted. A new furnace with central air conditioning was installed in the parsonage in 1987, and the exterior of the parsonage was completely permatized. In 1991 the new lighting system was installed in the church and the following year a new entryway was added to the church.

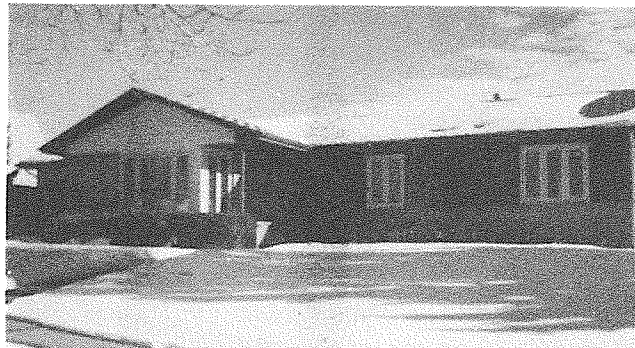
On June 30, 1985, the congregation observed the 25th year of its founding. The 25th anniversary of the completion of the church building was observed on December 11, 1988. Also, on this day the church mortgage was burned.

Pastor Carl Lindeman was installed as the congregation's sixth pastor on January 30, 1994. Prior to his family arriving in Bismarck the parsonage interior was completely renovated.

Five sons of the congregation are serving in the preaching ministry of WELS. They are Timothy Bauer, John Ruege Jr., James Nelson, Thomas Bauer, and Kenneth Nelson. Two daughters of the congregation are presently serving the church in the teaching ministry besides pursuing another calling, that of wife and mother. They are Cassandra (Bauer) Bandelin and Naomi (Ruege) Senter.

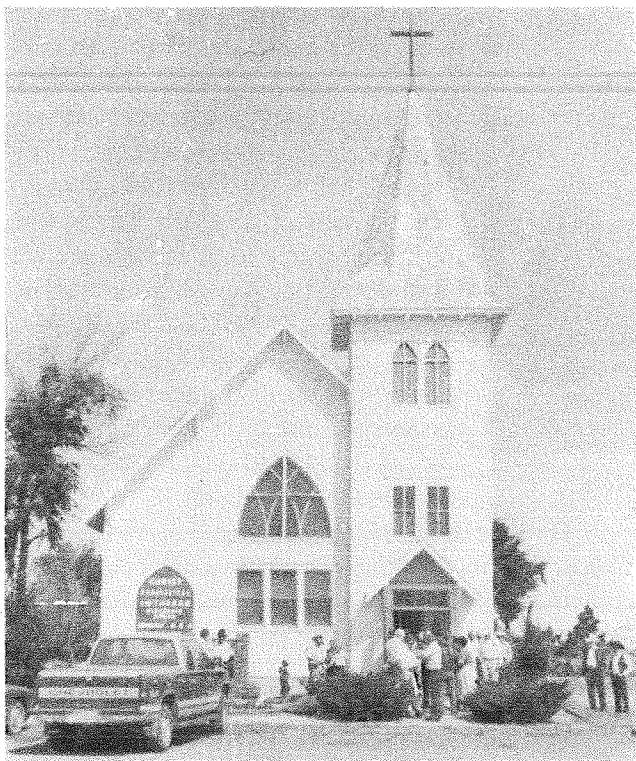
Members of Our Saviour's have been involved in various organizations such as Ladies Mission Society, Boy and Girl Pioneers, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Young People's Society, and Junior and Senior Choir.

At this time, Our Saviour's numbers 255 baptized souls and 195 communicant members.



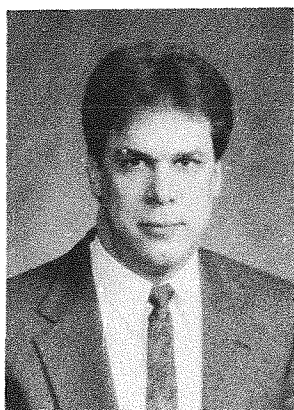
Our Saviour's Parsonage

Christ Ev. Lutheran Church, Bison, South Dakota



Christ Ev. Lutheran Church, Bison, South Dakota

The early history of Christ Lutheran is tied to five other churches. However, Christ's primary roots are the former Meadow and Scotch Cap churches. Three other churches at Athboy, Coal Springs, and Date shared their pastor. Early pastors Lenz, Behm, Neumann, and Kionka lived in Meadow. Around 1915



Pastor Kenneth Bittorf

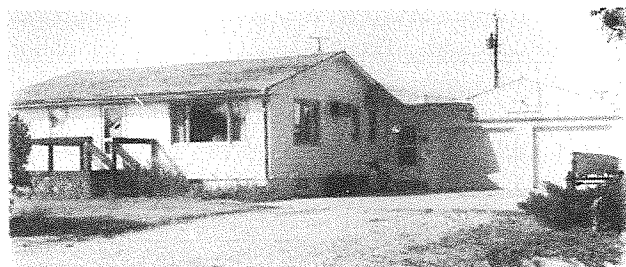
the synod bought a one room parsonage in Bison. Rev. Karl Kuske (1922-27) lived there first. He was followed by Rev. Walter Krueger (1927-30). When Herbert J. Wackerfuss (1930-39) became pastor, dwindling memberships and close proximity led Meadow and Scotch Cap to start meeting jointly at Bison. Eventually they merged and Christ Lutheran signed its constitution June 1, 1938. Rev. Gerhard Ehlert (1940-42), held services in the Seventh Day Adventist Church rented for one dollar a Sunday until 1946. Then the congregation moved to the former Presbyterian church rented from the local school. This, along with the dissolving of Coal Springs happened during Rev. Roy Reede's pastorate (1942-47).

Reede started a building fund used in 1947 under Rev. Max Herrmann (1947-52). Services were being held at the courthouse. In August a foundation with a roof was laid in anticipation of a building. On December 7th, Christ Lutheran began holding services in this covered basement. Many of the furnishings came from St. Paul's, Hazelton, ND, and some are still used today. Pews were loaned by the local Presbyterian church and an organ was bought. With a synod loan, a building was purchased and moved from Reeder, ND. It was dedicated on October 3, 1948.

Pastor Reginald Pope in Lemmon served the vacancy until Rev. John Balash (1953-54) was called. The following extended vacancy was again served by Pope (1954-56) and Vernon Greve (1956-58) after him. Pope's workload was reduced in 1955 when Date joined Christ, and Athboy joined Lemmon. Christ joined an association of five churches including Faith and Dupree in 1958. Pastor Robert Wendland served these churches out of Bison from 1959. He moved to Faith in 1960 and served Bison until Christ realigned with Hettinger and Reeder under pastor R.E. Buss in 1960.

After Buss left, Christ's long vacancy was served from Faith by Nathan Engel (1964-68). Finally, candidate Fred Fedke III (1968-72) was assigned to Reeder, Hettinger, and Bison. Christ also purchased its present place of worship that year, a building owned by the Assembly of God congregation. Pastor Larry Wiederich served from July, 1973, to July, 1976. During Rev. Terry Yahr's pastorate (1976-87) a brick sign was built for the church, the theater seats were replaced with pews, and in 1982 a pipe organ was bought and installed by Howard Nolte of Sioux Falls, SD. It was dedicated November 21. Sadly, Zion of Reeder closed in 1979.

In 1987 pastor Tim Johnston (1987-92) was installed and Christ celebrated its 50th anniversary. A parsonage fund was started and eventually used to buy the present parsonage in Bison in 1990. The present pastor, Kenneth Bittorf, was ordained and installed January 10, 1993. Christ currently numbers 104 souls and 73 communicants.



Christ Lutheran Parsonage

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, Bowdle, South Dakota

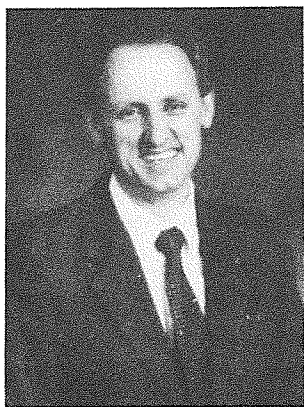


St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, Bowdle, South Dakota

St. John's had its start in 1888 when Pastor G. Lahme, who resided in Redfield, came to the Germans living in the area. He gathered a number of families in the William Haupt home to conduct the first Lutheran services in the area.

The Minnesota Synod, which later became the Minnesota District of the Evangelical Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States, sent Pastor R. Volkert as St. John's first resident pastor in 1889. Pastor Volkert also served the Theodore Township Church southwest of Bowdle.

Until now the congregation had not been organized. Pastor C. F. Malchow came to St. John's and on May 10, 1891, the congregation was formally organized.



Pastor Winfried Schroeder

The 15 men who signed the constitution were Frank Doherr, William Haupt, William F. Sorweid, John Rosin, Michael Nusz, William Schick, Jacob Buechler, John Buechler, Michael Buechler Sr., Michael Buechler Jr., Jacob Kurle, Christian Himmerick, August Fitzlaff, John Brandt, and Gottfried Fitzlaff.

Julius Engel served St. John's for a few months in 1892. In January of 1893 Pastor R. Fehlau came to serve the congregation. It was not until October 10, 1898, that St. John's dedicated its own church. Public school rooms had been used for worship up to that point.

Pastor J. C. A. Gehm took over the pastorate in 1901. Pastor O. Keller accepted the call in 1904 and

served the congregation until the time of his death on Christmas Eve in 1916.

During his pastorate the parsonage was enlarged, a bell was purchased by the Ladies' Aid in 1905, and a schoolhouse of cement block was built in 1908. In 1928 the schoolhouse was razed in order to make room for the present parsonage. A basement was added at this time to provide a place for schooling the congregation's children.

Pastor Carl Schweppe succeeded Rev. Keller. In 1920 Pastor Schweppe became a professor at our synod's Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm,

Minnesota. Pastor F. Traub then served St. John's until he accepted a call to our synod's Northwestern Lutheran Academy in Mobridge. In 1927 the vacancy was filled when Pastor Paul Albrecht accepted the call extended to him. On November 21, 1943, a building fund was started for improvement of the church. At the annual meeting on November 11, 1945, a decision was made to enlarge the church. In the fall of 1947 the new and beautiful structure was dedicated.

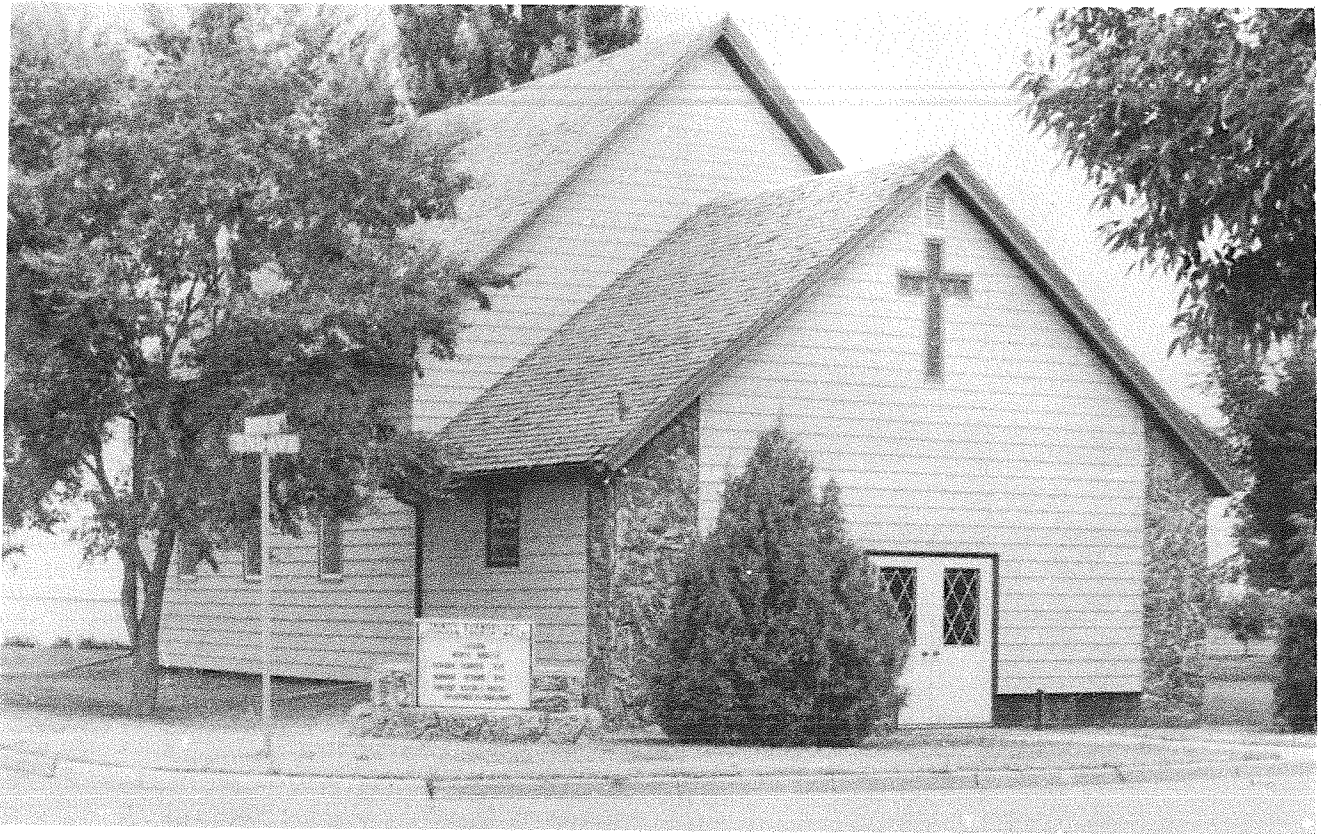
St. John's observed its Golden Anniversary on August 29, 1936. Former pastors J. C. A. Gehm and C. L. Schweppe, and two sons of the congregation, Pastors Samuel and Alvin Baer, served as festival speakers.

Hearts were disturbed in 1959 when the congregation was split over the issue of church fellowship, thus ending the pastorate of Paul Albrecht at Bowdle.

Professor K. G. Sievert of our Academy in Mobridge served as interim pastor until November, 1962, when W. F. Sprengler was installed. He retired from the public ministry in May, 1970. Pastor Loyal Schroeder accepted the call to St. John's and served until February 1978. Mark Johnston, a 1978 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, was assigned to St. John's in May of that year. Six years later Pastor Johnston accepted a call to the home mission field in Florida. On July 15, 1984, another seminary graduate, Paul Marggraf, was installed at St. John's. He was followed by another graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Steve Handorf, who served until November, 1993.

On July 1, 1994, St. John's entered into a dual parish arrangement with St. Paul's of Roscoe and Pastor Gerald Blobaum served both congregations. In 1995 Pastor Winfried Schroeder accepted the Call to serve St. John's and St. Paul's.

Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Carson, North Dakota



Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Carson, North Dakota

Trinity was begun in 1908 by Rev. Frank Wittfaut, a “traveling missionary” from the Minnesota Synod. The first service was held at the Sunny Slope



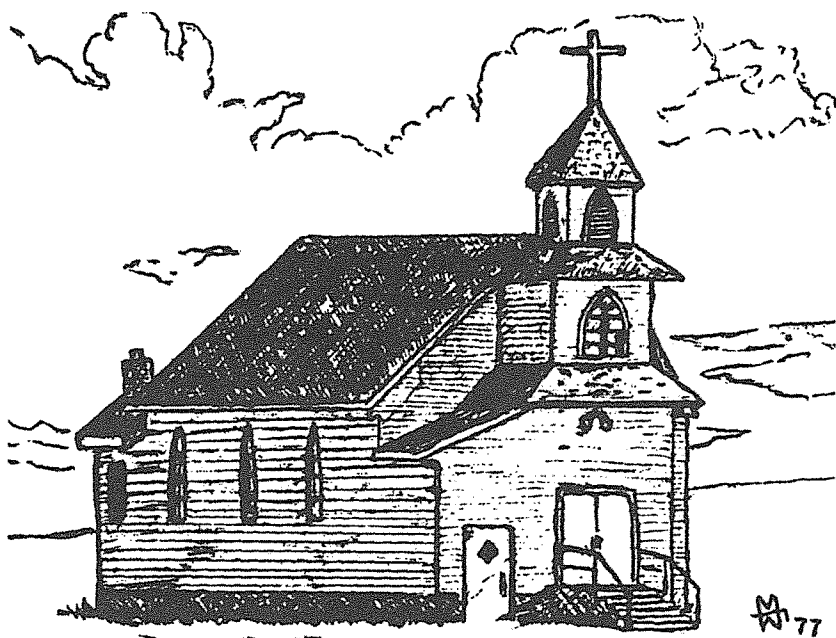
Pastor Wayne Rouse

School House, north of Carson. In the early days services could not be held every Sunday since Trinity was only a preaching station. During the winter of 1908-09 Trinity held their services in Pastor Wittfaut’s own house at Noel. In the Spring of 1909 the services were shifted to a sod school house near Carson. During

the summer of 1910 a church building was erected out at Noel. (In 1918 this building was moved from Noel to Carson.) This became the place of worship for Trinity until 1950 when they purchased the old Catholic Church building for \$3,000. The building has been kept in good repair and is still in use today. In 1975 St. Luke’s congregation of Leith, North Dakota, closed its doors and most of the people became members of Trinity.

Presently the congregation numbers 90 souls. Pastors who have served the congregation are: Frank Wittfaut, Peter Schlemmer, Fredrick Traub, Adolf Lenz, W. J. Schmidt, Herm. Mutterer, E. J. Otterstatter, Donald Boerner, Harold Johne, George Enderle, Lyle Schalow, Richard Strobel, Vicar Kirby Spevacek, William Russow, David Neumann, Carl Lindemann, Lloyd Fager, and Wayne Rouse.

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, Rural Carson, (Paradise) North Dakota



St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, Rural Carson, (Paradise) North Dakota

Here a pastor marks the roads by the places he's been stuck, and where he might find help in a pinch.

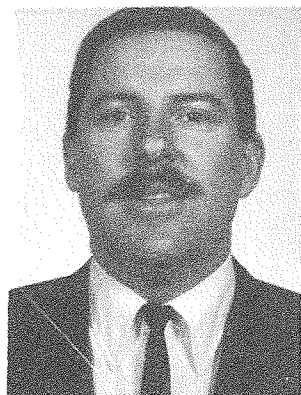
Warning barricades were up because the culvert was washed out. A narrow span remained which was only partly fallen in. Pastor hadn't been warned! He was between services, caught in a 10 mile *cul-de-sac*, with precious time already stolen by the muddy roads. He backed up, prayed, and hit it at a run.

Just this fall, Pastor arrived late for a confirmation class because his car stalled in the Cedar River ford.

A young man hoisted an entire half carcass to his shoulder and carried it down the plank steps to the basement butcher table. That cow was a gift to the

pastor. During a lull in the butchering, his elders performed (and challenged) jumping over a broom handle while maintaining hold with spread hands.

A certain rough spring, the dead ewes were lying swollen along a yard fence. Pastor stopped and asked for a pelt to repad his saddle. The owner offered me all I'd like; but I'd be doing the skinning.



Pastor Paul Heiderich

Vacation Bible School includes a one mile race, with 20 years history. 105 attendance at the Children's Eve Service! At the Christmas Day service, 12.

This is St. John's of Paradise, recently.

In 1907, eight families of German Russians settled about 25 miles north of McIntosh between the Cedar and Cannonball Rivers. Harsh weather during 1910 to 1912 led many new settlers back out of the country. Those persistent German Russians from Eureka, and formerly Odessa, S. Russia, founded a church. Pastor Gustav Adolph (1910-12) lived on his own place and seems to have served other groups as well as St John's. Pastor H. Wiedemann, July to fall, 1913, is the first recorded in the minutes. From the fall of 1914, for about a year, Pastor Berg from Mobridge promised "to do what the distances permitted." The fall of 1915 Pastor Paul Bast began service from McIntosh which continued until 1944. He served until the spring of 1917.

Pastor E.R. Gamm, December 1917 to 1923, served during the building of the church. His initial salary (congregation and mission support combined) was \$55 per month. Prices for potatoes, sugar, and coal were same as today! Interest was higher! In May of 1921, St John's promised \$2,300 for a new church building. By January, it was paid in full.

Pastor E. Strassen (1923-24) died while serving here. Pastor W. A. Krenke served 1925-28. Pastor John J. Wendland (1929-39) was allowed to preach in English during the afternoon service on January 1, 1932.

Also serving were Pastor R. Bretzmann 1933-42; A. H. Birner 1942-44; H. Mutterer 1944-46; E. J. Otterstatter 1947-51; D. Boerner 1952-53; Harold Johnne 1953-57; George Enderle 1957-62; and Lyle F. Schalow 1962-65. Vicar Kirby Spevacek stepped out of a pickup and learned the unique sound of a rattlesnake in 1966-67. Wm. Russow 1967 -71 and Dennis Hayes 1971-73 also served. A.F.W. Geiger rejoined our synod from the CLC and served the vacancy in June of 1973. He spoke resounding words of advice and love for the West to the latest "Wisconsinite," Paul G. Heiderich.

The most important spiritual history of a congregation cannot be written. That is God's working upon the hearts, the faithfulness which holds Jesus. May God bless us all to-long for its reading on the glorious Day of Redemption!

Shepherd of the Hills Ev. Lutheran Church, Custer, South Dakota



Shepherd of the Hills Ev. Lutheran Church, Custer, South Dakota

In the 1980s WELS families in the Southern Black Hills town of Custer had two church options. They either joined St. Paul's in Rapid City, our large self-supporting congregation to the north, or they became members of Grace in Hot Springs, our synod-supported mission to the south. In the meantime, Custer county was becoming one of the fastest growing counties in the state. The idea of starting an exploratory mission group there was being bandied about.

Area families began meeting to worship in local homes at the beginning of 1985. Synod congregations agreed to support the group financially if they were

served in a dual mission parish with Grace of Hot Springs. So the families began to be served by Pastor John Schuetze. They picked a name, Shepherd of the Hills, and arranged to rent a room in the local community center for worship.

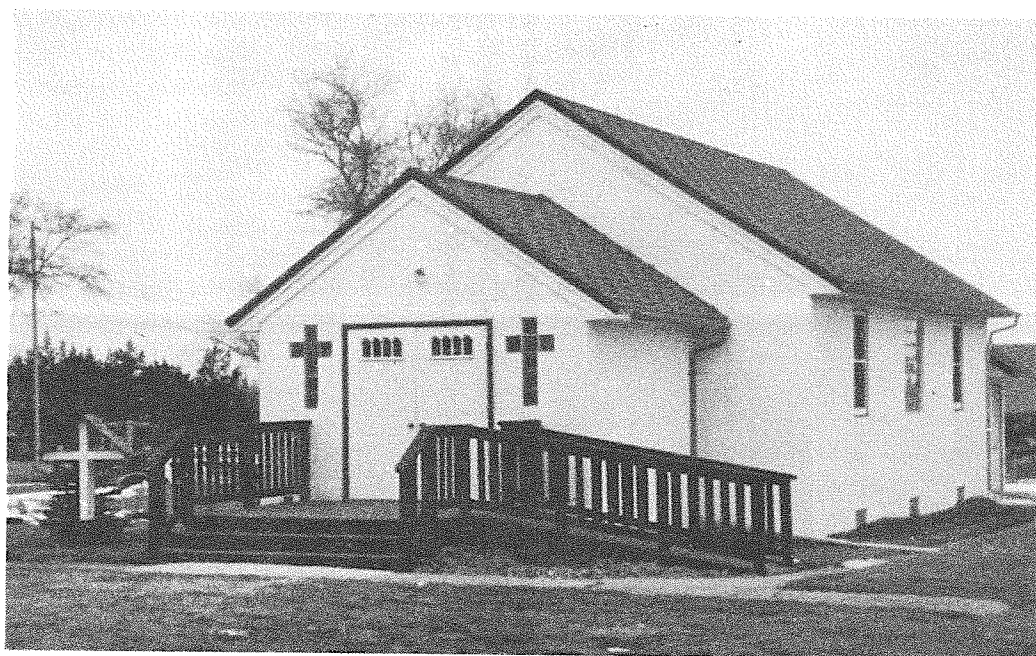
There was always the hope that one day the fledgling congregation would be able to buy or build its own worship structure. Excitement began to build when a submarine sandwich shop went up for sale. It had enough room, seemed to be

in a decent location, and the price was right. With God's blessing and a generous synod loan, Shepherd of the Hills purchased and renovated the building. They dedicated it to God's glory in November of 1988.

Pastor Schuetze accepted another call in June of 1990. About a half year later God sent Pastor Dean Biebert. Pastor Biebert accepted a call and the congregation has been vacant since late 1994.

At present the congregation numbers 29 souls and 20 communicants. The dual parish of Hot Springs/Custer plans to be self-supporting by mid-1996.

First English Ev. Lutheran Church, Dupree, South Dakota



First English Ev. Lutheran Church, Dupree, South Dakota

The history of First English began about 1908 when the first missionaries came into the West River Country. A Mission Congregation was started in the Dupree area in 1913 served by Pastor A. W. Blauert. He briefly lived in Dupree but later moved to Faith. He also served congregations in Redelm, Faith, and for a time Meadow and Drew. Pastor E.H. Neumann served the congregation from 1920-21 followed briefly by Pastor H. Schaar in 1921. Pastor H. Sprengler served the congregation from 1921-23.

Eventually the congregation in Redelm dissolved. During the pastorate of Pastor E.W. Penk the church building of the defunct congregation in Redelm was moved to Dupree. Up until that time the congregation met in school houses and the Congregational Church in Dupree. Pastor H. Schnitker took over in 1928 serving until 1937. During his ministry a preaching station was established in Ridgeview lasting from 1931-47. He was followed by A.G. Eberhart 1937-40, who helped the congregation to celebrate their 25th anniversary in 1939 with a special service in the courtroom of the county courthouse.

Pastor E. Mehlberg served the congregation from 1940-43. In May of 1943 Pastor H.E. Russow was installed serving until 1947. Pastor H. Bauer served the congregation from 1948-51. Pastor A. Brueckner followed from 1952-54. It was during the ministry of Pastor W.K. Hein (1954-57) that the present church

was built. The work on the building began in September of 1955 with labor donated by the members. The first service was held on December 4, 1955. The new building was dedicated December 18, 1955. The cost of the church was \$7,500 of which \$4,000 was borrowed and paid back in full by December 1, 1959. The congregation reached self-supporting status in 1960-61.

Pastor J. Brandt served the congregation from 1957-60.

During the 60s a number of different alignments were formed. In 1960 Pastor R. Wendland of Bison was called to serve Bison, Faith and Dupree. He served the three out of Faith. This three-point parish remained until Pastor H. Flegel arrived in 1962. It then returned to a two point parish of Faith and Dupree until 1965. When Pastor N. Engel arrived in 1965 a five-point parish was formed with Bison, Faith, Dupree, Isabel, and Timber Lake. In 1967 Bison was dropped from the parish and aligned with Hettinger, ND.

In 1969 Pastor T. Schmidt was installed as pastor. He was followed by Pastor G. Richmond in 1974 who helped to form a parish board to discuss matters pertinent to all four congregations. Pastor W. Russow took over in 1979. He served the four congregations until 1985. In February of that year the four congregations voted to split into two two-point parishes. Shortly thereafter Pastor D. Hrobsky was called to serve Dupree and Faith. During his ministry at Dupree the congregation celebrated their 75th anniversary. Part of that celebration included the purchase of 16 new pews and two sedilia (chancel chairs) dedicated on July 9, 1989, during the anniversary service. Pastor C. Oehlke served the congregation from 1991-94.

Currently Pastor J. Ruege is serving as vacancy pastor from Isabel. Membership currently totals 26 communicants and 33 baptized souls.

Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church, Elgin, North Dakota



Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church, Elgin, North Dakota

Immanuel was begun in 1908 by Rev. Frank Wittfaut, a “traveling missionary” from the Minnesota Synod. The first worship services in the vicinity of Elgin were held in 1908 in private homes and school houses. After a time, the services were held in the local hotel. The congregation was formally organized on February 12, 1909, with ten charter members. In 1911 the first house of worship was built on the lots where the present church and parsonage are located. This first building has since been moved and is used by Bethesda Lutheran, south of Elgin. In 1917 Immanuel



Pastor Wayne Rouse

and Trinity of Carson decided, with less than twenty members between them, to go together and form a self-supporting parish. In 1918 the congregation purchased the house next to the church which continued to serve as the parsonage until 1964. The first English service was also held in 1918. Since there were some who were eager for regular services in the English language, an entirely independent English congregation was organized. The statistical report for 1919 listed 120 souls, 46 communicant members, and 19 voting members for the “two” congregations. The “two” congregations have been united again under one constitution since 1935.

In the fall of 1921 a parochial school was opened with approximately 20 pupils in attendance. The school was taught by Miss Anna Hinz, who came from

Wood Lake, MN. Unfortunately, the school’s history is very brief. It was discontinued after two years of operation.

In 1927 the Mission Board realigned Elgin with Zion Lutheran in Burt, North Dakota. In 1938 St. Luke’s of Leith also joined the parish. This arrangement continued until the Leith congregation discontinued services in 1975 and the Burt congregation closed its doors in 1976. At that time, Immanuel again became a partner with Trinity of Carson—an arrangement

which has continued to the present time. As part of its ministry, in 1974, Immanuel began broadcasting taped worship services on KBJM radio in Lemmon, South Dakota—an effort which continues today.

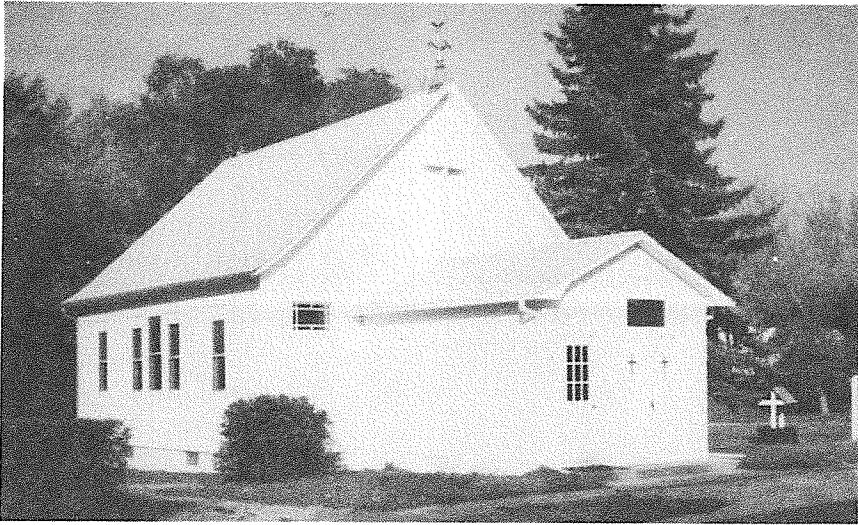
The building which the congregation presently worships in was constructed and dedicated in 1953. New pews were installed in 1963. The present parsonage was constructed in 1965. (The previous parsonage is now located north of the hospital.) A tornado punched a rather large hole in the church roof and damaged some of the pews in 1978. Immanuel added a bell carillon system. Repairs were made to the church foundation and drainage system in 1983. New doors were put into the front of the church in 1988 and air conditioning was installed in both the church and parsonage. In 1989 the parsonage was also fitted with new steel siding and new windows.

The congregation numbers 106 souls 97 communicants. Pastors who have served the congregation are: Frank Wittfaut; W.C. Limpert; P.F. Traub; Adolph Lenz; Walter Hermann; Paul Kuske; Oscar Lemke; Henry Ellwein; Richard Yecke; Gerhard Cares; John Murphy; William Bernhardt; David Neumann; Carl Lindemann; Lloyd Fager; and Wayne Rouse.



Immanuel Parsonage

St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Faith, South Dakota



St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Faith, South Dakota

The early history of St. Paul's began in 1910 when a few German Lutheran families gathered to hear God's Word and celebrate Lord's Supper in members' homes. They were at first served by pastors from the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Later, however, this mission field was turned over to what is now the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church was officially organized on July 26, 1914. The first resident pastor for the congregation was Rev. A. Blauert.

Building on the present church building began in 1913 before the congregation was officially organized and was completed by the time the congregation was officially incorporated in 1914. While serving St. Paul's, Rev. Blauert also served congregations north of Redelm, in Redelm, Dupree and for a time Meadow and Drew all by horse and buggy. In 1919 the current parsonage was started and completed. It was in the same year that English services were begun every other Sunday and a Sunday School was also organized.

Rev. E.H. Neumann served the congregation from 1919-21 followed briefly by Pastor H. Schaar in 1921. Pastor H. Sprengler served the congregation from 1921-23. Pastor E.W. Penk followed from 1925-27. Pastor H. Schnitker took over in 1928 serving until 1937. During his pastorate, in 1935, the church was redecorated and new pews installed. He was followed by A.G. Eberhart, 1937-40, who helped the congregation to celebrate its 25th anniversary in 1939.

Pastor E. Mehlberg served the congregation from 1940-43. In May of 1943 Pastor H.E. Russow was installed serving until 1947. Pastor H. Bauer served the congregation from 1948-51. Pastor A. Brueckner followed from 1952-54. Pastor W.K. Hein served from

1954-57. Pastor J. Brandt served the congregation from 1957-60.

During the 60s a number of different alignments were formed. In 1960 Pastor R. Wendland of Bison was called to serve Bison, Faith and Dupree. He served the three out of Faith. This three-point parish remained until Pastor H. Flegel arrived in 1962. The congregation along with its parish partners reached self-supporting status in 1960-61. In 1964 St. Paul's celebrated 50 years of God's grace. In 1962 it returned to a dual parish with Dupree until 1965. When Pastor N. Engel arrived in 1965 a five-point parish was formed

with Bison, Faith, Dupree, Isabel, and Timber Lake. In 1967 Bison was dropped from the parish and aligned with Hettinger, ND.

In 1969 Pastor T. Schmidt was installed as pastor. He was followed by Pastor G. Richmond in 1974 who helped form a parish board to discuss matters pertinent to all four congregations. Pastor W. Russow took over in 1979. He served the four congregations until 1985. It was during this time that stained glass windows and new pews were added. In February of 1985 the four congregations voted to split into two two-point parishes. Shortly thereafter Pastor D. Hrobosky was called to serve Faith and Dupree. During his ministry at Faith the congregation celebrated its 75th anniversary. Pastor C. Oehlke served the congregation from 1991-94.

Currently, Pastor K. Bittorf is serving as vacancy pastor from Bison. Membership currently totals 38 communicants and 47 baptized souls.



St. Paul Parsonage

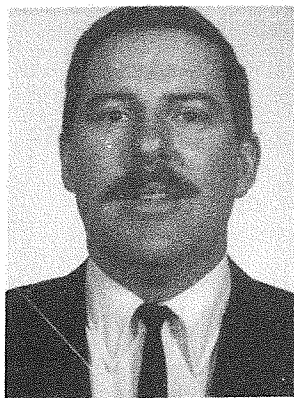
Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Flasher, North Dakota



Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Flasher, North Dakota

In April of 1908, Pastor Frank Wittfaut stepped off the train at Almont, ND. Within three weeks, the first Lutheran worship service at Flasher, ND, was held at a schoolhouse about 2 1/2 miles north of town. A congregation was established and services held every three weeks. Names of the constituting membership include: Kollamn, Wagner, Lange, Mertens, Meyer, Wolfgram.

Worshipping in various places, there was always talk of building a church. On August 1, 1915, the



Pastor Paul Heiderich

cornerstone was laid for a 32' X 20' building 10' high with an adjoining room. This room became bachelor Wittfaut's office and home. (Pioneer Pastor Wittfaut's chair is on display in our synod museum.)

Pastor Wittfaut's successor in 1917, Peter Schlemmer, was married. Thus, a separate parsonage was called for. Our synod rented and later purchased

a home for the Schlemmers, which Trinity, in turn purchased in 1929. This house was moved across the street from the church in 1930. Both it and the former

church building stand today. Pastor Schlemmer suffered a stroke and died on June 18, 1926.

Pastor W.J. Schmidt was installed on September 4, 1927. He served both Trinity of Flasher and Trinity of Carson. The following spring, he served a congregation at Carl School located about seven miles northwest of Lark which is about seven miles west of Flasher and north of the highway and stream. (The M. Werners still reside at Lark.) The congregation at Carl School closed in 1936.

Pastor Schmidt was succeeded by H.A. Mutterer who served Trinity from 1934 to 1946

which was the longest tenure. In January, 1944, St. John's of Paradise joined Trinity, Flasher, and Trinity, Carson. This tri-parish remained until 1971. It was served by Pastors: E.J. Otterstatter 1947-51; Donald Boerner 1952; Harold Johnne 1953-57; George Enderle 1957-63; Lyle Schallow 1963-65; William Russow 1967-71. The last 18 months Pastor Russow also served as vacancy pastor to Watauga, Morristown, and McIntosh—in effect a 6-point parish!

In 1971, Trinity joined Redeemer of Mandan and was served by Pastor Marvin Putz until 1973. On October 22, 1972, the present 52' X 24' church was dedicated. Pastor Robert Krueger served 1973-75. From 1975 to January, 1981, Pastor Carl Lindemann maintained interim services from his Elgin-Carson parish. From 1981-85, Pastor Lloyd Fager accepted the call to Trinity of Flasher and served the tri-parish of Elgin-Carson-Flasher.

In May, 1985, area churches met at Flasher and determined realignment. Trinity of Flasher joined St. John's of Paradise and St. Paul's of McIntosh to be served by their pastor, Pastor Paul Heiderich, who would relocate to a renovated rural parsonage at Flasher. From this pioneering settlement of Flasher, ND, he happily serves our only remaining tri-parish west of the Missouri River.

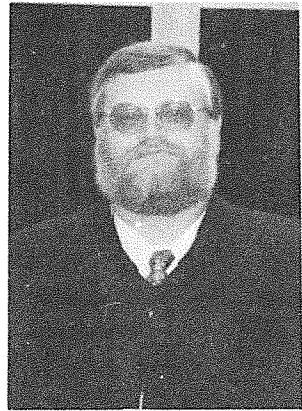
Christ Our Redeemer Ev. Lutheran Church, Gillette, Wyoming



Christ Our Redeemer Ev. Lutheran Church, Gillette, Wyoming

Monthly exploratory services began in October of 1980. Pastor David Russow from Casper, WY, conducted the services. In the summer of 1981 services were expanded to three services a month. Pastor Gerhold Lemke of Sturgis, SD, conducted the service on the 4th Sunday of the month.

Services were conducted in various meeting rooms and eventually were held at the Foothills Community Center. In June of 1983, the worship services were held at the American Legion Hall until April of 1986, when the Worship/Education/Fellowship building was dedicated at 1010 Beaver Drive. Pastor Lemke and Pastor Russow preached for the dedication services.



Pastor Alan Gumm

Pastor James Bolda was assigned to Christ Our Redeemer Ev. Lutheran Church and was ordained and installed on July 11, 1982, by Pastor David Russow. The parsonage,

located on Greenway, was relocated to Hills Loop in 1983. Sunday School was held at the parsonage.

The Women's Circle and the Youth Group were organized in 1982. The Boy and Girl Pioneers were organized in 1983. Mission status was granted February 13, 1983.

Monthly services and Bible Class were begun in Sheridan in 1984.

The present parsonage was dedicated on June 5, 1984, at 2113 South Autumn Court.

On June 17, 1986, our congregation left the Nebraska District and joined the Dakota-Montana District.

Pastor James Bolda served our congregation until November 19, 1989. Pastor Robert Weimer was installed January 28, 1990, and retired from the ministry on April 26, 1992. Pastor Alan Gumm was installed June 14, 1992.

Daniel Lucero was the first child to be confirmed in our group in Sheridan on July 5, 1992.

The altar, lectern, pulpit, and baptismal font were built by Paul Scherf, Tom Volk, and Rick Allerdings, with help from other members. The

paraments were hand-embroidered by the women of the congregation.

In July of 1993, a severe hailstorm damaged the roofs on the parsonage and the church. With the insurance money our members replaced the roof, painted the church, and built a platform for the chancel furniture. In 1994 the parsonage roof was replaced and masonite siding was put on the parsonage utilizing the insurance money.

In September of 1993, exploratory work began in Cody and Powell, WY. Twenty-one people attended the first meeting

Christian Worship - A Lutheran Hymnal was dedicated and replaced the *Lutheran Hymnal* on November 28, 1993.

Summer Vicar Donald Schulz was installed June 5, 1994. He was instrumental in VBS and in outreach work in Gillette, Sheridan, Cody, Powell, and Lowell. His last Sunday in Gillette was August 14, 1994. Because of this outreach effort about 80 prospective families were located.

God's grace has been good to our congregation. We give thanks to God for our 132 souls and 90 communicants. May His grace continue to be with us.



Christ Our Redeemer Parsonage

St. Jacobi Ev. Lutheran Church, Glenham, South Dakota



St. Jacobi Ev. Lutheran Church, Glenham, South Dakota

city of Mobridge in urging the synod to locate its proposed academy in Mobridge. Pastor Gustav Schlegel served from 1938-44. He painted the picture of the Savior in Gethsemane which adorns the east wall of the nave. The congregation and parish were served successively by Pastors Karl Bast (1945-54), Philip Press (1955-57); Herbert Kuske (1957-61).

During the service of Pastor Herbert Birner (1961-69) the church building was moved to a new foundation and enlarged in 1964. The building was rededicated to the glory of God on November

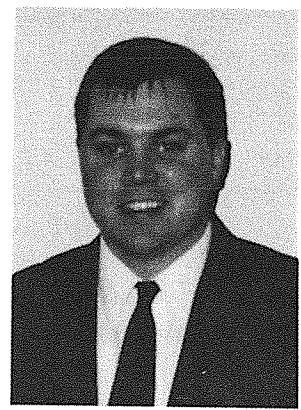
St. Jacobi Lutheran in Glenham, nine miles east of Mobridge, is partner with Zion Lutheran of Mobridge in a dual parish. The Glenham field had been served for many years, even prior to the founding of Mobridge, by pastors from Mound City and Akaska. In 1917 it formed a dual parish with Zion Lutheran under the care of Pastor Edwin Kionka (1916-18). During the pastorate of Albert Eggert (1919-22) St. Jacobi



Pastor Peter Naumann

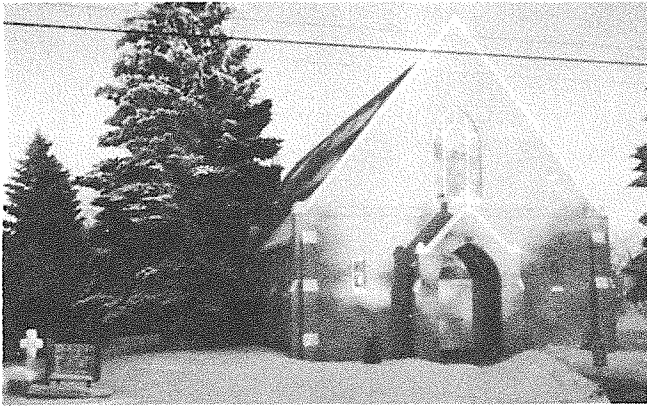
incorporated and joined the new Dakota-Montana District of the Wisconsin Synod. The church building was also erected in 1920. During the pastorate of Edgar Gamm (1923-38) St. Jacobi joined Zion and the

15, 1964. Pastor David Krenke (1969-79) succeeded Birner. A new electronic organ was purchased and first used in April, 1972. Pastor Mark Lindner (1980-83) encouraged the congregation to give financial support to the Zion Lutheran School. Peter Naumann (1983-present) was installed in November, 1983. Nearly the entire building has been remodeled in the 1980s and 1990s: new siding and shingles were installed; a new ceiling and carpet in the nave and narthex; pew cushions; and basement carpeting. St. Jacobi has always exhibited a strong desire for missions. St. Jacobi is planning to celebrate its 75th anniversary in July, 1995.



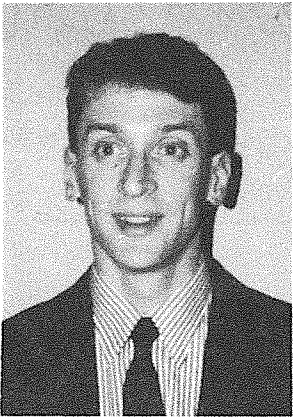
Vicar Jonathan Bilitz

St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Hazelton, North Dakota



St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Hazelton, North Dakota

In 1901 the Minnesota Synod entered Emmons County, North Dakota, with Rev. Georg Adascheck's call to Zeeland and "the territory northwest." Another pastor, Rev. Martin Schuetze, served "the outlying stations." From 1901-05 these two pastors founded several congregations in the county, including one in Hampton Township, a post office near the east bank of the Missouri River. Sadly, departure of the two ministers began a series of long vacancies and brief pastorates. Seeking more reliable care, these congregations turned to the Iowa Synod (now a part of the ELCA). Only a remnant of Trinity Church, Hampton, remained within the Minnesota Synod, served at the Reimer



Pastor Steven Nowicki

schoolhouse by pastors from the Zeeland-Hague parish.

The Minnesota Synod's first attempt to establish a congregation in Hazelton of Emmons County came in 1909. Under the guidance of Zeeland-Hague's pastor, Rev. J. H. Abelmann, services at Trinity, Hartford Township (once called Hampton) transferred to the village of Hazelton. The

effort failed. What remained of the congregation returned to the schoolhouse in Hartford.

After several years of near inactivity, Trinity, Hartford, came alive again in 1912. The newly arrived pastor at Zeeland-Hague, Rev. Martin Keturakat, gave the small mission some much needed attention. By 1917 the pastor at Trinity, now Rev. A. Maas, had begun another outreach attempt in Hazelton. But he accepted a call to another field that same year.

Pastor Samuel Baer from the Streeter-Tappen parish stepped in soon after Pastor Mass' departure.

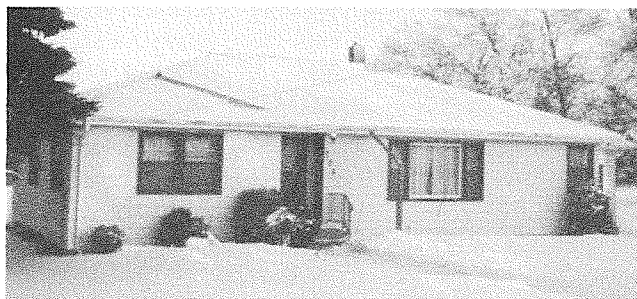
He moved to Hazelton shortly after 1918 to concentrate on the ministry there and at Hartford. By 1923 St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Hazelton, North Dakota had organized and joined in a mission parish with Trinity. St. Paul's incorporated on May 31 that year. After years of worshiping in rented locations—such as the Presbyterian church, a theater, a lodge hall, and a barn—the Wisconsin Synod (with which the Minnesota Synod had merged in 1917) loaned the congregation \$2,000 to build a church. St. Paul's dedicated its house of worship in June, 1924.

"Hartford abandoned," one synod document recorded in 1930. The one remaining family at Trinity Church began attending services in Hazelton. With that, the rural partner and "mother church" of St. Paul's quietly closed its doors.

Other notable dates in the history of St. Paul's are: 1928, the year it became a member of the Wisconsin Synod. April of 1946, the month it became a self-supporting congregation. And December 7th, 1947, the day its members dedicated the modern Gothic style church building that still serves the congregation today.

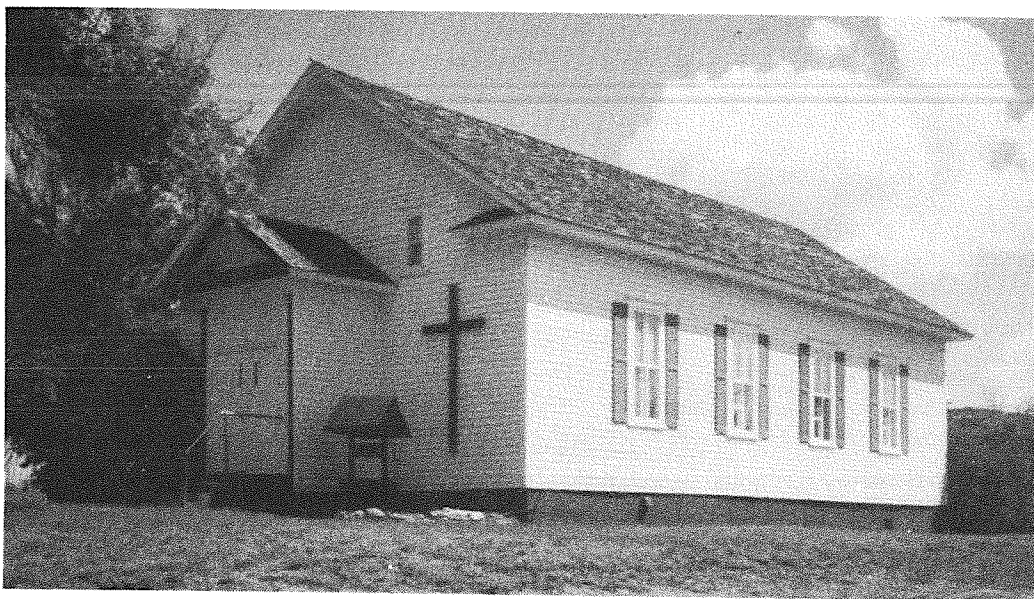
Hazelton's decline in population and the frequent outbound transfers at St. Paul's led the church to look at sharing pastor and ministry with another congregation. In 1995 St. Paul's, Hazelton, formed a dual parish with Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church of Zeeland, North Dakota, partnering the two remaining congregations that resulted from Pastors Adascheck and Keturakat's Gospel work over eighty years earlier.

These pastors have served one or both of the Hartford-Hazelton congregations. Martin Schuetze 1903-05; J. F. W. Pieper 1905-07; J. H. Abelmann 1908-09; Martin Keturakat 1912-14; E. G. Hertler 1914-16; Alfred Maas 1917; Samuel Baer 1918-25; E. Hinderer 1925; Walter Hermann 1925-27; G. Schlegel 1927-34; H. A. Schulz 1935-40; H. Heckendorf 1940-42; G. J. Ehlert 1942-49; George Baer 1950-55; E. O. Schultz 1955-62; Daniel Buske 1962-68; Nathan Engel 1969-72; A. P. C. Kell 1972-80; Alan W. Gumm 1980-86; and Steven Nowicki 1986-present.



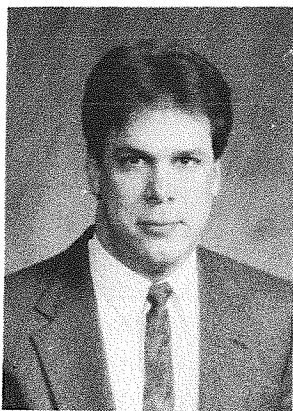
St. Paul Parsonage

Redeemer Ev. Lutheran Church, Hettinger, North Dakota



Redeemer Ev. Lutheran Church, Hettinger, North Dakota

Redeemer came about because of a Dakota-Montana Mission Board decision in the early 1950s to try outreach in Hettinger again. A previous church, St. John's, had eventually closed. This new effort was to be a dual parish with Zion of Reeder, ND. Redeemer also traces its roots to the former Redeemer Lutheran of White Butte, SD. Early in 1953 that church was dissolved and provided a core group which moved into the old Catholic church in Hettinger, purchased by the Mission Board. They brought the name of their old church and an enthusiasm to serve the Lord at this new



Pastor Kenneth Bittorf

location. Pastor Reginald Pope served the vacancy from St. Luke's in Lemmon until a permanent pastor was called. Candidate Paul Koch was assigned from the seminary, and was ordained and installed on July 6, 1953. Redeemer held its organizational meeting in January, 1954. Current members, Harry Swendsen, Jacob Maier, and Clavin Frey were elected as the first officers. One of their first decisions was to inquire about Redeemer's present pulpit and altar being offered by a sister congregation in Roscoe, SD.

Pastor Reginald Pope served the vacancy from St. Luke's in Lemmon until a permanent pastor was called. Candidate Paul Koch was assigned from the seminary, and was ordained and installed on July 6, 1953.

Redeemer held its organizational meeting in January, 1954. Current members, Harry Swendsen, Jacob Maier, and Clavin

Hazleton, ND. Shortly thereafter Pastor Bloemen accepted a Call.

Pastor Richard Buss was installed in July of 1958. In 1960 Christ of Bison joined Redeemer and Zion of Reeder in a tri-parish. Pastor Buss received many Calls during his nearly seven years, but the Call he finally accepted was as Dean of Northwestern Lutheran Academy. Later he would become a professor at Doctor Martin Luther College in New Ulm, MN.

Rev. Donald Krause served the extended vacancy after Buss. In December of 1967 the congregation decided to purchase a new organ and accept a gift of pews from Zion of Zeeland, ND. During the next year a decorative cross was added to the front of the church building and a garage was built for the parsonage. Candidate Fred Fedke III (1968-72) was ordained and installed in July. Three years later Redeemer became self-supporting.

Pastor Larry Wiederich was called and served from July of 1973 to May of 1976. Rev. Terry Yahr was called next and served Redeemer until January of 1987. During his pastorate Zion of Reeder was dissolved in 1979. Pastor Tim Johnston served from May of 1987 to December of 1992. While he was pastor a new parsonage was purchased in Bison in 1990. The present pastor, Kenneth Bittorf, was called as a candidate and installed and ordained on January 10, 1993. On November 1, 1993, Redeemer celebrated 40 years of God's grace. Pastor Pope was the guest speaker. Redeemer presently totals 21 souls and communicants.

In January of 1956 Pastor Koch accepted a Call to Minnesota. Pastor Pope served the vacancy until another candidate was assigned. Thomas Vander Bloemen was ordained and installed in July 1956. In May of 1957, the congregation decided to purchase the former Congregational church's parsonage. It was dedicated in August by Pastor Edmund Schulz of

Grace Ev. Lutheran Church, Hot Springs, South Dakota



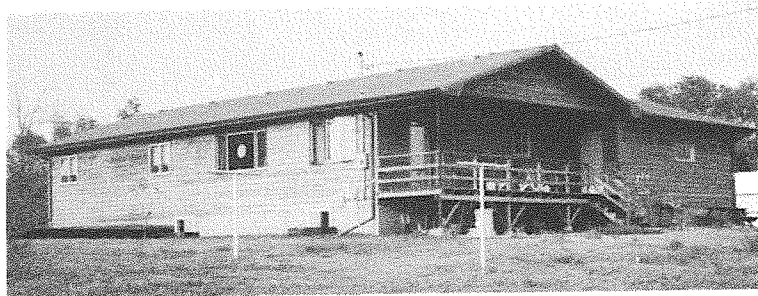
Grace Ev. Lutheran Church, Hot Springs, South Dakota

WELS families in the Southern Black Hills area had been attending church in Rapid City for years. A large enough group was making the trek to St. Paul's Lutheran for the people to begin thinking of starting their own church. They began with an informal service held in a local home on March 8, 1978. The first formal Sunday service took place four days later, with 25 people worshipping. Those first three years, the fledgling group met in the auditorium of the local hospital.

Pastor Loyal L. Schroeder, a district missionary, served the congregation during its initial year. He helped the people conduct their first vacation Bible school and organize their ladies' group.

Things began happening quickly for these people starting out on their own. The synod's Mission Board granted mission status, along with the promise of substantial financial help, to the group in February of 1979. A month later the congregation picked an official name for their group, "Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church," and adopted a constitution. People began giving to their own church building fund.

Just a few months later Grace was allowed to call their first pastor. Pastor Bruce Wietzke accepted the



Grace Parsonage

call in May of 1979. Wayne Schulz, pastor of our Rapid City congregation, had a hand here too, in installing him. The house for the new pastor ended up being the very same home where earlier the people had held their first informal worship.

June of 1981 brought the

next big "first" for the young congregation. God gave them their own church building. The local Jehovah's Witnesses group was vacating its building. It was being sold at a public auction. Leaders of Grace made a bid, and it was accepted! It was a small building, but it suited the congregation's needs.

In November of 1984 Pastor Wietzke accepted a call. The Lord sent Pastor John Schuetze a few months later so work could continue. Thanks to the Lord's hand, the congregation was continuing to grow. It was time to make plans to build or buy a new church. People used to stand outside the little church and admire the Church of God's beautiful structure across the street.

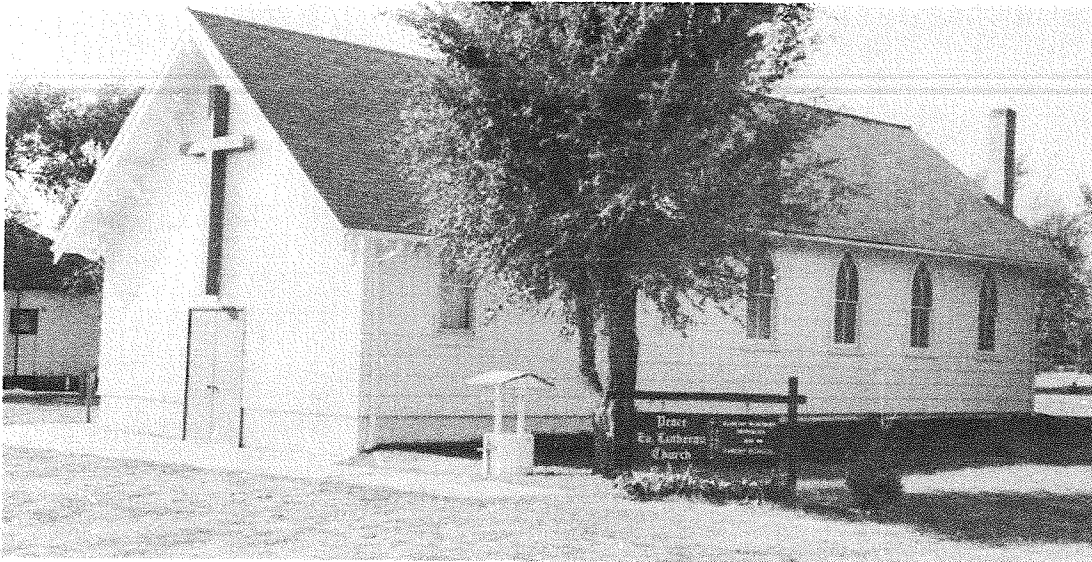
See how our God works! That building came up for sale, and it was just the right size. There were so many things the current church didn't have such as: a basement, Sunday School rooms, and a nice kitchen. With the help of our fellow synod members, Grace was able to purchase it, along with the adjoining land in May of 1995. Members chipped together to renovate it, fix up some out-of-state pews, and set up a different organ.

There was room for a new parsonage on the land. The Lord granted that as well in 1987.

Pastor Schuetze accepted a call in June of 1990. About a half year later God sent Pastor Dean Biebert. Pastor Biebert accepted a Call and the congregation has been vacant since late 1994.

Grace is made up of 58 souls and 47 communicant members.

Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Isabel, South Dakota



Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Isabel, South Dakota

The WELS came to Isabel, SD, in 1917 when Pastor Max Cowalsky, who commuted by train from Timber Lake, SD, began holding services every three weeks in private homes. Later, as the congregation grew, services were held in a school house fifteen miles west of Isabel. Illness forced Pastor Cowalsky to leave the congregation in 1936.

After a vacancy of about a year, Pastor Benjamin Borgschatz accepted the call to serve Isabel, Timber Lake, and Trail City.

In 1941, under the pastorate of Armin Schuetze, the congregation merged with a church of the Iowa



Pastor John Ruege, Sr.

Synod in Isabel, and Peace Ev. Lutheran Church came into being. The congregation worshipped in the church building constructed by the Iowa Synod in 1928. A basement and narthex were added later and the church is still used by the congregation today.

Pastors serving the three-point parish were: Armin Schuetze, 1941-43; Marvin Hanker 1944-48; Armin Schuetze, vacancy; Norman Lindloff, 1949-52; Armin Schuetze, vacancy; Stanley Halt, 1953-57; John Johannes, 1957-60; Wayne Ten Broek, vacancy.

Under the pastorate of David Krenke, who served from 1961-63, the church at Trail City closed its doors, and a four-point parish of the churches at Isabel, Tim-

ber Lake, Faith, and Dupree, SD, was formed. It was determined that the pastor would live at Faith, so the parsonage at Isabel was sold.

Pastors serving this four-point parish were: Helmut Flegel, 1963-64, vacancy; Nathan Engel, 1965-69;

Herbert Birner, vacancy; Thomas Schmidt, 1969-74; Gary Richmond, 1974-79; Wm. Russow, 1979-85; and Paul Heiderich, vacancy.

By 1985 it became apparent that the four-point parish could not be served adequately by one pastor, so it was divided once again. Faith and Dupree would be served by one pastor and Isabel and Timber Lake by another. A mobile home was purchased and placed on two lots east of the church and serves as the parsonage for Isabel and Timber Lake to the present time. At a later date a permanent addition was added.

Pastors serving the joint parish with Timber Lake: Randy Bader, 1985-89; Peter Naumann, vacancy; Jeffrey Heitsch, 1989-93; and John Ruege, Sr., 1993-present.

Peace Congregation has a choir and a Ladies Aid Society which meets monthly. It is a charter member of *The Message of Peace* radio broadcast heard weekly over KOLY, Mobridge, SD.

The congregation thanks God for graciously serving the community of Isabel with his precious Word for these 77 years.



Peace Parsonage

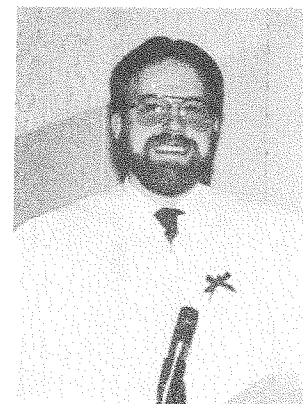
The Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Mandan, North Dakota



The Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Mandan, North Dakota

The history of the Lutheran Church Of The Redeemer begins back in the early 1930s, when Rev. W. J. Schmidt and Rev. Gustav Schlegel came to the Mandan area of North Dakota to explore its mission possibilities. Their findings were presented to the District Mission Board, which then called Rev. Edward H. Krueger as the first pastor for the new mission field. Rev. Krueger came to Mandan in July, 1934, and held the first worship service on August 5, 1934. By November, 1935, a name for the new congregation was chosen, and a constitution adopted. There were 59

members in the congregation by the end of 1935. The congregation was granted a Charter of Incorporation in 1941. Land was purchased on the corner of Fifth Avenue and 2nd Street NW in Mandan for a new church building. In May, 1943, the home adjacent to the church lot was purchased for use as a parsonage. The congregation had been renting



Pastor David Reichel

various houses in the area to serve as the parsonage to this time, and was renting the Episcopal Church for its

worship services and meetings. By May, 1945, the congregation had to go to two services per Sunday to accommodate its growth to 223 members.

Redeemer congregation became self-supporting on July 1, 1948. One year later, on May 5, 1949, excavation began for the new church building. A cornerstone was laid on July 17, 1949, with the building being finished and dedicated on July 23, 1950. These facilities have served the congregation to the present time.

In January, 1971, discussion was begun regarding a Christian Day School for Redeemer. A School Fund was started in January, 1977, and a committee appointed to begin a land search. By December, 1977, the congregation had purchased land in north Mandan for a new church building with provisions for a Christian Day School.

In April, 1981, the 5th Avenue NW church building was put up for sale, with construction on the new building to begin in north Mandan in the near future. In 1983 the Building Committee recommended building the Christian Day School first with a worship facility to follow later. Plans fell through, however, and by 1991, after further review and consideration, Redeemer congregation decided not to pursue the construction of the school building and proceeded to sell the land that had been purchased.

Redeemer Lutheran Church has been blessed by our gracious God with faithful, dedicated pastors. We thank our God for these shepherds of his flock: Rev. Edward Krueger 1934-46; Rev. Paul Kuehl 1946-56; Rev. Reginald Pope 1956-62; Rev. Richard Strobel 1962-67; Rev. Marvin Putz 1967-73; Rev. Robert Krueger 1973-79; Rev. Durant Shook 1980-84; Rev. Paul Zittlow 1984-92; and Rev. David Reichel 1992-present.

St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, McIntosh, South Dakota



St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, McIntosh, South Dakota

Pastor Paul Bast was working in the area 60 miles west of Mobridge by 1915. Out of McIntosh there were additional preaching stations at Walker and Swastika. The latter situated approximately eight miles north of McIntosh was the home location listing birth and baptism of Wayne Barney TenBroek. This gifted son, claimed by St. Paul's of McIntosh congregation, taught at Northwestern Lutheran Academy, Mobridge; Northwestern College at Watertown, Wisconsin; served various Dakota vacancies; and continues his



Pastor Paul Heidrich

life of service to God's people by his District Jubilee History. St. Paul's of McIntosh thanks our God for this gifted and able servant.

The earliest meeting on record took place February 9, 1919.

By January 1920, a committee was appointed to purchase a church site. Lot 10 in Block 1, or, as the highway sign directs, "On Top The Hill On Main St.," cost \$200 in May 1920. The corner stone reads 1924. The first Annual Meeting in the new church structure took place January 11, 1925.

By that date, St. Paul's had been served by three pastors: Bast, E. R. Gamm 1917-23, and E. Strassen 1924, who died of complications from appendicitis

while serving here. A rapid turnover of pastors in the West River churches has been their history to this decade.

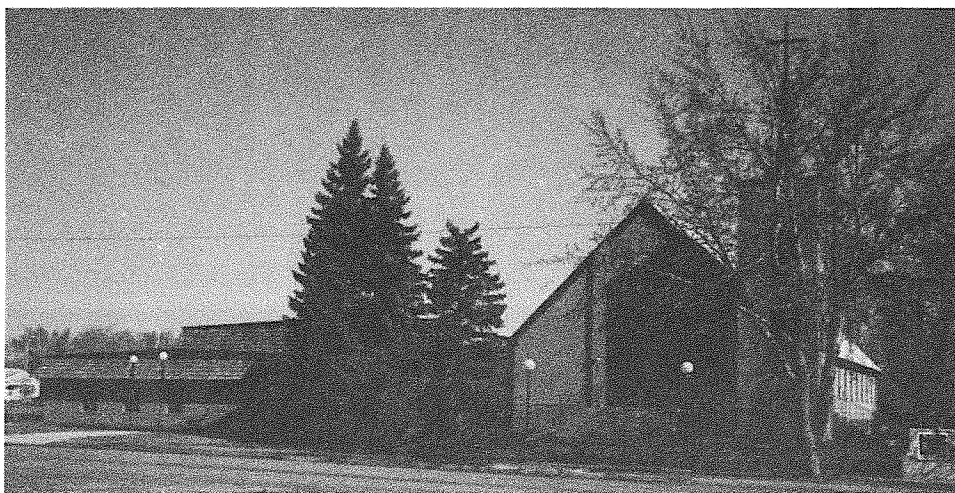
This is the record of full-time pastors who served St. Paul's. Bast, Gamm, and Strassen, as already mentioned. W. Krenke 1915-28. John J. Wendland 1929-39. He recalled those as "ten trying years of drought and economic depression." (They were years when NLA was trying to maintain a foothold having K.G. Sievert and our former Pastor Gamm doing the climbing.) Roland Bretzmann 1940-42. A. H. Birner 1942-44 was our last resident pastor. Clarence Koepsell 1944-48 served St. Paul's out of Morrystown. With Christ of Morrystown and Bethlehem of Watauga, a self-supporting tri-parish was formed. Marvin Radtke 1949-

54. Gerhardt Birkholz 1954-58. J. Carl Hilmer 1959-63. Pastor Hilmer left to another synod. His service is cordially remembered, and his departure deemed too precipitous. Donald Krause 1964-68. Wm. Russow as vacancy out of Flasher, ND, 1968-69. Dennis Hayes 1969-73. And, since July 1, 1973, Paul G. Heiderich, now serving us out of Flasher. There is marked difference in tenure of this last pastor compared to all former. I join them all in thanking God for the opportunity to serve Him and His people at St. Paul's.

Just for a change, we'd like to mention some supportive members of the congregation who have greatly augmented the worship of God here. In histories, there is never mention of individuals in certain categories. But, without that 10% or so of cheerful stewards, without those Sunday and Vacation Bible School teachers, custodians, building and repair committees, without that handful of every congregation which seems to have stepped forward over the years to do the necessities, what congregation would endure?

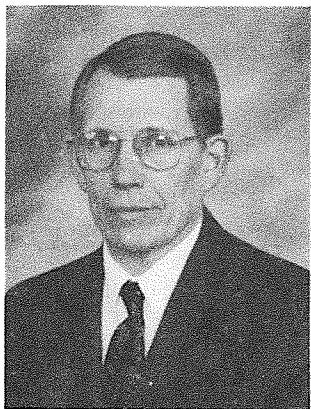
We mention our faithful organists: Mrs. Ada TenBroek, Mrs. Geo Larson, Mrs. Wm. Wiedenheft, Mr. Fred Bieber of the 1940s and 50s, Mrs. Helen Baumberger of the late 50s to 70s substituted by Mrs. Bonnie TenBroek and Mrs. Inez Bail, and Mrs. Coleen Schaffer from the 80s to the present. This congregation thanks them and God for them. May our existence as a congregation of saints be a pleasing hymn toward Jesus who has made us so!

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Mobridge, South Dakota

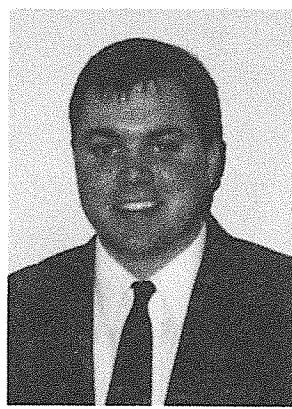


Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Mobridge, South Dakota

Shortly after the Milwaukee Road began building a bridge to span the Missouri River and the new town of Mobridge sprang up the Minnesota Synod began efforts to found a congregation in the new town. Services were held in various homes by pastors from the congregations to the east. The first resident pastor was John Schaefer who was installed on August 13, 1911. Zion was formally organized in 1912. With a loan from the Church Extension Fund a building was purchased and dedicated for church use. Pastor Ehrenfried Berg served the congregation from 1913-15 and Pastor



Pastor Peter Naumann



Vicar Jonathan Bilitz

Edwin Kionka from 1916-18. Because of a shortage of pastors, Kionka also served the Timber Lake area, Shields and Freda in North Dakota, and the Glenham parish was added to his Call in 1917. Pastor Albert Eggert served the parish from 1919-22. During his stay the Mobridge-Glenham parish became self-supporting. The original building was sold and lots were purchased to which a vacated church building from LaBeau was moved. It was dedicated on June 19, 1921. Under the pastorate of Edgar Gamm (1923-38)

the congregation experienced much growth. Together with the two congregations and the city of Mobridge Pastor Gamm was very instrumental in the synod's decision to locate its newest academy in Mobridge in 1928. Pastor Gustav Schlegel (1938-44) served the parish faithfully until ill health forced his retirement. Pastor Karl Bast served the congregation from 1945 until 1954. During his pastorate the Luther-

an elementary school was opened in 1949. The decision was also made to build a larger church. A fund was started and lots were purchased on the northwest side of the city. Decisions about a new building came to a head when the old church burned to the ground in the fall of 1955 shortly after Pastor Philip Press (1955-57) arrived. Services were held at the Academy and school was conducted in several buildings until a new building was finally dedicated on July 26, 1959, during the pastorate of Herbert Kuske (1957-61). A new parsonage was built in 1960. After Pastor Kuske accepted a Call elsewhere the congregation was served by the academy professors and tutors. Pastor Herbert Birner arrived in 1963 and stayed until 1969.

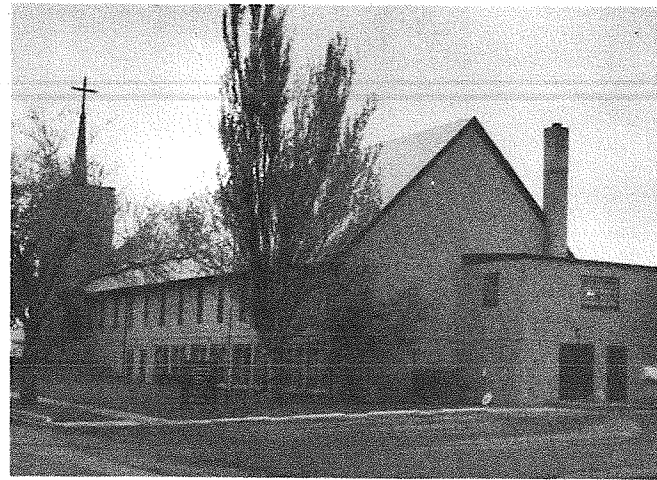
Pastor David Krenke came to Zion in 1969. He served for ten years and was also a member of the Northwestern Lutheran Academy Board of Control. During his tenure a new Wicks pipe organ was purchased and installed under the guidance of Professor Wm. Birsching. NLA was moved from Mobridge in 1979 and merged with Martin Luther Academy of New Ulm, MN, as Martin Luther Preparatory School in Prairie du Chien, WI. Pastor Krenke accepted the Call to Reedsburg, WI, in 1979 and a long vacancy ensued which was served by Pastor Mark Johnston of Bowdle. Candidate Mark Lindner was ordained in 1980. He followed the Call to Beaver Dam, WI, in



Zion Parsonage

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Mobridge, South Dakota (cont.)

1983 and Pastor Peter J. Naumann of Sauk Rapids, MN, accepted the Call and was installed in November, 1983. Since July, 1994, the parish has also been served by vicars Stephen Melso and Jonathan Bilitz. An addition to the church building had been envisioned since the closing of the Academy. The addition was dedicated on November 16, 1986. It contains a fellowship room, spacious narthex and offices, elevator, and multi-purpose/gymnasium. The 75th anniversary of the congregation was celebrated on July 21, 1987. The congregation became debt free in September, 1993. All praise and thanks to God alone!



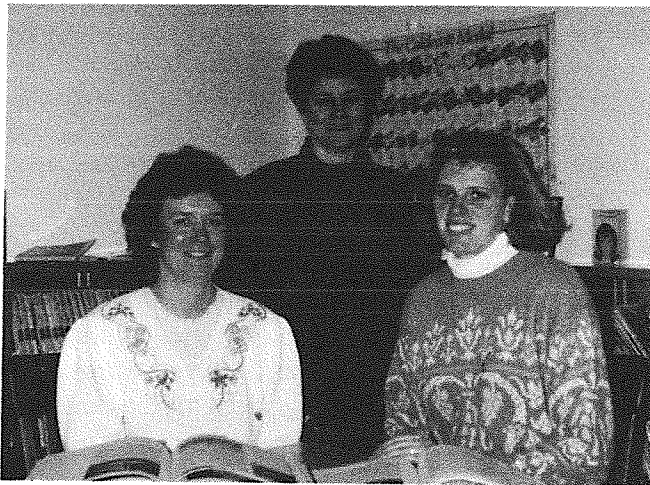
Zion Lutheran School

Zion Lutheran School

Zion Lutheran School opened its doors in September, 1949, with 33 pupils enrolled in grades 1-5. Robert Scharleman (1949-50) taught the first year and was followed by Renate Pape (1950-52). The rest of the elementary grades were added and two new teachers called. Rhoda Arndt served as upper grades teacher for twelve years (1952-64). She was followed in the upper grades room by Anita Lemke (1964-66), Patricia Murray (1966-67), Susan Kolasick (1967), David Holldin (1968), and Karen Springer (1968-70). The lower grades were taught by Mabel Goede (1952-56), Naomi Kiecker (1956-57), Julia Oelhafen (1957-59),

Jeanette Ohlmann (1959-61), Elsa Klein (1961-63), Elaine Tullberg (1963-64), Judy Anderson (1964), Timothy Pfitzer (1964-65), and Linda Wendt (1965-68).

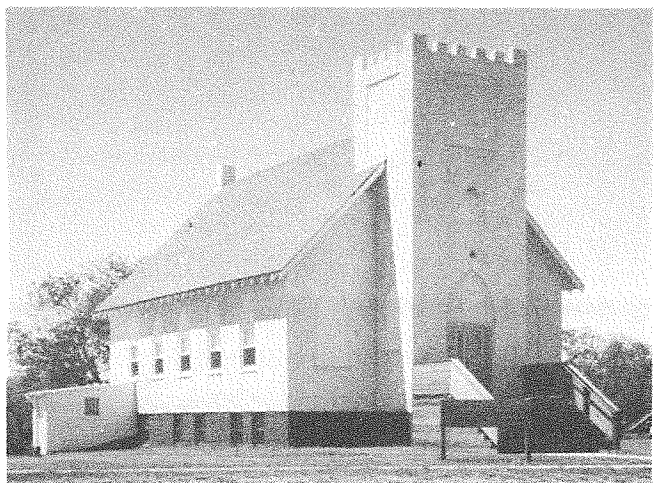
During the 1970s the day school continued to grow and enrollment approached 60. Teachers were Cheryl Spettel (1970-72), Curt Mantey (1972-79), and Gretchen Klett (1978-82) in grades 5-8 and Dorothea Knudson (1968-72), Diana Uhlenbruck (1972-73), Barb Babrofsky-Mantey (1973-75), Sandy Boettcher (1975-78), Betty Krenke (1978), and Becky Sauck (1978-82) in grades 1-4. With the moving of the academy, enrollment dropped into the lower 40s and then into the 30s but has rebounded to 42 in 1994. Teaching changes brought Judy Rabenberg (1980-93) as the first Kindergarten teacher followed by Lu Ann Sting (1993-present); Dale Anderson (1982-88), Werner Schlicker (1989-90), and Barbara Naumann (1990-present) in the upper grades; and Corrine Schardin-Schlomer (1982-88), Cindy Harder (1987), Linda Martens (1988-91), Kay Holz (1991-92), and Tamara Koepsell (1992-95) in the lower grades. A pre-school was opened in the fall of 1993 and has been well received by the church and community. It has expanded to two sessions and has served as an excellent evangelism tool.



Zion Teachers from left to right: Mrs. LuAnn Sting, Mrs. Barb Naumann, Miss Tamara Koepsell

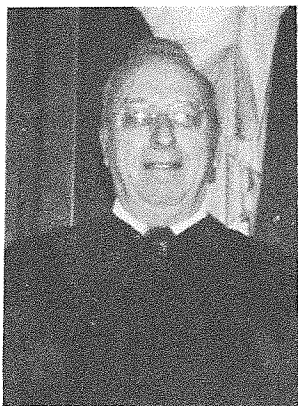
May Zion church and school continue to reach and teach souls bound for heaven. Amen!

Christ Ev. Lutheran Church, Morrystown, South Dakota



Christ Ev. Lutheran Church, Morrystown, South Dakota

In 1915 services were held in the City Hall, the school house, and the John Wagner home. Early information of church services are from a letter written by Rev. Gamm in 1954, "Morrystown had been served occasionally by Pastor Witfaut of Flasher and Elgin,



Pastor Wilber Niermeier

N.D. Beginning in 1915 Rev. Bast of McIntosh served you and I followed him in 1917. My personal records show that I preached in Morrystown for the first time on Dec. 30, 1917, and my records show that we had services on the 12th and 26th of Oct. 1919. It was evidently the latter date when the congregation organized.

The early records show the

uniting in the bonds of matrimony of Ida Wohlman and Christ Buhr". (Ida is still with us.)

Services were held in the Presbyterian Church for a time when the Wagner home became too small.

Rev. H.J. Schaar was installed as the first pastor on July 5th, 1923, and served for 13 years. The parsonage was purchased in 1924. The church basement was constructed in 1925. One year later, August 28, 1926, The congregation accepted the bid of P.R. & H. Lumber Co. of McIntosh to construct the church of Watauga tile, covered with an outer coat of stucco, for a cost of \$3,610. It was a joyous day, Nov. 7, 1926, when the new church was dedicated.

Pastor Schaar remained for 13 years. Rev. B.R. Hahm served from 1936 until 1941.

The debt on the parsonage was paid up May 19, 1942. There was more rejoicing on December 15, 1942, when, through the efforts of a special fund drive, the church debt was liquidated.

In 1944 Morrystown, McIntosh and Watauga consolidated and became self-supporting and called Rev. Clarence Koepsell who served from 1944 until July, 1949. Rev. Marvin Radtke, who came to replace him, explored the idea of starting a Christian Day School. Robert Kurth was installed as the teacher on August 27, 1950. The school closed after 13 years of operation.

January, 1955 a new Baldwin organ was purchased.

Rev. Gerhard Birkholz was installed in 1949 and served until November, 1958, when he left to serve at Lake Benton, MN, and Rev. Carl Hillman was installed at Christ Lutheran.

Keith Roehl became the first son of the congregation to be ordained a pastor. He accepted his first call to serve a parish at Grove City, Ohio. He died in September, 1990.

Rev. Donald Krause came in July, 1964, to serve the tri-parish. In July of 1969 Rev. Dennis Hayes was installed to serve the new parish of Morrystown, Watauga, Paradise, and McIntosh.

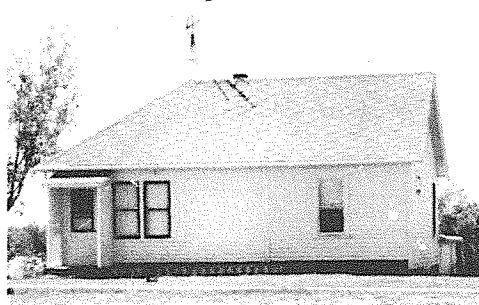
The gray stucco church was painted white in 1970.

Rev. Paul Heiderich was installed in 1973 and remained for 12 years. In 1980 the inside of the church was remodeled by insulating, installing smaller windows, the walls were paneled, new front doors were installed and the church floor was refinished.

In 1985 Christ Evangelical Lutheran, Morrystown became independent, and called a semi-retired pastor. Rev. Robert Weimer served three years. Rev. W.T. Niermeier was installed June 9, 1991, and remains with us today.

The altar statue of Christ was refurbished in 1994.

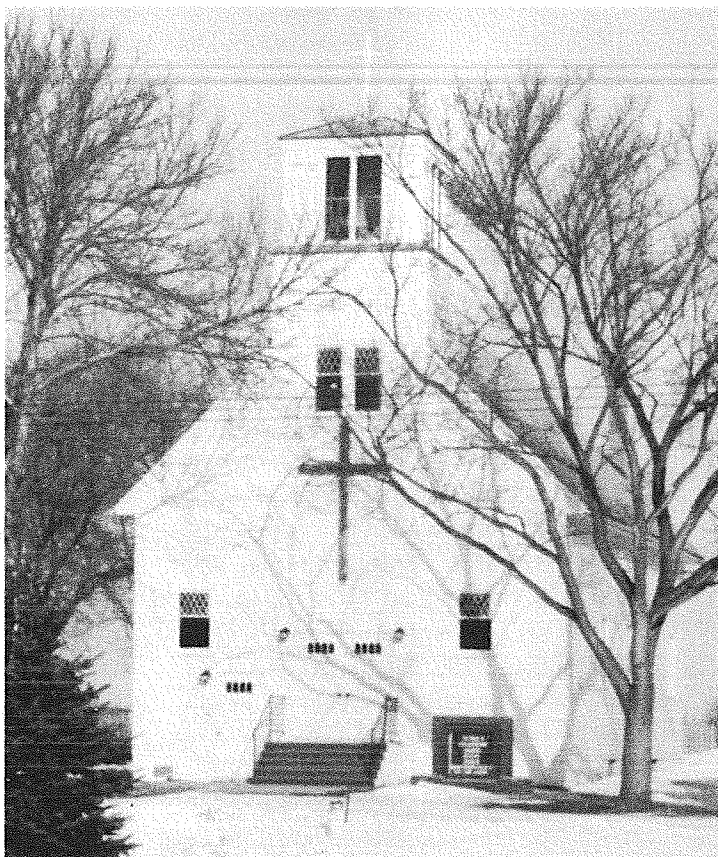
The Lord has truly blessed our church these 75 years with dedicated pastors to preach the Word in truth and purity. With their faithful wives, they endured the hardships of the West and with the congregation



Christ Lutheran Parsonage

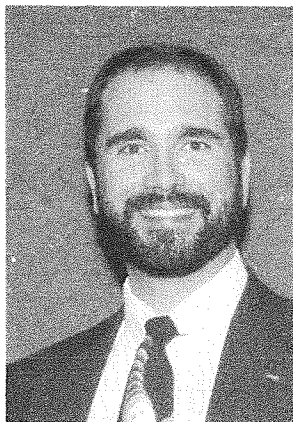
showed a faith and determination to keep the church alive with God's Word and help.

St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Mound City, South Dakota



St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Mound City, South Dakota

In 1886 a missionary from Ellendale, ND, came to Mound City and found a number of Lutheran families. In the spring of 1887, with the help of Pastor Mundt, St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mound City, SD, was organized.



Pastor Tony Hansen

The home of John Witte was frequently used for services along with the schoolhouse located a few miles west of Mound City.

In the summer of 1888, St. Paul called Pastor Schuelke to be the first resident pastor. Mound City had bought its first parsonage at this time. Pastors that followed were Malchow, Fehlau and Engel from Bowdle.

Pastor Wm. G. Albrecht (1899-1902) and Pastor Hans Eggert (1902-04) served the areas including Gale, Glenham, Bangor, Selby and Akaska.

Pastor William Sauer served the congregation from 1905-11. During his service a new church building was built and was dedicated in 1908. It is the same one that stands today. In 1928 the basement was put under the church.

Pastor J. H. Renner served St. Paul from 1913-16. Pastor Behrens served from 1916-18 and Pastor E. H. Behm from 1918-21.

St. Paul built a new parsonage in 1921. The Gale congregation helped share the cost. Pastor A. W. Blauert was the first to live in this parsonage. He served from 1921-27.

Succeeding pastors were E. Schaller from 1927-36, A. A. Hellman from 1937-44, H. A. Sauer from 1944-47, Theodore Hartwig from 1947-51, and Pastor Juroff from 1951-53.

In 1953 the Gale congregation and the Mound City congregation became one at Mound City.

St. Paul and Zion Ev. Lutheran Church of Zeeland, ND, formed a joint parish in 1961. The parsonage at Mound City was then sold.

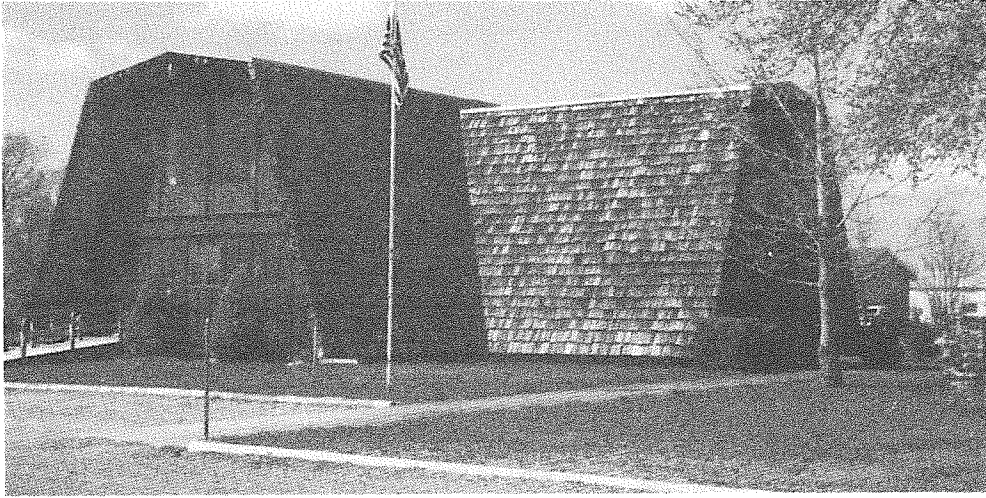
Pastors who have served since 1953 are Donald W. Lindloff, 1954-58; Waldemar O. Leoscher, 1961-64; Victor J. Weyland, vacancy pastor, 1964-65; Arnold E. Lemke, 1965-70; Donald N. Forss, 1970-71; Loyal Schroeder, vacancy pastor, 1971; Gerhard H. Geiger, vacancy pastor, 1972; Robert L. Weimer, 1972-80; Gerhard Geiger, vacancy pastor, 1980; Timm O. Meyer, 1980-86; Gary Koschnitzke, 1986-89; Paul Vander Galien, 1989-93; and Tony J. Hansen, vacancy pastor, 1993-94, until May 15 when he was installed as the present pastor.

During the service of Pastor Arnold Lemke (1965-70), the church was remodeled and the basement was renovated.

In the fall of 1993, St. Paul contacted Zion Ev. Lutheran Church of Akaska and St. James Ev. Lutheran Church of Tolstoy to realign. On February 27, 1994, St. Paul realigned with Zion of Akaska and St. James of Tolstoy to become one parish effective May 1, 1994.

At the present, St. Paul numbers 110 souls, 88 communicants.

Redeemer Ev. Lutheran Church, Pierre, South Dakota



Redeemer Ev. Lutheran Church, Pierre, South Dakota

The history of Redeemer Ev. Lutheran Church began in the late 1960s when the Dakota-Montana District Mission Board realized the need for a congregation in South Dakota's capital city. In 1967 Pastor Nathan Engel of Faith conducted the first official worship service on Christmas Day with seven people in attendance. Pastors that served the exploratory in its fledgling years included: Nathan Engel, Philip Zarling, Herbert Birner, William Leerssen, Martin Hahm,

Daniel Deutschlander, David Gosdeck, and Professor Daniel Malchow.

On December 7, 1969, Pastor John Engel was installed as the District Missionary for the Dakota-Montana District with the Pierre exploratory as his first assignment. A home on East Dakota Avenue was rented for use as a parsonage for the new pastor and family. On

April 27, 1970, the congregation was granted "mission status." Candidate Floyd Brand was installed as the first resident pastor on June 21, 1970. A parsonage was purchased at this time. The congregation was formally organized in July of 1970. The name Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church was chosen.

The congregation applied for membership in the Dakota-Montana District on June 13, 1972.

In January of 1973, land was purchased for the permanent parsonage and church on the corner of Mellette Avenue and Fourth Street. The parsonage was built in the late summer and ground was broken for the

church on November 18, 1973. On November 24, 1974, the parsonage and church were dedicated.

In February, 1976, Pastor Brand accepted the Call to Fremont, Wisconsin. On July 11, 1976, Pastor James Cloute was installed and served the congregation until he accepted a call to Marshall, Minnesota, in August of 1979. During this time the Lord blessed the young mission and membership

peaked at 111 souls. In September of 1979 Pastor Donald Krause was installed. He served the congregation until September, 1982. Pastor Alvin Schulz of Akaska served the vacancy.

On May 15, 1983, Pastor Steve Persons was installed. In the next few years, the congregation's buildings were given a "face lift" as energy and space efficiency examinations were made. A beautiful altar, pulpit, and communion rail were acquired. In May of 1990 Pastor Persons accepted a called to Leesburg, Florida.

On July 8, 1990, candidate Daniel Reich was ordained and installed as Redeemer's pastor. Several improvements have been made along with various maintenance items.

During the past ten years the Lord has again showered His blessings on this congregation. The membership once again reached 111 souls by the end of 1993.

On May 7, 1995, the congregation plans to celebrate its 25th anniversary with a special service of praise. The congregation has agreed with the District Mission Board to end operating subsidy on July 1, 1995. Membership presently totals 102 souls and 77 communicants.



Pastor Daniel Reich



Redeemer Lutheran Parsonage

St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Rapid City, South Dakota



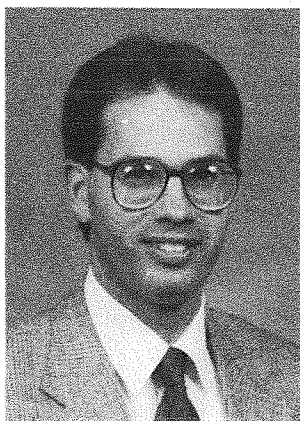
St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Rapid City, South Dakota

In 1940 Pastor A. Eberhardt (1940-43), Sturgis, SD, first served what now is St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Rapid City, SD, in the home of Mrs. Lewis. A fire hall and a donated church building were later used for services.

After becoming a mission congregation in 1942, St. Paul's called their first resident pastor in 1943, Wayne Ten Broek (1943-44).

Under guidance by Pastor Hogeby Bergholz (1945-46) the congregation purchased the lots at Ninth and Fairview. The church was later built and dedicated in May, 1950, when Pastor Harold Sauer (1947-50) led the congregation.

After calling numerous times a vacancy was filled by Pastor Gordon Fuerstenau (1951-54). During the vacancy a parsonage was constructed next to the church. After another vacancy, candidate Donald



Pastor Douglas Free

Sellnow (1954-62) was assigned from the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Seminary. Also during the 1950s the church basement was remodeled. In 1961 the congregation became self-supporting. St. Paul's congregation experienced some of its greatest growth in the years following this milestone.

Leroy Dodderstein (1962-72) was installed as pastor in 1962. An educational addition was added to the church during this time. The sixteen year mortgage on the church was burned during its 25th anniversary (1967). In 1968 St. Paul's remodeled its worship facility including new carpet and pew cushions.

September of 1970 found St. Paul's opening the doors of its new Christian Day School. Beverly Heine accepted the call as the first teacher. Mrs. Hazel Fuerstenau spent much time assisting the teachers.

Pastor Richard Strobel (1972-75) was installed in 1972 as St. Paul's seventh pastor. In 1973 the Walpole property was purchased for future relocation. Later Pastor Wayne I. Schulz (1975-89) became the eighth pastor.

After selling the first property they bought, the congregation purchased land in the Robbinsdale Addition where the new church on Fairmont Boulevard was dedicated in 1978.

In 1989 Pastor Douglas Free (1989-present) was called to serve St. Paul's. At this time a two service format began. Music became a highlight in 1989 when three octaves of handbells were generously purchased for the church (a fourth octave was added later). Also a Rodgers Essex 645 organ was purchased to replace the 23-year old Baldwin organ.

St. Paul's observed its 50th anniversary on August 9, 1992.

Plans for the future include calling a 4th teacher (school enrollment in 1994-95 hit an all time high of 75) and the possible construction of a fellowship hall/gymnasium.

St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Rapid City, South Dakota (cont.)

St. Paul Teaching Staff



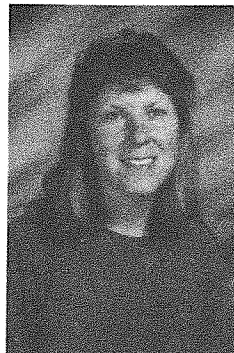
Daniel Plath



Mrs. Mikaela Burow



Mrs. Patricia Wolff



Mrs. Julie Renner



Mrs. Beth Plath

St. Paul Lutheran School

In September of 1970, St. Paul's reached the milestone of opening the doors to its own Christian Day school located on 9th and Fairview. Miss Beverly Heine accepted the call to be the first teacher of grades 1-8 at St. Paul's. School began on August 31, 1970, with 24 children enrolled.

In 1973, Miss JoAnn Galkiewicz was called to replace Miss Heine.

Candidate Miss Jane Schultz replaced Miss Galkiewicz in 1976. One year later, candidate Mr. James Holman replaced Miss Schultz becoming the principal and fourth teacher.

A new church and school was built and dedicated in 1978.

The school expanded to two classrooms in 1979 when candidate Miss Susan Griepentrog became the second full time teacher to serve along with Mr. Holman. Soon kindergarten was taught in addition to the other eight grades. In the fall of 1981, the school enrollment numbered 52, an increase of 100% since entering the new building three years earlier. Two new teacher candidates began service at St. Paul's when Mr. Thomas Libka became principal in 1982 and Miss Miriam Zimmerman began teaching in the fall of 1983. These teachers replaced Mr. Holman and Miss

Griepentrog. In 1986 the congregation built a library and a third classroom in the basement and called a third full-time teacher candidate, Miss Paula Robinson. The school enrollment had reached a high of 57 students. In 1988 Mrs. Patricia Wolff, a member of St. Paul's and also a DMLC graduate, accepted the call to replace Mrs. Miriam Holm (Zimmerman).

In 1990 Miss Robinson accepted a call and was replaced by Mrs. Mikaela Burow. In 1991 Mr. Libka accepted a call. Mrs. Marlys Reid, Sturgis, South Dakota, accepted a one-year call to fill the vacancy.

The principalship was again filled when Mr. Daniel Plath from Billings, Montana, accepted the call to teach the upper grades and be the principal.

Mrs. Julie Renner has served as a teacher's assistant for the past two years. Steps were also taken to complete an additional classroom in the basement.

In 1994, with the state mandating administrative time for principals and enrollment increasing, Mrs. Beth Plath filled the need for a teacher's assistant in the upper grade room.

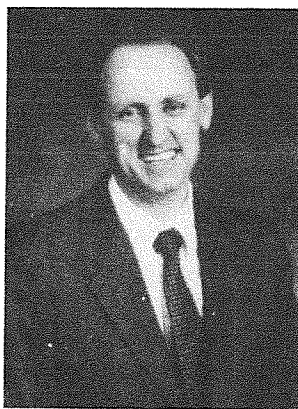
The blessings which the Lord has shown St. Paul's have been tremendous. We pray that the Lord continues to shower his blessings on all of our WELS schools and churches.

St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Roscoe, South Dakota



St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Roscoe, South Dakota

St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church, known as St. James Lutheran until 1906, was organized in 1893. This congregation worshiped in a country school house for a time, and also in the homes of various members. It wasn't until 1906 that the first church building was erected. It was also in 1906 that the congregation reorganized and adopted the name St.



Pastor Winfried Schroeder

Paul's Lutheran Church. The first parsonage was built one year later in 1907. During the next twenty years the Lord blessed this congregation with steady growth. By the middle 1920s, it became apparent that new worship facilities were needed, the 1906 building having grown too small to serve adequately. Construction began on a new church building in 1928 and the building was dedicated December 16th of that same year. It has a seating capacity of approximately 350 and has served St. Paul's exceedingly well throughout the years.

During the years following the dedication of the new church building, the Lord continued to bless the congregation spiritually and physically. Along with

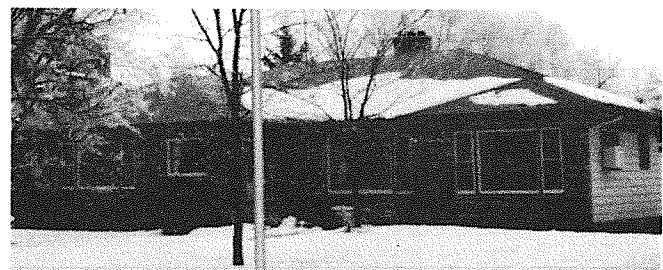
increased numbers came the Lord's physical blessings of a new Wicks pipe organ in 1947, and a new parsonage in 1954. Shortly thereafter, the congregation recognized a need: for more and larger classrooms for Sunday School instruction, etc. A 50' X 60' education wing was added to the existing church building and dedicated in 1962.

The congregation celebrated its 75th anniversary and the 40th anniversary of the existing church building in 1968. The Lord has continued to bless St. Paul's even though church membership has declined steadily since the 1960s, due in part to the change in economic conditions being experienced in rural America. The congregation celebrated its 100th anniversary

June 27th, 1993, giving thanks to God for his many blessings during the past century.

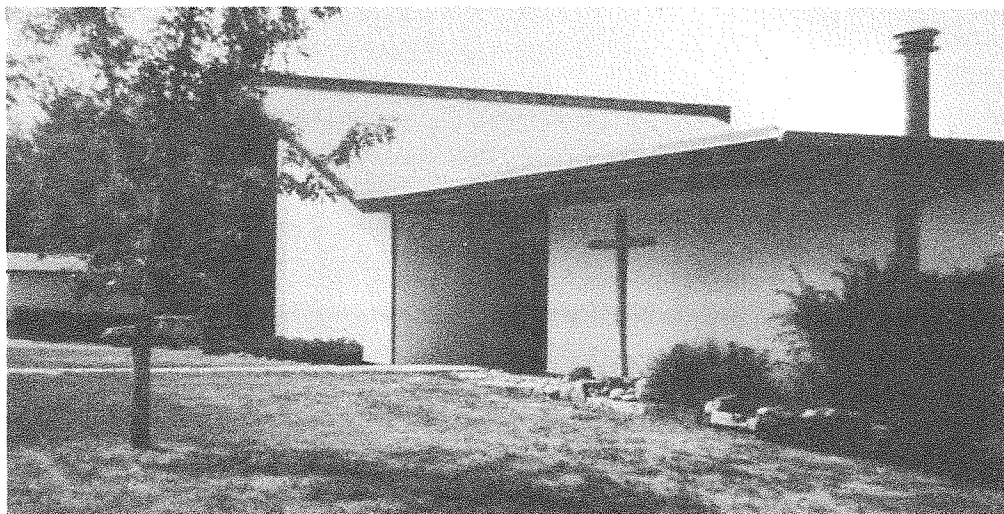
With an eye toward the future, St. Paul's formed a dual parish with St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church of Bowdle, beginning July 1, 1994. May the Lord of the Church continue to bless both parishes with faithfulness to His Word and with the desire to serve Him in every respect of our lives.

The following pastors have served St. Paul's throughout the years: Pastor F.A. Kiess 1893; Pastor Wm. Meyer; Pastor Fehlau; Pastor J.C.A. Gehm 1900-04; Pastor Keller 1904-07; Pastor A.C. Bartz 1907-11; Pastor Ernst Birkholz 1912-17; Pastor Fred Manteufel 1917-21; Pastor J.P. Scherf 1921-39; Pastor Herbert Lau 1939-51; Pastor George Boldt 1951-55; Pastor Waldemar Schuetze 1955-58; Pastor Martin Janke 1958-65; Pastor Louis Pingel 1965-68; Gerhard Geiger 1968-82; Pastor Timothy Winkel 1982-88; Pastor Gerald Blobaum 1988-95; and Winfried Schroeder 1995-present.



St. Paul Parsonage

Hope Ev. Lutheran Church, Spearfish, South Dakota



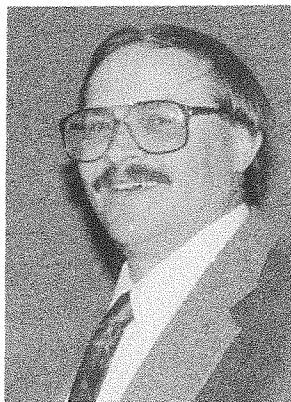
Hope Ev. Lutheran Church, Spearfish, South Dakota

The first exploratory service was conducted by Rev. Martin Hahm at the Rifle and Pistol Clubhouse in the city park on December 3, 1967. Services continued there for six years, but growth was very slow. Average attendance for the first year was 13.8. Many Sundays there were only one or two families. On one occasion there was only one person present beside the pastor... and the building was locked. The service that day was at a picnic table in the park. The clubhouse would be used for parties on Saturday nights so Sunday worship services would have to rise above the smell of spilled beer and stale cigarette smoke. How easy it would

have been to be a part of a larger congregation and worshipping in a church.

By January 19, 1969, the group felt a church would eventually be built in Spearfish and on that date the congregation chose the name of "Hope".

On June 13, 1971, Rev. Donald Dengler was installed. Efforts were under way to purchase



Pastor Lloyd Lemke

land. One location was acquired but later sold and the present site acquired.

Ground breaking services were held on September 9, 1973. The first services were held in our new church on Easter Sunday, April 14, 1974, at 10:45 am. The building was not yet completed. The money was borrowed from our Wisconsin Synod's Church Extension Fund. The synod's architectural

office designed the building. Dedication day was May 12, 1974.

Gerhold Lemke was installed on December 1, 1974, and served our congregation for 15 years. During this time exploratory services were begun at Gillette, WY.

Rev. Pieter Reid arrived in January, 1990, and was installed on February 7. The Reids served until January of 1993 when Rev. Reid accepted a call to serve our synod as a foreign missionary in Indonesia.

Rev. Lloyd Lemke was installed as pastor of Hope on March 7, 1993, after a one month vacancy.

The pastors and members of Hope have endeavored to serve the students of Black Hills State University and to be a home away from home for our Wisconsin Synod students during their schooling in Spearfish.

Hope congregation has served more than the Spearfish community. Over the years our people have traveled from all over the Northern Hills and out of Montana and Wyoming. This has made for a challenge to conduct meetings and other weekly activities, but God has been gracious to us and has blessed the sacrifices made in His name. We live in the hope of serving our Savior, Jesus Christ, who gives us living hope by His glorious resurrection from the dead (I Peter 1:3).

Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Sturgis, South Dakota



Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Sturgis, South Dakota

Trinity is the "flagship" congregation of our Northern Hills congregations. Beginning in late 1939, through the efforts of many people and under the Savior's blessing, many congregations and preaching stations have followed ever westward. Pastor Albert Eberhardt of Faith, SD, arrived during Christmas week that year. He was to also serve Lead (discontinued after strong protest of a former sister synod). Officially organized November 3, 1940,



Pastor Lloyd Lemke

the parish grew to 90 souls per Sunday. This bottomed out at 10 baptized members in 1946. When Pastor Eberhardt accepted a call in 1943 the congregation began to be served from St. Paul, Rapid City. Pastors during these years included Wayne Ten Broek, R. Reim, Hogey Berkholz, Harold Sauer, H. Bauer, Gorden Fuerstenau, and Candidate Donald Sellnow.

The present property was purchased in 1956 and David Koch became the first resident pastor in over a decade. In 1958 the first church was dedicated and George Rothe was ordained as pastor on the same day. This chapel was soon to be redesigned as a parsonage when the present church was purchased from an ELC congregation in downtown Sturgis and moved to Baldwin Street in 1959.

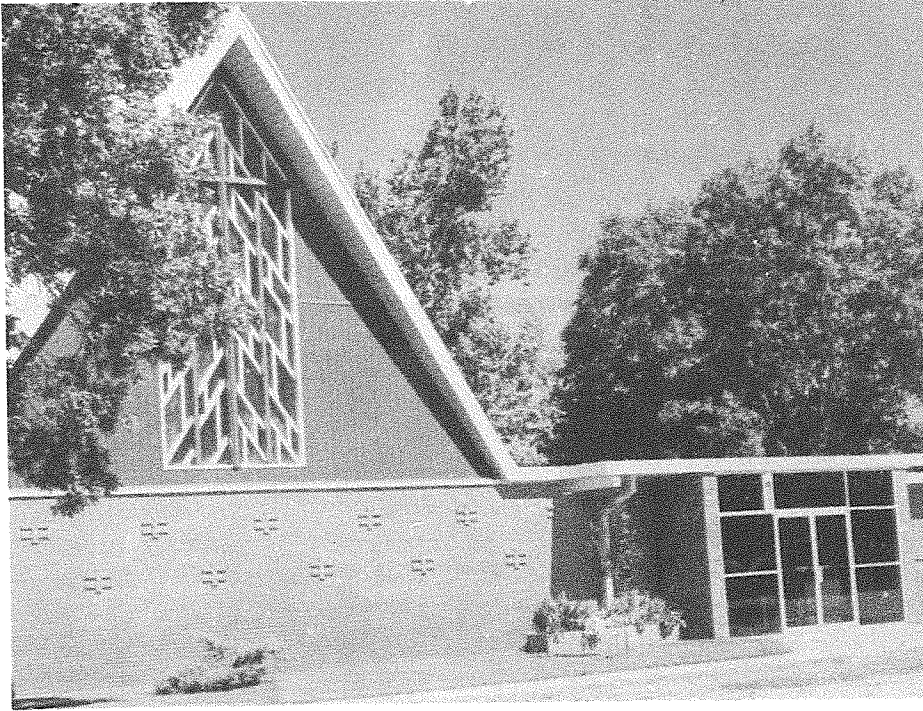
Again the congregation was served from Rapid City by Pastor Leroy Dobberstein and Vicar Arthur Valerio. Martin Hahm served from July, 1967, through May of 1971. Exploratory work began in Spearfish and resulted in a dual parish arrangement with Hope congregation. During the pastorate of Donald Dengler a church was built in Spearfish. Pastor Gerhold Lemke served the Trinity-Hope dual parish for 15 years (74-89) and began exploratory work at Gillette, WY. During these years a larger living room was added to the parsonage and the home was connected to the church with a tunnel. Trinity was blessed to celebrate 50 years of God's grace as a congregation in 1990 with its newly installed pastor, Pieter

Reid. Only months after dedicating a large addition to the parsonage, the Reids were commissioned to serve as one of our missionary families to Indonesia (January, 1993). The addition to the parsonage allows for the use of the parsonage basement as a fine annex for office space and Christian education by means of the tunnel. Trinity is presently served by Pastor Lloyd Lemke.



Trinity Lutheran Parsonage

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, Tappen, North Dakota



St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, Tappen, North Dakota

St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church was established in 1924. Charter members of the congregation were William Briese, Erich Koehler, Fred Wallner, Louis Wallner and William Wallner. Within two years of that time, the congregation had buildings for worship



Pastor William Russow

and for a resident pastor. A church building was dedicated in July of 1926; a month later a parsonage was dedicated.

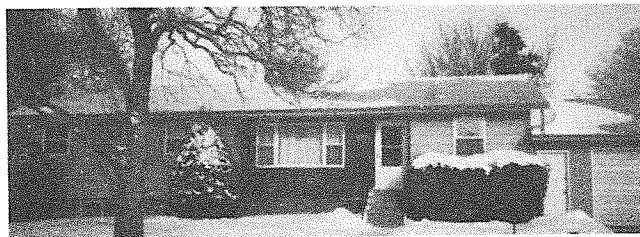
Two pastors served in the early organization of the congregation prior to its incorporation. They were Samuel Baer (1920-21) and C. Strassen (1921-23). Eugene Hinderer (1923-38) was St. John's first resident pas-

tor. Since 1938 there have been the following pastors: William Holzhausen (1939-43); E.L. Mehlberg (1943-44); Ruben Kettenacker (1944-48); Loren Schaller (1948-51); E.J. Otterstatter (1951-57); Frederick Mutterer (1958-61); Ernst Klaszus (1963-65); Walter Oelhafen, Jr. (1966-69); Russell Kloehn (1969-74); Henry Ellwein (1974-77); Roger Kovaciny (1977-84); Steven Steiner (1984-94); and William Russow (1994-present).

church while the new house was constructed.

In recent years the congregation did extensive renovation and weatherization of the sanctuary and classrooms. In December of 1986 John and Fay Hoffer bequeathed a substantial sum to St. John's. Among other things the money was used for new roofs, siding, insulation, sheetrock, and windows. Many hours of volunteer labor went into insulating and finishing the interior. A new Allen organ was purchased in October of 1991. It was dedicated on June 21, 1992. Professor William Birsching was the demonstrator and recitalist. He was a friend of the congregation through his many years of service at Northwestern Lutheran Academy in Mobridge, SD.

Throughout its history St. John's has served Tappen and vicinity with faithful proclamation of God's grace. Its pastors and lay leaders have always been people who hold to a literal understanding of the Bible and subscribe in total to the Lutheran confessions and the creeds of the ancient Christian church.

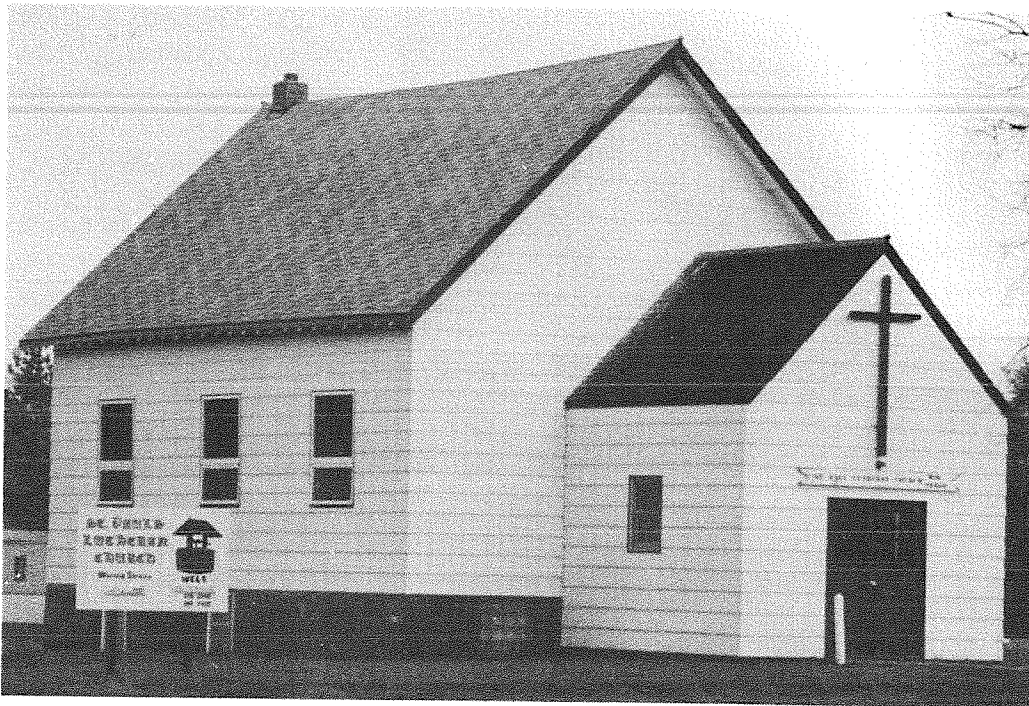


St. John Parsonage

In 1959 the congregation undertook a building program. A new sanctuary and classroom wing were constructed. The architect was Schoenrock & Sons, Inc. of Hazen, ND. Members volunteered many hours of labor. The new building covered 7500 square feet. It was dedicated on Sunday, November 29, 1959, with three worship services. Rev. Ruben Kettenacker of Dakotah, MN, preached at the 10:00 a.m. service. Rev. Donald Kolander of St. Paul, MN, preached at the 3:00 p.m. service. Rev. Martin Janke of Roscoe, SD, preached at the 7:30 p.m. service.

In 1972 the congregation built a new parsonage. Pastor Kloehn and his family lived in the classroom wing of the

St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Timber Lake, South Dakota



St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Timber Lake, South Dakota

A congregation of Lutherans living around Timber Lake, SD, was organized by E. H. Kionka, Pastor of Zion, Mobridge, SD., who served Timber Lake from Mobridge until 1916.

In 1917, Max Cowalsky became the first pastor of the congregation. He also served Trail City, Isabel, and a congregation which worshipped in the old Bader School, northwest of Timber Lake, for almost twenty years.

During the pastorate of Benjamin Borgschatz, an old school building was purchased and moved to a lot on the southwest side of Timber Lake and was dedicated to the service of the Triune God on June 2, 1940.



Pastor John Ruege, Sr.

Under Pastor Armin Schuetze, in 1941, the Bader School congregation joined the congregation at Timber Lake and St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church was formed. On Easter Sunday in 1946, the little church was destroyed by a tornado. For a time the congregation worshipped in the basement of the Fisher Recreation Hall. When the Baptist Church, was gutted by fire the

congregation purchased the shell and remodeled it. The new worship facility was dedicated on May 20, 1951.

From 1953-57 services were held only once a month. In 1957 the pastor resigned because of ill health.

During the next three years the church enjoyed considerable growth and progress. In 1958 weekly services were begun. In 1960 the church became debt free.

The membership

increased, a young people's group met every two weeks and the congregation had a sizeable Sunday School with five or six teachers. Many young people confirmed their baptismal vows before the altar during this time.

Over the years St. Paul has been served as part of a three and four point parish with other WELS churches in the area. Currently it is served jointly with Peace Congregation of Isabel.

Pastors who served St. Paul's with the Gospel: E. H. Kionka, 1910-16; Max Cowalsky, 1917-37; Benjamin Borgschatz, 1937-40; Armin Schuetze, 1941-43; Howard Russow, 1943-44 (vacancy); Marvin Hanker 1944-48; Armin Schuetze, (vacancy); Norman Lindloff, 1949-53; Armin Schuetze, (vacancy); Stanley Halt, 1953-57; John Johannes, 1957-60; Wayne Ten Broek, (vacancy); David Krenke, 1961-63; Helmut Flegel, 1963-64 (vacancy); Vicar Herbert Filter, 1964-65; Nathan Engel, 1965-69; Herbert Birner, (vacancy); Thomas Schmidt, 1969-74; Gary Richmond, 1974-79; Wm. Russow, 1979-85; Peter Naumann, (vacancy); Randy Bader, 1985-89; Peter Naumann, (vacancy); Jeffrey Heitsch, 1989-93; Peter Naumann, (vacancy); and John Ruege, Sr., 1993-present.

The members of St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church of Timber Lake, SD, give thanks to God for having served them with the Gospel during these past eighty-four years.

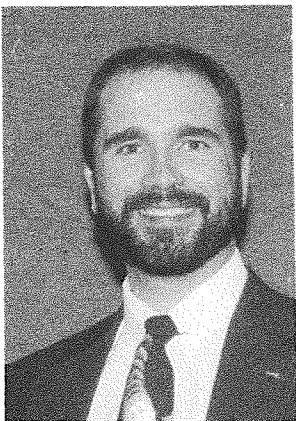
St. James Ev. Lutheran Church, Tolstoy, South Dakota



St. James Ev. Lutheran Church, Tolstoy, South Dakota

Lutheranism first came to the Tolstoy area in 1902 when the Christian Jacober family and other relatives moved into this area.

Pastor J. C. Gehm (1900-04), who already served a congregation in Bowdle, came to the area to



Pastor Tony Hansen

baptize the children. He then started to conduct services about five miles east of Tolstoy in the sod house owned by Henry Trefz.

Pastor O.P. Keller, who served Tolstoy from 1904-07, conducted the services in a school house in Tolstoy.

Pastor A. C. Bartz came in 1907 and served until 1911. In 1908, under

the leadership of A. Bartz, the St. Jacobi church was organized in Sherman Township, Faulk County, SD.

St. Jacobi Lutheran Church was built about five miles northeast of Tolstoy in 1908.

Pastor Ernst Birkholz served from 1912-15; Pastor G. E. Neumann, who resided in Tolstoy, served from 1915-17; and Pastor Arthur W. Fuerstenau served from 1917-18. Pastor Fuerstenau came from Akaska.

In 1919 on February 16, the St. Jacobi congregation reorganized under Pastor William Lindloff (1919-22). They took on the new name of St. James Lutheran Church of Tolstoy.

Pastor Theodore Bauer came in 1922 and served until 1924. In 1924, St. James resolved to build the present church building. The altar and lectern of St. Jacobi were moved to St. James. Pastor P. G. Albrecht arrived in 1924 and served until 1927.

The pastors that served St. James in the following years were: L.E. Lehman, 1927-30; F.E. Blume, 1930-31; Walter Herrmann, 1931-38; P.G. Albrecht, vacancy pastor, 1939-40; and R. Gehrke, 1940-42.

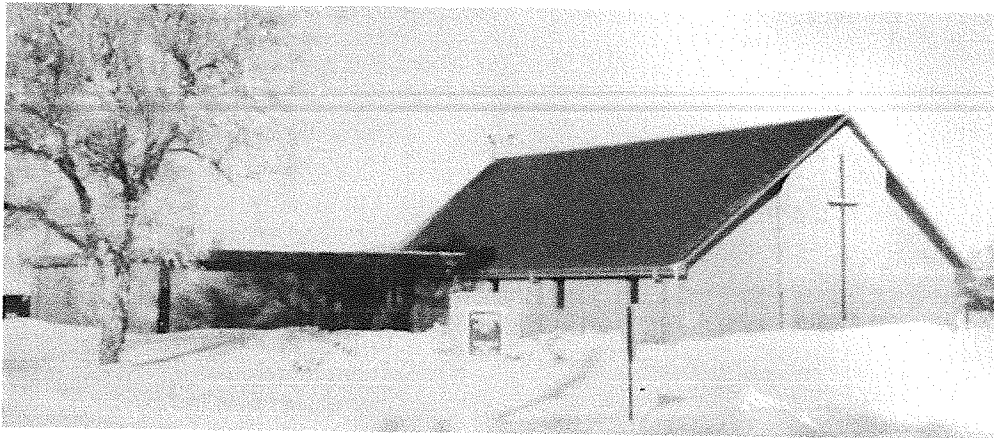
The membership of the church slowly dwindled. In 1942 St. James of Tolstoy and Zion of Akaska aligned with each other in order to alleviate expenses. Pastor B.A. Borgschatz (1942-45) was the first to serve Tolstoy in this capacity.

Several pastors then came and went. They were Ralph Gehrke, 1946-47; Marcus Albrecht, 1948-50; Lloyd Huebner, 1951-54; Kermit Biedenbender, 1955-60; Edgar Gieschen, 1960-63; Walter D. Herrmann, 1963-67; Daniel Deutschlander, 1968-70; Durant Shook, 1970-74; David Linn, 1974-77; Alvin Schulz, 1977-92; and Tony J. Hansen, 1992-present.

Recently, Tolstoy and Akaska have realigned again, this time with St. Paul of Mound City, SD, to create a tri-parish. After a number of meetings in Akaska, Zeeland, ND, and Tolstoy, voters from each of the congregations met in Akaska and approved the realignment on February 27, 1994. The realignment was implemented on May 1, 1994.

At the present time, Tolstoy numbers 17 baptized souls and 16 communicants.

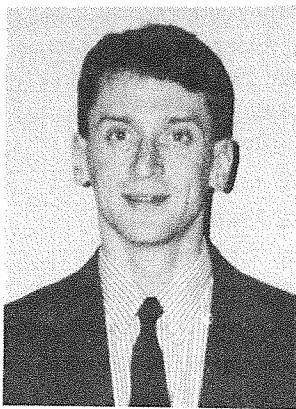
Zion Ev. Lutheran Church, Zeeland, North Dakota



Zion Ev. Lutheran Church, Zeeland, North Dakota

The year 1901 in North Dakota brought to Zeeland a Lutheran missionary, Rev. Georg Adascheck. The Minnesota Synod sent him to pursue mission opportunities in the state's McIntosh and Emmons Counties. During his five year ministry here, he built up the few congregations already established and founded several others. Sadly, his departure began a series of long vacancies and brief pastorates. Seeking more reliable care, many of these churches turned to the Iowa Synod (now part of the ELCA). Only three small missions remained with the Minnesota Synod: Immanuel Lutheran Church, located three miles southwest of Zeeland in McIntosh County; and in Emmons County, Friedens (Peace) Lutheran Church of Hague and Trinity Lutheran Church of Hartford Township, a faltering effort near Hazelton.

That year, 1910, a group of Lutherans in and around Zeeland met to organize a congregation in town. With the assistance of Pastor W. F. Sauer of



Pastor Steven Nowicki

Mound City they obtained land on the south side of town, built a schoolhouse for worship and Christian education, and incorporated Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church of Zeeland, North Dakota. The young congregation then formed a parish with its neighbors, Immanuel, southwest of Zeeland and Friedens, Hague. Rev. Sauer continued as pastor for the tri-parish until its rapid growth led the congregations to call their first resident minister, Rev. Martin Keturakat, in 1912. Pastor Keturakat would also revive the ministry at

Trinity Church, Hartford and serve there until 1914.

Zion quickly grew out of the 1910 Sunday School building under Pastor Keturakat's leadership. Recognizing its immediate need, the congregation planned, constructed, and dedicated the 1915 church in less than a year. In 1916 Zion became a member

of the Minnesota Synod, followed the next year by membership in the Wisconsin Synod when the two bodies combined

Immanuel Lutheran Church, southwest of Zeeland, closed its doors in 1919 and merged with Zion congregation. By the mid 1950s Friedens Lutheran Church of Hague also discontinued regular worship services. The congregation dissolved and joined Zion in 1958. Just a few years later however the Wisconsin Synod experienced a shortage of pastors, leading Zion to enter a dual parish in 1961 this time with St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mound City, South Dakota.

By 1965 Zion's needs had again out grown its present building. The congregation began plans for a new church and Christian education-fellowship unit, which the congregation built and dedicated to the glory of God on October 22, 1967.

The 1990s brought realignment for several multiple parishes east of the Missouri River in the central Dakotas; among them, Zion and St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hazelton, North Dakota, the daughter congregation of Trinity, Hartford Township. Zion and St. Paul's established a dual parish in 1995, partnering the two remaining churches that resulted from Adascheck and Keturakat's Gospel work over eighty years earlier.

These pastors have served Zion, Zeeland: W. F. Sauer 1910-12; Martin Keturakat 1912-21; E. Neumann 1922-23; E. Kolander 1924-25; Samuel Baer 1925-37; J. E. Bade 1937-42; Walter Herrmann 1942-49; Philip Janke 1950-54; Ernest Klaszus 1955-59; Waldemar Loescher 1961-64; Arnold Lemke 1965-70; Donald Forss 1971; Robert Weimer 1972-80; Timm O. Meyer 1980-86; Gary Koschnitzke 1986-90; Paul Vander Galien 1990-93; and Steven Nowicki 1993-present.

**A History Of
NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN ACADEMY**

A Mission In Christian Education On The Dakota Plains

by Prof. Wayne Ten Broek

Forward

Previous histories of the Academy have appeared over the years. In 1939 the synod authorized the first such formal history for distribution among the synod's constituents. Its intent was to provide information as to the origin, purpose and ideals of the Academy and the service it was rendering to the Kingdom of God. It covered the history of the school from 1928 to 1941. It was written by a four man committee: R.A. Fenske, W. Meier, E. Gamm and G. Schlegel.

In 1951 in the observance of the synod's centennial, a history of the synod, "Continuing in His Word", was published. It contains a chapter on the Academy which updates the school's history to 1950. It was written by R.A. Fenske.

By far the most ambitious and complete history of the Academy appeared in 1992. It is a chronological record of the Academy story from its beginning in 1928 to its close in 1979. A project of the Academy Alumni Association, it was authored by Hans Johannsen assisted by his wife Charlotte, who are Academy alumni. It bears the title: "Like a Tree Planted by the River of Waters." Its research included information gleaned from the synod reports and proceedings, articles from the Northwestern Lutheran, Board minutes, old letters and the Synod Archives. More recently the historical section of this book appeared in the October 1993 edition of the WELS Historical Journal.

When approached on the matter of writing an Academy history for enclosure in the Dakota-Montana District's 75th anniversary booklet, the present writer was fully aware that he would be able to add little to the story already told. He also recognized the debt he owed to those who previously had researched the records of the past and without whose efforts this edition would not be possible. His only advantage lies in the long relationship he has had with the Academy. A native of the Dakota prairies, he spent 37 years of his public ministry in the Dakota-Montana District. He received his high school education at the Academy in the early thirties and for 26 years served as an instructor at the school up to the time of its closure in 1979.

When one's life has been attached so long and closely to the subject of his writing there is a likelihood of its bearing tint-marks of personal feelings and opinions. If such sentiments seem to show, it was not by the intention of the writer. It is rather his conviction that personal judgements on such recent history are premature. At a future time, when the Academy story can be viewed within the framework of what God has planned as our synod's role in the building of his Kingdom, there will be a better vantage point for unbiased appraisal and reflection. For the present an unfinished task beckons our attention: to spread the Gospel and to nourish souls and this within the framework which God in his wisdom has provided in our synod here and now.

Yet to have received the assignment to author this version of the Academy history I count as a unique opportunity. From a personal perspective it presents a means to express a long-felt debt of gratitude. It is to this humble institution and the training it afforded in my adolescent years that I owe the life of service God has privileged me to enjoy. The message of Christ's amazing grace which formed the core of all its training and instruction gave life its true meaning and served to awaken the desire to pursue full-time ministry. The years in the pastoral and teaching ministry God has privileged me to have are to be traced to the Wisconsin Synod's mission in Christian education on the Dakota plains. May the reading of this account serve to encourage a continuing interest in the cause and the importance of Christian education.

Sowers of seed. Feeders of lambs. These familiar pictures symbolize our work as laborers in Christ's vineyard. They help us see what happens in winning souls for Christ. The process is much like sowing and feeding. We sow the seed of the Gospel into the hearts of men. With this message, which is God's power for salvation, the Holy Spirit awakens faith. He calls and gathers sin-lost souls into the Holy Christian Church. But the process then continues. As a plant without water will droop and then die, so a faith without nourishment is not able to survive. We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. In order to live sanctified lives of service we need the nourishment of the Word. Therefore Jesus says: Feed my lambs. With the Gospel's power the Holy Spirit sanctifies and keeps us faithful Christians.

Jesus commissioned his followers both to sow and to feed. "Go ye...preach the Gospel to every creature." We are to plant the seed. "Teach them to observe everything I have commanded." We are to feed the lambs.

In response to the Savior's mission call our Lutheran forefathers began sowing the Gospel seed on the Dakota plains in the early 1900s. As promised, the seed took root and hungry souls were gathered into tiny parishes across the prairies. Now an even more challenging task confronted the early missionaries. How were they to provide nourishment for the flocks? Who would feed the lambs?

Since Reformation times thorough Christian training has been held to be the key to the future welfare of the Church. As early as 1516 Luther said: "This (lack of Christian training) is the total ruin of the Church, for if it is to flourish again we must begin by instructing the young." In the Preface to his Small Catechism he says: "Therefore I entreat you for God's sake...pastors and preachers, to devote yourselves heartily to your office, to have pity on the people who are entrusted to you, and help us inculcate the Catechism upon the young."

Guided by these principles the fathers of our Wisconsin Synod at the first Synodical Convention in 1850 resolved: "that every pastor...shall devote himself especially to the youth and conduct day schools, Bible hours, mission hours, etc." In 1920 when the Dakota-Montana District organized as a district of the Wisconsin Synod one of its primary concerns was how to provide for the Christian training of the young.

The Dakota-Montana District extended over a vast area, a region nearly three times that of the state of Wisconsin. In the early 1920s it held promise for great mission expansion. Settlers emigrating from Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and South Russia were

staking their claims in this land of opportunity. Large numbers of these early settlers came from Lutheran backgrounds and they welcomed the visits of our early missionaries as they began stretching the Gospel net across the plains. The work was seldom easy. Preaching stations were small, often meeting in homes and country school houses and separated by long and tedious miles over roads scarcely better than cattle trails. And therein lay one of the more perplexing problems for the early circuit riders.

To build a future church on a solid foundation the Christian training of its youth could not be neglected. But under the prevailing circumstances how was such training to be properly provided? The establishment of local parish schools was clearly not the answer. A viable alternative seemed to be a centrally located academy. Such an institution could make it possible for at least a nucleus of the youth to gain a sound Christian training. They in turn upon their return to their home parishes could serve as responsible leaders of the flocks. They could be a leaven. For those who wished to prepare for full time church work an academy would provide a way to receive their first years of instruction without being separated great distances from home. Thus the concept of an academy was born. It is an interesting story to recall how the Lord of the Church arranged the circumstances which led to the actual founding of Northwestern Lutheran Academy.

How the Academy Idea Became Reality

The Dakota-Montana District held its first meeting in 1922. Professor August Pieper read an essay on Christian education. In it he said, "But our church must not stop with Christian elementary education. The need of higher education is growing among us from year to year. It is just our public schools that are at variance with what is intrinsically Christian and becomes dangerous to our youth. Therefore we must also found Lutheran high schools for all our Lutheran boys and girls; otherwise they will be lost to our church and to Christ." At the next district convention in 1924 Professor Bliefernicht from Dr. Martin Luther College in an eloquent essay again pointed out the inadequacy of state schools for our Christian needs and said, "We Christians must more and more take the thought to heart that we establish Christian high schools for our Christian youth." With such encouragement the interest and desire for an academy within the Dakota-Montana District intensified. In its 1926 convention, the district petitioned the synod for an academy.

It was in this same time frame of the mid-twenties that a movement was mounting to update the

synod's educational system. State laws were beginning to require school attendance through the high school years. The fear was growing that such laws would eventually erode interest and concern for parish schools on the elementary level. The synod's resolve to sustain a well-trained laity might well be jeopardized. These concerns prompted the 1927 Synod Convention to take action. Its Committee on Education presented the following recommendation: "That Synod should authorize and subsidize the establishment of preparatory schools, or academies, in many parts of its territory, preferably according to conferences."

In response to this recommendation and the petition from the Dakota-Montana District the 1927 Synod Convention adopted the following resolutions:

- 1) Synod authorizes the founding of an academy in the Dakota Montana District.
- 2) Synod appoints the members of the district to select the place at which the academy is to be established.
- 3) Synod elects the Board of Regents for the academy.
- 4) Synod allows \$5000 for maintenance.

A synodically sanctioned academy, supported and supervised by the synod in every respect, had received its first life. A host of details needed attention if the school was to open, as intended, by September of the next year, 1928.

The newly elected Board of Regents consisted of four laymen: E. Mischke, A. Ottenbacher, E. Guenther, S. Thomsen, and three pastors: J. Schaar, S. Baer, K. Sievert. The board held its first meeting in Aberdeen on November 11, 1927. Professors E. Bliefert and H. Klatt of Dr. Martin Luther College were present as advisors as was the district President W. F. Sauer. The board issued a request for candidates for the school's first professor. It approved "Northwestern Lutheran Academy" as the school's official name. It called for a special district convention to select the site for the school's location.

The special district convention met at Watertown, South Dakota in January 1928. There were four offers of locations for the new school. Each offer included inducements for its selection. The offer from Mobridge included no less than 28 acres of land and a school building to be moved to the selected site. When the ballots were counted Mobridge received 51 votes, Roscoe 7, Bowdle 4, and Elgin 2.

Prior to this special convention E. Gamm, pastor of Zion congregation, sought for leads in Mobridge for establishing the Academy. Through these contacts the city's Commercial Club became interested in the Academy project. Through the efforts of its executive committee the Commercial Club became instrumental

in starting the Academy in Mobridge. It offered the choice of four possible sites of no less than 28 acres each and without cost to the school. Thus without any solicitation on the part of anyone in the Mobridge congregation the eventual location of Northwestern Lutheran Academy overlooking the scenic Missouri River valley became a reality. By August a landscape artist had completed plans for developing the site.

Similarly providential circumstances provided the school with its first building. The "West Side School," a two-story 48 X 50 foot frame structure was only 18 years old when it was put up for sale by the Mobridge Independent School District. Designed to serve 200 students it was no longer adequate to handle the city's growing school population. It had been replaced with a new structure in 1928. This vacated building was destined to serve in many ways throughout the Academy's history. It affectionately came to be known as the "White Building." Zion congregation purchased it for \$500.

The Board of Control also met in January 1928 to call the Academy's first professor and director. From a slate of eight candidates Pastor K.G. Sievert of Grover, South Dakota was elected. For 43 years he would remain a member of the faculty.

With the selection of a location and the election of the first professor plans were soon underway to begin classes in September. Two men would be chiefly responsible to achieve this goal. E. Gamm, the local pastor, would superintend the physical aspects of the early beginnings. Professor K.G. Sievert was in charge of setting up the academic program.

From its outset the Academy's purpose had been manifest. Its first catalog made that purpose plain: "to make a Christian high school education available to a greater part of the synod's congregations, this Academy shall serve primarily the congregations of the Dakota-Montana District." The institution offered three separate courses:

- 1) A four-year high school course for young men preparing for the ministry and desiring to enter Northwestern College, Watertown, Wisconsin.

- 2) A four-year high school course for young men and women who desire to enter the teaching ministry and attend Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota.

- 3) A four-year high school course for young men and women who desire a general high school education under a distinctly Christian influence. By the time of graduation an Academy student held roughly twice as many credits as were required in a public high school. The courses ranged from Religion-History, Latin, German and English to Mathematics, Science,

Geography and Music. For the Academy's first year the enrollment was limited to the ninth grade. Professor Sievert taught 38 hours each week, including classes on Saturday morning. He also served as the school's administrator.

The first school year began on September 2, 1928 with the installation of Professor K.G. Sievert. The service was held in Riverside Park on the banks of the Missouri River. The school year itself got underway on September 5th in the leased facilities of West Side School, not yet moved to its future campus site. This building also served as the boys dormitory. Dormitory quarters for the girls as well as the dining hall and the living quarters for the matron-cook were located seven blocks away in a vacant hospital building.

These were no grandiose beginnings but they were a start. Board and room charges for boys for a year were \$120, for girls \$180. There was an additional charge of \$40 for those enrolled in the general high school course. The opening enrollment of 22 (all freshmen, though some were 16 to 18 years old) was larger than had been expected. Six students dropped out for various reasons during the course of the year.

There were great expectations for the oncoming year but disappointments were in store. During the summer members from St. Jacobi congregation in Glenham dug the basement for the White Building and the concrete work was completed. Zion congregation had purchased the White Building, but problems were encountered in moving the large structure to its new foundation. The building suffered extensive damage. The local congregation bore the cost not only of moving the building but also for repairing the damage, a liability of \$4500. And the Academy lost the use of the White Building for the major part of its second year as the building was being refurbished.

But there was good news too. In August 1929, the synod authorized the immediate calling of a second professor as well as a tutor for the year that would follow. Equally heartening was the synod's approval to build a dormitory with a central heating plant and of the construction of a professorage on campus.

The second school year began with the enrollment of 22 ninth and tenth grade students. Since the White Building was not available, the boys were housed in a rented residence in town. The auditorium and basement of Zion's church were used for classrooms. The school's dining room and the dormitory for the girls stayed in the vacated hospital. The Call for the second professor had not yet been answered. Professor Sievert's father, a retired teacher, provided

emergency teaching help. It was a difficult year. With the school scattered all over town, conditions were not conducive to proper supervision or stellar classroom achievement.

But better days were soon at hand. F.E. Traub, a veteran from earlier Dakota days and since then a pastor in Minnesota, accepted the Call to be the Academy's second professor. He was installed on November 3, 1929. Construction of the new dormitory and the heating plant as well as of the director's new home began in October. The dormitory cornerstone was laid in place with special services on Thanksgiving Day. By March all units were ready for occupancy. The boys settled into their new dormitory, the girls with their housemother moved into one of the second floor rooms of the White Building. Professor Sievert took up residency in the new professorage. A sense of stability had finally arrived.

The new dormitory was a two-story, 32 X 70 foot, brick structure. In its basement there were living quarters for the janitor and cook, a student dining area and kitchen, and space for the coal-fired general heating plant. Because of a funding shortfall the second floor had not been finished. The area, which was only roughed in, served as the general sleeping space for the boys. Student study rooms, tutors' quarters, a reception room and bathroom facilities were located on the first floor of the building. The total cost of the dormitory with its heating plant was \$22,949.17. Since this figure was slightly higher than the synod had appropriated, such things as basic furniture, furnishings, landscaping besides the unfinished second floor were items earmarked for the future.

The Academy had settled on its campus. It was an event worth celebrating. June 15, 1930 was set as the day of dedication for the boys' new dormitory. The school year had been extended a few days so the students could take part. From a hundred mile radius members of congregations came as did the pastors and delegates then attending the district convention in Roscoe sixty miles away. Sermons were delivered by Professor Bliefernicht from New Ulm, Pastor John Brenner of Milwaukee, Professor John Meyer from the Seminary and Professor K.G. Sievert. The chairman of the Board, Pastor Samuel Baer, read the dedicatory rites.

The entire appraised value of Academy property, land and all the buildings on campus, was set at \$50,000. Of this, the synod had invested \$28,000. The city, the local congregation and the district had given the rest in the interest of Christian education. Local and district support for this oasis of Christian training had developed early in its history.

Striving for Stability and Tested by Adversity—The Depression Years

Changes were less dramatic for the coming years as the Academy settled into an established routine. The White Building became strictly a classroom-administration building. Living quarters for the girls were shifted into the homes of the two professors, an arrangement which continued until 1949. As the school grew into a four-year institution tutors were assigned to teach the increasing number of classes. They lived in the boys dormitory and served as supervisors. Their example and encouragement led many of their charges to pursue the Call of full time ministry.

But the tutor system had drawbacks; it involved an ongoing change in teachers and in dormitory supervision. A sense of continuity was lacking. This situation was not improved when Professor Traub, after eight years on the faculty, returned to the parish ministry in 1936. Hilton Oswald, who had served as tutor for four years, received the Call of permanent professor and was asked to become the acting director of the school. He served in this capacity until 1939 when he followed a Call to Northwestern College. It was at this point that the Board of Control resolved to call a permanent director. The call went to Professor Reinholt Fenske. He had taught the ten previous years at Lutheran High School in Milwaukee and before that had served in the parish ministry in the Pacific Northwest. His tenure at the Academy began in July 1939 and extended to 1965, a period of 27 years. His years of service would leave a lasting imprint on the image of the Academy.

In the summer of 1939 the problem of continuity on the faculty was finally addressed. The Academy Board asked the synod to grant a third permanent professor. After intensive study the request was granted. Three professors and one tutor would now constitute the faculty. The three permanent men were now able to concentrate on specific teaching areas where continuity was especially important. Tutor Henry Meyer was called to become the third professor. In addition to his regular subject area he was given charge of the music department. The tutor, besides serving as dormitory supervisor and athletic director, was chiefly responsible for teaching mathematics.

But the story of the thirties would be incomplete without reference to the impact of the financial crash of 1932 and the crippling drought in the years that followed. Their effects left lasting marks on the Academy. Hopes for the school's existence flickered as mortgage foreclosures and sun-darkening dust storms drove farmers and ranchers from the plains, as wheat

sold for fifty cents a bushel and ranchers marketed their stock at five to ten dollars a head. Despite pleas to parents extolling the importance of Christian education Academy enrollments dropped drastically, from 32 students in 1931 to 17 in 1935. In 1939 there was but a single graduate. The cost of running the Academy had less than a three percent impact on the total synod budget, yet the 1933 convention studied a proposal to close the school. In the following year in an attempt to save \$800, the synod's trustees requested releasing the two tutors. The request was withdrawn. It would have forced the school to close. Efforts were made to cut costs in other ways. A stoker was installed to furnish heat by burning a cheaper grade of coal. A vegetable garden was planted. It was irrigated with water from the Milwaukee Railroad water lines which crossed the campus. Grasshoppers and Mormon crickets soon destroyed the little that grew.

These were trying times for the young Academy. Professors, tutors, staff and members of the board struggled valiantly with the daily problems. Parents bore extreme financial sacrifice to give their children a Christian education. For the students this was not a time for irresponsible or prolonged adolescence. It was a time to learn dependability, self-reliance, awareness of other people's needs and how to manage one's affairs. The duress of the times shaped lasting attitudes. Prudent foresight, careful management, conservative restraint became almost moral imperatives, maxims not to be forgotten even when better days returned. Yet through it all, the humble beginnings, the tiny student bodies, the trying times forged a family atmosphere which bound the students closely to their Alma Mater. For some it also awakened the desire to pursue the path to public ministry. The Lord clearly had not abandoned the Academy.

A Steady Hand during Days of Change The Early Fenske years

The 1940s mark the beginning of the Fenske era. The new director would soon be facing challenges unlike those of earlier years. With the nation's growing involvement in World War II the school would have to cope with shortages and cutbacks and increasing costs of everything. But there were pleasant problems too, such as the return of prosperity and growing enrollment

In the fall of 1940 under Professor Fenske's urging the board inaugurated a number of changes. Once a bandsman himself in Northwestern College days, Professor Fenske pushed for beginning an Academy band. (Until now piano lessons and basic choral

drills had been the extent of the music offerings of the school.) With borrowed money and donated instruments Professor Meyer began the band, a troop which in future years would march in festive parades and win prized trophies for excellence. It was also at this time that the *Academy Advocate* came into being. A mimeographed school paper it was the brainchild of three students, Jerome Albrecht, Wilbert Blumhart and John Lau. Some years later, *The Wildcat*, a student annual, made its appearance as a second publication. It became a popular pictorial review of each year's activities and a cherished keepsake of each student. Another change was in recruitment. Student groups began making singing excursions to neighboring congregations. And the school catalogs were distributed to widening circles to increase Academy awareness.

Student enrollments did increase. From 1939 to 1948 the number tripled, from 20 to 69. This gave rise to a new problem, a problem that really never went away throughout the Academy's history. Where and how could space be found to accommodate the growing numbers? Since neither funds nor materials were at hand to provide anything permanent, stop-gap solutions were made from year to year.

In 1940 the Academy secured its second professorage. The home of former Professor Traub was purchased for \$3000 to become the residence of Professor Meyer. Professor Sievert purchased his own home and received a rental subsidy. Professor Fenske occupied the professorage on campus. Second floor rooms in the Fenske and Meyer homes furnished housing for sixteen Academy girls.

The only building designed for regular student housing was the boys' dormitory and its space was beginning to be strained. The unfinished portion of the second floor was finished off in 1941. The janitor's quarters were moved out of its basement. Though beset with wartime restrictions and shortages, dormers were eventually installed in the attic and third story sleeping quarters were thus made available. Because of the growing student numbers in the mid-forties the kitchen-dining area became too small and had to be shifted to the White Building. The vacated space was utilized as added dormitory quarters.

In 1944 Professor Fenske sounded the first of many pleas in *The Northwestern Lutheran* asking the synod to provide its school with necessary facilities. When enrollments reached seventy, four and five boys were cramped into study rooms designed for two students. They mounted two flights of stairs to reach their attic sleeping quarters. When space in the professors' homes was no longer sufficient to lodge all the girls, some girls were quartered in the boys dormitory

basement. At one time there were as many as nineteen girls living there. It was a stop-gap remedy for a problem that demanded a better solution.

The solution came in 1947. At its August convention the synod, alarmed by the existing housing conditions, budgeted \$65,000 for a girls' dormitory. After much discussion and modification of plans a bid for \$104,093 was signed in June 1948. The dormitory was a two-story brick structure, designed to house 44 girls. It also had a matron's apartment, a lounge and reading room and a reception room. In the basement there were piano rooms, laundry room, and a recreation area. Generous donations in time, money, and materials from ladies' groups and individuals provided many of the furnishings for the building and its matron's quarters. The dormitory was dedicated on April 24, 1949. Pastor L. Koeninger of the synod's Board of Trustees was the guest speaker. In the closing hymn the assembly sang:

*Almighty God, at Thy command
We brought our need before Thee;
Thy gracious help is now at hand
In this new dormitory.
Our voices then we raise
In thanks and in praise,
Our Father, God, to Thee,
Who hast so wondrously
Vouchsafed to us this structure.*

The words came from a hymn, composed for the occasion by Mrs. H. Lau, wife of Pastor Lau, chairman of the Board of Control.

Other building plans and changes lay ahead. The major need was a new classroom-administration building. This need had become critical when the kitchen-dining hall had been shifted into the White Building. In this change over two large first floor classrooms had been lost. One of these, the science laboratory, was moved upstairs into the library room. The library was pinched into a smaller room and the remaining second floor classroom, measuring 23 X 28, became the assembly room and chapel area for a faculty and student body of nearly eighty people. Space still had to be found for two more classrooms. A temporary building, a 22 X 40 foot cement block barracks, in later years to serve as a garage, was built to furnish the needed classroom space. Oil burners were still not available in 1946. Hand-fired coal burning space heaters furnished heat for the barracks. Even so students wore winter garments and overshoes to class to shield against the chill. A new classroom building was clearly a top priority as the forties merged into the fifties.

The forties and fifties were years of growing enrollments, from 28 in 1940 to 70 in 1948. Although

there was a drop to 58 in 1949, the number rose phenomenally to 106 in 1954. The growth called for an increase in faculty. A second tutor was added in 1944 and a fourth professor in 1948. Rev. A. Schuetze, who had begun his ministry in the Dakotas and was now pastor in Thiensville, Wisconsin, accepted this professorship. In addition to his regular teaching duties Professor Schuetze served as the librarian and in 1953 was asked to become the first Dean of Students. The Schuetze family occupied the original campus professorage. Professor Fenske moved into the recently constructed Cape Cod style dwelling which had been authorized in 1948. With the erection of the girls' dormitory in 1949 a new position, that of matron or housemother, became an integral part of the Academy family. Through the years many noble ladies would occupy this position, but the tenure of Mrs. Lottie Traub, the widow of former Professor Traub, was the longest. Besides having her as a housemother many Academy students received their first piano lessons under her direction. She served from 1950 to 1962 when she suffered a stroke.

The high point of the fifties was the construction of the long-awaited and sorely needed administration-classroom building. Planning for this structure had begun in 1944, although actual construction did not begin until the fall of 1951. Funds for the project were slow in coming. After the war in the mid-forties, synod had undertaken its Centennial Building Fund collection with a goal of a million dollars. Its purpose was to alleviate the crowded conditions in most synodical schools. The collection fell short of its goal by a quarter million. Pleas to complete the collection continued into the spring of 1951. Finally at its August 1951 convention, the synod authorized the beginning of construction at Mobridge. Additional funds as needed were to come from Church Extension Fund offerings once that fund had reached a goal of \$400,000.

The contract for building was awarded to Kyburz Construction Company of Aberdeen, South Dakota. The bid came to \$274,500. Construction began on September 21, 1951. Nearly a year and half later, on February 9, 1953, the building was occupied by students and faculty. It was a joyous day of thanksgiving in Academy history.

A second contract, this one for a pipe organ, was awarded to the Wicks Organ Company. In that time and for this western area a pipe organ was not a common instrument. Its cost was underwritten by two faithful friends of the Academy, Mrs. Sperling of St. Martin's in Watertown, South Dakota, and another anonymous donor.

Once major construction got underway the progress was slow, often delayed by inclement weather and government restrictions on materials. It should be mentioned that one important part of the project was already in place and was functioning. The new central heating plant, fueled by heavy oil, had been installed in 1950. This had become a necessity when the old coal burning furnace proved totally inadequate to supply the heat needed for two dormitories and the White Building.

Meanwhile other improvements were receiving attention. The dining area in the White Building was enlarged. A new entry was built and a cook's apartment was added. In the boys' dormitory the basement floor was tiled and the showers and lavatories were refurbished. With the addition of a canteen-candy store and equipment for a game room, the area which once had been the kitchen-dining area became a welcome recreation room for the boys.

It was the occasion for district-wide rejoicing when the new Administration-Classroom Building was dedicated on April 26, 1953. Over 900 people from all parts of the district filled every available seat. Professor C. Schweppe of Dr. Martin Luther College delivered the address and Pastor H. Birner, chairman of the Board, read the dedicatory rites. A mass choir of over 200 voices under the direction of Professor Meyer sang praises to God. In an evening service with Pastor Albrecht speaking and W. Nolte from Mankato, Minnesota, presenting a sacred organ concert and a mass choir together with a children's choir singing praises, the new pipe organ was set aside for God's glory.

The new building so long in planning and construction was well suited for a student body of roughly 150 students. Its classroom area included, in addition to its five full-sized classrooms, a faculty room, a president's office, an assembly-chapel room, and a nicely furnished science laboratory. The gymnasium with locker rooms and showers for boys and girls compared favorably in size with those of other high schools in the area. The gymnasium wing also included a stage and storage areas, affording space for rehearsals, concerts, dramatic productions, as well as providing a focal assembly area for larger gatherings and conventions. A unique arrangement made it possible to move the console of the pipe organ from its location in the assembly-chapel room through a narrow passage way into the gymnasium. Thus it was possible to enjoy the use of the pipe organ in either area.

The new Administration Building spurred new interest and growth for the Academy. Enrollments climbed from 83 in 1953 (year of dedication) to 99 in

1954 to a then all-time high of 117 in 1957. The increases brought renewed growing pains in dining hall and housing facilities. Remedies for these would be slow in coming.

Changing ministries and new professorships brought new faces to the faculty. In 1953 the Academy received its fifth professorship and the funds for a professorage. That same fall after a fifteen year tenure on the faculty Professor Meyer accepted a call into the parish ministry. His position as head of the music department was filled by Professor W. Nolte. When Professor Nolte's arrival was delayed until he could complete his school year in Mankato, temporary music help was supplied by William Birsching, then a student at Dr. Martin Luther College. At the end of the 1953-54 school year Professor Schuetze asked to be relieved of his duties as the Dean of Students. In July 1954 Pastor Wayne TenBroek, a 1935 Academy graduate and at the time pastor in the Henry-Florence parish in eastern South Dakota, accepted the call to be Dean and Latin instructor. He would remain at the Academy until its close in 1979. The faculty now had reached its intended size of five professors and two tutors. One tutor was responsible for dormitory supervision, the second was given charge of the athletic program. Each tutor had teaching assignments.

Holding the Course Through the Sixties The Close of the Fenske Era

The fifties and sixties were times marked with high hopes as well as disappointments. The return of affluence and prosperity in the postwar years carried mixed blessings in their wake. Much is in the record of the change and restlessness of this period. Old traditions were attacked, past values were challenged, new life-styles came into vogue. Life at the Academy was not exempt from the stresses which came with the spirit of the times. In the effort to stay a steady course there were fluctuations of highs and lows. Some of this was reflected in the enrollments. But other factors also played a part in number fluctuations. Upward surges can often be accounted for by the larger student numbers coming from more distant places. In 1955 ten different states were represented in the student body of 115. Such surges were not constant. Larger numbers caused housing overflows and housing overflows created supervision problems. When the White Building had to be pressed into service to accommodate an overflow in boys, there was no provision for additional supervision. In 1957 the synod was again memorialized for more dormitory space for the boys. The request was delayed until a more propitious time.

Despite such a disappointment there were bright spots. The synod did allow an additional tutor to assist in the music department. (By this time there were 65 piano students.) This tutor was able to help with dormitory supervision. Another encouragement was the larger number of students continuing their studies into full-time church work. In the period during and just after the war this number had been minimal. By the mid-fifties nearly half the student body indicated their intention to enroll at Northwestern College or Dr. Martin Luther College.

The late fifties brought further faculty changes. In 1956, after an eight year stay at the Academy, Professor Schuetze returned to the pastoral ministry. Professor V. Weyland succeeded him as librarian and professor of German and history. Professor Weyland was not installed until January 1957. Tutor D. Kuske served as an emergency instructor during the first semester. In the fall of 1958 Professor Nolte followed a Call to Winona, Minnesota. Tutor F. Zabell served as music director for the 1958-59 school year. In the fall of 1959 Professor William Birsching became the music director and instructor in English and geography. The 1955 Synod Convention had granted two new professorships but there had been a delay in filling these positions. The first of these vacancies was filled in 1959 when Professor T. Pelzl was called to be the first full-time athletic director of the school. His coming answered a long-felt need.

Through the years, long before the Academy had its own gymnasium, the students had sought outlets for physical activity. On an outdoor court often buffeted by wind and piled with snow drifts they had practiced basketball. They had pitched horseshoes, kicked footballs and batted softballs. They had competed in intramural games with local high school teams. Each year they played a few games against nearby schools. For lack of adequate practice facilities such games usually proved to be unequal contests. Even after practice sessions were held on in-town courts there was little in the Academy athletic program to compare it with that of neighboring schools. The high point of the athletic year came on Memorial Day. A school holiday was declared and the classes competed with each other in day-long field day events. Such traditions were to change once the school had its own gymnasium and a full-time coach. Basketball for both the boys and girls remained the chief interscholastic activity. The quality of play improved and contests became more competitive. In time track was added to the program and a cinder running track was developed. Intramural play continued throughout the school year in regular physical education classes. In time conference play was

arranged on a limited scale. The apex of the athletic year came when the boys' basketball team took its annual trip to Wisconsin to participate in the Lutheran Invitational Tournament.

Enrollments in the sixties did not measure up to expectations. Population on the plains was declining. Fewer numbers were managing larger acreages and families were moving elsewhere in pursuit of greener pastures. The 1960 communicant membership of the district stood at 7,500. A lingering doctrinal dispute also disrupted the flow of students from several key congregations. One encouraging sign was the continuing influx of students from Nebraska, Arizona, Washington and even from the far-off California Mission District. But with an average enrollment of roughly 90 students it was difficult to make plans for future needs. To remedy the situation recruitment efforts were stepped up. "Academy Day," a visiting day for seventh and eighth graders was introduced, a Ladies Auxiliary was organized, an Academy filmstrip was developed, and the Academy traveling choir made recruitment tours to ever widening circles of congregations. There were improvements designed to better student morale. In the dining hall a cafeteria line replaced family style serving, a change which was welcomed by the students. The boys dormitory, its walls marred by years of abusive overcrowding, received a new look when the women of the district held a painting bee in 1962. Even the countryside took on a new and more inviting look as Lake Oahe, formed by the backwaters of the dam ninety miles downstream, began filling in the lowlands below the Academy campus. Within a few years the wide expanse of blue water would be an inspiring sight and would serve to suggest the theme for the school's 50th anniversary: "Like a Tree Planted by the River of Waters".

In 1964 permission was granted to call the seventh professor. This man was to become the Dean of Students. Professor Ten Broek who had served in this position since 1954 assumed a full classroom teaching assignment. Pastor R. Buss, who had served as tutor previously and had since that time been pastor in Reeder and Hettinger, North Dakota, accepted the Call. He was installed in January 1965. A recently constructed home near the campus was purchased as a professorage.

Despite the static enrollment figures of the sixties changes did occur on campus. When prospects for a new boys' dormitory loomed less and less likely, an alternative was pursued. The synod's Board of Trustees released \$15,300 for a complete renovation of the old dormitory. This project was completed during the summers of 1965 and 1966.

A second project, no less urgent and even more ambitious, got underway. For over twenty years the first floor of the White Building had housed the school's refectory. There had been an ongoing need for a more modern and suitable facility. Lack of funds and problems with architectural designing had resulted in delays. Permission to proceed was finally granted and ground-breaking ceremonies were conducted on January 12, 1966. The multipurpose building was designed to provide pleasant dining facilities for 200. It also furnished space for a student union, a publication room, and apartments for staff personnel. This was to be the last major building project for the Academy campus, as it was the last major project to be launched under the leadership of Professor R.A. Fenske. In February 1966, he announced his retirement.

The sixties saw several changes in personnel. Mrs. Lottie Traub had served as matron and piano teacher since 1950. In February 1962, she suffered a stroke and was unable to continue. Mrs. H. Kunde finished out the year as her replacement. Mrs. Orpha Lau became the next housemother and served until 1965. She was succeeded by Mrs. Irene Rauschke who remained through the 1967-68 school year. A new position, that of school secretary, was begun in 1962. An early Academy graduate, Mrs. Melvin Hepper, was the first to occupy this position.

As has already been noted, Professor Fenske had announced his retirement in February 1966. He had served the Academy for 27 years. Both the Academy family and the district at large honored the Fenske's with anniversary observances. They would spend their retirement years in Colorado, not to return again to the school, which he had guided through the changing decades of drought and depression, wartime shortages and postwar adjustments.

Intensive Efforts towards Growth The Malchow Era Begins

It was a different day in the land and for the Academy as the process got underway to call the Academy's second full-time president. The board named Professor Sievert the Interim Director. He served in that role for next two years as the call for a new president was extended sixteen times.

During the interim-directorship of Professor Sievert the construction of the Student Union-Refectory was completed. Its cost came to \$211,680. It was formally dedicated on October 22, 1966. The chairman of the synod's Board of Trustees, Pastor Harold Wicke, preached the sermon on the theme, "Finished Building-Unfinished Task." That theme was a harbinger

ger of events yet to come. Through the efforts of the ladies of the district and by gifts from individuals the Student Union was furnished with draperies and furniture. With the completion of this project the Academy stood in a good state of repair. With its dormitories filled to their capacity, 115 students could be comfortably accommodated.

The 1967-68 school year marked the Academy's 40th Anniversary. The school observed this milestone on graduation day, May 31, 1968. Pastor E.R. Gamm was the guest speaker for the occasion. He had been the pastor of Zion congregation at the time of the Academy's founding. He had played an important role in attending to the school's physical needs during its first years. In the same service Professor Sievert's forty years of service at the Academy was recognized. No one would surpass the years of dedicated service he had rendered to this school which had been the focus of his ministry.

Vital issues faced the Academy's Board of Control as it began calling a new director. The synod's commitment to the school was plain enough. Over the years buildings had been built, teachers had been trained, year by year increasing subsidies had been appropriated to maintain the school. What was expected was a greater commitment throughout the district to use the school for the Christian training of its youth. In its first forty years the enrollments had rarely reached the hundred mark, and even when that number had been reached there was little likelihood it would be sustained. As the board sought ways to cultivate a deeper understanding and appreciation for the school, one solution seemed to lie in developing a more vigorous and far-reaching recruitment effort. With this goal in mind, the Lord led the board to call Pastor Daniel Malchow as the president. It was the second time he had received the Call. The Lord led him to accept and he was installed on August 27, 1968.

An aggressive, energetic spirit characterized Professor Malchow's presidency. His goal was to awaken a renewed interest in the school and to redefine its image. Symbolic of this goal was the adoption of a new Academy seal. The seal featured an alert Wildcat (the Academy's mascot) striding on the east bank of the Missouri River and bearing on his back the cross of Christ. The imagery symbolized the purpose of the school, to prepare Christian youth for their role as members of God's kingdom and ready to bear the message of Christ's cross into the world.

A number of new ventures were inaugurated to increase interest and enrollment. The *Academy Bulletin*, a newsletter about the Academy and its activities,

was circulated throughout the district. It was also sent to interested congregations in the Nebraska, Pacific-Northwest, and Arizona-California Districts.

Steps were taken to seek and eventually to gain state accreditation. This opened the door to a wider range of student activities. Teams became eligible for competition in regular conference play. Music and choral groups, as well as students interested in drama, could now participate in a wide range of state-sponsored programs. These new outlets for achievement enhanced student life and helped to widen an awareness of the Academy and its program.

In spreading the Academy story it had long been the practice to arrange choir tours to congregations within reasonable traveling distances. Car caravans were the form of transportation that was available. When the Academy acquired a school bus in 1970 it became possible to embark on longer tours. In 1970 the choir traveled to the Pacific-Northwest District. In following years its travels took the choir to Nebraska, Montana and even into Canada. As they sang the Lord's praises in sacred concerts and mingled with the families of the hosting congregations, the young choir members spread the message of what the Academy had to offer. Under the Lord's blessings these renewed recruitment efforts began bearing fruit. In 1968 there were 102 students. This number grew steadily and reached an all time high of 133 in 1975

The early seventies saw a number of changes in faculty and staff. In 1970 Professor Buss accepted a Call to teach English at Dr. Martin Luther College. Pastor P. Wilde from Lake Mills, Wisconsin, succeeded him as Dean of Students. At the end of the 1970-71 school year Professor Sievert announced his retirement. Tutor R. Georg, an assistant instructor, was his successor as science instructor. In 1970 Mrs. Mary Majoros from Ontario, Canada, became the matron.

Mr. Robert Wright from California accepted the position as Business Manager, a new position on the staff.

When Professor Sievert retired in 1971 he had completed 43 years of faithful service on the Academy faculty. He had spent the entire 50 year span of his public ministry in the Dakota-Montana District, a truly unique event in this district of frequent pastoral changes. Professor Sievert's retirement was observed with a special worship service of thanksgiving. A plaque in recognition of his long service was placed in the main hall of the Academy Administration Building.

Two professorages were added to the complex of Academy homes in the early seventies. A new home for the president was built near the Academy's main

entrance. Directly across the street a home became available and was purchased as the home for the new dean. The former Fenske dwelling became Professor Georg's residence. The original Academy professor-age now was the home of the custodian.

The larger enrollments of the seventies again put a strain on dormitory facilities. Expanding athletic and music programs were also in need of more space. If further growth was expected these were clearly problems that called for a solution. But before embarking on a major building program, the synod in 1971 called for a restudy of the Academy's role in the worker training program.

Urgency for this study intensified when the state fire marshal declared the White Building unsafe for further student use. Since the erection of the new dining hall the White Building had been pressed into service as a music practice hall. Now with the fire marshal's ruling a real crisis was at hand. A feasibility study was authorized to examine the options. It concluded that it would be cost prohibitive to bring the White Building up to fire code. As an alternative the study suggested either shifting the music hall into the gymnasium and building a new gymnasium, or building a separate music hall. The results of this study became part of the assigned restudy of the Academy's role.

As the Academy Board began its assignment a number of significant statistics came under scrutiny. The entire communicant membership of the Dakota-Montana District was less than 9000. The enrollment in Christian Day Schools, of which there were four in the district, was 199. Though the ratio of Academy enrollees to district communicant membership compared favorably with that of Lutheran high schools in more populated areas of the synod, yet the fact remained that the per student costs for running the Academy were high and on the increase. It was also a fact that nearly half of the Academy students came from beyond the borders of the district. The study also zeroed in on the number of Academy students enrolled in the worker training program. The sentiment was growing that synod subsidies should not be spent to support general high school education and this was gaining more and more support as an increasing number of area Lutheran high schools were being established in other areas of the synod.

At the 1973 Synod Convention the Commission on Higher Education and the Academy Board of Control presented its restudy of the Academy's role. *The Northwestern Lutheran* reported the synod's reaction to this report: "The delegates directed the Academy board to make projections for a maximum on-campus

enrollment of 200 to consist almost exclusively of students preparing for the work of the church. A general Christian high school education would continue to be offered, but the Academy was encouraged to solicit and receive direct support from individuals and congregations associated with the school for general education students." During the 1973-74 school year the firm of Boettcher and Ginnow, Inc. of Neenah, Wisconsin, was engaged to develop the master plan requested by the synod.

From 1972 to 1974, as the Academy experienced its years of greatest growth, the entire campus took on a different look. An expanding range of extra curricular activities became available. Expanded programs in athletics, music and dramatics were introduced as outlets for student activity and achievement.

In 1974 Professor C. Lemke succeeded Coach Pelzl as athletic director. By this time football had become a part of the school's athletic program. With state accreditation it was now possible to compete in regular conference play in football, basketball, and track. This served to whet the interest and incentive of the young athletes and they responded by winning their share of trophies. At a state track meet in 1974 the Academy mile relay set a state D record.

The girls too enjoyed the advantages of interscholastic competition. Their highest achievement came in 1976 when the team returned from the girls' state B tournament with the runner-up trophy. But perhaps even more widely acclaimed were the performances of the Academy's tumbling team. Under the tutelage of Janine Vasold, who served as music teacher and girls coach from 1972 to 1974, their acrobatic routines delighted the crowds at the half times of basketball games.

It came as a real enhancement to the Academy's athletic program when an anonymous gift of \$10,000 was received to resurface the Academy track. When the paving was finished in the summer of 1975 the new all weather track was regarded as one of the best in the entire area. This fine track encircling the well tended gridiron led a local sports pundit to label the facility the Academy Sports Complex.

An increasing range of musical activities opened up for the students in the early seventies. Keyboard lessons continued to be offered to all who were interested. Everyone took part in the student body chorus. Those with special talents were encouraged to take part in A Capella Choir, the Boys and the Girls Glee Clubs. All these groups performed at regularly scheduled concerts in the Academy Auditorium. Smaller choral groups went on choir tours. A special treat for the young singers came with the invitation to join in

the annual Lutheran Choral Festival. These festivals featured choirs from our Lutheran high schools in Minnesota and Wisconsin. In the fall of 1977 the Academy even hosted such a festival. About 180 singers representing a dozen Wisconsin Synod high schools got a taste of western hospitality as they took part in the Mobridge festival.

The growing excellence of the band and the development of the Drum, Bugle and Fife Corps were further aspects of the Academy music program. Professor William Birsching had taken the lead in developing the music program and rich rewards crowned his faithful efforts. The music delighted the appreciative audiences, prizes were won at music contests, and the brisk routines of the marching band and the well drilled maneuvers of the flag twirlers won the applause of all who watched. The excellence of the young performers was attested by the high ratings they received in competition. Like the choir, the Academy band also enjoyed the fellowship which came with participation in the Tri-State Lutheran Band Festival. In March 1973 the Academy played host to this festival.

Dramatics was the third major extracurricular outlet open to the students. Over the years stage night presentations of one act plays had provided in-school entertainment and training for more serious public performances. One of the earliest of these was the 1957 student production of Gilbert and Sullivan's "HMS Pinafore." In the years that followed other musicals and plays challenged the abilities of the student actors and evoked the appreciation of the audiences. In 1975 the Senior class play, "Coming Round the Mountain" was entered in state competition where it gained a Number One rank and two of its players were awarded superior ratings. Professor Wilde had the satisfaction of coaching the young thespians to their winning performance.

As the Academy rejoiced in the progress with which the Lord was blessing the school, there were ongoing changes in campus personnel. In 1972 Robert Wright retired. Robert Travis succeeded him as business manager. Later he also assumed management of the food service department. After Mrs. Majoros' resignation in 1973, Esther Van Dyk became the housemother. Two new instructors joined the faculty in the mid-seventies. In 1974 Pastor H. Schewe became the school's eighth professor. In 1975 upon the resignation of Professor Georg, Mr. A. Jeffers accepted the call to fill the vacancy in science and physical education. State accreditation required all permanent members of the faculty to become state certified. This usually called for at least a quarter's attendance at a state college. When Professors Schewe and Jeffers

had fulfilled this requirement the Academy held the status of a fully accredited institution. A new home was built to house the Jeffers' family. The Schewes occupied the Ten Broek residence which became available when Professor Ten Broek purchased his own home.

Changed Conditions Alter Past Patterns The Academy Era Ends

It has already been stated that the synod had determined 200 students as the enrollment needed to warrant the capital funding envisioned for new and remodeled facilities. In September 1974 the Academy Board reviewed the master plan developed by the Boettcher-Ginnow firm. The Commission on Higher Education (CHE) endorsed the plan and in August 1975 the plan was adopted by the synod. Euphoria was in the air.

The Boettcher-Ginnow plan called for an outlay of \$1,805,000 in three phases. Phase one, costing \$1,095,000, projected the construction of a music facility, an athletic facility, and a remodeling of the Administration-Gymnasium. Phases two and three called for building and remodeling dormitory facilities large enough to accommodate 200 students.

It was now for the CHE to put these proposals into effect "according to schedule if at all possible" (to quote the wording of the resolution). It was no simple assignment. The 1975 convention had voted large sums for mission expansion. It had approved building programs at other worker training schools. A spiraling inflation and a looming budgetary deficit further complicated the problem. For the CHE it became a question of deciding how much and where synodical dollars could accomplish the most in producing future church workers.

When viewed in the role of becoming a purely worker training school, the Academy's request for a plus million dollar building program proved difficult to defend. The Academy had been producing about five percent of the students entering our worker training colleges. Its per student cost was roughly twice that of a larger synod prep school. Nor could the fact be disregarded that after its peak enrollment years the numbers had again started to decline and students in the pastor-teacher track were on the decrease. From the Southwest and the far West appeals were being heard to move the Academy to an area where there was a greater growth potential.

Such considerations prompted the CHE to reverse its 1975 endorsement of the Academy's master plan for expansion. Its revised recommendation to the

1977 Synod Convention was: Plan the removal of Northwestern Lutheran Academy to a new site and investigate the possibility of offering the campus to the Dakota-Montana District for a regional Lutheran High School. When the synod met in August all previously approved plans for expansion at the Academy (as well as at the Watertown and New Ulm preparatory schools) were suspended until a decision could be reached as to the future of these schools.

Classes resumed in September with an enrollment of 123. It was the golden anniversary year of the Academy. The theme selected for the celebration was: "Like A Tree Planted by the River of Waters." The scenic location of the school overlooking the waters in the Missouri River valley lent substance to the picture of the Psalmist. But there was a richer reason for this theme. Fifty years before a merciful God had led Wisconsin Synod people to plant this tree, this oasis of Christian knowledge, in this region far removed from the synod's heartland. For fifty years God's truth had permeated like a leaven all the subjects taught and had equipped young believers as workers in Christ's kingdom. Each year for fifty years, as fruits of the tree which had been planted, her graduates had gone forth as witnesses of the Gospel's power in their lives.

During the course of the anniversary year President Malchow and Dean Wilde were honored with a service of thanksgiving for their 25 years of service in the Lord's vineyard. The commencement concert and graduation exercises took recognition of the Academy's golden jubilee. In a fitting testimony of honor Professor emeritus K.G. Sievert served as the guest speaker for the occasion. As a close to the anniversary year festivities the Alumni Association hosted the first all-school reunion in July. About 450 people representing classes from early years and late returned to praise God for the blessings they had received from their Alma Mater. In view of the proposal to discontinue the Academy as one of the synod's worker training schools, 168 alumni signed a petition asking the synod to continue its support of the Academy.

The year 1978 marked the district's final efforts to forestall the Academy's closure. In a special January convention the district resolved to assume responsibility to fund the building program upon which future growth depended. Its first phase was to be the replacement of the music hall. By June the congregations had pledged \$177,500 towards this endeavor. It was an encouraging sign and hopes were stirred for the synod's favorable reaction and continuing support.

But events would soon occur which would discourage whatever hopes there were. In July 1978 the synod met in a special session and took a heroic step to

solve the pressing need for space on the New Ulm and Watertown campuses. It voted to purchase Champion High School in Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin at the cost of nearly three million dollars. Martin Luther Academy in New Ulm was directed to begin its 1979-80 school year on this new campus. The first year of operation would cost half a million dollars. When these costs were factored into its regular budgetary responsibilities the synod was face to face with some serious financial pressures and decisions.

In October the CHE Planning Committee met to map a program for the future. Its completed report, though tabled at the time, left little doubt as to its plans for Northwestern Lutheran Academy. The school should be offered to the district as an area Lutheran high school; if this did not materialize the school was to be closed. The rationale for this proposal was the Academy's apparent lack of growth potential and the small number of its graduates continuing in our worker training colleges.

As the 1978-79 school year proceeded into its second semester the signs did not improve. In January the Program Planning Committee of the CHE revised its report to read: "That NLA discontinue operation as a synodical institution, effective with the completion of the 1979-80 academic year". Academy representatives on the Planning Committee took strong exception to this proposal and formulated a minority report. Their report recommended that the synod continue subsidizing the budgetary operation of the school as a worker training institution while accepting the district's offer to assume responsibility for future capital expenditures. Both the majority and minority reports were to be heard at the forthcoming August Synodical Convention.

As the school year drew to a close a number of instructors accepted Calls. Professor Lemke received the call to coach and teach at Martin Luther Preparatory School in Prairie du Chien. Dean Wilde returned to the parish ministry in Escanaba, Michigan. Miss Juroff, in charge of girls' athletics, accepted a Call to Wisconsin. With the Academy's future in a state of uncertainty no authorization was given to fill any of these vacancies or those that were to follow. When the class of 1979 graduated on May 24, there was little doubt as to what to expect at the forthcoming Synodical Convention.

During the early summer there was a further exodus of faculty. Professor Weyland accepted a Call to Minnesota Valley Lutheran High School near New Ulm. Professors Birsching and Ten Broek, who had been honored with anniversary observances in the Academy's final year, received calls to fill existing

vacancies on the Northwestern College faculty in Watertown. Professor Schewe was holding two Calls and pondering his decision. By the time of the convention only three members of the faculty remained on staff: President Malchow, Professor Jeffers and Tutor Starr. The imminent closure of the school as a worker training institution certainly had played a part in these developments.

For fifty-one years Northwestern Lutheran Academy had provided its students with a Christ-centered education. As a worker training school it had laid the ground work for many of its graduates to becoming full time workers in the Church. The 1979 Synod Convention took formal recognition of these facts. But the synod also recognized other facts. History had moved forward. The scope of the synod's mission had enlarged, its economics had grown more complex. Now per student costs and students enrolled for full time ministry had become criteria in determining the survival of a school such as the Academy. Since 1973 its role had been under scrutiny. The school stood at a crossroads. The Academy was too small to justify its costs, yet without facilities it was not able to grow larger. Even if the facilities had been granted, was there the potential for the growth that was needed? It was projected that an enrollment of 200 would be necessary to justify the capital funding being asked. Yet since the surge in students of the early seventies enrollments had again taken a downward trend, reaching a low of 114 in the 1978-79 school year. Even more disappointing was the decrease in the number of students enrolled in the worker training program. These matters became key issues when the Academy question came before the convention. Another side of the picture related to the faculty. In recent months the Lord had led the majority of the faculty to accept new calls and no authorization had been given to fill the vacancies. Without manpower the operation of the school would be impossible. Such was the setting as the delegates weighed the debate on the Academy question. By ballot vote and by a margin of 225-41 the following resolution prevailed: "that the synod, with deep regret, discontinue the operation of NLA as a synodical institution, effective immediately."

When the synod resolved to cease its support of the Academy, the land and buildings were offered without cost to the Dakota-Montana District for an area Lutheran high school. If this offer were not accepted within a stated time, the synod would dispose of the property to its best advantage.

The district in 1979 was not in a position to assume a take over of an institution the size of the Academy. The school had grown to its size largely

with the backing of the synod. It had depended on the synod for direction, for staffing, for much of its financial support. That sort of assistance was now gone. Other long time patrons of the school were also turning elsewhere. Over the years congregations in Nebraska, Washington, Arizona, and California had come to regard the Academy as their worker training institution. There were years when nearly half of the students came from these outlying districts. But since 1977 each of these regions had started Lutheran high schools of their own, often at great sacrifice with small initial enrollments and in limited facilities. The loss of these faithful and long time Academy supporters greatly eroded the Dakota-Montana's potential for assuming the take over of the Academy. The obligations which were involved were simply beyond reach, at least in the short term. An area Lutheran high school in the Dakotas would be a venture for a future time.

By the time the 1979-80 school year had begun the remaining members of the Academy faculty, President Malchow, Professors Schewe and Jeffers and assistant instructors, Mr. and Mrs. Huebner, accepted calls to Martin Luther Preparatory School in Prairie du Chien. A large part of the Academy student body from Mobridge transferred there and helped to swell the opening enrollment of the new school. Other members of the staff, the housemother, Mrs. Van Dyk, and Mr. Travis, as food manager, became a part of the transplanted Academy family on the new Wisconsin campus.

When the district declined the synod's offer to use the Academy as an area Lutheran high school, the property was put up for sale at a public auction. On July 28, 1980 the entire property was purchased by the Mobridge-Oahe Enterprises for \$375,000 as an investment endeavor. In December 1985 the Academy and its campus became the home of the Central Indian Bible College. After renovations its total investment for the school was reported to be nearly half million dollars.

IN RETROSPECT

In his history of the Academy in 1951 Professor Fenske set forth the Academy's purpose in these words: "it was a mission school in a mission district; it was to provide a general education on the high school level; it was to be a 'feeder' to our synodical colleges."

If measured by this yardstick, the Academy under God lived true to its purpose through the years. Its nearly 700 graduates, as well as those who were in attendance for shorter lengths of time, came in large part without the basics of a Lutheran parochial school education and often even without the benefit of thor-

ough pre-confirmation instruction. The unending miles separating the parish memberships in these western regions present real problems for the pastors in providing sound and systematic Christian training for the youth. It was to help remedy this problem that led to the establishment of the Academy in this mission district. The success of the endeavor is attested by the fruits which were produced. Academy graduates today are filling their roles as active members and enlightened leaders in their congregations, serving as helpful leaven in the life of the church.

Of those who received their high school diplomas at the Academy about 17 percent entered one of our worker training colleges. That a dual nature preparatory school had a part in providing this proportion of its graduates to the ranks of future church workers is not to be reckoned disappointing. That there should or could be more no one will dispute. It is God who grants the increase on what we plant and water. The laborers He gives are an answer to our prayers. We are humbly grateful for the workers whom God has given as a result of the training they received at the Academy.

Life at the Academy was characterized by unity of purpose. Christian faith and charity, daily refreshed at the well of God's life-giving Word, bound faculty and students together in the pursuit for excellence. The Academy sought no accolades of glory. It found its purpose realized in a faithful dedication to its duties day by day. This spirit may in part be traced to the dedication of its teaching staff. Some members on the faculty devoted well-nigh their total ministry in service to the school. For others the years of faithful service were for shorter lengths of time. Students sensed this spirit of unselfish dedication and it served them as a model toward faithful stewardship of time and talent. The bond of faith and steadfastness were at the heart of what may be called the Academy spirit. This spirit lives on in the lives of its former students and is very much in evidence when Academy alumni reassemble for their all-class reunions.

The Academy's prime purpose was to offer its students a sound Christ-centered education. A secondary purpose was also of significance. The Academy was a rallying point for pastors and parishioners of the vast and remote expanses of the central plains. It pro-

vided a special place for fellowship as the members of our churches came together to hear the concerts, to watch sporting events in field and gym, to attend school openings and graduation services. It was the focal point for district gatherings and meetings, the spot where people met for the exchange of ideas and mutual encouragement, so vital for those involved in the extension of Christ's kingdom.

For fifty-one years the Academy was the pattern for Christian education in the Dakota-Montana District. Among its patrons were many active laymen who from the day of its humble first beginnings gave freely of their time, their talents and their treasure to support its cause and purpose. Among the rewards for such dedicated service their children and the children of many others have been blessed with the special opportunity the Academy gave to grow in faith and in the grace of godly living. They were privileged to reap the blessings promised to those brought up in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord.

The Academy's demise dares not spell despair for the cause of Christian education on the plains. It rather opens up the challenge to seek and find the ways available for Christian growth, ways to furnish our youth with the strength to stand steadfast in God's ways in a day of shrinking values and the scraping of God's truth. One such way lies in hastening the day when a Lutheran high school is established in an area where its needs can more easily be met and students more readily supplied. Lutheran elementary education too, the church's most effective means for early Christian training, needs our continued encouragement; it prospers as its values are appreciated and supported.

As new avenues of rapid communication and technology, geared for the effective spread of knowledge over distance, come into more common use, there may be found in these the tools to serve the cause of Christian training in areas ever so remote. There is no lack of materials or services for the furtherance of Christian knowledge. The responsibility remains to find the most effective way to bring these into contact with the learner. For until He comes again the commission stands: Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you; and surely, I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.

**PROFESSORS WHO SERVED AT
NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN ACADEMY**

W. H. Birsching	1959 - 79	H. C. Oswald	1937 - 39
R. E. Buss	1965 - 70	T. A. Pelzl	1959 - 73
R. A. Fenske	1939 - 66	H. A. Schewe	1974 - 79
R. C. Georg	1971 - 75	A. W. Schuetze	1948 - 56
A. L. Jeffers	1975 - 79	K. G. Sievert	1928 - 71
C. M. Lemke	1974 - 79	F. E. Traub	1929 - 36
D. W. Malchow	1968 - 79	W. B. Ten Broek	1954 - 79
H. G. Meyer	1940 - 54	P. H. Wilde	1970 - 79
W. H. Nolte	1954 - 57	V. J. Weyland	1957 - 79

MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMY BOARD OF CONTROL

Paul Arndt	1960-73	Rev. Herbert Lau	1941-52
Rev. G. S. Baer	1952-55	W. Mehlberg	1938-43
Rev. H. C. Baer	1940-45	Rev. W. T. Meier	1930-43
Rev. S. Baer	1928-40	Oscar Meyer	1947-54
Rev. Karl Bast	1945-51	Ronald Meyer	1954-55
Wilfred Bauer	1955-79	E. Mischke	1928-47
Walter Begalke	1955	J. K. Moser	1936-39
Rev. G. Birkholz	1957-59	Rev. Fred Mutterer	1958-61
Rev. H. Birner	1949-55	A. Ottenbacher	1928-29
Richard Brei	1973-79	Rev. David Plocker	1961-65
Rev David Buske	1966-67	Rev. Reginald Pope	1955-61
Rev. G. P. Eckert	1961-63	Rev. Marvin Putz	1968-70
Rev. Nathan Engel	1971-73	Rev. George Rothe	1967-71
Calvin Frey	1964-79	Rev. H. Schaar	1928-32
Rev. E. R. Gamm	1928-38	Rev. J. P. Scherf	1930-32
E. Guenther	1928-31	Martin Scherf	1943-63
Thomas Hansen	1975-79	Rev. G. J. Schlegel	1939-40
Rev. Dennis Hayes	1973-75	Rev. Thomas Schmidt	1973-79
Rudy Heier	1945-75	Rev. W. Schmidt	1940
Rev. Ronald Heins	1971-73	Rev. James Schneider	1964-68
Rev. Philip Janke	1951-57	Rev. W. Schumann	1956-58
E. Kehrberg	1930-31	Rev. Cyril Spaude	1964-66
John Klein	1929-32; 1938-60	S. Thomsen	1928-37
Rev. David Krenke	1973-79	Rev. Edward Werner	1965-67
Rev. Paul Kuehl	1955-56	Rev. R. Zimmermann	1959-64

ASSISTANT INSTRUCTORS

David Adickes 1957-58	David Johnson 1971-73	Harold Sauer 1943-44
Norman Berg 1944-46	Kathryn Juroff 1977-79	Ronald Schilling 1961-62; 1964-65
Leonard Bernthal 1946-48	Jon Kietzer 1962-63	Loyal Schroeder 1948-51
William Birsching 1954	Edgar Knief 1936-40	Raymond Schumacher . 1977-78
Gerhard Birkholz 1952-54	Thomas Koepsell 1966-67	Melvin Schwark 1959-60
Robert Bock 1970-72	James Korthals 1973-74	Curtiss Seefeldt 1975-76
John Brenner 1974-75	Richard Kuckhahn 1962-63	Carroll Sengbusch 1959-60
Ronald Bretzmann 1937-39	Robert Kuehn 1964-65	Oscar Siegler 1940-41
Charles Buege 1969-71	David Kuske 1956-57	Robert Sievert 1960-61
Ruth Bunkowske 1977-79	Paul Kuske 1967-68	Roger Sievert 1966-67
Milton Burke 1948-50	Daniel Luetke 1970-71	Cyril Spaude 1954-56
Richard Buss 1957-58	Martin Lutz 1953-55	Richard Starr 1978-79
Robert Carter 1955-57	Gerald Martin 1932-37	Martin Stern 1950-52
Roger Dallmann 1964-65	Henry Meyer 1939-40	Janine Vasold Swain . . . 1972-74
Adelbert Dornfeld 1929-32	Paul Naumann 1976-77	Paul Swain 1971-74
Joel Ehlert 1964-65	Theodore Olsen 1963-64	Frederick Tabbert 1942-43
Willard Engel 1965-66	Hilton Oswald 1932-37	Verdell Tassler 1965-66
Charles Flunker 1962-63	Carl Pagel 1963-64	George Tiefel 1958-59
June Frank 1974-77	David Palmquist 1972-73	Aaron Uitti 1961-62
Immanuel Frey 1939-40	John Parcher 1957-58	Erwin Wagner 1931-32
Raymond Frey 1941-42	Henry Paustian 1945-46	Ronald Wels . . . 1974-75; 1977-79
Ralph Gehrke 1944-45	Richard Paustian 1961-62	Rolfe Westendorf 1958-59
Grant Gentz 1956-57	David Pelzl . . . 1963-64; 1965-66	Harry Wiedmann 1947-48
Ronald Georg 1969-70	Philip Potratz 1974-75	Wilfred Wietzke 1951-53
Ronald Gosdeck 1968-70	Edward Renz 1945-47	James Wooster 1973-74; 1975-77
John Habeck 1957-58	Melvin Robbert 1959-60	Franklin Zabell 1958-59
Paul Hartwig 1973-74	George Rothe 1956-57	Philip Zarling 1967-68
Robert Huebner 1977-79	Fritz Rueter 1931-32	Walter Zimmermann . . 1968-69

HOUSEMOTHERS

Mrs. J. Burkhard 1950	Mrs. Irene Rauschke 1965-70
Mrs. R. A. Fenske* 1942-48	Mrs. B. Schlemmer* 1928-30
Miss E. Giziewske 1949-50	Mrs. A. W. Schuetze* 1948-49
Mrs. F. Gosch Sr. 1949	Mrs. K. G. Sievert* 1930-41
Mrs. H. Kunde 1962	Mrs. F. E. Traub* 1930-36
Mrs. Orpah Lau 1962-65	Mrs. F. E. Traub 1950-62
Mrs. Mary Majoros 1970-73	Mrs. Esther Van Dyk 1974-79
Mrs. Henry Meyer* 1941-49	

*An asterisk denotes those who were matrons in their homes.

A History Of GREAT PLAINS LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

The first group among the constituency of the Dakota-Montana District to address the issue of an area Lutheran high school was called the "Committee for Christian Secondary Education." This group began working in January 1979, with people of the Mobridge, SD vicinity and alumni of Northwestern Lutheran Academy (NLA). Initial planning was aimed at assuming control of the NLA facilities. The hope was that enough interest could be generated within the District to provide for the survival of NLA at Mobridge, SD.

NLA Closed

On May 14, 1979, Synod's Coordinating Council voted to recommend to the Synod Convention that NLA be closed immediately. Leaders of the local committee felt that NLA would indeed be closed due to lack of time to organize within a few short months. In August 1979, the WELS Convention resolved to close Northwestern Lutheran Academy after 51 years of operation and offered the campus to the constituency of the Dakota-Montana District for use as an area Lutheran high school.

DMLHS Formed

In mid-September 1979, a general meeting was held at Zion Lutheran Church in Mobridge, SD for all persons interested in establishing an area Lutheran high school. On December 1, 1979, the organizational meeting was held at Trinity Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, SD. The name **Dakota-Montana Lutheran High School, Inc.** and the proposed bylaws were adopted unanimously. In late December 1979, the newly formed Dakota-Montana Lutheran High School submitted a progress report to the NLA Closure Committee. In early 1980, the interim board studied seven population centers of the District. However, the board concluded it was premature to choose any one area for the location of the school. Instead a promotional program called *Presentation To The Congregations* was developed. By March 1980, DMLHS had 59 individual members and eight member congregations.

First DMLHS Annual Meeting

On May 3, 1980 DMLHS held its first annual meeting in St. Martin Lutheran School in Watertown,

SD. In June, the District Convention resolved to give the Synod a free hand in disposing of the former NLA property. In July 1980, four DMLHS board members traveled to Waco, NE to visit the Nebraska Ev. Lutheran High School in an effort to gain more knowledge on how to establish and operate an area Lutheran high school. In September of 1980, it was noted that 10 congregations had joined the association thereby converting the voting authority from the individual members to the member congregations as stated in the bylaws.

Building Search Begins

In January 1981, the board of directors toured their first building known as the former Watertown Business University. It was decided not to pursue this property. By February 1981, DMLHS had 85 individual members and 10 member congregations. On July 28, 1981, the former NLA facility was sold at public auction for \$375,000.

The Harmony Hill Proposal

By September 1981, the DMLHS membership numbered 16 member congregations. The board toured the Harmony Hill Education Center just south of Watertown, SD. This fine facility was a former Catholic girls high school. In November 1981, the board began compiling a proposal to open a high school at the Harmony Hill facility. A \$35,000 goal for calling an administrator was set. A proposal was presented and accepted (subject to their review at a later date) by the delegates concerning the utilization of the Harmony Hill property. In November of 1982, it was learned that the Harmony Hill facility would not be available to DMLHS.

Former School For The Blind

In January of 1983, the board toured their third facility — the former School for the Blind along with the local public school both at Gary, SD. In September 1983, another presentation called *Feed My Lambs* was produced by the board. In May 1984, DMLHS held its fifth annual meeting at St. Jacobi Lutheran Church, Glenham, SD. Representatives from the Gary congregation encouraged the use of the former School for the Blind at Gary. And representatives from the Mobridge congregation encouraged the use of the former NLA

property at Mobridge, SD which was again available. The delegates reemphasized the desire to call an administrator when the \$35,000 goal was reached.

Calling An Administrator

In early July 1984, the \$35,000 goal was reached. Three administrator calls were extended, and each was declined. In November 1984, the board extended a limited call for Promoter of Christian Education. Mr. Neil Scriver accepted the Call and in January 1985 began extensive traveling and talking to pastors, teachers, and laymen both in and around the Dakota-Montana District. In January 1985, the board recommended Aberdeen as the site for the school, but continued to study the Watertown and Mobridge areas. Also in January, a 17th congregation became a member of DMLHS.

ACT Fund

In May 1985, at its annual meeting a plan for a "Special Income Fund" was adopted by the delegates. In July 1985, the "Special Income Fund" was refined and named **Aid to Christian Training (ACT Fund)**. In August, another congregation joined DMLHS bringing the total to 18 member congregations. At the April 1986, board meeting, Neil Scriver announced he had accepted a call to Shoreland Lutheran High School, Summers, WI. In February 1987, the treasurer reported a balance of \$16,552 in the ACT Fund, and the first distribution of student aid grants was made to students attending Lutheran high schools. In November 1987, discussions with the Gary, SD school board were held concerning the possibility of sharing their school building with DMLHS. In January 1988, the board met at Mobridge, SD and toured the soon to be vacant Central Indian Bible College buildings. (This college moved to the former NLA campus and remains there to this day.)

Watertown Selected As Site

St. Martin Lutheran School hosted the ninth Annual Meeting on May 7, 1988. A resolution was passed directing the board to concentrate on buying land for our school in Watertown, SD. In June negotiations began on purchasing a parcel of land in Watertown. The Special Delegate Meeting was held at St. Martin Lutheran School in Watertown on September 9th. The proposal to purchase a 40-acre tract of land

for \$200,000 on the north edge of Watertown was approved by a vote of 21 to 15. In January of 1990, St. Martin Lutheran Church of Watertown become a member congregation thus bringing the communicant membership strength to 3,108.

Land Contract Signed

In late January, the contract to buy land was signed. In March of 1990, the board adopted a six point resolution aimed at improved promotion. A fund raising campaign was developed called **Train A Child...** designed specifically for funding the land purchase. On January 29, 1991, the first-year land payment was made which totaled \$43,400.

New Name Selected

On May 4, 1991, the twelfth Annual Delegate Meeting was held at St. Martin Lutheran School. Steve Randall (planning consultant) presented a four phase Master Plan for the campus layout. A new name was chosen for the association: Great Plains Lutheran High School Association.

Property Improvement

In 1992, a shelter belt of trees was planted along the north and west sides of the property. The board began negotiations with the city of Watertown on a drainage easement project. In May of 1993, a drainage easement and drainage detention system agreement was signed, and construction was completed in the fall of 1994.

Opening The School

In August 1993, the synod voted to consolidate MLPS and NPS at Watertown, Wisconsin in 1995.



Pastor Wayne Fischer

The annual delegate meeting in May 1994 voted to pursue opening the school in the fall of 1995 and renting the Grant School in Watertown, SD. After six administrator calls, Pastor Wayne Fischer accepted and is planning to begin his work full-time in early August 1995. The projected date for opening the school is the fall of 1996.

Appendix A

Professor Karl G. Sievert

by Herbert A. Birner, Pastor Emeritus

Permit a brief profile of a man who more than many others left his mark on the district. In writing this profile, I am well aware of the fact that Karl Sievert was very controversial in the annals of Zion Lutheran Congregation of Mobridge. Karl Sievert was not one to “let sleeping dogs lie,” and it must be admitted there was fault on both sides. Yet his contribution to the district should not be overlooked as a pastor, a teacher, and an officer of the district.

He came into the district from the seminary in 1921 and was called to open a mission at Willow Lake, SD. It wasn't long before he was asked to serve the district in various ways.

He came from a family of teachers. His father was a day school teacher. Three Sievert brothers including Karl would teach in synod schools. A brother and two sisters will spend their lives teaching in day schools. Later his retired father would help out for a while at Northwestern Lutheran Academy.

Karl was called to open and be the first teacher at the district's new Academy in 1928. For a while he was the only teacher, the dean, and the administrator. As time went on there was not a subject that Sievert did not teach: German, English, Latin, Mathematics on all levels, Science, Religion, History and other social subjects. During his teaching years he touched the lives of hundreds of our district's youth. Some would go on to be pastors and Day School teachers, the rest went home and became leaders in our congregations. Though he could be a hard taskmaster his students did not resent him. He was the teacher they would visit when they came to town. Many spoke to this writer of Sievert's influence on them.

All congregations in the neighborhood of Mobridge at one time or another had him as a vacancy pastor. When the little Trail City congregation was left stranded, he became their pastor and did not neglect his teaching duties. He served them for years and finally in his old age wished the congregation on this writer. When the Bowdle congregation was split as a result of the Church of the Lutheran Confession controversy, the praesidium asked Prof. Sievert to serve and put the pieces back together. In that controversy he served us well with his counsel.

Among the district's pastors his influence was felt on conference and convention floors. We remember well, how at a mixed conference in the middle fifties, he with a brief history of the old church controversy between the early Iowa and Buffalo Synod, exploded the Missouri claim that Missouri had always held to the doctrine that the local congregation was supreme and that Wisconsin's doctrine that synod could also be Church was false doctrine. He was a ready speaker, who with a few well chosen words could solve a problem which was troubling many.

He was never a “yes man,” and so at times could be very abrasive. When it came to doing battle, he seemed to be afraid of no one. This did serve us well when President Albrecht wanted us to defect from the synod. In an argument it was pretty hard to get around “Doc,” as both his friends and enemies called him.

I think I am correct in saying that he was the only man who served in the district for over fifty years. 49 of those years were served in the first fifty years of Dakota-Montana as a district. This in itself makes him unique and different. He did love his district and despite what some may say served it well.

In many respects he also influenced me and from 1963 to 1969 I was his pastor. He never meddled in my ministry and when I left Mobridge we both shed a few tears.

To God Be The Glory!

Appendix B

Pastor Arthur Paul Carl Kell

by Pastor Alan W. Gumm

Most of the pastors in our district never had the opportunity to meet Pastor Kell. He was a faithful servant of God, born in Pomerania, Germany in 1906. At the age of 20 he entered DMLC—the high school department. He went to Concordia College in St. Paul, MN and from there went to our seminary, graduating in 1935. He served the Lord at Hutchinson, MN; East Fork Indian Mission; Battle Creek, MI; St. Clair, MN; Bethlehem at Watertown, SD, St. John's at Rauville; and for a while Grover, SD. From 1974-1980 he served St. Paul's in Hazelton, ND. He served the Church at large in many capacities in many places. But what he will be remembered for is his time as president of the Dakota-Montana District from 1966-1980.

Those are the cold facts and stats about Pastor Kell. Pastor Kell was a gentle giant with a booming voice who often ended potentially long discussions at meetings, conferences, and conventions with only a few well chosen, wise words. He loved the people God gave him to care for. He loved his family, his work, the Word of God, his Savior, and his district. Someone once said that his initials "A.P.C." stood for "Always Preach Christ." Pastor Kell did.

The first time I met him was on Call Day at the seminary. At the meal the night before, Pastor Kell got up, as all of the Assignment Committee did, and introduced himself, talked about the district, and then said with his German accent: "My next door neighbor told me that I was the biggest Lutheran minister she had ever seen. Well, she hasn't seen anything yet." I had a feeling I was going to the Dakota-Montana District. When my name and assignment to Hazelton, ND was read, the assembly chuckled and I hunted for a map.

Afterwards we talked at length about the congregation and the district. His eyes sparkled as he talked about the district. I knew then and there that I was going to love the Dakota-Montana District.

I could tell you more stories about Pastor Kell, but I won't. Those who knew Pastor Kell respected him and loved him. I attended the Christian Victory Service at Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church in Watertown, WI. Pastor Kell left the District and Hazelton, ND on July 1, 1980. He entered the glory of heaven on November 18, 1980. Pastor Walter Schumann, pastor of Trinity and former president of our district, based his sermon on 2 Timothy 2:1 & 3: "You, then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus....Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus."

As we were walking away from the grave side, someone said to me, "It's a shame we didn't bring along any dirt from the Dakotas to sprinkle on his casket, so he would feel at home."

The last paragraph in Pastor Kell's funeral bulletin sums up the life of this humble, faithful servant and the life of every Christian. "Pastor Kell always looked upon his life and the events here chronicled as an uninterrupted and unmerited blessing of his Lord.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Appendix C

Pastor Reginald E. Pope

by Pastor Alan W. Gumm

As you can see from what took place at the 1994 Convention, Pastor Reginald Pope was not reelected District President. After 42 years in the full-time ministry, he retired. To my knowledge, he is only the second District President to do that. Pastor Kell was the other pastor to retire as our District President.

Pastor Pope entered the ministry in 1952 in our district. Over the last 25 years I have often heard him and his wife, Pat, speak of their love for our district, their district. Their eyes sparkle when they tell stories of their years on the prairie.

Pastor Pope is a theologian, a pastor's pastor. Every time I called him for advice and guidance, and there were many such calls, he always listened. He always gave me advice that turned out to be the right advice. He never made me feel foolish or stupid.

When we served the vacancy at my home congregation when I was a senior at the seminary, he talked me out of quitting because I felt that I didn't have the intelligence to be a pastor. That discussion took place as I was about to teach Adult Information Class. He asked me, "What do you have in your hand?" I said, "The Bible and the Catechism." What he said reassured me that I could serve the Lord in the ministry, by God's grace. He simply said, "What more do you need?"

After I had been elected circuit pastor, which took place 10 days after I returned to the district, I talked to Pastor Pope about resigning as circuit pastor because I felt I didn't have the qualifications to be a circuit pastor. Once again, he gave me a helpful piece of advice. He said, "As long as you are on the side of Holy Scripture, you are always right."

Pastor Pope served his Lord well. Pastor Pope was on the side of God's Word during the troubled 50s and early 60s. He was instrumental in keeping many of the pastors and congregations in the WELS during those troubled times. God made him the right man to lead our district during those troubling times in 1989 and 1990. Over the years he served on practically every committee in our district. God certainly used His humble servant, Pastor Reginald Pope.

Pastor Pope and his family have been my friends for many years. The Dakota-Montana District was their home. My wife and I visited them as they were loading their moving truck for their move to Wisconsin and to retirement. Before we said our farewells, I thanked Pastor and Mrs. Pope for all of their advice, concern, guidance, and Christian love that they had shown to me and my family. Pastor Pope said, "Oh, but we want to thank you for suggesting our name for Mitchell. If it hadn't been for you, we would never have had the opportunity to come home." No thanks necessary, except to the Holy Spirit, who alone brought this all about.

How fitting it was at the convention, after Pastor and Mrs. Pope had received the district's heartfelt thanks and gift, that we sang, "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow." It was a time to sing to the Lord a new song.

Appendix D

PPFA

by Pastor Alan W. Gumm

The history of our beloved District would not be complete without some mention of PPFA.

The year was 1962. (Maybe) Pastors Werner, R. Zimmerman, D. Zietlow, K. Lenz, and maybe C. Spaude, R. Strobel, and N. Meier and there may have been others, went fishing in the pristine mountains of Montana. To locate the best stream for the best fishing, they hiked a long time. They crossed a mountain. And there, right before their eyes was the stream of their dreams. God's creation was truly spectacular! They discarded their coats and unneeded equipment. God filled their creels. But then the fun and frolic came to an end—abruptly! A game warden quickly pointed their attention to a sign that said: “No Fishing! Yellowstone National Park.” He then made the statement: “Only dumb preachers wouldn't be able to read the sign.” You see, the sign had been hidden by their coats. Fines were not levied. Fish were not taken. There was no jail time served. But Poaching Pastors Fishing Association was born. This story has come to me by way of a nameless, reliable source.

If it isn't true, so what. It makes a great story. If it is true, then great! If it is partially true, then it is a legend.

Over the years certain men have received a special mantle and have served as Guide Supreme for the austere association. Having been a part of this I recall names of great Guides Supreme. Men who proved their tracking skills in finding big fish, cool drink, and good food. There was D. Neumann, J. Engel, B. Leerssen, G. Blobaum, R. Froehlich, M. Lindloff, and D. Biebert.

Over the years great campfires heard great stories of elk hunts, long walks, bearbells, bear sightings, Michael Keaton, guns, knives, B.B.Q skewers, card games, and special songs. There have been men who have driven thousands of miles to be with fellow brothers in the ministry. Everyone is greeted with a warm handshake and farewells are quiet occasions. Only the Lord knows if we will see each other again on this earth.

PPFA is more than fishing and not washing for four days. It's therapeutic. To see deer, elk, moose, and eagles among the lodgepole pine and mountains and to fall asleep to the babble of the Boulder River is what the tired soul needs. For five years I drove from Wisconsin, a round trip of 2,800 miles to enjoy the therapy of the mountains and the warm fellowship.

I want to thank the “early” pioneers and founders of PPFA. They have handed down to us a wonderful tradition. Since 1962 to the present, by God's grace, no one has ever been seriously injured. There were some close calls, but God is always good.

To my knowledge, we are the only district in the synod that has such a tradition. May we continue to carry on this fine tradition.

Appendix E: Dak.-Mont. Congregation Statistics

District Totals: Established - 1920 Souls - 12,289 Communicants - 9,340 School Enrollments - 394

Eastern Conference Congregations

Brookings, SD

Our Savior
 Pastor Paul Marggraf
 Established 1969
 Souls 395
 Communicants ... 299

Clark, SD

Peace
 Pastor Jon Hadler
 Established 1923
 Souls 133
 Communicants ... 101

Clear Lake, SD

Trinity
 Pastor Michael Enderle
 Established 1935
 Souls 377
 Communicants ... 286

Dempster, SD

St. John
 Pastor Gail Johnson
 Established 1912
 Souls 82
 Communicants ... 65

Elkton, SD

Trinity
 Pastor Jonathan Hohenstein
 Established 1889
 Souls 163
 Communicants ... 129

Estelline, SD

Mt. Calvary
 Pastor Gail Johnson
 Established 1937
 Souls 121
 Communicants ... 113

Gary, SD

First
 Pastor Bruce Mueller
 Established 1924
 Souls 193
 Communicants ... 163

Goodwin, SD

St. Peter
 Pastor Dennis Lemke
 Established 1898
 Souls 133
 Communicants ... 115

Hendricks, MN

Trinity
 Vacant
 Established 1890
 Souls 68
 Communicants ... 64

Henry, SD

St. Paul
 Pastor Paul Vander Galien
 Established 1894
 Souls 113
 Communicants ... 88

Rural Henry, SD (Grover)

Emmanuel
 Pastor Paul Vander Galien
 Established 1884
 Souls 72
 Communicants ... 55

Huron, SD

Faith
 Pastor Jon Baumann
 Established 1973
 Souls 94
 Communicants ... 61

Jamestown, ND

James Valley
 Pastor Christopher Oehlke
 Established 1978
 Souls 69
 Communicants ... 50

Milbank, SD

Peace
 Pastor Timm Meyer
 Established 1983
 Souls 81
 Communicants ... 60

Mitchell, SD

Ascension
 Pastor Martin Luchterhand
 Established 1974
 Souls 151
 Communicants ... 111

Moorhead, MN

Ascension
 Pastor Lloyd Schlomer
 Established 1965
 Souls 200
 Communicants ... 144

Raymond, SD

Bethlehem
 Pastor Jon Hadler
 Established 1884
 Souls 118
 Communicants ... 100

Sioux Falls, SD

Bethel (St. Paul)
 Pastor Jim Bolda
 Established 1994
 Souls 313
 Communicants ... 236

Sioux Falls, SD

Good Shepherd
 Pastor Norman Seeger
 Established 1952
 Souls 455
 Communicants ... 328
 School Enrollment . 71

South Shore, SD

Our Savior
 Pastor Dennis Lemke
 Established 1968
 Souls 439
 Communicants ... 344

Summit, SD

St. John
 Pastor Timm Meyer
 Established 1888
 Souls 79
 Communicants ... 60

Valley City, ND

St. Paul
 Pastor Christopher Oehlke
 Established 1935
 Souls 97
 Communicants ... 71

Ward, SD

Immanuel
 Pastor Jonathan Hohenstein
 Established 1886
 Souls 64
 Communicants ... 51

Watertown, SD

Bethlehem
 Pastor Stephen Ristow
 Established 1956
 Souls 219
 Communicants ... 173

Watertown, SD (Rauville)

St. John
 Pastor Stephen Ristow
 Established 1889
 Souls 67
 Communicants ... 59

Watertown, SD

St. Martin
 Pastor John Carter, Jr
 Pastor Dennis Hayes
 Established 1886
 Souls 1473
 Communicants .. 1095
 School Enrollment 173

Willow Lake, SD

Willow Lake
 Pastor John Hildebrant
 Established 1923
 Souls 115
 Communicants ... 94

Yankton, SD

Prince of Peace
 Pastor Alvin Schulz
 Established 1972
 Souls 65
 Communicants ... 51

Rock Mountain Conference Congregations

Billings, MT

Apostles
Pastor Paul Metzger
Established 1969
Souls 314
Communicants ... 221
School Enrollment . 18

Bozeman, MT

Shining Mountains
Pastor Ronald Kruse
Established 1972
Souls 72
Communicants 53

Calgary, AB, Canada

Mountain View
Pastor Jonathan Schultz
Established 1994
Souls 36
Communicants 25

Calgary, AB, Canada

St. Paul
Pastor Jeffrey Heitsch
Established 1982
Souls 139
Communicants 67

Carstairs, AB, Canada

Morning Star
Pastor Jonathan Schultz
Established 1994
Souls 35
Communicants 27

Circle, MT

Salem
Pastor Phil Paustian
Established 1933
Souls 55
Communicants 42

Great Falls, MT

Mountain View
Pastor Timothy Johnston
Established 1964
Souls 130
Communicants 86

Helena, MT

Valley View
Pastor R. Dennis Rardin
Established 1980
Souls 107
Communicants 79

Lavina, MT

Holy Trinity
Pastor Paul Metzger
Established 1959
Souls 27
Communicants 21

Livingston, MT

St. Paul
Pastor Kenneth Nelson
Established 1948
Souls 110
Communicants 80

Melstone, MT

Faith
Pastor David Neumann
Established 1958
Souls 61
Communicants 46

Missoula, MT

Mt. Zion
Pastor Martin Weigand
Established 1977
Souls 129
Communicants 96

Red Deer, AB, Canada

Mighty Fortress
Pastor Steven Persons
Established 1993
Souls 23
Communicants 15

Saskatoon, SK, Canada

Abundant Life
Pastor Daniel Myers
Established 1992
Souls 68
Communicants 31

St. Albert, AB, Canada

St. Peter
Pastor D. Thomas Rawerts
Established 1965
Souls 81
Communicants 61

Terry, MT

Trinity
Pastor Phil Paustian
Established 1935
Souls 53
Communicants 44

Wetaskiwin, AB, Canada

St. John
Vacant
Established 1965
Souls 71
Communicants 63

Winnett, MT

First
Pastor David Neumann
Established 1958
Souls 58
Communicants 40

Wolf Point, MT

Good Shepherd
Pastor Phil Paustian
Established 1948
Souls 19
Communicants 16

Western Conference Congregations

Aberdeen, SD

Trinity
 Pastor Curtiss Seefeldt
 Established 1954
 Souls 419
 Communicants ... 310
 School Enrollment . 33

Akaska, SD

Zion
 Pastor Tony Hansen
 Established 1911
 Souls 73
 Communicants 61

Bismarck, ND

Our Savior
 Pastor Carl Lindemann
 Established 1960
 Souls 270
 Communicants ... 218

Bison, SD

Christ
 Pastor Kenneth Bittorf
 Established 1937
 Souls 108
 Communicants 73

Bowdle, SD

St. John
 Pastor Winfried Schroeder
 Established 1891
 Souls 152
 Communicants ... 133

Carson, ND

Trinity
 Pastor Wayne Rouse
 Established 1908
 Souls 94
 Communicants 90

Rural Carson, ND (Paradise)

St. John
 Pastor Paul Heiderich
 Established 1910
 Souls 69
 Communicants 51

Custer, SD

Shepherd Of The Hills
 Vacant
 Established 1985
 Souls 40
 Communicants 26

Dupree, SD

First English
 Vacant
 Established 1914
 Souls 32
 Communicants 29

Elgin, ND

Immanuel
 Pastor Wayne Rouse
 Established 1909
 Souls 98
 Communicants 89

Faith, SD

St. Paul
 Vacant
 Established 1914
 Souls 45
 Communicants 38

Flasher, ND

Trinity
 Pastor Paul Heiderich
 Established 1912
 Souls 31
 Communicants 24

Gillette, WY

Christ Our Redeemer
 Pastor Alan W. Gumm
 Established 1983
 Souls 124
 Communicants 87

Glenham, SD

St. Jacobi
 Pastor Peter Naumann
 Established 1920
 Souls 121
 Communicants 82

Hazelton, ND

St. Paul
 Pastor Steve Nowicki
 Established 1923
 Souls 180
 Communicants ... 149

Hettinger, ND

Redeemer
 Pastor Kenneth Bittorf
 Established 1935
 Souls 21
 Communicants 21

Hot Springs, SD

Grace
 Vacant
 Established 1979
 Souls 55
 Communicants 45

Isabel, SD

Peace
 Pastor John Ruege, Sr.
 Established 1942
 Souls 66
 Communicants 60

Mandan, ND

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer
 Pastor David Reichel
 Established 1935
 Souls 277
 Communicants ... 222

McIntosh, SD

St. Paul
 Pastor Paul Heiderich
 Established 1914
 Souls 65
 Communicants 60

Mobridge, SD

Zion
 Pastor Peter Naumann
 Established 1912
 Souls 296
 Communicants ... 240
 School Enrollment . 42

Morristown, SD

Christ
 Pastor Wilber Niermeier
 Established 1919
 Souls 90
 Communicants 61

Mound City, SD

St. Paul
 Pastor Tony Hansen
 Established 1887
 Souls 110
 Communicants 92

Pierre, SD

Redeemer
 Pastor Daniel Reich
 Established 1970
 Souls 102
 Communicants 77

Rapid City, SD

St. Paul
 Pastor Douglas Free
 Established 1942
 Souls 719
 Communicants ... 478
 School Enrollment . 74

Roscoe, SD

St. Paul
 Pastor Winfried Schroeder
 Established 1893
 Souls 312
 Communicants ... 267

Spearfish, SD

Hope
 Pastor Lloyd Lemke
 Established 1968
 Souls 119
 Communicants 85

Sturgis, SD

Trinity
 Pastor Lloyd Lemke
 Established 1940
 Souls 173
 Communicants ... 117

Tappen, ND

St. John
 Pastor William Russow
 Established 1924
 Souls 297
 Communicants ... 207

Timber Lake, SD

St. Paul
 Pastor John Ruege, Sr.
 Established 1910
 Souls 49
 Communicants 44

Tolstoy, SD

St. James
 Pastor Tony Hansen
 Established 1924
 Souls 17
 Communicants 16

Zeeland, ND

Zion
 Pastor Steven Nowicki
 Established 1910
 Souls 128
 Communicants ... 109