

**THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN:
Its Inception and Inaugural Year**

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As we roll into the 21st century in the United States of America, there are still elderly people who can remember speaking German in their parents' home. There is still a handful of churches in the WELS that conduct regular Sunday morning services or occasional services in German. The students at the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod preparatory schools and college are still required to take a minimal amount of German classes to meet language requirements. However, as the history of the church marches forward the number of people who converse in German or have a good grasp on the language become fewer and fewer. Within a few years, as the older generation of German Lutherans pass on from the Church Militant to join the Church Triumphant, one will be hard pressed to find a church anywhere that still offers traditional German services. Many young people have lost interest in their German heritage and seek to learn different languages in high school and college.

This being the present situation, it is hard for us to imagine what it was like in 1913 when the Joint Synod of Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota and other States functioned exclusively in German. It is hard for us to imagine the tension that was felt as members of the church struggled with the real problem of trying to keep the younger American generation in a German-speaking church body. This, however, was exactly the struggle that was waged in the early 20th century. And out of this struggle was born the church periodical *The Northwestern Lutheran*.

The Problem

German Lutheranism came to the United States in the 18th century and had firmly established itself in the land over the course of the following century. By 1913, the only Lutheranism that the leaders and lay members of our synod knew was practiced in the

mother tongue, German. The great and revered forefathers of the Lutheran church had expressed the gospel truth so beautifully and so eloquently in the German language. To do ecclesiastical things any other way seemed almost unthinkable. An article written to commemorate the fiftieth year of *The Northwestern Lutheran* helps to remind us of the way things were in that year:

By and large, German was the language which was used in our services, in the voters' meetings, in the societies for adult members. So, too, in our Synodical life much of the teaching at our institutions was done in German; our conventions and conferences were conducted mainly in German. The *Gemeinde-Blatt*, our German magazine, was widely read. ¹

But the situation was changing. Many young people were growing up in twentieth century America who could no longer make beneficial use ~~out~~ of the German language. They grew up in a different generation. They were taught in English schools. They spoke English on the playground with their friends. They spoke English at home. Since the Synod offered only German reading material, many young people were abandoning the Lutheran Church that held its German heritage so near and dear. They would read English articles, both religious and secular, whether or not these proved beneficial and edifying to their faith. Something needed to be done. Talk of a need to serve these people so that they would not be lost to the atheistic, rationalistic American society became more and more common. People were looking for solutions to this serious problem. The thirst that was felt by many in the Lutheran Church ^{is} Body was quenched initially in the founding of the periodical *The Northwestern Lutheran*.

The Proposal

¹ Irwin J. Habeck, "Looking Back: On Fifty Years of the Northwestern Lutheran," *The Northwestern Lutheran* Vol. 51, No. 19 (September 20, 1964) : 295 (Hereafter cited as Habeck, "Looking Back")

The cries for an English magazine were voiced strongly in the Wisconsin Synod. Pastors, young and old, and lay people recognized the changing nature of the culture in which they were set and called for assistance to those who spoke English. John Jenny expressed the concerns that led to the formation of *The Northwestern Lutheran* in his introductory article of the newly formed publication.

The publication of an English Lutheran church-paper has been a long-felt want within the confines of our Synodical body. For years the desire has been expressed – not alone by young and inexperienced men, but by those of years and of wide experience – to offer to a large number of our parishioners a church-paper written in a tongue more familiar to them. Although German is the leading language in nearly every congregation of our Synod and will continue to be so for some time to come, due to the efficient **bilingual** work that has hitherto been done in the parochial schools, we cannot deny that the language question is today insistently demanding our attention. Even now our children are daily growing less familiar with the German language, and many of our young people use the English almost exclusively, conversing and thinking in this only, so that if anyone wishes to make himself perfectly understood by them, he must convey his thoughts to them in English. The result is that the rising generation, to a great extent, will ultimately be capable of reading and understanding the Word of God only through the medium of the English language. Whether we note this change with or without regret, we fully realize that language, like other externals, can never be an essential factor in the make up of the Church of God. We are bidden to read the signs of the times. There is an urgent demand for an English parish paper in our Synod, and the time has come to act. We must supply the members of our churches with English Lutheran publications. They are now often reading un-Lutheran literature at the danger of becoming imbued with views incompatible with Lutheran principles. We believe, therefore, that true Lutheran publications in English are timely, indeed, and that we should use all efforts in fostering and circulating them.²

The stage was set. With confidence and courage the concerned members of the Wisconsin Synod started the ball rolling in this daunting, but necessary endeavor. Although there had most likely been much discussion about this topic in the previous years, official action was taken at a meeting held in Appleton, Wisconsin from July 9-15,

1913. The report of the committee that had been assigned to delve into these matters was given to the Northern Conference of the Wisconsin Synod. The committee reported on the need for English missions in the area and then recommended that the Joint Synod publish a church paper in English as soon as possible.³ It was not long after this meeting that the proposal came up for discussion at a meeting of the Joint Synod in Green Bay, Wisconsin held from August 20-26, 1913.⁴

The Joint Synod also saw the benefits of such a paper and agreed to its publishing. With the sincere and complete backing of the Joint Synod, *The Northwestern Lutheran* had been transformed from a mere dream into a reality. John Jenny was able to joyfully report in the first issue, "Pursuant to a resolution passed by the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, and other States, at its biennial convention held at Green Bay, Wis., August, 1913, *The Northwestern Lutheran* presents itself to the public in its first issue."⁵

An avenue through which to communicate the gospel to the next generation had been found. The timing of the completion of this search was impeccable. The Lord used the efforts of his faithful servants at just the right time to give a smooth transition to the young paper. That this was the case could be clearly seen after fifty years of reflection.

It was therefore a forward-looking step when our Synod embarked upon issuing an English magazine for the purpose of interesting and edifying its members who were beginning to become more at home in the English.

² John Jenny, "Introductory," *The Northwestern Lutheran* Vol. 1, No. 1 (January 7, 1914) : 1 (Hereafter cited as Jenny, "Introductory")

³ Synodal – Bericht. Verhandlungen der dreiundsechzigsten Versammlung der Deutschen Evangelisch- Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin u. a. St. gehalten zu Appleton, Wis., 9. –15. Juli 1913 : 115-116 (See Appendix A, translated by Benjamin Berger, WLS 2000)

⁴ Synodal – Bericht. Verhandlungen der zwölften Versammlung der Allgemeinen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan u. a. St. gehalten zu Green Bay, Wis, vom 20. – 26. August 1913 : 70 (See Appendix B, translated by Benjamin Berger, WLS 2000)

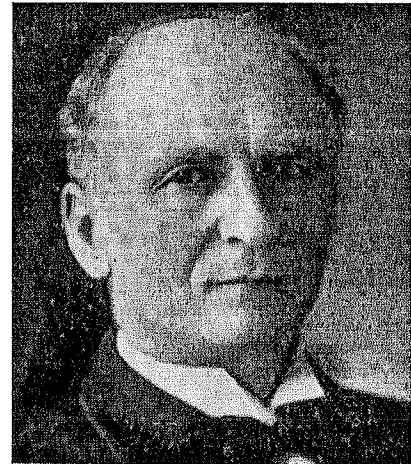
⁵ Jenny, "Introductory" : 1

We might say that the Lord guided our fathers to undertake this project at the psychological moment. For 1914 was the year in which World War I began, and after our country became involved, anti-German feeling ran high and speeded up the transition into English in our congregations and our Synod. We did not have to go into a crash program to meet the changed situation. The Lord had so guided us that we were ready with an English magazine for our people.⁶

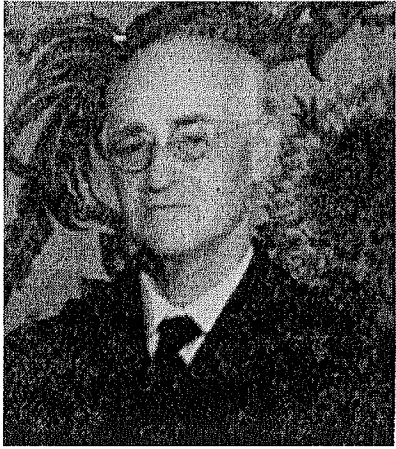
The First Editors

The first staff of *The Northwestern Lutheran* consisted of four contributing editors. None of these men was designated as editor-in-chief, but each of them left his own significant mark. In no particular order they were Pastor John Jenny, Pastor Fred Graeber, Pastor John Brenner, and Pastor Hans Kollar Moussa. A brief biographical sketch of each of these men demonstrates that the future of the untested magazine was in good hands.

Pastor John Jenny (1859-1939) did considerable writing for each issue and was active as editor for 25 years until his death in 1939. "Rev. Jenny was a very active worker in the kingdom of God, not only in his congregation, but also in the larger sphere of the Synod's work. He was a member of the commission sent to Arizona in January, 1916, to visit the Indian Missions of the Wisconsin Synod. He made two voyages to Europe in 1931 and 1937. These he described in articles in *The Northwestern Lutheran* and the *Gemeinde-Blatt*."⁷ Pastor Jenny faithfully served on the original editorial committee while also functioning as a full-time pastor at St. Jacobi in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



⁶ Habeck, "Looking Back" : 295



Pastor Fred Graeber (1870-1955) also worked as editor for the first 25 years of the paper's existence. He "served on the editorial board until his resignation in 1939. Although the duties of managing editor were sufficiently demanding to keep him from extensive writing, when he wrote, his comments were admirable in their facility of expression and keen analysis. The words of Pastor Graeber were never trite. His comments likewise reflected a staunch confessional Lutheranism and a horror of compromising the Church in any way. The Church was enriched by the faithful and unselfish service rendered by Editor Graeber."⁸ During his tenure as editor of *The Northwestern Lutheran*, Pastor Graeber served at Apostles' Church, which started out at 29th St. and St. Paul Avenue, but later relocated to a larger location near 38th St. on Michigan St.

Pastor John Brenner (1873-1962) was a large voice in the Synod when it came to the change from German to English. One can understand why pastor Brenner was elected to the editorial staff of the paper when he reads the obituary that was published in *The Northwestern Lutheran* in 1962 by Pastor E.E. Kowalke.



He was also among the first of our pastors to urge the necessity of doing mission work among English-speaking people, of instructing the young in English in preparation for confirmation, and of holding regular English

⁷ Arthur B. Tacke, "Obituary of the Reverend John Jenny," *The Northwestern Lutheran* Vol.26, No. 12 (June 4, 1939) : 179

⁸ "The Editor," *The Northwestern Lutheran* Vol. 42, No. 6 (March 20, 1955) : 82

services besides the German. He was one of the group who urged the publication of a church periodical in English. He used the German language as fluently as anyone else in the Synod, but if the use of German hindered the free course for the Gospel, then there was no question in his mind but that the German had to give way, much as he cherished the Christian literature that was available in the German.⁹



Pastor Hans Kollar Moussa (1883-1928) “also was one of the pioneers of *The Northwestern Lutheran* – and an outstanding one. His editorials, which were a regular feature of our churchpapers for many years, bore the marks of a masterful style and of keen insights and evaluations regarding all the religious developments of the day. Church papers outside the Synod often paid him the compliment of reprinting his editorials.”¹⁰ Pastor Moussa served as a parish pastor at St. Peter’s Church in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin during the latter part of his life while he also functioned as editor for *The Northwestern Lutheran*. Moussa suffered from an untreatable ailment of which he died at the age of 44 years. Co-worker Pastor Graeber, the author of his obituary which appeared in *The Northwestern Lutheran* on May 13th, 1928, had words of praise for this gift of God to the church. “The deceased was a man of singular gifts of heart and mind, and for their application to the highest ends there was added the further grace of humility and balance....His persistence and obedience to the call of duty as he understood it had kept him at his post when service must have been painful and a heavy tax on his failing strength.”¹¹

⁹ E.E. Kowalke, “Pastor John Brenner: A Man With a Strong and Wide Pastoral Interest” *The Northwestern Lutheran* Vol. 49, No. 22 (November 4, 1962) : 345

¹⁰ Habeck, “Looking Back” : 295

¹¹ G. “Pastor Hans Kollar Moussa,” *The Northwestern Lutheran* Vol. 15, No.10 (May 13th, 1928) : 145

The First Year

As with any major undertaking that is heretofore untried, the first year of the periodical was very important. The quality of the publication and its reception by the members of the Synod could very easily make or break the whole project. How would the staunch German members of the synod react? Could an English paper maintain the doctrinal integrity of the Lutheran Confessions? Would there be a rivalry for popularity between the *Gemeinde-Blatt* and *The Northwestern Lutheran*? All of these questions remained unanswered as the magazine was inaugurated in 1914. Many of those questions, however, were put to rest in an article published in the *Gemeinde-Blatt* on January 1, 1914. In a well-written piece the editors stressed in no uncertain terms that they were fully supportive of *The Northwestern Lutheran*, its editors, and its mission. The entire article is quite stirring and merits a complete reading, although it is far too long to appear in its entirety in the body of this essay.¹²

Without a doubt, the editors of *The Northwestern Lutheran* were given a great amount of encouragement upon reading the aforementioned article put forth by their “big brothers” of the *Gemeinde-Blatt*. As though in direct response to this Christian encouragement John Jenny wrote a sound article that stated the purpose of *The Northwestern Lutheran*. Jenny put down in writing some words that seem to say, “Although our paper is in a foreign language, we stand beside our German speaking brothers and sisters in mission and doctrinal unity. The purpose of this paper is to proclaim the gospel message as we have learned it from our forefathers.” A portion of his article (all of which deserves a thorough reading) follows.

¹² H. B., “Der Northwestern Lutheran” *Gemeinde Blatt* Jahrg. 49, No. 1 (January 1, 1914) : 5-6 (for complete article see Appendix C, translated by Benjamin Berger, WLS 2000)

Through its columns are to be disseminated the glorious principles of the Reformation, the doctrines of our Lutheran Church. What are these doctrines? They are none other than the wonderful tenets of true apostolic Christianity. They are embodied in the Gospel which tells us, that the salvation of man is the work of God alone, that God has decreed this salvation even from eternity, and that in the fulness of time He has worked the redemption of mankind in the Incarnation of His Son Jesus Christ.¹³

And so it began. The first magazine was published on January 7, 1914. The succeeding publications would appear without fail on the 7th and 21st of every month. One could obtain a subscription for the whole year for \$1.00. The format was very comparable to the format of the *Gemeinde-Blatt*, but only half the length. Each issue would contain eight pages of printed articles that were contributed mostly by the four editors. There were very few pictures in the issues of that first year, an added visual effect that we all but take for granted.

Although there were a great variety of topics that were covered in that first year, the basic layout was very much constant throughout. Each issue began with a hymn of four or five stanzas that either corresponded with the church year or captured Scriptural theology in the English language. Many hymns that are familiar to us today appeared in 1914 such as *Hark! The glad sound, the Savior comes* (December 7), *A Mighty Fortress* (October 21), and *O Sacred Head, Now Wounded* (April 7). Next followed essays based on a portion of Scripture or on a doctrinal topic. Mixed in were articles that dealt specifically with the issues that would concern the individual living at that time, many of which still very much apply to us today. The authors wrote about the Boy Scouts, The Lodge, Christian Science, Church and State, religious teaching in the public schools, religion and science, unionism, and the Christian in the time of war.

¹³ Jenny, "Introductory" : 1-2 (for complete article see Appendix D)

The last page or two of each edition was entitled "Items of Interest." In these pages the everyday church member or pastor could keep up to date on the latest happenings within our church body. There was normally a section reserved for news that was happening in the Joint Synod. After that there was a section that spoke of the various Wisconsin Synod institutions: The Seminary at Wauwatosa, Dr. Martin Luther College at New Ulm, and Northwestern College at Watertown. The final section was dedicated to information that concerned the Missouri Synod and other church groups.

Several times during the first year the editors chose to focus on a special issue of interest to the members of the synod. One such issue appeared on July 7, 1914. The whole issue focused on the importance of Christian education and the efforts being put forth by the Synod. A complete description of the Synodical schools was put forth, complete with a fine pictorial preview of the prominent buildings of each campus. The October 21st issue was dedicated to the celebration of the Reformation, emphasizing the allegiance of the new magazine to her German heritage.

As one reads through the articles produced in that first year, he can see that the editors did a noble job of accomplishing the purpose for which the magazine existed. Through the Spirit's guidance they produced an edifying and informative church paper in the English language, which met the goals that John Jenny had outlined in his article of January 7, 1914:

To this end the Northwestern Lutheran endeavors to bring to the Lutheran home articles both instructive and edifying, and to keep our people in touch with the current events in the religious world. For this reason it is to be made up of practical and devotional articles, of editorials, of doctrinal, polemical, and historical treatises, as well as of articles communicating such matters of interest to the readers as may increase their knowledge and incidentally enliven their interest in the good cause which our Joint Synod stand for. Fully conscious of their own limitations, the members of the

editorial committee assume their task with confidence in the guidance and blessing of Him, whose cause they would further by their labor.¹⁴

Eighty-five years later, *The Northwestern Lutheran* continues to exist as the official church paper of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. We are the beneficiaries of a future-looking, well-planned effort. The writer of the fiftieth anniversary article sums up well what had happened with the creation of *The Northwestern Lutheran*.

In some circles our Synod is looked upon as being reactionary and out of touch with the times. What leads to this charge is that we have not gone along with the idea that our doctrine and practice must be changed to keep pace with the changes which appear on the American scene and the world scene. For we are convinced that our doctrine and practice are drawn from the Word of God. That Word does no change. ‘The word of God, which liveth and abideth forever’ (I Pet. 1:23). ‘Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away: (Matt. 24:35), says our Lord Jesus. Here we recognize no pressure of changing conditions. But in the manner in which the unchanging Word is brought, we do try to keep abreast of changing conditions. The appearance of *The Northwestern Lutheran* is one example.....Change in manner or method, yes. Here we want to be progressive, alert to the changing times and changing situations. But where doctrine and practice are concerned, we want to be, not reactionary, going beyond the Word, but very much conservative, holding fast the faithful Word in all that we teach and in all the standards which we set for Christian life.¹⁵

¹⁴ Jenny, “Introductory” : 1-2

¹⁵ Habeck, “Looking Back” : 295

APPENDIX A

Minutes from July, 1913 meeting held in Appleton, Wisconsin

Without a doubt the time has come that this work should be energetically undertaken, also indeed beyond Milwaukee, in the larger cities. Also the distributions commission has discussed this affair. It deems necessary the position of English missionaries and, therefore, has reserved two candidates for this work --- in the assumption that the honorable synod will meet the suitable measures. Also it is the recommendation of the two conferences (Milwaukee City Conference and Northern Conference) to publish a modern

English "Gemeinde-Blatt"

and this should be taken under the advisement of the honorable synod.¹⁶

The Committee Report about two petitions, concerning an English periodical and concerning an English mission

I.

The petition concerning an English periodical reads: -----
"Considering this, that many of our young people read only a little bit of German, we hold in this time, that the Wisconsin Synod should also publish an English 'Gemeinde-Blatt.' The members of the Northern Conference, therefore, recommend that the publication of such a paper should be undertaken as soon as possible."

Your committee recommends to the honorable synod: --

- a. "To urgently recommend to the Joint Synod, to publish an English paper as soon as possible.

¹⁶ Minutes from Synodal – Bericht. Appleton, Wis., 9. –15. Juli 1913, page 18 (translated by Benjamin Berger, WLS 2000)

APPENDIX B

Minutes from August, 1913 meeting held in Green Bay, Wisconsin

12. Publications

Milwaukee, WI July 17, 1913

a. Petition of the Wisconsin Synod

Concerning an English *Gemeinde-Blatt*

To the honorable Joint Synod of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, and other States, gathered at Green Bay Wisconsin!

The Wisconsin Synod, gathered at Appleton, Wisconsin, has concluded:

1. to urgently recommend to the Joint Synod to publish an English *Gemeinde-Blatt* as soon as possible.
2. also to establish for the editing of this English paper a commission such as an editing committee.

By the order of the Synod
G.E. Bergemann, President
Heinrich Gieschen, Secretary¹⁷

¹⁷ Synodal – Bericht. Green Bay, Wis, vom 20. – 26. August 1913 : 70 (translated by Benjamin Berger, WLS 2000)

Appendix C

With these words, which are as similar to any announcement, as one egg is to another, we could perhaps leave it according to the above written and let the Northwestern Lutheran speak for itself. But we are brothers, thus one will not consider us evil if we put in a good word to our readers for this our younger brother, the Northwestern Lutheran. The English paper is not brought forth with the specific intention to oppose the work of the *Gemeinde-Blatt* or to estrange its readers or to lead our German-speaking Christians into an English camp by force; no, the Northwestern Lutheran should stand at the side of the *Gemeinde-Blatt* as a helper and should complement its work.

We cannot and should not allow ourselves to wear out this fact, that there are already in the circle of our synod many people who do not have such a great command of German that they would have good use for a German sermon. What do we owe to those people who belong to our households? Are we not as the housekeepers of the many gifts of God obliged to give to them their due at this time? And if we cannot give them this through means of the German language, must we not at least serve them with the language that they speak and understand? Or will we say to these people: "Go over there where English is preached and where English church papers are read. We are a German Synod and will remain German?" That means that the mission activity of our synod lies not only entirely lame on one important side, but also digs a grave for us; for the church and synod that stops striving for missions is no longer fully and completely conscious of its first and last, indeed, its only duty and belongs rightly in its dying state.

And if we now have here in our land favorable opportunity to proclaim the gospel loudly and clearly in the English language to our fellowmen, then should we let this opportunity pass us by? Should we, who next to God through the yielding mission work of our forefathers have completely and entirely come upon the inheritance of the Reformation and are called before others to transmit this inheritance to others, expel from ourselves mission work which stands before us and ignore others so that we could spare ourselves the trouble and work? That cannot, that should not be the attitude of our Christians. And because we need an English church paper for useful mission work in the true Lutheran sense, therefore we will welcome the Northwestern Lutheran heartily.

We will also henceforth hold high our mother language in which we were taught by our mothers to pray to our Savior, in which Dr. Martin Luther translated the Bible and in which he wrote the Small Catechism, in which he has sung, taught, and preached as in no other, in which so many men illumined by God have learned, recited, and written, so that we are envied by other people for the sake of the great and excellent treasure of books, and we will pass it down to our children and grandchildren whenever possible. But we do not want to fight against the gospel, but help it if its path is refracted through means of the English language.

Still there are indeed in the circle of our Joint Synod hundreds, no thousands who speak German, read German, pray German, and – do not have the *Gemeinde Blatt* because they do not know it or only know it by hearsay. Why don't they know it? Because so many of us are not diligent to introduce other people in our congregations to the *Gemeinde Blatt* and to advertise to new readers.

Do you complain about the fall of the German language in your house or in your congregation? Don't you know that a German paper in your house or in your

congregation is a proven means also for the preservation of the German language? Nothing will get better through complaining. Up to the work and delay not! Help the Gemeinde Blatt spread wherever you can. Do not go out with the Gemeinde Blatt alone. Put the Northwestern Lutheran in your pocket as well. And when someone says to you that he can no longer read German, then introduce the people to our new English church paper so that they will be helped by the gospel. For the sake of the gospel the one is there and for the sake of the gospel the other is there. If you help to spread it then you are helping the gospel. May God help you do that!¹⁸

¹⁸ H. B., "Der Northwestern Lutheran" *Gemeinde Blatt* Jahrg. 49, No. 1 (January 1, 1914) : 5-6 (translated by Benjamin Berger, WLS 2000)

Appendix D

Let us bear in mind that every English Lutheran paper has a message to the English-speaking people of this country. Through its columns are to be disseminated the glorious principles of the Reformation, the doctrines of our Lutheran Church. What are these doctrines? They are none other than the wonderful tenets of true apostolic Christianity. They are embodied in the Gospel which tells us, that the salvation of man is the work of God alone, that God has decreed this salvation even from eternity, and that in the fulness of time He has worked the redemption of mankind in the Incarnation of His Son Jesus Christ; they are embodied in that Gospel which tells us, that God has revealed himself to lost and condemned man in Jesus Christ alone, that in Jesus alone man learns to know God as the true God and only Savior; in that Gospel which teaches us, that man, having fallen under the curse of the Law through disobedience and sin, is saved, not by any works or merit of his own, but solely by the grace of God through the faith, that Christ, very God and very Man, has made atonement for his sins by the sacrifice of His own life. This redemption is offered to all sinners by the Holy Ghost through the Gospel and in the sacraments, the only means of grace, and is applied, appropriated and received through faith, whence believers have reconciliation with God, forgiveness of sins, the grace of God, sonship, and heirship of eternal life. That is the Gospel the true Lutheran Church proclaims to all the world, and that is the message every English Lutheran church-paper should carry to all its readers. It is the same message that Paul, the Apostle, delivered to the whole Christian Church, saying: "I am determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified;" and it is the same faith, for which the fathers of our Church so earnestly contended in compliance with the exhortation of Holy Writ; "Earnestly contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints." Hence our motto: "The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our fathers; let him not leave us, nor forsake us." Let the Lord our God be to us today, and to ours forever, what He was to those who went before us. Let His spiritual blessings continue with our children, as they did with our fathers. The faith of our fathers – none other - shall be the faith of our children. By the help of God our children shall abide with the Lutheran Church. If there be a dividing line between the old and the new, let it be language and nothing else. The doctrine of the true Lutheran Church, to which our fathers have adhered, in which they have come to know the one and only way unto salvation in which they have found abundant comfort and consolation, and for which they have fought all the days of their lives even unto death, must, therefore, be preached in the language of our children if they are to remain true to the Lutheran Church, the church of their fathers.... Thus we bring to our generation a message which is ever in season and through whose influence is to be reared a religious, God-fearing race, as loyal to the standard of our Lutheran Church, as devoted to its interests and solid growth, as was the Church of our fathers. To this end the Northwestern Lutheran endeavors to bring to the Lutheran home articles both instructive and edifying, and to keep our people in touch with the current events in the religious world. For this reason it is to be made up of practical and devotional articles, of editorials, of doctrinal, polemical, and historical treatises, as well as of articles communicating such matters of interest to the readers as may increase their knowledge and incidentally enliven their interest in the good cause which our Joint Synod stand for. Fully conscious of their own limitations, the members of the editorial committee assume their task with confidence in the guidance and blessing of Him, whose cause they would further by their labor.¹⁹

¹⁹ Jenny, "Introductory" : 1-2

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