

WELS Historical Institute

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The picture on the cover is of the old St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Watertown, Wisconsin.

Proceedings of the Sixteenth Convention of the German Evangel. Luther. Synod of Wisconsin and other States held in the German Evangelical-Lutheran Congregation in Fond du Lac, Wis. from June 7 to 13, 1866

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The annual synodical convention of the German Evangelical-Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin and Other States, as directed by a resolution of the previous synodical convention, took place on the days of June 7 to 13, 1866 A.D. in Fond du Lac, Wis. The majority of pastors and delegates arrived early on June 6 in Fond du Lac and all were cordially received by Pastor E. Mayerhoff, his dear congregation and several other friends.

The business discussions of the synodical convention were opened with a festival service in the church on Thursday, June 7, at 9:00 a.m., in which the Hon. President, Pastor W. Streissguth preached the sermon based on Acts 15; the topic being "The first Christian synodical convention as a model for our synodical convention - with regard:

1. to the topics treated there;
2. to the prevailing governing principles there;
3. to the procedural order maintained thereby;
4. to the resulting rich blessings"

On Friday evening, 8:00 p.m. Pastor H. Quehl conducted the service, basing his sermon on Ephesians 6:4. On Saturday evening, Pastor Th. Jaekel conducted the confessional preparation on Psalm 130:1-4 in connection with Romans 11:33. On Sunday (II after Trinity) Pastor J. Bading preached in the morning service on the day's Gospel, Luke 14: 16-24, and the convention attendees together with the local congregation members celebrated the Lord's Supper which was administered by Pastors J. Bading and E. Mayerhoff. In the afternoon at 2:00 p.m. a children's devotion was conducted by Pastors G. Fachtmann (founder of the Fond du Lac congregation) and J. Conrad, followed by a sermon on I Corinthians 12:3 by Pastor A. Hoenecke. On Monday evening Pastor Ph. Brenner preached the mission sermon on Luke 12:49, after which Pastor A. Liefeld spoke about mission work amongst the Zulu-Caffre on the southeast coast of Africa. On Tuesday evening Prof. E. Moldehnke presented a talk on the requirements for correctly educating the youth and how this is carried out in our land.

Transactions and Business

First Session, Thursday, June 7, 9:00 a.m.

The Hon. President, Pastor W. Streissguth, opened the meeting with a synodical worship service and sermon. Thereupon followed the roll call of the pastors, and the handing in of the credentials of the lay delegates. The assembly consisted of the following members (The asterisk indicates the arrival of that person during the convention.)

A. Pastors

1. J. Muehlhaeuser, Milwaukee (Grace Congregation)
2. C. F. Goldammer, Jefferson
3. J. Conrad, Theresa
4. J. Bading, Watertown
5. D. Huber, Germany (near Ft. Atkinson)*
6. Ph. Koehler, Manitowoc*
7. W. Streissguth, Milwaukee (St. John Congregation)
8. Ph. Sprengling, Sheboygan*
9. F. Waldt, Eldorado
10. C. Gausewitz, West Bend
11. Th. Meumann, Platteville*
12. Chr. Stark, Oshkosh
13. H. Quehl, Hika*
14. C. Wagner, Caledonia Centre
15. Prof. E. Moldehnke, Watertown
16. J. Ritter, Davenport, Iowa
17. J. Kilian, Greenfield
18. M. Ewert, Burr Oak, LaCrosse Co.
19. H. Sieker, West Granville
20. A. Denninger, Addison
21. C. G. Reim, Green Bay*
22. H. Bartelt, New Berlin
23. A. Lange, Lebanon
24. Ph. Brenner, Kilbourn-Road
25. A. Hoenecke, Farmington
26. J. Brockmann, Mosel
27. Fr. Hilpert, Calumet
28. A. Titze, Burlington
29. E. Giese, Milwaukee
30. G. Vorberg, Milwaukee (St. Matth. Cong.)
31. A. Opitz, Hartford
32. G. Thiele, Ripon
33. E. Mayerhoff, Fond du Lac
34. T. Gensike, Helenville
35. F. Kleinert, Newtonbourg*
36. Th. Jaekel, Winchester
37. A. Zerneck, Crystal Lake
38. W. Staerkel, Kenosha
39. G. Bachmann, Kewaunee
40. C. Otto, Hermann
41. H. Hoffmann, Portage City

Absent Pastors

1. E. Sauer, Iron Ridge
2. C. Braun, Two Rivers
3. J. Hoffmann, Racine
4. W. Dammann, Milwaukee (St. Peter Cong.)

5. F. Hass, Greenfield, LaCrosse Co.
6. E. Strube, Fountain City

The following were accepted as advisory members

1. G. Fachtmann, St. Paul, Minn. As delegate of the Evang.-Luther. Minnesota-Synod.
2. H. Kittel, LaCrosse
3. A. Liefeld, Columbus
4. J.A. Hoyer, Ridgeville
5. P. Lukas, Princeton
6. Prof. A Martin, Watertown*

B. From Synod congregations the following delegates have a seat and a vote

1. G. Brumder, Milwaukee (Grace Congregation)
2. J. Haberkorn, Theresa
3. D. Kusel, Watertown*
4. C. Kiekhefer, Milwaukee (St. John Cong.)
5. G. Bigalt, Eldorado
6. G. Moehrl, Farmington, Washington Co.
7. H. Gustavus, Oshkosh
8. H. Grupe, Centreville*
9. M. Schuhmacher, West Granville
10. F. Werner, Addison*
11. G. Schattner, Kilbournroad*
12. H. Ohse, Mosel*
13. J. Hinn, Forest
14. F. Schmidt, Burlington
15. C. Reichmann, Fond du Lac
16. G. Reul, Helenville
17. F. Jaeger, Winchester
18. J. Ekel, Port Washington

The following delegates were received as advisory members

1. F. Holle, Milwaukee (St. M[att])
2. M. Krause, Ripon*
3. C. Gerhardt, Neenah
4. H. Zanders, Town Franklin
5. A. Hacker, Hartford
6. Spannagel., Schleisingerville*
7. Hensel, Theresa
8. Braun, Sheboygan*

In accordance with §35 of the Synodical-Constitution (“Also those pastors who serve a congregation not belonging to the synod, have voting privileges for a period of two years. If it is not possible for them to get their congregation to join the synod during this length of time, they must either leave that congregation or they lose their voting privileges.”) the convention resolved that Pastors C. Goldammer and A. Opitz can only be advisory members at this convention.

Resolved that Prof. Moldehnke be a voting member of the convention.

Resolved that the convention be adjourned to 2:00 p.m.
Closed with prayer by the Hon. Senior Muehlhaeuser

Second Session, Thursday, June 7 2:00 p.m.

Opened with prayer by Pastor C. Goldammer.
The minutes of the morning session were read and adopted.
Delegate M. Krause was received as an advisory member.
The president presented the following report:

In the name of the Lord, beloved fathers, brothers in the ministry and dear congregational delegates who are co-members with us!

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all. Amen!

“Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name!” With this petition on our hearts and our lips we approach our heavenly Father in the name of Jesus Christ, just as we do daily in our private chamber and with the family, on Sundays with the congregation and also each year jointly as a synod. For the understanding and appreciation of this First Petition from dear children to their dear heavenly Father, let us gladly be led by that light which Luther in a simple child-like, yet profound and comprehensive explanation gave us: “How does it take place that God’s holy name also be holy among us? When the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as children of God, also lead a holy life according to it. This grant us, dear Father in heaven. But he who teaches and lives otherwise than God’s Word teaches, profanes the name of God among us. From this preserve us, heavenly Father.” If we in faith pray thus, and our heavenly Father, graciously hearing us, sends his Holy Spirit, so that we believe by his grace the unadulterated preached word, and then in obedience to faith, which is active in love, as attached branches bring forth fruit (John 15:16), and as such by his grace strengthened in His Word with our active faith strengthened by that Word, and we remain steadfast thereto to our end (Colossians 1:23): then is God’s holy name made holy also with us in heart, home, congregation, synod and church, his kingdom is come to us and his gracious and good will is also done among us.

Since we can offer no worthier a prayer than this in our chambers, at the family altars and in God’s House, and then must give evidence that the requested blessing in spiritual obedience in the various life-circles decreed for us, is a power of God, which first corrects, then makes holy and finally makes blessed; so we also as a synodical-convention group cannot set for ourselves a more worthy goal than: to convene in the name of Jesus to worship the Father in spirit and in truth, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of majesty give to those here convened as a synod and to all who are in our fellowship the spirit of wisdom and understanding and that we increase in the knowledge of God (Colossians 1:9, 11); until we all come as one body in one spirit to the same belief and knowledge of the Son of God, and become a perfect man, who will be of equal measure to the perfect stature of Christ, so that we no longer be children and let ourselves be tossed and blown by every wind of doctrine through the cunning and craftiness of people (Ephesians 4:13,14), and that we then be as those who have partaken of the same food (I Corinthians 10:3); also all of whom speak the same language and not permit divisions among us, but hold fast to one another in one mind and in the same thought (I Corinthians 1:10); that we may then however also as such who through Jesus Christ are made rich in all things, in all doctrine and in all knowledge, and in whom the preaching of Christ has been made strong, that we have no lack of any type of gift (I Corinthians 1:5-7), that with such a knowledge of Jesus Christ we let ourselves be found

slothful and unproductive, after an abundance of his Godly strength has been given us, which pertains to life and godliness (II Peter 1:3, 8) and his workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works (Ephesians 2: 10) to make every effort also to add to our faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge discretion, and to discretion patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly love, and to brotherly love universal love (II Peter 1:5-7).

If we dear Brothers, briefly look at the first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer in connection with the above quoted passages of the Apostles, we recognize and confess with Joh. Arndt: "True Christianity consists of two items: 1. the purity of doctrine, 2. in the holiness of living." And for that reason this is the most blessed goal for our convention and for the coming synodical year, namely to pray for and to strive for purity of doctrine and holiness of living. All of our transactions, deliberations and resolutions should bring us closer to this goal, otherwise it serves no purpose to bring them up before a Christian synod, nor would it bring forth lasting fruits for the present or the future world.

May God's good Spirit teach us to act according to his good pleasure and may he lead us on the right path. Amen!

If we now, dear Brothers, at our sixteenth annual synodical convention, especially at this place where the synod met six years ago, look back over the sixteen years and take a special look at this past synodical year, two items especially come to the fore which take hold of our hearts and which make us bend our knees before our Lord, namely, our guilt and his grace; the former great, the latter exceedingly greater. Lord, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him; we are not worthy of your mercy and faithfulness which you have shown us, your unfaithful servants! How short our best works have fallen behind our obligations and our intentions and solemn promises, and how much has the forgiving grace of our Lord to cover! May the faithfulness of our God which we richly experience make us not more sluggish but always more zealous to become firm and steadfast and always increasing our activities in the work of the Lord, especially since we know that our work is not in vain in the Lord.

If we look more closely into the history of the past synodical year, we find that it was less a time for new beginnings and remarkable progress and results, than for a time of tranquil development, of internal stabilizing, and of attempted establishment of previous plans. In comparison with the previous three years, less new workers entered the work entrusted to us; likewise in comparison only a few new places have opened up for us, and in the places where we already are established nothing of importance took place. In my personal opinion I do not consider this to be a step backward, or even a lack of activity, but rather a time for renewal, necessary for our synod, lest a speedy growth and expansion externally endanger the internal strength and wholesome development of our church body. Just as with a physical body, not the great amount of nourishment consumed is of great importance, but the good constitution, consumption, acceptance and absorption by the existing organs is, so also, and in still greater amount, can a church body maintain health, strength and growth through self-study and vital mutual reciprocal action of all of the individual component parts.

Let us now take up the various individual items.

I. Our Educational Institutions

Our educational institutions at the time of our last synodical convention were in a

position of offering us great hope, but at the same time also giving us great apprehension. They were not on the path of a gradual development, but came into existence with a sudden, powerful bang, and for this reason will need a longer than usual period of time as well as wisdom and love on the part of the synod and its officials; not only that but also a greater than usual amount of divine blessings, patience and help, in order to reach their goal. May our God grant us both in grace. After the institution's building was completed during the course of the past summer and then occupied by the theological professor and the seminary students, it was dedicated in a festival service on September 14. At the same occasion the college was opened. For the latter a principal (sic) in the person of Prof. Martin was called by the trustees. The Board of Trustees as well as the Visitors will give their reports at the appropriate times and the Hon. Synod will have a large portion of time and ability to take up the discussion of matters concerning the institutions.

II. Our Congregations

In our congregations, as far as I know – which indeed according to the regulation of our synod could have been at the most of minor or incomplete consequence – everything in general went smoothly and peacefully. God's Word and Sacraments as well as all other blessings of a Christian church were easily and without hindrance available for all, and in general were made use of with greater or lesser results, depending upon the condition of the ground upon which the seed fell. There were very few major disputes except for a few congregations, and in two cases (Columbus and New Berlin) the voluntary departure of the pastors solved the problem. In another congregation which as yet does not belong to the synod (Ripon) the result was a split in the congregation after many serious battles. In a few other congregations the uprising was satisfactorily settled with the disappearance of the cause. We always have, even in this regard, reasons to plead: in your mercy grant us peace. Amen!

The Lord in his mercy allowed several of our congregations to dedicate newly built church buildings, for example, Sheboygan, Milwaukee (St. Matthew Congregation) and others; several other congregations are in the process of doing the same this year, for example in Theresa, Milwaukee (St. Peter Congregation) and others. Much is also being done in our congregations about schools, in fact the old concept seems to return from time to time that some congregations have more zeal for schools than for churches, which indeed is explainable, but not exactly as a virtue or commendation. But there is still much to do in regard to the education of our youth, both in church matters and civic matters, and much to hope and pray for. May the Lord have mercy on the future as well as the present generations!

III. Departure of Pastors

1. Pastor Mayer, as mentioned above, upon my recommendation and that of other Brothers, left his congregation in Columbus at the end of November and moved to Missouri, where he found a home in Hannibal. He received and accepted a call from a Lutheran congregation there and was installed into office on *Miserere* Sunday. The congregation in Columbus was being served by Prof. Moldehnke during the vacancy. Postscript: After I had written this report, Pastor Mayer informed me that he for the time being wishes to remain a member of our synod.

2. Pastor Zwolanek, who is not a member of our synod, likewise left the congrega-

tion in New Berlin and stated at the same time that he was leaving the preaching ministry. As far as I know, he has done this.

IV. Arrival of New Pastors and Ordinations

Although not in the same number as in the previous year, yet the love of God and his way of helping us in the past year was not lacking in sending us workers for our field of harvest, where there is much more opportunity to clear the land, to plow, to sow, and to water than to harvest.

1. On the first day we referred to Pastor H. Hoffmann, about whose examination and call to Portage we already reported last year. At last year's synodical convention, on June, 25, he was ordained after obligating himself to serve under all of the Symbolical Books of our church and then on the 4th Sunday after Trinity was installed into his office in Portage by Prof. Moldehnke.

2. The second was Teacher J.A. Hoyer from Hamburg, who came to us already in the past synodical year by arrangement of the kind Hon. Berlin Society. After he had served for a while in the parochial school in Watertown, at my suggestion he was examined by the Central Conference Examination Committee and by them recommended to me for ordination. After he received a proper call on Sept. 24 from the congregation at Ridgeville, Monroe Co., he was, upon my approval, ordained by Pastor Dammann on October 23 and installed into his office, having obligated himself to all of the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran church.

3. Sent here by the Berlin Society and recommended to us with adequate testimonies and recommendations, Pastor Hermann Kittel arrived in Milwaukee on August 28 of last year from Prussia and offered himself to us for a position. After he spent some time in Milwaukee and after he successfully passed a colloquy on his confessional stand, I sent him to the congregation in La Crosse from which Pastor Stark had resigned. He was elected by them on September 24 and given a proper call and then on the 19th Sunday after Trinity installed into his office by Pastor Hass.

4. Candidate Paul Lukas from Prussia arrived in Milwaukee on November 2 of last year with good credentials and recommendations as a candidate from the Hon. Langenberg Society, for the purpose of offering us his services to the Lord. He was examined by the Examination Committee of the Southern Conference and found qualified, and was recommended to be ordained, which took place in Milwaukee on November 5 with Senior Muehlhaeuser, Pastor Giese and myself officiating. He was then sent to the congregation in Princeton from which he received a call, and was installed there by Pastor Mayerhoff on the 3rd Sunday in Advent.

5. Finally, on March 3 of this year Missionary Liefeld arrived in Milwaukee from Prussia with the wish to join our synod and be given a position. After completing his work as a mission student at Hermannsburg, he was ordained by the Hannover Consistorium. For about four years he served as a missionary among the Zulus in Africa. After his return to Germany he resolved to serve the Lord among the Germans in America, for which he was recommended by the Berlin Society. After passing his colloquy, especially on his position in regard to the Symbolical Books of our church, I recommended him to replace Pastor Mayer who had left Columbus. He was properly elected on Easter Sunday of this year as their pastor and received the call, after which, at my direction, he was installed into his office by Pastor Hoenecke.

V. Change of Positions and Installations

In addition to the already mentioned cases, the following changes of position and the following ordinations as directed by me took place in the past synodical year.

1. Pastor Gensike, with the approval of his congregations in and near Menomonee, accepted the properly issued call from the Helenville congregation, which had been vacant since before last year's convention when Pastor G. Reim moved to Beaver Dam, and which had been served during that period by neighboring pastors. Pastor Gollammer, assisted by Prof. Moldehnke, installed Pastor Gensike in his new place on the 16th Sunday after Trinity.

2. Pastor Waldt, in obedience to the Lord and on the advice given him at last year's convention, accepted the call from the congregation in Eldorado which he had held for quite some time. He was installed into his office by Pastor Mayerhoff on the 18th Sunday after Trinity.

3. After Pastor Stark resigned his position in La Crosse during the early part of August, he was properly elected and called by the congregation in Oshkosh on September 10. He accepted the call and was installed into his office by Pastor Waldt on the 19th Sunday after Trinity.

4. Pastor Ritter of Hallowayville, Ill. accepted a call from a Lutheran congregation in Davenport, Iowa.

5. Pastor Bartelt resigned his position with the congregations in and near Two Rivers in November of last year and in December accepted a call from the congregation in New Berlin (which had been served during the vacancy by Pastor Dammann) and was installed into his office by Pastor Dammann on II Easter Day of this year.

6. Pastor Giese, with the approval of St. Matthew Congregation (previously Friedens [Peace] Congregation), resigned his position there toward the end of last year and accepted the serving of a congregation near Milwaukee.

7. On November 13 Pastor Vorberg of West Bend was properly elected and called by St. Matthew Congregation of Milwaukee. With the approval of this congregation he accepted the call toward the end of last year and was installed on Sylvester Eve by me with the assistance of Senior Muehlhaeuser and Pastor Giese.

8. As a result of the previous, Pastor Gausewitz of Port Washington was properly elected and called by the congregations in and near West Bend. He accepted the call and was installed into his office on II Christmas Day by Pastor Vorberg.

9. Pastor Sprengling of Mosel, with the approval of his congregation, accepted a proper call from the congregation in Sheboygan and was installed into his office there by Pastor Quehl on *Oculi* Sunday.

10. In his place Pastor Brockmann was properly elected and called by the congregation in Mosel. The installation by Pastor Sprengling has not as yet taken place.

11. The congregations in Two Rivers, becoming vacant with the departure of Pastor Bartelt and then temporarily served by neighboring pastors, had its vacancy filled by Pastor Braun of Reedsville, who accepted the properly issued call. He was installed by Pastor Koehler on Trinity Sunday of this year.

I am happy to report that I do not have to fill the above mentioned twelve vacancies in that many of the above reported pastoral changes took place in part without my requested counsel, in part in my opinion in a manner for which I am not accountable, in part also in a manner based on insufficient reasons, and only in a small number in a manner appearing satisfactory to me. It is not my duty to go into details and personalities here, nor is it my purpose to judge individual Brothers. I, however, cannot let this

opportunity pass without expressing to the Hon. Synod my deep distress and apprehension over the ever increasing destructive practice by which in many cases the letter and the spirit of §30 of our synodical constitution are stretched, having given the congregations a justified offense, and generating unending confusion, since one such case often leads to many other similar ones. This practice points to other more serious evils in our synod and organization and all seem to hang together, for which reason it is to be desired that these evils are recognized, healed and prevented from reoccurring. – To my knowledge this is the first time that such evils are officially referred to, and it is high time, that such be stopped. May God himself bring about improvement.

VI. Implementation of Last Year's Synodical Resolutions.

1. The correspondence of the officers with the congregations in Naperville and Wausau was carried out, to the former by me and to the latter by the Hon. Secretary. The congregation in Naperville did not want to continue to live under the hope that we would send them a preacher. Since favorable offers were given it from other sources it sought most definitely a release from our synodical body, which in conformity with last year's synodical resolution was granted by our officers. Concerning the somewhat unsuccessful negotiations with Pastor Leupp and with the congregation in Wausau, a report will be given later by the secretary.

2. Likewise Prof. Moldehnke will give a report on his negotiations with persons and societies in Germany concerning the *Proseminar*.

3. Last year's synodical resolution concerning the publication of the *Gemeinde-Blatt* [Congregational Periodical] which is to serve as a synodical organ, was implemented according to the synod prescribed time and manner by the authorized editors. It received a much greater acceptance by our congregations, a broader circulation and a more blessed effectiveness than first thought. The editor-in-chief, Prof. Moldehnke, who is responsible for all of this, will give a special report later.

I cannot neglect to draw your attention to a shortcoming in last year's resolution, in that the Hon. Synod did not definitely establish the relationship of the periodical to the synod; and since the Hon. editorial staff also did not bring up this point, there lies, namely to the outsider, a doubt if the principles, and criticisms of other principles are the opinions of the editor, or of the synod. This doubt can possibly be put to rest with a few explanatory words.

The Hon. editorial staff is due the sincere appreciation and thanks of the synod for its diligent and capable work.

4. Concerning the proposed revision of the hymnal I have, in adherence to the resolution of the synod, contacted the officers and members of several other synods. The secretaries of the Hon. Synod of Pennsylvania could not personally go into greater detail, but will place the matter before their synod which meets at the same time we meet. From the Hon. Ohio Synod I received the report that their own work has already proceeded so far, and also has taken place under other principles, that our participation there is not possible. The Hon. New York Synod declared at its last year's convention that it isn't the time as yet for a revision.

With that both of our committees which were assigned the revision took hold of the matter, and have completed their assignments for the most part and will report at their assigned times. The same will be done by the committee charged with the drafting of a new charter.

VII. Our Relationship with the German Societies, Church Magistrates and Synods in Our Country

1. Our relationship with our old loyal friends in Germany, namely the Hon. Mission Societies in Langenberg and Berlin for the Germans who emigrated to America was more evident in the past year with deeds than with pen and ink. Neither I nor our Hon. secretary received any official letters from the named societies with the exception of one incidental letter of recommendation – which apparently was written for non-essential reasons and had no special significance. On the other hand we, as previously mentioned above, received from each of the societies a living sign of love in the persons of Brothers Kittel and Lukas; likewise, by their intermediation, Brother Liefeld, who came to us. The Berlin Society also worked hard for us in another way, e.g. by successfully helping us to get permission for the general collection in Prussia, by their participation with word and deed for our plan to establish a *Proseminar*, by their help with considerable gifts of love for our seminary as well as for individual congregations, and by their constant gathering and shipping of books, periodicals and pictures for our institutions and for use by the *Reiseprediger*.

2. Also there is the opportunity here to remember the efforts of our friends who brought to fruition the permission for a collection to be gathered in Mecklenburg, and who are still working for a similar permission in Hannover; likewise to remember the gifts of love for our seminary sent by the Mecklenbergers as well as the gifts from the Pommeranian church-treasury, from Alsace and from other places about which Pastor Bading will give more details.

3. Also our old friend, the Hon. Synod of Pennsylvania, has again in this past year kept us in mind in love, and has again placed at the disposal of the president a considerable sum of money for the support of needy preachers.

Sincere thanks of our synod is due all our old and new friends and benefactors for their love, care and self-sacrificing for our benefit.

4. In this connection it should also be mentioned that at a special occasion Prof. Moldehnke and I had a brotherly meeting with the officers of the German Synod of Iowa, and similarly Pastor Bading and Prof. Martin with a larger circle of members of that church body. These brotherly conversations contributed much on the part of both sides to erase misunderstandings and misconceptions, as well as bringing about a feeling and understanding of a closer relationship as colleagues. In us it strengthened anew the wish to attempt similar steps to move forward in other directions for the purpose of identifying our position so that the walls of Zion will be built and their ruptures healed.

5. The latest events lying in the lap of the Lutheran General Synod point to the expectation that within a short time the departure of more synods will result in a union based on a better foundation of Lutheran Confessions and Lutheran practice, and it is recommended to our Hon. synod to reconsider, yes renew its resolution of two years back (see page 11 of those Proceedings): “That if an attempt is made to form a new larger union of Lutheran synods based upon a solid confessional foundation, a delegation from our synod would be sent to such an alliance-forming meeting.”

6. Prof. Moldehnke has spent several months as *Reiseprediger* in the service of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Minnesota, and also served as our delegate to their this year’s convention.

VIII. Miscellaneous and Conclusion

1. My intention to have several Brothers work out papers on doctrinal matters for discussion at this year's convention did not work out because those Brothers I approached in part declined, in part withdrew from their commitment, which then was too late to approach others. However in last year's closing statement by the president it was urgently recommended to the individual conferences the discussion of papers and theses on a specially selected doctrinal position; the recommendation according to the recollection of our Hon. secretary was followed by several conferences. It is herewith urgently recommended to the Hon. synod to hold discussions in the spirit of truth and love not only on the proposed papers but also on other papers on doctrinal matters for the purpose of being edified and strengthened on the most holy foundation of our faith. So this can be done, all other handling of external matters should be taken care of quickly and shortened.

2. I recommend to the Hon. synod special consideration be given to specific and closely related fields of Christian works of love. Without taking away from the concentration of works of love for our synodical institutions, we dare not neglect other areas, as stated in the maxim: "This you must do, but don't forget that." I refer to the regard for heathen missions, Bible institutes, orphanages, hospitals (especially for the hospital coming to Milwaukee for the welfare of our whole state), Castle Garden Mission for immigrants, and the like.

3. The Hon. synod should direct special attention to the reestablishment of the *Reiseprediger* program. The two years of activity of our former *Reiseprediger* and present theological professor, E. Moldehnke, should have given us enough of a hint and encouragement, not to let this program fall by the wayside if possible. Not only are there at the ends and corners of our state and on the borders of neighboring states countless numbers of scattered and neglected fellow believers, who can be served only by a regular *Reiseprediger* program, but also the many vacant congregations of the synod, and the many other already organized but not or no longer served by anyone, which lie open for us, would alone be sufficient reason to demand the services of a *Reiseprediger*, and thus require action on our part. In fact, during the entire last synodical year four congregations were vacant and still are, and there is no prospect that these vacancies can be filled. For example, the congregations in and near Menomonee still await a shepherd, but in vain. Pastor Kittel of La Crosse, at my request, was kind enough to undertake a mission journey in order to bolster the declining spirit of our brothers there

4. The correspondence of my past official year, and the special official duties were so extensive that a report on all that surpasses the time and effort allotted me. I can categorically state to the glory of God that almost all letters, with one exception, sent to me from outside our synod reflected the spirit of love, of peace, and of harmony, so that in this respect I did not have any difficulties or unpleasantness. – The most important correspondence is being presented to the Hon. synod for assignment to respective committees.

5. Finally, this is to remind the Hon. synod that the terms of office of synod officials have expired and an election is due after my report, also the legally required election of Visitors and of Trustees.

And now, dear Brothers, I commend you and myself to God and the word of his grace, who has the power to edify us and to grant us the inheritance among all who will be sanctified. May our God and Lord Jesus Christ, and our Father, who loved us and gave us the eternal comfort and good hope by grace, admonish our hearts and strengthen

us in all doctrine and good works.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all. Amen.

Wm. Streissguth, Pres.

By resolution of the convention the president's report was accepted with thanks. The election of officers resulted as follows:

Pastor W. Streissguth, President

Pastor J. Bading, Vice-president

Pastor G. Vorberg, Secretary

Pastor D. Huber, Treasurer

The pastors handed in their parochial reports which were then read. The report is as follows: (See the attached table) [Ed. Note: The table was printed at the end of the Proceedings.]

The president appointed:

1. Committee. Acceptance of New Congregations. Pastors J. Kilian, H. Bartelt, and Delegates C. Kieckhefer and Reul;

2. Committee. Annual Report of the President. Pastors A. Hoenecke, Chr. Stark, G. Thiele and Delegates C. Reichmann and Ekel;

3. Committee. Acceptance of New Pastors. Senior Muehlhaeuser, Pastors Jaekel, Gausewitz and Mayerhoff.

Delegate J. Hinn was accepted as a voting member.

Closing prayer by Pastor J. Conrad.

Third Session, Friday, June 8, 9:00 a.m.

Opened with a hymn, Scripture reading and prayer by Pastor Ph. Koehler. The minutes of the previous session were read and adopted.

A proposal that the old, most deserving member of our synod, Pastor C. Goldammer, be allowed to vote was retracted by the proposer after Pastor Goldammer made a statement on this matter.

The following arrived at this time for the convention: Pastors D. Huber, Ph. Koehler, Ph. Sprengling, Th. Meumann, H. Quehl, C.G. Reim, J. Brockmann, A. Kleinert as well as the following congregational voting delegates: D. Kusel, H. Grupe, H. Ohse, G. Schattner and F. Werner.

The following were accepted as advisory members: Delegates H. Zanders and Spannagel.

Pastor D. Huber declined his election as treasurer. After Pastor C. Goldammer did the same, Pastor J. Conrad was elected to the office.

Committee 3 – Acceptance of Pastors – presented its report, which reads as follows:

The undersigned committee on the Acceptance of Applicant Pastors reports that after consultations with Pastors Liefeld, Kittel and Hoyer, it arrived at this conclusion: that it is able to recommend Pastors Liefeld, Kittel and Hoyer to the Hon. synod for immediate acceptance, because they accepted the confessional position of the synod as their own.

J. Muehlhaeuser, Th. Jaekel, C. Gausewitz

The report was adopted and the named three pastors were by means of a resolution accepted into synod membership as voting members.

Committee 1: – Acceptance of Congregations – brings in its report which reads:

The committee recommends to the Hon. synod all of the following named congregations for acceptance. [Each is preceded by The Ev. Luth.]

1. Trinity Congregation in Neenah;
 2. Congregation in Town Dall;
 3. Bartholomew Congregation in Maple Grove;
 4. St. Paul Congregation in New London;
 5. St. Matthew Congregation in Maple Creek;
 6. St. Peter Congregation of Indian Creek
- all of which adopted the constitution produced by the Hon. synod of Wisconsin; also
7. St. Matthew Congregation in Milwaukee as well as
 8. The German Lutheran Congregation in Ripon
- each of the latter two having a very good constitution, thoroughly examined by the committee. Subsequently the constitution of the
9. Ev. Lutheran St. Paul Congregation in Town Franklin was handed in and was found to be good by the committee, so that this congregation is also recommended for acceptance.

Delegates C. Kiekhefer, G. Reul; Pastors J. Kilian, H. Bartelt

The report was accepted and then the nine congregations were accepted by resolution as members of the synod.

The following delegates were thus given voting privileges: 1. C. Gerhard; 2. Fr. Holle; 3. M. Krause.

Resolved that the Trinity Congregation in Town Herman, Dodge Co., send its constitution to the synod officials and that, if the constitution is ratified by the officials, the named congregation be accepted as a member of the synod.

The report of the board of the theological and Arts and Science institutions in Watertown was read. It reads:

Report of the Board of the Theological, and Arts and Science Institutions in Watertown

The board appointed by the synod for guiding and administering the institutions in Watertown presents respectfully herewith to the Hon. synod a report on the past year's activities.

At the beginning of the past synodical year the situation of our institutions, as is known to the Hon. synod, was most discouraging. The expenditures connected with the erection of the institution's building not only depleted the treasury, but the burden of a large debt hindered the hoped for continuation of the necessary completion of the structure. The lack of knowledge in our congregations of the disturbing situation with our scattered and forlorn brothers in the faith suppressed the necessary participation in the needs and concerns for our institutions, so that here also very little encouragement was experienced. And the very sad experiences in part with the students let it be known that a radical change in leadership within the institution had to take place and this became a very difficult task for the board. The direction and promise of our faithful God alone could ward off despondency and show the correct way of the joyfully blessed continuation of the project for his handiwork. The board could with confidence entreat the Lord's blessings, since indeed (even though there seemed to be so much misfortune) the

founding of the institution was no foolhardy undertaking, but a required necessity.

In this situation the board wanted to make its task clear for itself, and in God's name have its goal agree with its principles. It looked for ways and means by which to complete the externals for the welfare of the institution, and to lead the internal matter to a favorable conclusion. Recognizing clearly the necessity, the board ordered the completion of the structure in the most advantageous manner, relying on God's help for aid in providing the necessary materials. By September 14 of last year the project had reached the point that the institution was festively dedicated to the service of God for his church, and at the same time the Academy was able to be opened. The internal furnishings were gradually obtained from the means at hand, and those items most necessary were acquired, so that the building for present purposes can be said to be completed. Naturally this brought about significant expenditures (the exact financial report will be presented at its appropriate time), but the board remained firm to its principle, that it would incur no new debts, and, if possible, also avoid using the extra grant of \$2000 offered by the synod. This was made possible in part with increased offerings from congregations which were given more information about our project when collections were gathered in their areas, in part with two separate remittances of \$160.00 in currency from the Mecklenburg Church Treasury, sent us by Supt. Pollsdorf and Pastor Crestin, and in part with interest free notes of \$25.00 or more.

The same principle of careful use of means and opportunities offered was in evidence with the financial management and was helped by the very cautious housemother with her assistance and willingness. Because of the collection of foods and the assistance of the Ladies Aids of our congregations the support and care of our students took place without burdening expenditures.

The above mentioned expenditures and the manner by which they were taken care of gives evidence that by God's grace the institutions are debt free except for a few hundred dollars still to be paid.

The Board of Visitors will report to the synod the result of the activity of the Board of Control and will give the Hon. synod the opportunity to accept or reject its actions in regard to new practices, regulations, etc.

Due to the nature of the situation, the handling of the internal matters of the institutions demands much greater attention in regard to the guidance of the students, the acquisition of instructors, the establishment of the bounds of the various authorities, etc., than the managing of the externals. The seminary has to become a lasting entity so it required a set of rules and regulations in order that the necessary discipline be practiced, that all irregularities be avoided as much as possible and that the necessary authority for action be afforded Prof. Moldehnke who has been entrusted with the overall program. Accordingly the board, after examining the desired regulations as set up in other similar institutions, drafted a provisional set of house rules, which will be presented to the synod for acceptance or for improvement.

In agreement with the views expressed by the Hon. synod, the board sought to establish the college and for this purpose called Prof. Martin of Hartwick Seminary as the first professor of the institution. He accepted the call and opened up college instruction with fitting formality at the occasion of the dedication of the institution on Sept. 14, last year. Taking into account the instructions of the synod, the board set the salary of the theological professor at \$800 per year, and Prof. Martin's annual salary at \$600, plus free housing.

About those who made use of the blessings of the seminary, during the past year

three students were accepted by the seminary, namely Aug. Schmidt, Louis Junker and Grotheer. The first two are studying for the preaching ministry, the latter for teaching. Candidates for the preaching ministry accepted into the preparatory institution were Dahlke and Paul Denninger. Although the board is of the firm opinion that in the not too distant future all those who aspire to the preaching ministry be accepted and cared for without payment of fees, yet it believed that in the case of the latter some payment should be required with conditions as they are at present.

Since voices have been raised here and there strongly against this provision by the board, the board requests specific advice from the synod in regard to this matter. Besides the above named, there are four students who had enrolled earlier in the institution, so that there was a total of eight students in the seminary, preparing for the preaching ministry. Joh. Gamm of Watertown, a student for the teaching ministry, was granted free instruction. Thus two young persons who had in mind the teaching profession could move forward in the seminary and college toward their selected goal. In regard to teaching candidates, the board believed itself to act in agreement with the wishes of the synod if it granted them as many concessions as possible and necessary in regard to the costs of their upkeep. After this rule was adopted that the instruction would be free but for food, lodging, heat and light \$100 should be paid yearly. If this were not possible, adjustments in keeping with the conditions should be made. It is now of sad necessity to give an account in this report of a reduction in the total enrollment of students. Two students left the institution. One, named Schwarting, because of a lack of ability, could not make the grade, and his request to withdraw was not denied. The other, Wilh. Denke, showed himself publicly to be a hypocrite and an arrogant individual, and because of his public display of unworthiness had to be dismissed. The exact report in each case can be found by synod members in the Book of Minutes of the board of control. Of those who were temporarily dismissed and entrusted to various pastors this past year, namely Denninger, Achilles and Horwintzky, the board believed it could re-enroll Denninger because he seemed to have fulfilled the requirements. He declared that he was now totally committed to the teaching profession, and for this the board wished him God's blessings.

The above named students of the institution were duly taught the various subjects according to the grade level until the end of the second term. Prof. Moldehnke, following an urgent plea from Pastor Fachtmann, decided to devote himself during the summer months to the *Reisepredigt* program in Minnesota. It was considered worthwhile to offer the opportunity to all of our students at that time to engage in the study of English for a period of time. The board did not feel itself authorized to object to this plan or to hinder it, especially since the Hon. president of the synod, Pastor Streissguth, considered it to be good, so the board granted the sought consent.

In regard to charitable gifts which the seminary received during the past year, excluding those from our dear congregations, special thanks should be offered for:

1. The sending twice of \$160 currency from the Church Treasury of Mecklenburg through Supt. Pollsdorf and Pastor Crestin;
2. A gift of 220 francs from Pastor Kreis of Strassburg;

The shipment of a number of valuable books for the seminary library from Oscar Steinmeyer of Berlin, who also indicated in letters filled with love toward us that other similar shipments are forthcoming.

In addition to the above, the following is still to be added in connection with the college department. When the matter of the founding of the seminary was discussed by

the Hon. synod, it was brought up and established with good reason that for the continuation of the seminary and for the good reputation of the graduating pastors, a good preparatory institution must take on the format of other colleges by offering a broader curriculum. The board held firmly to this concept and sought measures to obtain the necessary means to strive for and establish such an institution. Profs. Moldehnke and Martin shared the teaching of courses during the course of the first term. In the second term two instructors were needed because of increased enrollment. They were Messrs. Seeman and Kaltenbrun. Mr. Gaebler was entrusted with music instruction. The total number of students in the institution at the present time is sixty-six (66), excluding those in the seminary.

The board is happy to announce that the college not only supported itself, but also was able to give a considerable sum to the seminary fund, the result of which is just as much a badge of honor for the professors as it is elating for the synod, which is thereby relieved of a heavy burden.

Before the board closes its report, it wishes to present to the Hon. synod several points about the institution for serious consideration.

The chief reason which led to the founding of our own institution was the depressing and glaringly emerging lack of confessional shepherds who could correctly serve the scattered members of our church and offer them the pure word and sacraments for their comfort and help in life and death. It was hoped that this unfortunate situation would be alleviated with the founding of a seminary, and trust was placed in our faithful God that he would lead capable young men to it from our congregations or from other places. Even though the latter in part has taken place, yet from the past several years of experience it became evident that the number of enrollees capable of becoming good shepherds is far too small. The mindset of our American people solely to gather worldly possessions makes it very difficult to convince them that the command of Christ pertains to all Christians: "Go into all the world, etc." It is necessary for us to look to other sources where the urgent admonition of our Lord "Go into the vineyard" is accepted more favorably. A sister synod has shown us how to find the correct way to solve this mentioned unfortunate circumstance. And the board would like to make an urgent request to the Hon. synod that it go along with the desired preparatory steps taken in the founding of a *Proseminar* in Germany. It can also be mentioned here that Prof. Moldehnke, to whom the contacts with the particular brothers about our efforts in Germany was entrusted, is prepared to present to us the encouraging correspondence. Recently also the president of the board received some encouragement from Pastor Eichler of Berlin which will be reported to the Hon. synod at the apportioned time.

Another point, which the board believes it cannot earnestly stress enough, refers to the daily guidance and supervision of the students by a qualified inspector. Aside from the fact that many unfortunate circumstances which happened during the course of the year justify this move as being very necessary and desirable, other conditions also make this request a necessity not to be denied. Prof. Moldehnke has indicated that he probably will return to Germany; the housemother, Mrs. Koester, has likewise decided to leave her present position, so that the seminary finds itself in the position of possibly being without personnel. [The original says – find itself orphaned.] In such a situation earnest prayers for leadership from God and a conscientious effort to seek and gain the proper person are in place. May God be gracious to us and help us! When the necessity to secure an inspector because of Mrs. Koester's resignation, and other circumstances came to the fore, the board resolved to recommend the Hon. secretary of the synod, Pastor

Hoenecke, for the position. If this resolution in light of the recent developments is to be considered a correct one, the Hon. synod is asked to decide.

The interests of our institutions demand that a third point be brought to the attention of the Hon. synod. It is in regard to the funding of the college. The funding of the college to be separate from that of the seminary is to be discussed, because the plan by which this goal can be attained, can be employed for the college only. The plan came from our ambitious Prof. Martin who has secured almost \$10,000 for this purpose, and has the unconditional approval of the board. The plan is based simply on the current support principle, which in larger undertakings is so successful and financially worthwhile, in that a great number of persons become interested in a means to an end, and in our case that would be in the form of Scholarships. (*Schuelerrechte*)

It is really not necessary to prove the need of funding our college, since it was clearly expressed enough that it was the purpose of synod to establish a respectable Arts and Science institution, and that such must take place only with firm support. If there was any unclarity about this point, it was not because of the purpose of the synod, but solely because of the extent of the means which are demanded for the desired goal. It is now the obligation of the Hon. synod to examine the plan which will be presented orally by Prof. Martin, and to establish measures of procedure, so that in the coming years, with the help of God, the project can move forward successfully on the right path. For this purpose then an agent has to be appointed who will devote himself exclusively to the interest of the institution, that is to the funding. The board has resolved to recommend Pastor Sieker to the Hon. synod for this position; it however must be added that this brother has protested this resolution.

Finally, the board requests the Hon. synod to think of ways and means to direct our congregations to an ever ardent zeal in the support of our institutions. May the Archshepherd, Jesus Christ, the king of his kingdom, give us all the necessary wisdom and his loving blessings in all of our deliberations. Amen!

Respectfully, the Board of Control

Joh. Bading, President; J.H. Sieker, Secretary; C.F. Goldammer; Ph. Koehler; D. Kusel

The report was adopted.

The report of the theological professor is read, as follows:

“if we have the strength, yet their span is but trouble and sorrow” [NIV]. These words of Moses about the life of mankind are also fitting for the past year. What else is there to expect, for, “does not a person always have to be in a struggle on earth and his days be like those of a laborer?” Thus one had constantly to wrangle, to battle and to struggle in regard to physical needs, to ease the pressing burden of debt, to lead the institution forward under many disheartening experiences, to support the newly established college, and to establish a harmonious union with the seminary. In connection with all this the three enemies referred to by Luther in his small catechism raised their ugly heads within and outside the institution. Nevertheless we can still rejoice with: “We have a Lord, who renders aid.” Interest in our institution is picking up within the synod – the college is happily moving forward. Yet the step to transfer the institutions to Watertown before adequate permission was granted, is chastised in tangible ways. Attempts were made in the city through the sale of scholarships to gather an adequate sum of money from the residents. Our new wonderful building was dedicated on September 13, as announced in the *Gemeindeblatt*, and classes began on the following day. The professor, besides instructing in the seminary, dedicated a great amount of his time

to the college and had, besides that, to do the editing of the *Gemeindeblatt*, the latter being publicized by more Brothers with exceptional zeal, which happily increased the readership and the growth this time – a matter to be brought to your attention. Then also, the professor served the vacant congregation in Columbus and its affiliates from Christmas to Easter; also made a collection trip, the result of which was the winter session, the professor with the approval of the Board of Trustees undertook a nine week mission journey in Minnesota. He also used his vacation time so that the instruction in the seminary fell short by only five weeks. For the existence of the institute correspondence was carried out by him with several recognized theologians in Germany, and a sincere willingness to help was shown by Prof. Hengstenberg and member of the High [Church] Consistory Kliefoth and others. Several difficulties arose in connection with the *Proseminar*. But with the Lord's help, if the Hon. synod will take definite steps to participate in covering the costs, the *Proseminar* should hopefully be given a definite start this year. Then, as we hope, the number of our seminary students will increase and the life in the seminary will be more pleasurable for the professor and students.

The following are students in the seminary: Siegler, Schmidt, Grotheer, Junker; preparing for the seminary are three young men in the college: Dahlke, Denninger and Gamm. Grotheer is ready to accept a school position. Schmidt is filling the second teaching position in Watertown; Teacher Kienow received instruction in doctrine during the entire winter session and he also taught the students thorough-bass. To our sorrow two students had to be dismissed: Bernh. Schwarting before Easter and Fried. Wilh. Denke, who came to us on February 7, 1865, the second week before Easter of this year. Several applications came in lately; this fall, God willing, several youths from our congregations in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa will be entering our seminary. With the great shortage of workers however, may the word of the Lord be taken seriously to heart: "Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

E. Moldehnke, Prof.

The report was also adopted.

The president then named:

4. Committee: Seminary matters – Pastors E. Mayerhoff, E. Giese, W. Staerke, C. Gausewitz and Delegates G. Brumder, H. Gustavus.

5. Committee: Implementation of last year's synodical resolutions – Pastors Ph. Koehler, D. Huber, J. Ritter and Delegates M. Schuhmacher, F. Schmidt.

6. Committee: Hymnal matters – Prof. Moldehnke, Pastors E. Otto, C. Goldammer, Th. Meumann and Delegates J. Haberkorn, D. Kusel. (Later on Pastors Muehlhaeuser and Stark were named in place of Pastors Otto and Goldammer.)

7. Committee: Vacant congregations and *Reisepredigt* program – Pastors C.G. Reim, C. Wagner, G. Bachmann and Delegates H. Grupe, F. Werner.

8. Committee: Excuses from absent pastors and from congregations not represented by a delegate – Pastors H. Quehl, Ph. Brenner and Delegates H. Ohse, G. Bigalk.

9. Committee: Treasurer's report of the synod and of the seminary – Pastors J. Brockmann, A. Zerneck and Delegates G. Brumder, G. Moehrl.

The report of 2. Committee on the annual report of the president was read and accepted.

The committee appointed last year by the synodical convention to draught a new charter reports as follows:

The committee appointed last year at the synodical convention in regard to the mat-

ter of the charter reports respectfully:

That it has agreed to ask the synod to draught two charters, one for the synod, the other for the institutions. The committee allows itself to present to the synod the draught of a charter for the institutions, and it regrets that it did not have enough time to discuss the drawing up of a charter for the synod.

Respectfully,

W. Streissguth, J. Muehlhaeuser, J.H. Sieker, G. Vorberg

The report and the charter draught were accepted and it was then resolved to refer it to a new committee.

The chief editor of the *Gemeindeblatt* reported that 2850 issues are being delivered with an income of \$640.81, a gain of \$68.81.

Resolved to adjourn to 2:00 p.m. Closing prayer by Pastor F. Waldt.

Fourth Session, Friday, June 8, 2:00 p.m.

Opened with prayer by Pastor Stark.

The minutes of the morning session were read and adopted.

Prof. Moldehnke gave a report on how far the matter of the founding of a *Proseminar* in Germany had proceeded; Pastors G. Bachmann and J. Bading also reported that in letters from Germany they had received suggestions for sites for the same. Pastor Lohmann, referred to at last year's convention, is ready earnestly to start such an institution for our purpose, and to head it. – After the synod had the opportunity to discuss this matter thoroughly, it in joint action resolved the following:

1. That the High Church-Consistory in Berlin be asked to release the payments of the money collected in Prussia for this purpose at the earliest convenience possible, provided that the institution will be established on our confessional position; that in like manner the payments of the soon to be held collection in Mecklenburg also go to the *Proseminar*;

2. That the synod declare itself willing to support this institution, but it cannot make definite promises since first of all the institutions in Watertown demand the entire attention of the synod;

3. That from information sent us, the synod extends its complete trust in and to Pastor Lohmann, and that it has heard his liberal offerings and accepts them with thanks; that also the offerings of love from the Berlin Society, the payment of \$150 annually as well as the payment for the lease of the land for the institution, be accepted with thanks;

4. That the Board of Trustees together with the synod officials be authorized to correspond, in accordance with instructors from the synod, with the official leaders in Germany about this matter and to bring it to a successful conclusion.

After this the president appointed:

10. Committee: Relationship of our synod with other synods of this country in regard to the awaited new General-synod – Senior Muehlhaeuser, Pastors J. Bading, Ph. Koehler, Prof. Moldehnke and Delegates M. Krause, C. Kiekhefer.

11. Committee: The Charter – Pastors E. Giese, A. Lange, A. Hoenecke and Delegates C. Gerhard, F. Holle.

The convention adjourned itself to Saturday, 9:00 a.m.

Closing prayer by Th. Meumann.

History of the Archives of the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod (1950 – 2000)

Norbert M. Manthe

Archival work during the first one-hundred years of the Synod (1850 -1950)

The original constitution of the First German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin, now known as the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod or the WELS, was adopted at its organizational meeting in 1850. One of its sections provided for the keeping of an archives: “The Ministerium will maintain a special archives wherein all letters, memorials, written complaints, etc. belonging to the Ministerium will be kept.”¹ Subsequent revisions of the Synod’s constitution, the constitution of the Federation of the former Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota Synods in 1892, and of the merged or Joint Synod approved in 1918 made no mention of the maintenance of archives. Not until the adoption of the 1961 constitution is provision made for the appointment of an archivist and historian.

The proceedings of the 1858 convention of the Wisconsin Synod contained a resolution that it be the obligation of member pastors “to write an account of the history of their respective congregation from their inception; that it be written on the basis of five year periods, and that it be handed into the synodical secretary.”² It is not known whether or not this was done since no such historical accounts have been located.

Johannes Muehlhaeuser served as president of the Wisconsin Synod during its first decade of existence, from 1850 until 1860. At the 1860 convention, he presented the first written history of the synod.³ This history makes no reference to a synodical archives, however, at this convention Muehlhaeuser was appointed to be the synod’s archivist.⁴ There is no evidence that Muehlhaeuser fulfilled his duties as archivist and none that he gave an annual report to the synod.

Muehlhaeuser died in 1867 and at the next year’s synod convention it was resolved that the archives be placed in the seminary building which at that time was located in Watertown, Wisconsin. Inspector Adolph Hoenecke was named as archivist.⁵ In 1878, the seminary and Hoenecke moved to Milwaukee. (The seminary moved to Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, in 1893 and to its present location in Mequon, Wisconsin, in 1929.) It is likely that the archives maintained at the Watertown campus up to that point remained with the librarian at Northwestern College in Watertown and that the seminary’s librarian in Milwaukee also maintained an archives. Pastor Raymond Huth who served as part-time archivist from 1949 until 1965 reported in 1954 that professors at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Northwestern College and Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota, and synod pastors had collected and set aside valuable historical materials.⁶ These collections remained at each of the schools well into the twentieth century. The synodical proceedings from 1868 through 1947 do not mention a synodical archivist. Further, no reports by Hoenecke or others as archivist have been located.

At the June 1899 convention, Pastor John Philipp Koehler (1859-1951) was appointed to write a history of the Wisconsin Synod in observance of the Synod’s upcoming fifty-year anniversary. Koehler reported that synod sources were incomplete for

writing such a history. There were no copies of correspondence written by the pioneer pastors to the German missionary societies who were supplying pastors to the synod during the first decades of its life. Further, Koehler had accepted the call in 1900 to the seminary, then located in Wauwatosa, as professor of church history and New Testament studies. These situations led to a shortened digest of the intended history of the Synod which appeared in four issues of the 1900 *Gemeinde=Blatt*, the synod's periodical.

In 1924, J.P. Koehler once more took up the task of writing the synod's history for its diamond anniversary in 1925. He was given a leave of absence from his seminary duties during 1924, from Easter until Christmas. He traveled to Europe in order to conduct research to supplement source material available to him in the archives at home and elsewhere in the United States. The completed book, *Geschichte der Allgemeinen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin und andern Staaten*, published by Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, appeared in 1925 and coincided with the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Wisconsin Synod. The 1925 history subsequently became the first two chapters of Koehler's more extensive work, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, published in 1970 by the Sentinel Publishing Company, St. Cloud, Minnesota, for the Protestant Conference.

In this most recent history of Koehler's he wrote that in writing the history for the fiftieth anniversary in 1899, he knew of the cabinet that synod made available at the start as its archive.

The cabinet was indeed at Bading's⁷, but empty. Jaekel's⁸ attic yielded a basket with carefully arranged packages of letters. At Bading's finally fundles of letters were discovered wrapped in newspapers and stuffed between the roof and attic walls, evidently for insulation. While Koehler ironed out and arranged the letters, Bading, looking on, would read one or the other and offer bits of information that came to his mind. In the end, being a busy man, he decided to leave his assignment entirely to Koehler. When the whole material was finally assembled, in the course of two years, chronologically arranged in the proper folders, there were about 4,000 items, covering the period from 1849-86. The catalog, with a digest of each document and other necessary index data, was entered in the first book of Synod's minutes.⁹

Dr. Arnold Lehmann, Professor em. Northwestern College and current editor of the *WELS Historical Institute Journal*, has done significant work in transcribing and translating the 4,000 items referred to by Koehler. For the 1849-86 time frame, Lehmann writes, "Whatever archives were maintained were so done by the presidents. That is evidenced by the Koehler file."¹⁰

Dr. James Kiecker, Professor of History at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, writes: "When one turns his attention to the history of the Wisconsin Synod, he quickly discovers how much 'we just don't know' about our past. ...One can turn to the granddaddy anniversary booklet of them all, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, by J.P. Koehler, produced in 1925 for our synod's seventy-fifth anniversary. But there one encounters the same problem on a larger scale. One can find easily enough the pages which cover the earliest synod churches and their pastors. But where are the footnotes? Where are the references? Where is Koehler getting his information? ... At the end of the German edition of his work, Koehler lists the sources which he used. One's heart leaps for joy. Now one can check things out. But the excitement quickly cools, for the

sources are, for the most part, not easily or not at all available.”¹¹

About the same time during which Dr. Kiecker was writing his critical questions and comments, Dr. Lehmann discovered two cases of letters and other historical items collected in the library archives of the former Northwestern College, Watertown, Wisconsin. This important collection indicated where Koehler got his information. Unfortunately the discovery of the collection had not been publicized and was unknown to Kiecker when his paper was written.

The documents maintained by the synodical presidents with one exception repose in the archives of the Wisconsin Synod located at the seminary in Mequon. Unfortunately, the presidential files of President Philipp von Rohr who served nineteen years, from 1889 until his death in 1908, have not been located and are presumed lost.¹²

Other significant archival materials which have not been located and are presumed lost are the Proceedings of the former Minnesota Lutheran Synod from 1860 through 1866, Proceedings of the former Michigan Lutheran Synod from 1860 through 1865, and the Proceedings of the Northern Wisconsin District conventions 1932, 1934, and 1936.

Bringing the first century of the life of the Wisconsin Synod to a close, we observe that very little was done to promote the archives and to further its historical holdings. There appeared to be neither human nor financial resources available nor did there appear to be a keen interest among the synodical leadership to promote a viable and usable synodical archives. The principal additions to the archives during this period were the presidential letters and the proceedings with the exceptions noted previously. The holdings included complete sets of the periodicals, *Gemeinde=Blatt* (1865-1969) and the *Northwestern Lutheran* (from 1914) and an incomplete set of the elementary school publication, *Lutherische Schul=Zeitung* (1876-1904). One is able to take heart in the research and scholarly compilations of the history of the synod done by John Philipp Koehler during the first century. These works should survive the test of time and be invaluable to future researchers of church history.

The Archives of the WELS in recent times, 1950 – 2000

With the approach of the synod’s centennial in 1950, there was a revival of interest in its archives as evidenced by the conventions of 1947 and 1949. Pastor Frank Reier was appointed Chronicler and made a report to the synod’s president, Pastor John Brenner, and the synod for the biennium 1945-1947.¹³ His successor, Roland H. Hoenecke, professor at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota, was elected Chronicler and gave biennial reports from 1951 through the 1961 conventions. In the 1959 synod constitution, the name of the office was changed to Historian and was made an appointive rather than elective office. Section 10.05 had these provisions for the office of Historian:

- (a) There shall be a Historian appointed by the Conference of Presidents. The Term of office shall be two years.
- (b) The Historian shall take careful note of and record outstanding events within the Synod in their chronological order. Such record shall include important Synodical resolutions; expansion of faculty or physical plant at the institutions of the Synod; expansion of the Synod’s mission program; special conventions of the Synod; anniversaries of the Synod’s institutions, of the Districts, and of the Synod itself; fiftieth anniversaries of pastors, teachers, and professors; one-

hundredth anniversaries of congregations; deaths of pastors, professors, teachers, and laymen who have served the Synod.

(c) Wherever possible the Historian shall list the sources of his records. He shall submit his report to the regular conventions of the Synod.

(d) The Historian shall make triplicate copies of his record, one to be deposited in the archives of the Synod, one to be deposited in the archives of Northwestern College, and one to be retained by the historian.¹⁴

Pastor Walter Hoepner served as synod historian from 1961 through the 1973-1975 biennium and Pastor Martin Westerhaus, Librarian and professor at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, served as historian from 1975 through the 1997-1999 biennium. Most historian reports present comprehensive accounts of the synod's history during the successive two-year periods and are invaluable additions to the archives for synodical research.

The synod's president, Pastor John Brenner, reported to the 1949 Synod Convention that the "valuable documents of our Synod", then stored at Northwestern College in Watertown and at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon, "should be brought together and filed properly."¹⁵

An Archives Committee was appointed in 1949 consisting of Professor Adalbert Schaller of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Professor Ewald Tacke of Northwestern College and Raymond Huth, pastor of Messiah Ev. Lutheran Church, Milwaukee. The Committee was "to find ways and means for the collection of materials of permanent interest and value for a synodical archives."¹⁶

At the September 6, 1949 meeting of the Committee, Rev. August Suelflow, Director of Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, Missouri, was present in planning for the establishment of an archives for the synod. Later that year, Pastor Huth spent several days with Pastor Suelflow in St. Louis to review the Missouri Synod's archives operation at Concordia Historical Institute.

In 1950, space for the archives was made available in the Tower Room at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon. This provided space for filing periodicals, synodical reports, congregational and biographical files, essays, Synodical Conference reports, reports of other Lutheran bodies, and other materials of an historical nature. A modest sum of \$500 was approved in the synod's budget for materials to equip the Archives Office. Subsequent conventions approved similar modest sums out of the budget for the operation of the archives.

The Archives Committee presented biennial reports to the Synod from 1949 through the 1959 Convention. With the adoption of a new constitution in 1959, the Committee was replaced by an Archivist, an appointive position. The duties of the Archivist appeared for the first time in the Synod's Constitution as Section 10.07:

(a) There shall be an Archivist appointed by the Conference of Presidents. The Archivist shall be responsible for the Synod's Archives, located at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Thiensville, Wisconsin.

(b) The Archivist shall keep the archives in good order, maintain proper indices, provide for their preservation against deterioration and damage, and shall report to the regular conventions of the Synod.

(c) The President, Board of Trustees, General Board for Home Missions, and the Board for World Missions shall transfer correspondence, records, and other papers from their respective offices to the archives when, at their discretion,

such material is available for this purpose.

(d) The Protocols, records, correspondence, and other archives of officers, boards, committees, departments, and institutions of the Synod, its Districts, their Conferences, committees, and officers shall be transferred to the archives at the expiration of not more than ten years unless such records are still open.

(e) Temporary committees of the Synod upon their dissolution shall transfer all records and material relating to their work to the archives.¹⁷

Although he had been serving as the 'unofficial' Synod Archivist since 1949, Pastor Raymond Huth was appointed to this position in 1959 and served until 1965. Pastor em. William Schink of West Bend then served as Archivist until 1981. There is no evidence that Schink filed reports either with the president or with the synod and so there is a gap of sixteen years during which there is no record of archives activity. It is known that Schink made regular visits to the archives to take care of information requests and care for the filing of documents. Professor Martin Westerhaus was appointed Archivist in 1981. Subsequently, the offices of Historian and Archivist were combined into one called Archivist/Historian. Westerhaus served until his resignation in 1999. At this writing, the office is being served *pro-tem* by the seminary's librarian, Professor John Hartwig.

Synod headquarters relocated in 1963 from the building at North Avenue and Thirty-Seventh Street in Milwaukee, then the home of Northwestern Publishing House, to 3512 W. North Avenue, Milwaukee. At this location space was made available in two rooms in the basement, one of which was a former coal bin. According to the report of the synod's president, Pastor Oscar Naumann, to the 1963 synod convention, this move "would make the archives more accessible."¹⁸ Two years later, the archives were moved from the seminary to the Synod Office Building.

The relocated space for the archives at the North Avenue location was less than ideal. The basement facility was damp and lacked adequate heat and ventilation and it was not possible to control the temperature and humidity in these rooms. When the synod offices were moved to the present location on Mayfair Avenue in early 1984, there was no room for the archives at the new location. Office personnel were instructed to take only what was needed to the Mayfair offices. As a result, almost no attention was paid to documents which were of possible historical value and so there was a wholesale 'relegating of materials to the dumpster'. A similar situation prevailed in 1985 when Northwestern Publishing House moved from its North Avenue location to 113th Street in Milwaukee. Pictures and other materials which were 'one of their kind' and of significant historical value were discarded due to space limitations in the new facility. During the closing of Northwestern Lutheran Academy, Mobridge, South Dakota, in 1979 and the amalgamation of the synodical schools in the 1990s, there was no one available to assist in the retrieval of materials which may have been of significant historical value. Surely, a full time archivist should have been on hand in all of these instances.

At the time of the move of synod offices to the Mayfair location, a temporary place of storage was found for the archives in 1984 in a former classroom at Salem Landmark Church on 107th Street in Milwaukee. Here they remained until the new and present quarters were made available at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in the summer of 1988. The facility consists of two levels totaling 1,973 square feet with an anticipated shelving capacity of 587 linear feet. Although the areas have controls for temperature and humidity, both are sometimes difficult to control. Steam pipes pass through the main storage

area and entrances to the areas are not completely air-tight and insect-proof. No provision is available for the isolation of incoming materials to make sure they do not contain insects, mold, etc.

The WELS Historical Institute was founded in 1981 and one of its purposes was “to serve as the official department of archives and history of the synod.” This provision resulted in confusion and contradictions within both the Institute and the synod for nearly two decades. On the one hand, the Institute was given charge of the archives, received no synodical funding for its operation and had no power over the appointment of the archivist. On the other hand, Synod had the constitutional right to appoint the archivist and approved the short and long term budgets for the archives. Neither the Institute nor the synod took ‘ownership’ in the archives. Interest in maintaining an archives waned. This was especially true among synod officials who now gave token lip service to the maintenance of synod archives.

In 1995, recognizing that the synod was in need of “the establishment of a viable, usable, and first-rate synod archives (that) will require the full intellectual, spiritual, and financial commitment of the synod,” the synod in convention resolved to “establish a special committee to examine the need for expanded archives and adequate staff...”¹⁹ As a result of the Ad Hoc Committee’s report to the 1997 convention, the synod resolved “that the Synodical Council give high priority to establishing the position of a full-time archivist/historian with support staff in this biennium.”²⁰ This convention also passed the resolution “that in the use of this offering (i.e. the Forward in Christ offering) high consideration be given to the following:

- (a) a synod archives building to remember the past;
- (b) a chapel at Martin Luther College to celebrate the present; and
- (c) an energetic outreach program to look to the future.”²¹

A noticeable shift in the direct responsibility for the synod archives began in 1998. In the 1998 *Report to the Twelve Districts*, it was reported that the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Board recommended to the Board for Ministerial Education that there be a closer integration with the archives and the seminary library.²² The June 1998 *Supplement to the REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR MINISTERIAL EDUCATION CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT UNDER ‘Master Site Planning’*: “The B(oard for) M(inisterial) E(ducation) in April advised W(isconsin) L(utheran) S(eminary) to restudy and reduce the cost of its proposal to integrate space for synodical archives into a reorganization and expansion of its present library.” In the September 1998 *President’s Newsletter*, the Commission for Communication on Financial Support/Special Giving reported that: “...the Synodical Council at its August meeting recommended that the financial goal of the thank offering (i.e. the Forward in Christ offering) be \$30 million with the following allocations: \$20.75 million for outreach and scholarships, \$8 million for a chapel project on the M(artin) L(uther) C(ollege) campus and \$1.25 million for an archives project.”

The 1999 convention approved the shift of responsibility for managing the synod archives to the seminary with the budget for the archives being kept separate from the seminary budget. Amendments to the bylaws of the synod were also approved at this convention and these appear in the May 2000 edition of the Constitution and Bylaws. Under Section 5.70, Synod Archives. Items (a), (h) and (i) read:

“The Synodical Council shall establish and maintain a synodical archives, which

shall be the repository of documents of historical value.

“The Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Board of Control shall call or engage an archivist, who shall serve under the direction of the library director of the Seminary.

“The library director of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary shall oversee the operation and staffing of synodical archives. He shall report to the Seminary Board of Control through the President of the Seminary.”

With the advent of the twenty-first century, our synod archives are in a state of flux. It is anticipated that a full time archivist with adequate staff will be engaged soon, perhaps in the next biennium. The space needs and the final location of the archives is dependent upon the success of the \$30 million Forward in Christ Thank Offering conducted by the synod which began this year, the year 2000.

Professor John Brenner of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary covered the issue well when he wrote on “The Need for Historical Preservation” in the July 2000 issue of *Sharing*, a newsletter of the Ministry of Planned Giving.

A church body that has not preserved its history is like a person with amnesia. It has no sense of identity and is in danger of losing its reason for existence. That is why the Bible so often tells us to remember the former things. Our hope for the future is based on what God has done for us in the past. The historical record preserved in the Bible is important because it traced God’s plan of salvation promised and fulfilled in history. A church body also needs to preserve the record of God’s grace in its own history. Preserving our history allows us to learn from past mistakes and successes. It gives us an appreciation of the struggles and hardships that those who went before us endured to preserve God’s truth for us. It gives the ability to understand who we are and why we do what we do. It helps us recognize past errors which appear again in slightly different guise. It helps us see God’s grace in the life of our congregations and synod.²³

ENDNOTES

1. “*Das Ministerium hat ein eigenes Archiv, worin all Briefe, Bittschriften, Klagschriften u.s.w., was dem Ministerium zugehoert.*” This quotation is from Section X, No. 2, of the original constitution which is found in the volume entitled, *Verhandlungen der Versammlungen der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin*. This volume contains the early proceedings from 1850 to 1869. Subsequent references to these and other synodical proceedings will be cited as *Proceedings* with the appropriate year and page reference. Proceedings may be found in the library and the synod archives at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin.
2. *WELS Historical Institute Journal*, April 1994, p. 9, of the afternoon session on June 2; a translation by Dr. Arnold Lehmann of the 1858 Proceedings.
3. A translation of this history by Dr. Arnold Lehmann appears in the Fall 1985 issue of the *WELS Historical Institute Journal*, pp. 10 ff.
4. *WELS Historical Institute Journal*, April 1995, page 15, Resolved No. 5; translation by Dr. Arnold Lehmann.
5. *Beschlossen, dass das Synodalarchiv in das Seminargebaeude nach Watertown verlegt und der Inspector (i.e. Rev. Adolph Hoenecke) zum Archivar ernannt*

- werde”; *Proceedings*, 1868; p. 35.
6. *The Northwestern Lutheran*, January 10, 1954; “The Archives of Our Synod”, p. 9.
 7. John Bading was synod president for the periods 1860-1863 and 1867-1889.
 8. Pastor Theodore Jaekel succeeded Muehlhaeuser at Grace Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1867.
 9. *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, J.P. Koehler; Sentinel Publishing Company, St. Cloud, Minnesota, 1970; page 209, col. 1.
 10. E-mail from Dr. Arnold Lehmann to the writer, Norbert Manthe, July 14, 2000.
 11. Dr. James Kiecker, Professor of History at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, delivered a paper entitled, “Historical Research and Early WELS Congregations in the Milwaukee Area”, to the fall meeting of the WELS Historical Institute on October 29, 1986. The text of this paper was printed in the *WELS Historical Institute Journal* in the Spring 1990 issue, Vol. 8, No. 1, pp. 3 ff.
 12. Searches for President von Rohr’s files at St. Martin’s Ev. Lutheran Church, Winona, Minnesota, and at Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, Missouri, have been to no avail. Contacts with von Rohr’s descendants have also proven unfruitful in locating the missing files.
 13. *Proceedings*, 1947; pp. 123 and 124.
 14. *Proceedings*, 1959; p. 288.
 15. *Proceedings*, 1949, p. 18.
 16. *Proceedings*, Archivist Raymond Huth’s report on the Wisconsin Synod Archives in July 1963 to President Nauman and to the synod.
 17. *Proceedings*, 1969; p. 289.
 18. *Proceedings*, 1963; p. 23.
 19. *Proceedings*, 1995; p. 102-3.
 20. *Proceedings*, 1997; p. 98.
 21. *Proceedings*, 1997; 95.
 22. Report to the Twelve Districts, 1998; pp. 10 and 11.
 23. John Brenner is professor of church history and education at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin. His article appears on page 6 of the July 2000 newsletter, *Sharing*, of the synod’s Ministry of Planned Giving.

God works in a mysterious way His wonders to perform
The Story of
St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Congregation,
Watertown WI
by Arnold O. Lehmann

Foreword

By the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain. I Corinthians 15: 10 (KJ).

This confession was written by the Apostle Paul about a dozen years before his death, or about a quarter century after he became a missionary for Christ. This confession can also be pronounced today by St. Luke's Ev. Lutheran Congregation, Watertown, Wisconsin. The spiritual life of the Apostle Paul is mirrored in the spiritual life of St. Luke's Congregation. From the earliest reports about St. Paul in Scripture and from the early records of this Watertown Congregation (it did not take the name of St. Luke's until 1909) it is apparent that foremost in the thoughts of each was the obligation to serve and worship God.

A few words on the early life of each. From Paul's own words we know him to have been a conscientious Pharisee.¹ Pharisees, with their myriad of laws and rules, taught that strict obedience to these laws was most necessary for salvation. They overlooked the many Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament. Readers should be familiar with Jesus Christ's statements to and about the Pharisees.²

About 1817 the King of Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm III, issued a decree that the Lutherans and Reformed churches combine to form one Protestant body, which was known by the name of *Unirte* (United). Countless numbers of Lutherans and Reformed members who opposed this union emigrated to America and elsewhere in order to continue worshiping in their respective confessions. In addition to these immigrants many other Germans came to America who may or may not have been members of this new united church. Some came with the hope of finding a more prosperous life; others who were in opposition to the government sought refuge to avoid prosecution. Those who wanted to continue the practices of the united church formed a church body which they named Evangelical Church.

The founders of the respective Watertown congregation of this article did not want to be connected with any synod or larger church group, which of course ruled out the Lutheran, Reformed and Evangelical church bodies. To make this evident, the congregation took the name of The Evangelical German Church of Watertown when the church's officials signed the incorporation papers in January 1849.³

To complete the major comparisons of the life of the Apostle Paul and the Evangelical German Church of Watertown, the change of direction of each must be considered. The change of direction of St. Paul was abrupt and fast. St. Paul, in his early years known as Saul, was on the way to Damascus to help persecute the followers of Christ when he was stricken by the Lord,⁴ His conversion to true and strict Christianity took place in a matter of days. (His preparation for becoming a missionary took much longer).

The Evangelical German Church of Watertown began as a rather liberal group for

that time. This will be shown later in the details of the congregation's story. For nearly a half century the congregation actually had no definite confessional stance. Even though a resolution was passed that its pastor must be either Lutheran or Reformed, apparently the eyes were partially closed in more than one instance. After nearly this half century of its existence, the hand of the Lord also entered the picture by sending to the congregation a Lutheran pastor who took hold of the situation and step by step slowly led the congregation toward orthodox Lutheranism, an action which was continued by the next two pastors and strengthened by the following two pastors. Today St. Luke's Congregation professes orthodox Lutheranism – by faith alone, by grace alone, by Scripture alone – and is a member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS).

The account concerning the spiritual life of the apostle can be read in the book of The Acts of the Apostles and in Paul's Epistles. That of the St. Luke's Congregation is the purpose of this article, but in somewhat condensed form.

Phase I

The Congregation's Early Years

Watertown, Wisconsin's first permanent resident was Timothy Johnson, who laid claim to property there in 1836. The settlement was first named Johnson's Rapids, but a few years later the name was changed to Watertown, as suggested by some settlers from Watertown, N. Y.

The first German, Johann Jakob Wiedmann, arrived in the area the following year. A decade later he was among the original members of the Evangelical German Congregation. Little has been recorded anywhere about immigrants, or about residents transferring from eastern United States to the village, nor about its growth and development in its first decade. However, in 1843 a large number of German families settled in an area about five miles northeast of the village, calling the place Lebanon. They eventually purchased 80 acres from the government and established Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Congregation, which affiliated itself with Pastor J. A. A. Grabau, the originator of the Buffalo Synod.

No detailed report is extant about a German Methodist circuit rider who gathered a group of German families in the village and formed a congregation in the mid 1840's. There was another group of German families that wanted no part of German Methodism. Again there is no record of the initial steps taken, but a nucleus of prominent German men of this group gathered to form a congregation, probably as early as 1846 or possibly 1847. They held their meetings in the Buena Vista Hotel, still standing at the corner of North Fourth and Jones Streets.

The fact that the congregation existed as an organization in 1848 is recorded in the History of Dodge County and in the History of Jefferson County.⁵ It can be further deduced that a congregation existed in 1848 from a paragraph in the minutes of the congregational meeting of January 7, 1849, the earliest official record of the congregation. There it reads (translated): At a general meeting of the congregation, taking place today, the following members – Heinrich Boegel, Carl Matthias Ducasse' and Peter Seeburg – were elected council members by majority vote to replace council members Georg Hasenfeldt, Moritz Flor and Ludwig W. Ranis, whose terms expired.⁶

Further evidence that the congregation existed in 1848 in Watertown can be gathered from the congregation's Church Book (1855-1900)⁷, where a reference is made to a "register" existing in 1850, which is not preserved. Transferred from this register to the

The Buena Vista House where forerunners of St. Luke's met for services 1848-1851.

Church Book are the names and dates of children baptized⁸ by a Pastor A. Diedrichsen of Milwaukee.⁹

During these very early years the congregation was also served by Mr. H. H. Winter, a "Latin farmer"¹⁰ living nearby in the Town of Farmington. In the minutes he is referred to as "pastoral-office substitute." He performed some baptisms and possibly conducted other pastoral duties, because in the minutes of September 15, 1850 he and a Mr. Roese were thanked "for their contributions which they voluntarily rendered to us as preachers."

Because the congregation resolved in the January 7, 1849 meeting to build, the next step would have to be incorporation. The second set of minutes, March 26, 1849 read: "Today a general meeting was held in order to get the congregation's approval of the corporation paper as drawn up on February 8, 1849." The approval paper was recorded at the court house in Jefferson, WI.¹¹ The congregation now moved ahead in earnest with plans toward the purchase of property.

Because the surveyor in Watertown directed all Germans to settle north of Main Street and east of the Rock River,¹² the choice of location was limited. On March 27, 1849 the congregation held another meeting to purchase land. An offer made by a group of four property owners to sell a site for \$80.00 was accepted. Twenty dollars was to be paid to each man. One of the four demanded his money, the other three donated their fee under the condition "that each should receive a reserved seat in the new building for life, if pew assignments were sold."¹³ The land, now a parking lot, that was purchased was about one block north of Main Street on North Fourth Street.

In the January 1, 1850 congregational meeting, among other business matters handled, it was resolved to elect a pastor, with two men being asked to give test sermons.¹⁴

The man elected was Pastor Joh. Georg Friedrich Rentzsch, an independent Lutheran clergyman, who began his services in Watertown in September 1850.

After his arrival a congregational constitution was drafted and adopted. Also, a resolution was adopted that each congregation member (men) was to be assessed \$2.00 per year for the pastor's salary, to be paid in quarterly installments of 50 cents. A newly constructed frame church building was dedicated in early May 1851.¹⁵ Two months later the annual salary of the pastor was set at \$150.00 plus \$60.00 rental allowance. Financial problems soon plagued the congregation and when a treasurer, whose obligation it was to collect all fees, was sought for the next year, no one was available "because of a lack of time." Finally a man offered to accept the position, but under the condition that he not be obliged to collect the pastor's salary. He accepted the election after Pastor Rentzsch offered to collect his own salary.¹⁶

Rentzsch sought permission to establish six daughter congregations each within the radius of 15 miles from Watertown.¹⁷ There is no record to indicate whether this program ever materialized or not. With financial problems causing difficulties, Pastor Rentzsch was given a three week leave of absence to take a trip in order to collect funds for the church, of which he could keep 25% for expenses.¹⁸

In early 1854 a notice was published in the newly established German newspaper in Watertown, *Anzeiger*, that there was a vacancy in the Evangelical German Church, and that applications were being accepted. Whether Rentzsch indicated that he was leaving, or whether the council decided this, is not recorded. The latter could have been the case because the renewing of the pastor's contract was voted on annually at the time of expiration.

Some sort of trouble was brewing in the congregation in 1854 and details are weak. All of the founding officers of the Evangelical German Church left the church and organized another church body which today is St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran Congregation in Watertown. It appears that the Evangelical German congregation irritated the council by passing a resolution not acceptable to the councilmen. Apparently the council did not want to reelect Rentzsch and acted accordingly, but the congregation voted to reelect him.

Problems with the new German Methodist preacher in Watertown, the departure of the officers, and the financial situation may have been the cause for Rentzsch's request in June 1854 for permission to take another trip east to collect funds for an organ. This was granted. Rentzsch told the congregation that he would provide a substitute pastor.

Pastor H. Doerner of Pomroy, Ohio came as the substitute, and it eventually turned out that he was reelected by the Watertown congregation, and Rentzsch took over the vacancy in the Pomroy, Ohio Lutheran congregation. Doerner was promised a salary raise if and when he would increase the membership of the congregation. This took place, for in January 1856 it was announced that membership had reached 102 (men). In the early years of its existence the congregation had no instrument to lead it in congregational singing. The singing was led by a cantor (*Vorsaenger*) who would intone and introduce the hymns by singing them. In 1858 the congregation voted to spend up to \$300.00 for an organ. Soon after this meeting a man, Rudolph Haussener, who would be instrumental in developing an early music program, joined the congregation. It is unclear whether he was asked to be the music leader or whether it was the result of his request for permission to open a German school, using the church building for this purpose. When permission was granted the following conditions were stipulated:

1. he must lead the congregational singing in all the worship services;

2. he must help with the Sunday religious instruction;
3. he must pay \$3.00 per month for the first three months;
4. he is responsible for the control of the children, that they do not ruin or damage the church or its contents.

Nothing is reported in the church records about the school, because it was not a church function. Three months later Haussener reported that he did not have enough money to pay the rent, so added to the above conditions was a fifth – he was to take over the janitorial duties of the church in lieu of the rental fees.

The school must not have been successful in its continuation because within three years Haussener asked the congregation to pay him an annual salary of \$25.00 for performing the services agreed upon several years earlier.

The congregation still appeared to be unsettled, chiefly because of financial problems. Pastor Doerner left and was succeeded by a Reformed pastor who left after a little over two years, and started a Reformed church in Watertown. His successor was a Lutheran pastor who remained only one year.

The next pastor, another Lutheran, had an interesting background. He taught in Pastor Joh. Muehlhaeuser's parochial school in Milwaukee, attended the Episcopal seminary in Nashotah, WI, but left the seminary because he was not in agreement with some of their doctrines. He wanted so desperately to become a Wisconsin Synod pastor, making application for synod membership several times at conventions, but the applications were rejected, with no reason recorded in the minutes of the conventions. Finally the Lutheran congregation in Golden Lake, WI engaged him as its pastor, having had difficulty in getting someone to fill its vacancy. The Golden Lake congregation had been recently accepted into Wisconsin Synod membership, but their membership was canceled when the congregation refused to release Pastor Fack as its pastor. During Fack's tenure of five years in Watertown the Evangelical German congregation discussed the rebuilding and refurbishing of the church building. Different view points were argued, when suddenly in mid-May 1865 an unnamed voter made a motion that a new church be built, and this resolution was adopted 25 to 2. After the usual preliminaries and provisions for the construction of a new church were discussed, selected and implemented, and after the old church was moved away,¹⁹ a new brick church was built and was dedicated on Christmas Day, 1866. The cost was \$4,163.43. This building served the congregation until it moved to its new building at Clark and South Third Streets in 1960.

Of special historical interest from the early years of the congregation's existence is the establishment of a Ladies Aid before 1865, the formation of a mixed choir in 1869 under the direction of Mr. Emil C. Gaebler, a local music businessman, who also served as music instructor in the recently established Northwestern University in Watertown, and the acquisition of a custom built pipe organ in 1867, after the use of a melodeon (reed organ) for five years.

Phase II

The Years of Spiritual Weakness and Indifference

The congregation now seemed to settle into a period of indifference, especially in regard to the spiritual. Pastors were hired and released without much care about Scriptural standards, and the congregation's earlier practices. One wonders whether some of the pastors of this period were engaged because of good speaking voices or because of

desperation to fill a vacancy. The early requirement that a pastor had to be Lutheran or Reformed was not considered a requirement for the next 20 years. Eight pastors, some of questionable character, served the congregation. All served but short terms except one pastor who remained for eleven years. However, concern for worship services remained. The Sacrament of the Altar continued to be offered because one of the councilmen was elected annually to take care of the wine supply for Communion. The congregation was concerned about confirmation and confirmation instruction, and baptisms are recorded in the Church Book of the time. Like the Apostle Paul however, the congregation thought that they were doing God's will.

With this somewhat carefree attitude liberalism crept in. Seven widows or unwed women were given voting privileges – that is all that applied. Picnics, lotteries and a variety of games of chance were held as a way of acquiring funds to financially aid the congregation. Pastors were permitted to perform activities in the secular world which would not have been allowed by a conservative Lutheran or Reformed congregation, for example, sponsoring secular concerts, giving political speeches, speaking at anti-Christian events.

But the Lord was patient.

Phase III

Movement Toward, and Acceptance of True Lutheranism

As stated earlier, the conversion of the Apostle Paul to become a disciple of Christ was a sudden one. The manner in which this was accomplished by the Lord could be effected only with an individual. But not with a congregation. The change in the Evangelical German Congregation began with the election of Pastor Hermann Sterz of Green Bay, WI as pastor. Pastor Sterz was a member of the conservative Michigan Lutheran Synod, and was serving as supervisor in a children's home in Green Bay. It is with interest to see how he slowly moved the congregation towards pure Lutheranism. Christian diplomacy is evident.

Sterz arrived in the mid 1890's. His "contract" to serve the congregation, like those of previous pastors, was for a year. In the annual meeting of January 1, 1891 the congregation voted a change in the constitution. The paragraph which required an annual vote to retain or not retain a pastor was dropped.²⁰

Furthermore, up to this time the pastor was not a member of the church council nor did he attend the council meetings. Likewise he was not a member of the congregation nor did he attend the congregational meetings unless he had made a formal application for membership. Slowly Sterz became more and more involved in church matters and by 1897 attended every council meeting. Sterz's suggestions were accepted and adopted, such as the 50th anniversary celebration; the excavation under the church so that, among other things, a furnace could be installed; changes in the constitution, which are referred to in the minutes but not recorded. The suggestion of greatest importance was offered by him in 1909 when he proposed a name change, namely from Evangelical Protestant²¹ to Evangelical Lutheran. After considerable discussion concerning the advantages and disadvantages, the name change was adopted by the council in September 1909, and by the congregation in October 1909. One council member objected and left the congregation. After the name change was adopted, a second resolution was adopted that the congregation join no synod.

At the end of October 1909 a council member suggested that the complete name be

the Evangelical Lutheran St. Luke Congregation. This was voted on, adopted and recorded as such in the Jefferson Co. Register of Deeds Office.²²

By 1911 the movement toward true Lutheranism was noticed by other Lutherans, especially by the pastor and church council of St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Watertown. The latter invited the pastor and church council of St. Luke's Congregation to attend a joint meeting for the purpose of addressing the problem of releases and acceptances of members from one congregation to the other. The invitation was accepted and it was resolved that the general rule of the Synodical Conference²³ regarding releases and acceptances of members from sister congregations would take effect between the two congregations, which meant that members of either congregation would be accepted as members by the other only if they had received peaceful releases from the respective congregation.

Things moved along in a routine manner within St. Luke's congregation until 1917 when the congregation accepted the Wisconsin Synod's German hymnal to replace their currently used hymnals which were deteriorating and were out of print. In that same year St. Luke's Congregation joined the other Watertown area Lutheran congregations in a joint Reformation festival commemorating the 400th anniversary of the nailing of the 95 Theses on the Wittenberg University church door by Martin Luther. Again everything proceeded in routine and peaceful fashion until the Lord decided that Pastor Sterz had completed his work in the Lord's kingdom when on November 27, 1926 He called him home. Sterz had led St. Luke congregation to true Lutheranism as accepted and taught by the Synodical Conference. The congregation, however, did not officially join this organization as a member during his lifetime. That was left for a future pastor.

A major advance in the congregation took place under Sterz's successor, Pastor Paul Lorenz, when in 1927 the congregation voted to conduct both German and English services. At first services were conducted in both languages each Sunday, but in 1928 German and English services were conducted on alternate Sundays.

After Pastor Lorenz's resignation /retirement in 1941, Pastor Immanuel G. Uetzmann accepted the call to serve as St. Luke's shepherd. During Uetzmann's first year the constitution of the congregation was rewritten; it resolved to hold English services every Sunday, with an additional German Service on the first and third Sundays of the month; and the congregation voted to adopt *The Lutheran Hymnal* (1941). German services were slowly eliminated so that by 1959 all services were conducted in English.

In 1942 a third name change took place. The name of the congregation was changed from German Evangelical Lutheran St. Luke's Church to St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Watertown, Jefferson County, Wisconsin.

By the mid 1940's St. Luke's began to be serious about Christian education for its youth. Although the amount of financial support changed and varied over the next years, the congregation financially supported its students enrolled either in St. Mark's or St. John's parochial schools.

From 1951 on, discussion of two items prevailed in council and congregational meetings. One was the application of membership to the Wisconsin Synod; the other was the remodeling and enlarging of the church building. The latter took predominance. The former was tabled from meeting to meeting.

On January 12, 1955 a motion was made, seconded and adopted (25 to 9) to build a new church. Plans to sell the Fourth Street property because it was too small, to the selection of new property, to the engagement of an architect for the church's design, and to the construction itself took time. The new church was built at the corner of South Third



St. Luke's Lutheran Church and School after the 1999 addition.

and Clark Streets and was dedicated on May 23, 1960.

Phase IV

Development of a Christian Education Program

Sunday School was a concern of the congregation from the very early years but recorded evidence of its existence are meager. In the mid-20th century Sunday School was held between services, a practice that has continued to the present day. A major step was taken on April 5, 1966 when the congregation voted to join the Wisconsin Synod without dissenting votes. Five years later, 1971, Pastor Uetzmann announced his resignation/retirement. He had faithfully served the congregation for 30 years, during which time the new church was built, the congregation joined the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and the membership greatly increased. He was succeeded by Pastor Ervine Vomhof, a Christian education-minded pastor. His first achievement was to get the congregation to join the Lakeside Lutheran High School Federation in 1974.

During this time and in succeeding years elementary Christian education was a chief topic of discussion, especially in the church council meetings. After attempts to formulate its own school program, it became apparent that it would be of greater blessing and benefit to the congregation and its students if St. Luke's congregation could unite with Trinity Ev. Lutheran congregation in maintaining a joint parochial school. Individual and joint meetings were held with the result that an agreement to conduct a joint school was signed in 1981. Eventually it was pointed out that St. Luke's congregation was spending a huge amount of money toward the school and showing no equity in the building. After many meetings of boards, councils and congregations, a 50% ownership of the property was effected in 1988. Trinity-St. Luke's school attendance increased dramatically, so that by the end of the 20th century an additional building housing the upper grades was built by the St. Luke's Congregation, and Trinity purchased St. Luke's share of the building near Trinity Church, thus returning possession of this school building to the original owners. The dual campus has proved to be an excellent move on the

part of both congregations.

After Pastor Vomhof's resignation/retirement in 1991, Pastor Anthony Schultz accepted the position as pastor of St. Luke's Congregation. The work of the previous pastors having been established and well maintained, emphasis now moved toward evangelism and Bible study classes. This resulted in increased study of the Scriptures and in increased membership of the congregation.

Thus the second portion of the Apostle Paul's statement has also found its effect in St. Luke's congregation - *And His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain. Deo Gloria!*

ENDNOTES

1. The Acts of the Apostles 23:6
2. For example: Matthew 23:23; Luke 11: 37-44; 18:14.
3. Recorded in Book I page 4, the Register of Deeds office, Jefferson Co. Wisconsin.
4. The Acts of the Apostles 9
5. Chicago. Western Historical Company. 1879
6. Also in the January meeting the congregation voted to build a church building and a building committee was appointed. A founding congregation would never discuss a building program in its original congregational meeting. In another paragraph Georg Meyer was asked to continue functioning as the reader for the services and Henry Bertram was asked to continue as treasurer.
7. Pages 527-528.
8. Six on April 23, 1848; seven on October 8, 1848; eleven on June 3, 1849 and three on June 4, 1849. Also a marriage was performed on April 23, 1848.
9. Rud. H. Koss in his own published book in Milwaukee 1871 writes in essence that Pastor Asmus Didrichsen arrived in Milwaukee [no date] looking for a congregation. He first passed himself off as a Rationalist. Such a group had formed a congregation in Milwaukee and Didrichsen was engaged as its pastor. Since they had no building for meeting purposes, nor was there any prospects for such a building, Didrichsen, upon suggestion, went to newly founded Cedarburg where a congregation asked him to serve them at an annual salary of \$100. He moved back to Milwaukee but kept this congregation and walked there every other week to carry out his duties. In order to supplement his income, he would stop at houses along the way to see if there was someone to be baptized. This, by the way, was also a practice of early Wisconsin Synod preachers, especially the *Reiseprediger*. Later Didrichsen served other Evangelical or Reformed churches, after he had rejected a call to serve one of the strict [old] Lutheran congregations in Milwaukee.
10. In 1848 many educated men had to flee Germany because of their involvement in the revolution of that year. Some of these came to Wisconsin, but were unable to continue in their occupation or profession, so most took up farming with a majority settling in the east central part of the state. Mr. Winter settled in the Township of Farmington, Jefferson County. These men were called "Latin farmers " because they conversed in Latin, a practice observed by many professors and learned men both in Europe and America. Whether Mr. Winter was asked to substitute in pastoral acts because he had some theological training or because he was a highly educated man is not recorded.
11. Recorded on page 4 of Book I in the Register of Deeds office. It may be of interest

to see what the Incorporation Paper contained in the mid-19th century. Know all Men by these Presents that on the 26 day of March A.D. One Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty Nine due notice having been previously given a meeting was held by the Male Members of the Evangelical German Church in Watertown, County of Jefferson State of Wisconsin at the House of Wm. Wiggerhorn, this being the usual place of Meeting for the said Congregation, for the purpose of incorporating themselves and Electing trustees to take charge of the estate and property belonging thereto & to transact all affairs relative to the temporalities thereof, the Congregation having not yet a Minister, Nor any Elders or Church Wardens. Georg Meyer and Zacharias Thearing, both Members of said Church was Nominated by a Majority of the Members present to preside at such election. A vote by ballot was then taken and the following members of the church, Peter Seaburg, Carl M. Ducasse and Henry Bogel received a plurality of Votes were declared duly Elected Trustees for the said Evangelical German Church of Watertown by which name or title the above named trustees for their time of Service and their successors in office for ever hereafter Shall be Called and Known and by Vote "The Evangelical German Church of Watertown" was designated as the name by which said Congregation Should be known in Law.

12. In order to avoid nationality conflicts, the surveyor directed Germans as stated. The Irish were sent west of the river, where St. Bernard's Catholic Church was built. The Welsh he directed northwest where they built a chapel and where Welsh Road still exists. The English and eastern American citizens were directed south of Main street and mostly east of the river, although a few built west of the river. The Episcopal, Congregational and Universalist churches were established in this area. A group of Bohemians, mostly Roman Catholic, were directed to settle southeast of the river, but they built no church there. Churches built in the German area were, besides the Evangelical German Church, one Roman Catholic, one Moravian, one Reformed, three Lutheran, one German Methodist. A German Baptist church was built about four miles east of Watertown.
13. Pew assignments were purchased in many of the eastern U. S. English churches, and since these men were settlers from that part of the country, they knew whereof they spoke – unfamiliar of course to the German folk.
14. It was the practice at that time and for many years thereafter to have applicant pastors give a test sermon (*Probepredigt*), after which the congregation would vote either to accept or reject the applicant. This common practice was also in use in the Wisconsin Synod by various congregations and pastors, as recorded in minutes and letters of the day.
15. The Watertown CHRONICLE, the only newspaper in the village, of May 14, 1851 printed the following item: CONSECRATION. – The Evangelical German church in this Village, was consecrated on Sunday last, by its pastor, F. Rentzsch. – The members of the German Singing Society performed the choruses, and the whole service was solemn and impressive. – The building owned and occupied by the society, is eligibly situated on Fourth Street, is large and well arranged. The altar and pulpit are pieces of workmanship highly creditable to the society and the builder.
16. Collecting funds for a pastor's salary was a problem in America because in Germany pastors were paid by the state, and the only collections the churches in Germany took up were for the poor (*Armenkasse*) and for foreign missions.

17. Town of Ixonia; Town of Oconomowoc; on Jefferson Road; on both Settlement Streets; Richwood; and Boomhauer Settlement.
18. This was not an uncommon practice. Pastor Muehlhaeuser went east to collect funds for his Grace congregation in Milwaukee, and Pastor Bading of Watertown went to Europe to collect funds for the new seminary/college to be built in Watertown.
19. The old frame church was moved to Second and Cady Streets and converted into an auditorium, called Concordia Music Hall. It burned down in 1882 from sparks that flew onto the roof when two ice houses burned down across the street.
20. The Minutes read: The committee reports to a Christian congregation that it has studied the passage in Article II §7 which states that an annual preacher-vote must be taken, and has found that this passage is not in agreement with the Word of God; that it is most impractical and without purpose; and that it could not lead to a blessing for the congregation but rather easily to its detriment; therefore we recommend to this Christian congregation that the passage in §7 Article II, which requires that an annual preacher-vote be taken, be completely revoked. However, in regard to the call of a preacher at anytime [i.e. within the period of his tenure], the liberty to make a change remains preserved both on the part of the congregation and on the part of the preacher, if the conditions for such make it appear desirable. Regardless, the previously required three (3) months notice remains in effect.
21. For much of the time after about 1865 the congregation referred to itself as Evangelical Protestant, and not Evangelical German. However no official change was made and recorded in the Court House files.
22. Know All Men By These Presents: That the undersigned, Rev. H. Sterz, Ulrich Habegger, Henry F. Scholz, Robert Radtke, Emil Zeidler, Henry Lemmerhirt and Robert Zabel, and those who are or may become associated with them for the purpose herein specified have organized themselves into a religious society of the Lutheran church, located in the city of Watertown, County of Jefferson, and State of Wisconsin, for religious, charitable and educational purposes, which society shall be known and incorporated by the name of German Evangelical Lutheran St. Luke's Church. That such society and the incorporation connected therewith has heretofore been known and called "The Evangelical German Church of Watertown" and is hereby reorganized under Chapter 91 of the Revised Statutes of the State of Wisconsin of 1898.
23. The Synodical Conference was organized in 1870 and consisted of the following member synods: the Missouri, the Wisconsin, the Slovak, the Finnish and the small Norwegian. It was dissolved in the early 1960's because of alleged doctrinal differences.

from the editor ...

by Arnold O. Lehmann

Sincere thanks to Mr. Norbert Manthe for his well researched article on the ups and downs of archival activity in the Wisconsin Synod's 150 years of its existence. The same up and down attitude appears even today in regard to the preservation of matters historical of the synod and its component parts. Our archivists were and are often frustrated when congregations ask for information about their past for anniversary booklets, but nothing has been preserved. We urge more general interest in the maintenance of our archive, and we hope that the extension of archival rooms and area at our seminary is receiving serious consideration by WELS members.

Mr. Manthe was a former teacher as well as controller of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. For the past eight years he has been a part time archives volunteer in our WELS archives, sorting, filing, answering requests and performing many other duties. For this he deserves the heartiest thanks of WELS members. Without his work our archive contents would not be as organized as we find them today.

In the 1866 Proceedings the term *Schuelerrechte* is mentioned. This term will again be found in the second installment of the 1866 Proceedings and a brief account of its meaning and purpose will be given. Scholarship is a poor translation of the term.

Soon members of the Institute will be receiving a reminder for payment of dues for 2001 memberships. The board hopes that members respond promptly, and that members encourage others to join the Institute in order that we may properly maintain and improve our museum. Also included in the membership fees are the 2001 issues of the NEWSLETTER and the JOURNAL.

The editor wishes all of the readers God blessed holiday seasons, and a new year that will bring us all the continued blessings of our Lord and Savior.

Correspondence may be sent to the editor:

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The WELS Historical Institute was given formal approval by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) in convention in 1981 to organize for the purpose of collecting and preserving historical data and artifacts that are related to the various periods of Lutheranism in America, especially of the WELS. In recent years the synod took over the responsibility of maintaining the archives. The Institute maintains a museum and publishes a *JOURNAL* and *NEWSLETTER*. Membership is open. Fees are as follows, which include the subscription fees: Single: \$15.00; Family: \$20.00 (2 votes but only one publication issue); Congregation, Library, Organization: \$30.00; and Student: \$10.00. Fees may be sent to the WELS Historical Institute, 2929 N. Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, WI 53222.

The board members are: Dr. James Kiecker, president; Prof. Alan Siggelkow, vice president; Dr. Mark Braun, Pastor Curt Jahn, Pastor Mark Jeske, Clarence Miller, Naomi Plocher, and Charlotte Sampe.

from the editor . . .

by Arnold O. Lehmann

Sincere thanks to the Rev. Prof. Mark Braun of Wisconsin Lutheran College for his well researched article on the "split" that took place in mid-20th century between the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. As one can see from the excellent bibliography, Prof. Braun's research was extensive and inclusive, which is much appreciated. Part I of the 1864 *Proceedings* may be found in the October 1999 issue of the *Journal* (Vol. 17. No. 2). Back issues may be obtained by writing to the Synod's Archives at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

Just a word to remind our readers that the WELS Historical Institute will host the annual meeting of the Lutheran Historical Conference to be held on October 19-21, 2000. Further information may be obtained from Prof. Dr. James Kiecker at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee WI.

Again a reminder, that articles of historical interest and importance on American Lutheranism, especially of the WELS, are welcomed, and may be sent to the undersigned. Do not let matters of historical importance in your area be lost for future generations. Especially this year when the WELS celebrates its 150th anniversary of existence, such articles ought to appear or be made available. It is expected that they will be well written and well researched however.

Please send comments, articles or other written or photographic items of historical interest to:

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The WELS Historical Institute was given formal approval by the synod in convention some twelve years ago to organize for the purpose of collecting and preserving historical data and artifacts that were related to the various periods of the existence of the Wisconsin Synod. For this purpose the Institute took over the former synodical archives which are now to be found in our seminary's library building. These are available for researchers and students of history. A museum was also established when Salem Ev. Lutheran Church made its old church building available for that purpose. It is now known as Salem Landmark Church. The Institute itself receives no funds from the synod, although some funds are given to the archivist for part of the cost of preserving synodical data. Funds, especially for the museum, have been received from outside sources. The majority of the costs to maintain the work of the Institute comes from membership fees, and for this reason it is hoped that our membership can be increased in size. Membership fees are: \$15.00 for individuals; \$20.00 for a husband and wife; \$10.00 for a student; and \$30.00 for a congregation, school, library or corporation.

Board members are: Dr. James Kiecker, president; Prof. Alan Siggelkow, vice president; Dr. Erhard Opsahl, secretary; Pastor Curtis Jahn; Pastor Mark Jeske; Mr. Clarence Miller, Miss Charlotte Sampe; Dr. Thomas Ziebell. *Ex officio* — Prof. Martin Westerhaus and Mr. Barry Washburn, treasurer.

Journal and *NEWSLETTER* editorial staff are: Dr. Arnold O. Lehmann, editor; Mrs. Naomi Plocher, Prof. em. Armin W. Schuetze — staff.

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