

WELS Historical Institute

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Editor: John M. Brenner

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Cover picture  
Hans Koller Moussa

## The Man with a Plan A Biography of Hans Koller Moussa

by Paul D. Voss

Sometimes God chooses to bless the world and his Church with talented men who do not seek fame or popularity, but who offer great service in proclaiming the gospel. At times the names of these men are recorded in the annals of history; at other times they are only referenced here and there. In these latter cases it is really a shame that more is not written about them because their stories would offer much food for thought to future generations! Hans Koller Moussa is such a man. He has been described as one who possessed many gifts and used those gifts to the service and glory of his God. And yet, for whatever reason, very little has been written about him over the years.

Hans Koller Moussa was born on June 18, 1883, but his story begins much earlier and across the great body of water known as the Atlantic Ocean. The city is Jerusalem; the date is May 29, 1858. A baby boy is born of Arabian descent, and he is given the name Albert Moussa.<sup>1</sup> Albert became an orphan at an early age, when his parents both died of cholera on the same day,<sup>2</sup> and he was placed in a German orphanage in Jerusalem. During his time in the orphanage, Albert displayed a great variety of talents.

Albert moved to Germany to study medicine and served a stint as a medic in the Crimean War. When his tour of duty was completed, he was convinced that medicine was not his career of choice and enrolled in the theological seminary in Basel, Switzerland, at age sixteen. Four years later, in 1878, Albert was ordained in Germany and promptly sent over to America. His first call in America was to serve a church in Genoa, Michigan, a small town located in



*Hans Moussa age 3*

Livingston County, about forty miles southeast of Lansing. He married Walberga Bierschneider in Saginaw on December 28, 1881.

On the eighteenth day of June, 1883, God blessed Albert and Walberga with their first son, whom they named Hans Koller.<sup>3</sup> The family heritage and history were so important to Albert that he had a relative send water over from the Jordan River which he used at Hans' baptism.<sup>4</sup> Hans grew up to be a distinguished man and was described as "striking, with flashing dark eyes. There was the charismatic about him... Prof. Kowalke described him as an 'outstanding athlete.'"<sup>5</sup> Hans lived in Genoa for only a brief time. Soon after Hans' birth, Albert accepted a



*Moussa age 12 and younger brother Herbert Augustus*

call to serve in the Saginaw area. He moved his family one more time during Hans' childhood, when he took the call to serve the Lutheran congregation in Manistee, Michigan, a town located north of Ludington and along the coast of Lake Michigan.

Hans quickly began to show many of the same talents that his father possessed. With no real established school system set up in the area, Hans' elementary education was provided by his father. He was confirmed in 1884 at age eleven and continued his studies at Northwestern University in Watertown, Wisconsin, shortly thereafter.

During his time at Northwestern where he was known as "John,"<sup>7</sup> Moussa displayed his brilliance in the classroom and in writing for Northwestern's monthly paper, the *Black and Red*.<sup>8</sup> He also assisted Professor Hoyer with his duties as inspector until Hoyer's replacement could be found.<sup>9</sup> In those years the dean of students was called "inspector." Moussa was graduated in 1900 at just under the age of eighteen and is the youngest man ever to have been graduated from this institution.<sup>10</sup> Not wanting to delay his education, he enrolled at the Wisconsin Synod's seminary in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.

Moussa's talents in the classroom were visible at the seminary as well. In fact, he was on pace to be graduated before his twenty-first birthday. Not wanting to have him ordained before he reached twenty-one, the seminary assigned him to Northwestern University as an (undergraduate?) assistant to the inspector,<sup>11</sup> where he served with future seminary professor, John P. Meyer.

That arrangement did not last long. Northwestern had for a long time been having trouble with student misbehavior. Inspector Meyer resigned in 1903, and Moussa found himself in charge of the dormitory by himself at the ripe old age of nineteen, although he did have Dr. Ott's assistance.<sup>12</sup> J. P. Koehler places most of the blame on Moussa for Inspector Meyer's resignation, writing in his history of the Wisconsin Synod, "[Inspector Meyer] could not handle the situation, though he had an assistant in H. K. Moussa, probably because of the latter fact. Moussa was chummy with the boys, and when off duty maintained a passive attitude even though the riot would take place in front of his very door."<sup>13</sup>

Koehler's assessment of the situation, however, may not be entirely fair. Koehler could at times look down a bit on those who did not share his German descent. His personality and attitude toward student/faculty interaction was far different from Moussa's. One of Inspector Meyer's relatives said in an in-

terview that Moussa was highly thought of – both by his students and his parishioners. He speculated that Meyer and Moussa found themselves in a bad situation which was perhaps complicated by the fact that Moussa was not much older than the university students themselves. It is also possible that there was a conflict of disciplinary styles that confused the students, with Meyer having more of a stern style and Moussa being a bit more lax<sup>14</sup> or laid back.

Moussa's seminary career was completed in 1904 and he was ordained by his father in Manistee, Michigan. His first assignment was to serve in Winona, Minnesota, with Pastor Philip von Rohr, the president of the Wisconsin Synod. Von Rohr was the first of three synod presidents<sup>15</sup> with whom Moussa would serve. Moussa's ministry in Winona was not marked by much excitement, although he was given complete control of the congregation for a time while Pastor von Rohr vacationed in an attempt to restore his health. Yet, what an exciting first assignment it must have been to learn from one of the early presidents of the synod!

For whatever reason, Moussa decided that he was going to take a leave of absence from the ministry. Perhaps he wanted to continue his education while he was still young or maybe he was contemplating a change of careers. Whatever the case may be, in 1905 Moussa enrolled at the University of Chicago (founded 1891). There he studied Oriental languages under the president of that institution, William R. Harper. Moussa continued to display tremendous intellectual abilities. In fact, he impressed the faculty at the University of Chicago so much that it was reported President Harper hoped Moussa might follow him as president. President Harper "considered him one of his most brilliant students."<sup>16</sup>



Hans Moussa was not the only Northwestern<sup>17</sup> alumnus who attended the University of Chicago. He met up with two other alumni, Martin Sprengling and William Herrmann, and together they organized a Northwestern Club of Chicago in 1906 with some twenty other alumni as members.<sup>18</sup>

While at the University of Chicago, Moussa was appointed to take part in the American Oriental Expedition, one of his final requirements to receive a doctorate in Semitic languages. A tragic turn of events made him leave his studies behind.

On February 25, 1907, Albert Moussa, Hans' father, suddenly entered eternal rest. Albert Moussa had accepted a call from Manistee, Michigan, to St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Burlington, Wisconsin, just after Hans' ordination. The congregation in Burlington resolved to call Albert's son to succeed him. They extended the call on March 17, 1907,<sup>19</sup> and shortly thereafter Hans moved to begin his ministry there. As in his first parish, Moussa did not serve very long in Burlington – just over a year and a half. Even in his short time at St. John's, he began to display another one of his talents and interests, Christian education. Moussa is credited with expanding St. John's day school. During the short time he served there, St. John's decided to build an addition to the school at the back of the building and to add a second story to the original building.<sup>20</sup>

In the fall of 1908,<sup>21</sup> Moussa was extended a call to return for a third time to Northwestern College in Watertown. Once called student John Moussa, then Assistant Inspector<sup>22</sup> Moussa, Hans Koller was now known as Professor Moussa. He taught at Northwestern for two years. While in Watertown, he had the opportunity to use his God-given talent with languages<sup>23</sup> as a professor of ancient languages – in fact, he headed up the ancient languages department.<sup>24</sup> Besides teaching in the classroom, Moussa also served as athletic director<sup>25</sup> and coach of the football team. In his two years as football coach, he had a cumulative record of 3-6-0.

He was a popular professor,<sup>26</sup> but the classroom was not where Moussa felt most comfortable. His heart longed to be back in the parish and among the people. In 1910, he was called to serve as pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church in Jefferson, Wisconsin, after Pastor Vogel was called home to his Lord. Webber calls St. John's "one of the premier pulpits of the synod"<sup>27</sup> and "an influential congregation."<sup>28</sup> Moussa served at St. John's, Jefferson, longer than he did at any other parish. While there he once again showed a strong love for Christian education. The history of St. John's reports, "His 14 years of dedicated service to our church and school contributed to the growth of both of them. It became necessary to enlarge our school in 1912 by adding a second story and our teaching staff was increased to three in a few years."<sup>29</sup>

It was most likely at Jefferson that Moussa became known as an excellent preacher. F.R. Webber says that "he gained a wide reputation as an eloquent preacher," and he laments that more of Moussa's sermons were not saved.<sup>30</sup> He was such a terrific preacher that he was in high demand whenever a con-

gregation was celebrating a festival or needed a pastor for "noonday Lenten services,"<sup>31</sup> even traveling as far as St. Paul, St. Louis, and Cleveland.<sup>32</sup> Moussa was said to have had an "expressive countenance [with a] skill in the use of choice English and a strong voice of admirable modulation"<sup>33</sup> that helped make him the great preacher that he was. However, if he were asked, Moussa would say that good preaching always goes back to the use of Scripture. "As a master of the original languages of the Holy Scriptures, he was able to deliver sermons that were rare examples of exposition at its best."<sup>34</sup> In fact, Moussa's homiletical gifts also allowed him to preach on short notice without much preparation time.

So thoroughly familiar was he with the Bible and its teachings that a man who knew him declared recently that "H. K. Moussa was called upon now and then to preach before some important gathering on ten minutes' notice, and his impromptu sermons were as solid in thought and admirable in their choice of language as those upon which he had devoted weeks of study."<sup>35</sup>

By God's grace, in spite of all of his intellectual gifts and vast learning, Moussa continued to remain true to the doctrine of Scripture. He never gave up his belief in the verbal inspiration of Scripture and continued to teach all the truth of God's Word.

Moussa kept his connections to Northwestern College. J. P. Koehler had been the first president of Northwestern College's Alumni Society, a position he held for about thirty years. When his duties as seminary professor and writer began to demand more of his time, Koehler stepped down as Society president and the reigns were handed over to Rev. William Huth. Pastor Huth, however, served in that capacity only for a few years, and in 1912 Moussa was elected as the Alumni Society's third president. It was a position that Moussa would relinquish only because of his death.

H. K. Moussa held several other distinguished offices during his ministry. He was a member of the Board of Northwestern College<sup>36</sup> and a member of the Board of Bethesda Home in Watertown.<sup>37</sup> For a time<sup>38</sup> he was secretary for the Seminary Building Committee.<sup>39</sup> He also served as a member of the intersynodical committee which suggested that the Synodical Conference members merge into one large synod.<sup>40</sup> In 1915 he was asked to put his language skills to work and provide the English translation of Dr. Arthur Hörmann's book, *Soli Deo Gloria*, which celebrated Northwestern College's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Moussa was also nominated to fill a vacancy at the seminary, although he was never called to this position.

In 1914, the Wisconsin Synod established a new English language paper to be published alongside the German language *Gemeinde-Blatt*. Four men had been identified to be the chief writers and editors of this paper: Pastor John Jenny, Pastor John W.O. Brenner, Pastor Fred Graeber, and Pastor Hans K.

Moussa. This paper was called *The Northwestern Lutheran*, a nod to the confessional Northwestern Conference of the old Wisconsin Synod, and its purpose was "to bring to the Lutheran home articles both instructive and edifying, and to keep our people in touch with the current events in the religious world."<sup>41</sup> The first issue of *The Northwestern Lutheran* was published on January 7, 1914.

Every two weeks for the next fourteen years, Moussa's editorials in this paper would find their way into the homes of Wisconsin Synod members, into the hands of other confessional Lutherans, as well as to "men who were not Lutherans, but who subscribed for his paper for the sake of his brilliant essays."<sup>42</sup> Moussa was devoted to his *Northwestern Lutheran* writing, and in fact, none of the other three co-editors matched the sheer number of essays Moussa wrote during the time he served. His editorials covered a wide variety of topics including Christian education, Einstein's theory of the universe, prohibition, the switch from German to English in Lutheran congregations and schools, a supplement to the new hymnal of his day, World War I, as well as a number of other events and issues.

It was during his ministry at St. John's in Jefferson that Hans Koller Moussa found his bride. He had been encouraged to find a wife, just as his father was, because it did not leave a good impression when a pastor was single.<sup>43</sup> A young woman named Della Wetzel, a member of St. John's and one of Hans' 1913 confirmation students,<sup>44</sup> had adored Hans. If the stories are true, Della also lived up the street from Hans' Jefferson residence.<sup>45</sup> The two were married on June 16, 1921. It was a marriage described as "singularly happy"<sup>46</sup> and a "blissful union."<sup>47</sup> Della's love for Hans ran deep, and she was grateful for the care which he would later receive at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester. In fact, that experience led Della to enter medical school. She later became a nurse, and then a doctor, all after her husband's death. She hoped to find ways to prevent such unnecessary deaths from happening again.<sup>48</sup> After her husband's death, Della married Hans' cousin<sup>49</sup> from Jerusalem, Ibrahim George.<sup>50</sup> Hans and Della did not have any children.

The Lord blessed Moussa's fourteen years of ministry in Jefferson. The congregation grew from just over two hundred members to well over three hundred,<sup>51</sup> and the school also grew. In fact, the church grew so much that it was no longer possible to hold one service, and a second service was started.<sup>52</sup> St. John's also voted to add an assistant pastor to their ministry staff, calling Rev. H. Jungkuntz during Moussa's time there.

In 1923, the Wisconsin Synod met in convention at Bethesda Church, Milwaukee. One of the issues discussed at the convention was the increasing demands of the synod president. "The plea was made to synod either to relieve Pres. Gustav Bergemann of his duties in synod entirely so as to enable him to spend all of his time serving the congregation or, if synod insisted on having him as president, to engage him as its full time salaried official."<sup>53</sup> It was decided that Bergemann should continue his role as synod president and that St.



*Hans Koller Moussa with his dog, Caesar*

Peter's, Fond du Lac, WI (where Pastor Bergemann served), would call a second pastor to be the congregation's primary pastor. This call was extended to Pastor Hans Moussa. However, Moussa loved the congregation at Jefferson and did not want to leave. He returned the call the first time it was sent to him and the second. The congregation in Jefferson didn't want to see him leave either. They drew up and signed a petition, "pleading with [Moussa] to stay."<sup>54</sup> Then St. Peter's called him a third time to be their pastor. On this occasion the call was delivered by "Synod Officialdom,"<sup>55</sup> who requested that St. John's, Jefferson, give Pastor Moussa a release from his call since the issue was important to the synod's work at large.

Moussa began his ministry in Fond du Lac on July 2, 1924.<sup>56</sup> He was installed by Pastor Bergemann and Prof. John Meyer.<sup>57</sup> He was once again directly involved with the congregation's school and the Lord blessed his efforts. Just as it was necessary to build an addition in Jefferson, so also St. Peter's had to enlarge their school and faculty to provide for an increasing enrollment.<sup>58</sup>

In 1924 there was a peculiar turn of events. A young eighth grade girl, Viola Zimmerman, "interrupted her prepared [graduation] address to the assembly to plead 'Please give us another year of Christian education at this school!'"<sup>59</sup> Some have speculated that Pastor Bergemann had planted the seed of this idea, but he always denied it. The author wonders whether indeed it might have been Moussa himself who encouraged such a request, given his history and affinity for Christian education, whatever the source of this plea, it worked. St. Peter's Lutheran School added a ninth grade to its school in 1925.

That year saw an enrollment of 340 students at St. Peter's, and an additional twenty-two students in the ninth grade. Because of the popularity of this extra grade, a decision had to be made. On June 6, 1926, 388 people met and exuberantly voted to start a new Lutheran high school. This new school was named Winnebago Lutheran Academy. It was the second area Lutheran high school founded by members of the Wisconsin Synod.<sup>60</sup> In order to make this dream a reality, Moussa himself gave a substantial sum of money for financial support<sup>61</sup> and also served as a member of the faculty, teaching Latin class.

Moussa's ministry at St. Peter's, Fond du Lac, also included establishing the Men's Club of St. Peter's, an organization that exists to this day.

If Hans Koller Moussa were known for just one thing, it would most likely be the report which has come to be known simply as the "Moussa Report."<sup>62</sup> At the 1925 convention of the Wisconsin Synod, delegates had voted to form an "educational survey committee." The goal of this committee was to examine the increasing problem of school enrollment at the synodical schools. Dormitories were becoming ever more crowded, and the synod wanted some direction on what to do. The committee appointed included Moussa, Pastor Adolph Ackermann, Pastor John Plocher, and two laymen, Herman Aufderheide and Fred Wolff. Moussa served as secretary and Ackermann as chairman.<sup>63</sup>

After serious study of the schools, particularly the schools at Watertown and New Ulm, the committee published a report. The report was submitted to synodical officials, and was approved in 1926.<sup>64</sup> However, since this report contained some unique and far reaching proposals, the Synodical Council asked that the report be reprinted and sent "to all pastors, teachers, and others for discussion and study prior to the 1927 convention."<sup>65</sup> The committee complied, and included a letter along with the report. The committee's secretary, Hans Koller Moussa, signed the letter, and his name has been attached to the report ever since.

The Moussa Report<sup>66</sup> made the following five recommendations to the synod in convention.

- I. Every parish in our Synod should have a day school with the aim of providing eight years of instruction.
- II. Our college at Watertown and our Teachers' Seminary at New Ulm should **not** continue as preparatory schools.
- III. The Synod should authorize and subsidize the establishment of preparatory schools, or academies, in many different parts of its territory, preferably according to conferences.
- IV. The Teachers' Seminary should extend and vary its normal course to meet the needs of our day.
- V. Northwestern College, which now has reached the full standard of the American college, should likewise, as prudence dictates, offer college courses that would serve others than those who intend to prepare for the ministry. If the commercial department is retained, it should be open to those only who have finished a satisfactory preparatory course.

Moussa saw a need to change the way the synod's education system was currently operating. He recognized the problems at the colleges in New Ulm and Watertown. The dormitories were being used to house both college and high school students and the professors were being asked to teach on both levels. This was not ideal in Moussa's mind or the committee's. Rather, they

thought the campuses should have a single focus, the education of college students. They proposed that separate high schools should be established around the synod. Ideally, Moussa thought, there should be one such high school in each conference of the synod, which would cut down on the need for dormitories.<sup>67</sup> These schools, he argued, would serve two purposes: a preparatory system for the extended training of called workers and the added blessing of training solid lay workers.<sup>68</sup>

Moussa also used the committee to continue to push an idea he felt extremely worthwhile, the elementary education of the children in the synod. The committee proposed that every congregation should have its own elementary school in which they might teach children both secular subjects as well as instruct them in the Christian faith. The Moussa Report received a lot of attention and discussion during the convention. The first recommendation of the report that each congregation should have a Christian day school with eight years of instruction was unanimously adopted. The other proposals were turned over to a floor committee which offered four recommendations:

1. Make the proposed Dakota-Montana academy a synodical school subsidized and controlled exclusively by the synod.
2. Subsidize the Fond du Lac academy with \$1200 per year, contingent on synodical supervision.
3. Refer the "Report" to the Synodical Committee.
4. Instruct the Synodical Committee to create a visiting team to deal with other academies in the matter of synodical supervision and support.

Three of the four recommendations were accepted. The second was not. Many reasons have been offered for the failure of the second proposal. Some have thought that there was concern that the academy in Fond du Lac might not be a good source for future called workers. Others have suggested that there was concern about current synodical debt. Whatever the case may be, Winnebago did not receive funding from the synod and was left to support itself.

As proposed, Northwestern Lutheran Academy was established the next year in Mobridge, South Dakota, in the Dakota-Montana District. Perhaps the Moussa Report was meeting with more success than some thought it might! Could this new academy be the beginning of a district-by-district ministerial education program? The future may have looked bright for a time, but not for long. In 1932 a proposal was offered to close the academy. One can only wonder how Moussa would have reacted if he had still been alive! This proposal was not accepted at the time. NLA was not closed by the synod until 1979. Its faculty and many of its students moved to Prairie du Chien to become part of Martin Luther Preparatory School when New Ulm's Martin Luther Academy was transferred to the newly purchased campus in Western Wisconsin.

The Great Depression began only two years after the 1927 convention

adopted the three resolutions in response to the Moussa Plan. Struggling to come up with cash, the Wisconsin Synod had to forgo the idea of establishing a new preparatory school in each conference. The task of providing Christian high school education would eventually fall on the individual conferences and local organizations. The inevitable result was that the schools were not preparatory schools as Moussa's committee intended, but rather high schools focused on training lay individuals for Christian lives in secular fields, with some future called ministers as a byproduct. More area Lutheran high schools would be established in the coming decades, but the original intention of the Moussa Report still to this day remains "the great might-have been."<sup>69</sup>

One wonders how much this gifted man could have accomplished if he had been given a long life, but that was not God's plan. Moussa was "a sick man for a long time"<sup>70</sup> and "had for some years previous to his coming to Fond du Lac been suffering with a stomach ailment which, however, until now had not appeared to be alarming."<sup>71</sup> He was encouraged by his doctors to visit the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. Before he left he wrote a letter to his fellow co-editors of *The Northwestern Lutheran*, apologizing for his lack of contributions. "Am sorry I must again beg your indulgence and ask for patience. My health is not what it should be. Have to go to Rochester. Operation very probably. Perhaps I can make up when I am well again."<sup>72</sup> Moussa left Fond du Lac for Rochester on Sunday, April 15, 1928. He would not return alive.

He was placed on the surgery table on Saturday, April 21. The surgery was performed by Dr. Balfour, a doctor described as being "world famous for the surgery necessitated by its case."<sup>73</sup> Hans came out of the surgery alive and the operation was called a success. However, five days later the doctors began to notice that complications were setting in. "The sickness had spread so far, that a recovery was not to be thought of anymore."<sup>74</sup> His closest family was called to his bedside,<sup>75</sup> and in their presence Hans proclaimed an everlasting trust in Jesus Christ.<sup>76</sup> Shortly thereafter, on April 27, 1928, the loving Savior sent his angels to bring Hans Koller Moussa's soul to everlasting rest. He was forty-four years, ten months, and nine days old. His death sent shockwaves through the synod and many mourned the death of this extremely talented pastor.

Various reports can be found giving different reasons for Moussa's surgery and his resulting death. Some have said that he suffered from stomach ulcers,<sup>77</sup> while others said that he had stomach cancer.<sup>78</sup> But neither of these were the real cause. His passing was due to a burst appendix.<sup>79</sup>

On Sunday, April 29, Moussa's family brought his body by train to Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, where the Zacherl motor hearse began the final leg of Moussa's return. The visitation was held at the Moussa residence in Fond du Lac and the funeral service was conducted on Tuesday, the first of May.<sup>80</sup> If there is any question regarding how Hans was thought of by the parishioners he served, the communities he served in, or his peers in the ministry, one would only need to look at his funeral service, which was very well attended.<sup>81</sup> Two of his colleagues in the ministry, Pastor John W.O. Brenner and Prof. John

P. Meyer, conducted the funeral. Meyer preached the German sermon. Brenner preached the English. Pastor Bergemann shared a devotion with the family before the service. Pastor August Bendler conducted the graveside service. Hans Moussa's body was buried in the family plot in Burlington, Wisconsin.

Hans Koller Moussa spent his life working to advance God's kingdom through the proclamation of the gospel and the training of the next generation of Christian men and women. He never sought public recognition but was loved by those he served and by those he came in contact with. The only prize and recognition he sought was the everlasting prize and recognition that was his through his Savior. In the end, he was given that crown that never withers or fades away, the Crown of Righteousness.

### Endnotes

1. According to family tradition, a Moussa ancestor was one of Jesus' disciples. The family has a very long line of pastors both in the Lutheran and Greek Orthodox Church. Gayle Moussa, letter to author, 05 December, 2009.
2. James P. Schaefer, "Hans Koller Moussa," *Northwestern Lutheran*. May 15, 1989. 199.
3. Hans' middle name has seen some variations over the years, particularly the two spellings: Koller and Kollar. The most reliable records, including Moussa's obituary in *The Northwestern Lutheran*, have his middle name spelled Koller.
4. Gayle Moussa letter, 5 December 2009.
5. James P. Schaefer, "Hans Koller Moussa," *Northwestern Lutheran*, May 1989. Moussa seemed to love two sports above any other, football and golf, at a time when golf had not yet reached a high level of popularity.
6. Webber, F.R. *A History of Preaching in Britain and America*, Vol. III (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1957), 589.
7. Kiessling, Elmer Carl, *Centennial Memoir: Northwestern College Alumni Society 1879-1979* (Milwaukee: Northwestern College Alumni Society, 1979), 62.
8. *Ibid.*, 23.
9. Professor Hoyer's health was not its best, but he continued as Inspector until his replacement was called. Moussa and Herman Frank assisted during this time. Kowalke, E. E. *Centennial Story: Northwestern College, 1865-1965* (Watertown, WI: Northwestern College, 1965), 134.
10. Webber, 589.
11. The exact date cannot be determined because the reports are conflicting and some don't mention the date at all. There are two possibilities: 1) He was graduated from the seminary in 1903 and was at NWU for one year after that, or 2) he was assigned to the University mid-seminary studies

- and returned. He is photographed with the graduating class of 1904 and was at Northwestern with Inspector Meyer, who resigned in 1903. What can be said for sure is that Moussa accepted the call to Northwestern University as Assistant Inspector because he was not yet "old enough" to be ordained.
12. Koehler, John Philipp. *The History of the Wisconsin Synod* (St. Cloud: Sentinel Publishing Co., 1981), 226.
  13. Koehler, 226.
  14. John Meyer, interview with the author, November 25, 2009.
  15. Hans Moussa served with Pres. von Rohr in Winona, MN; with Pres. Gustav Bergemann in Fond du Lac, WI; and with Pastor John W.O. Brenner as part of the editorial committee of *The Northwestern Lutheran*. Brenner was elected president of the Wisconsin Synod after Moussa's death.
  16. Webber, 583.
  17. At this time, Northwestern University was not just limited to students preparing for the ministry. It was a general liberal arts university, with a curriculum for those who desire to continue ministerial education, much like Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minnesota, today.
  18. Kiessling, 56.
  19. *A History of St. John's Lutheran Church*. Burlington, WI: St. John's Lutheran Church, 8.
  20. *Ibid.*, 8.
  21. *Ibid.* 8.
  22. Today we might call him "Tutor Moussa."
  23. Hans had been richly blessed by God in this area. Apparently he had a working knowledge of some fourteen different languages!
  24. "Rev. H. Koller Moussa, Lutheran Pastor, Dies at Rochester Hospital," *Fond du Lac Commonwealth-Reporter*, April 28, 1928, Obituaries.
  25. This office seems to be more "unofficial" as there technically was no called athletic director until much later.
  26. Webber, 589.
  27. Schaefer, "Hans Koller Moussa."
  28. Webber, 590.
  29. *125 Years for Ev. Lutheran Church of St. John*. (Jefferson, WI: St. John's Lutheran Church, 1976.)
  30. Two of his early sermons, from his time at the seminary, can be found in the WLS archives. A few others can be found in *The Northwestern Lutheran*.
  31. Webber, 590.
  32. "Rev. Hans Koller Moussa Former Pastor Dead," *Jefferson Banner*, 3 May, 1928.
  33. Webber, 591.
  34. *Ibid.* 591
  35. *Ibid.* 591.

36. Pastor F. Graeber, "Pastor Hans Koller Moussa," *The Northwestern Lutheran*, 13 May 1928, 146.
37. "Rev. Hans Koller Moussa Former Pastor Dead," *Jefferson Banner*, 3 May, 1928.
38. Immanuel Frey mentions that W. Bensemann replaced Pastor H. K. Moussa, who had originally been appointed. I was neither able to track down the date when Bensemann began responsibilities on this committee nor the reason why Moussa no longer served. It is possible that Bensemann began serving after Moussa's death (just before ground breaking in Mequon), or that Moussa relinquished his responsibility due to ever-increasing demands of schedule. Immanuel P. Frey, "Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary 1863-1963." *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* vol 60 #3 (July 1963), 22.
39. *Jefferson Banner*, 3 May, 1928.
40. Koehler, 241.
41. James P. Schaefer, "TNL's 75th Anniversary," *The Northwestern Lutheran*, 1 January 1989
42. Webber, 590.
43. Gayle Moussa letter, 5 December 2009.
44. C.C. Frohmader, letter to Rev. James P. Schaefer, 30 July 1989.
45. Gayle Moussa letter, 5 December 2009.
46. *The Northwestern Lutheran*, May 13, 1928, 146.
47. *Jefferson Banner*, 3 May, 1928.
48. Family Tree Maker, "Della I Wetzell," <http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/m/o/u/Gayle-Moussa/WEBSITE-0001/UHP-0015.html>.
49. Gayle Moussa, interview with the author, 2 December, 2009.
50. *Ibid.*
51. *100th Anniversary of St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church*. Jefferson, WI: St. John's Lutheran Church, 1951.
52. *Ibid.*
53. *A History of St. Peter's Lutheran Church*. (Fond du Lac, WI: St. Peter's Lutheran Church).
54. C.C. Frohmader, letter, 30 July 1989.
55. *Ibid.*
56. "Rev. H. Koller Moussa, Lutheran Pastor, Dies at Rochester Hospital," *Fond du Lac Commonwealth-Reporter*, 28 April 1928.
57. It does not appear that there was any bad blood between John Meyer and Hans Moussa from the old Northwestern days, with the former participating in both Moussa's installation here as well as his funeral in a few years.
58. Wilde, Pastor Phil et al. *Northward in Christ: The History of the Northern Wisconsin District*. (WELS Northern Wisconsin District, 2000).
59. Pastor Paul S. Waldschmidt, "Winnebago Lutheran Academy 1925-2000:



- 75 Years of God's Grace," 2.
60. The first area Lutheran high school for Wisconsin Synod members was founded in 1903 in Milwaukee as a joint project of individuals and congregations of the Wisconsin and Missouri synods.
  61. *Ibid*, 9.
  62. It has also been sometimes referred to as "The Moussa Plan", hence the title of this article.
  63. Fredrich, Edward C. *The Wisconsin Synod Lutherans*. (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1992), 151.
  64. Gayle Moussa letter, 5 December 2009.
  65. Fredrich, 151.
  66. The Moussa report, and the floor committee's resulting measures, can be found in the 1927 Synodical Proceedings on pages 26 and following. These are also included in the appendix.
  67. One can only wonder if Moussa's experience as Assistant Inspector led to his distrust of the dormitory system.
  68. Waldschmidt, 6.
  69. Fredrich, 153.
  70. *Jefferson Banner*, 3 May 1928.
  71. *A History of St. Peter's Lutheran Church*.
  72. *The Northwestern Lutheran*, 13 May 1928, 145.
  73. *Jefferson Banner*, 3 May, 1928.
  74. Armin Engel, "Hans Koller Moussa," trans. Paul Voss (Mequon, WI: WLS Archive).
  75. Engel, "Hans Koller Moussa."
  76. *Jefferson Banner*, 3 May, 1928.
  77. *Fond du Lac Commonwealth-Reporter*, 28 April 1928.
  78. *A History of St. Peter's Lutheran Church*.
  79. Gayle Moussa, interview with the author, 2 December 2009.
  80. *Fond du Lac Commonwealth-Reporter*, 28 April 1928.
  81. Engel, "Hans Koller Moussa."

## Appendix – The Moussa Report<sup>1</sup>

### 6. REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, MADE TO THE SYNODICAL COMMITTEE, OCTOBER 26, 1926, MILWAUKEE

#### A. Introductory Letter

Fond du Lac, Wis., February 16, 1927.

Dear Brethren:

When the report which is introduced by these lines was first submitted to the Synodical Committee on October 26, 1926, it was in fulfillment of an assignment made by resolution of the Joint Synod at its regular sessions at Milwaukee, August, 1925. A committee had been appointed, Pastor A. Ackermann, chairman (the other members are Pastor J. Plocher, St. Paul; Mr. Herman Aufderheide, New Ulm; Mr. Fred H. Wolff, Jefferson, and the undersigned, secretary), to consider the needs and requirements of the Joint Synod for its schools in the future with the purpose of avoiding haphazard planning which would surely lead to useless expense and to failure to achieve the ends sought. This committee had meetings at Mankato and at Milwaukee and prepared the following report.

The Synodical Committee heard the report and discussed it at great length and finally directed Chairman Ackermann to have it prepared for print so that it might be sent to every pastor and teacher in the Synod and to all others who are interested. It is hoped that it will be given serious thought by all and that it will be thoroughly discussed at conferences – delegate conferences were especially mentioned.

With such thorough preparation it should be possible to agree to some course of action at the coming sessions of the Joint Synod.

Yours sincerely,  
H. KOLLER MOUSSA,  
Secretary.

Note: All suggestions from individuals and conferences should be forwarded to the chairman of this committee for the purpose of preparing a complete report to present to the next meeting of the Synodical Committee. Such suggestions should be forwarded before the end of April, 1927.

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1. The Moussa Report can be found in the *1927 Proceedings of the Wisconsin Synod*, under the title "Report of the Special Committee on Education, Made to the Synodical Committee, October 26, 1926, Milwaukee," pages 26 and following.

## B. Committee Report

The educational problem of the Joint Synod is now acute because New Ulm and Watertown have reached their capacity in enrollment, in fact have gone beyond it. The question is: Shall they be allowed to grow still further according to the plans and policies in force heretofore? That would mean that both institutions would soon have in excess of 300 students and if they are to serve the needs of the whole Synod they should grow to two and three times that number in the near future, requiring a concentration of synodical expenditures for buildings and upkeep at these two places.

An examination of the educational needs of our Synod today, together with a consideration of the service it is possible to render to the eight districts with our three preparatory schools, Watertown, New Ulm and Saginaw, quickly discloses the fact that parents living at some distance are loath to send their children so far away to school; this is evident from the facts at hand. From one-half to two-thirds of the preparatory enrollment at New Ulm comes from its surrounding territory; a similar state of affairs obtains at Watertown, though to a lesser degree; at Saginaw one would not expect it to be otherwise.

If Christian intermediate schools, whether intended to prepare for the ministry or not, are so little available to the greater part of Synod's congregations, then our well-meant efforts to establish primary schools and eventually colleges for our people will come to little good, because with school attendance compulsory to the end of the high school age much of the work done in our common schools, where we are fortunate enough to have them, is later undone and the interest and concern for these common schools is sure to decline. Furthermore, if we were able to stock our congregations with members who have attended our own academies, we could be sure of more understanding and zeal in behalf of all of our schools.

Though there are many other considerations that should move us in the same direction, your committee feels that these should suffice to make the following recommendations of such significance that a discussion of their contents should lead to well-considered action at our next Joint Synod meeting.

### Recommendations

- I. Every parish in our Synod should have a day school with the aim of providing eight years of instruction.
- II. Our college at Watertown and our Teachers' Seminary at New Ulm should **not** continue as preparatory schools.
- III. The Synod should authorize and subsidize the establishment of preparatory schools, or academies, in many different parts of its territory, preferably according to conferences.
- IV. The Teachers' Seminary should extend and vary its normal course to meet the needs of our day.

- V. Northwestern College, which now has reached the full standard of the American college, should likewise, as prudence dictates, offer college courses that would serve others than those who intend to prepare for the ministry. If the commercial department is retained, it should be open to those only who have finished satisfactory preparatory courses.

### Notes to the Recommendations

To I. Eight years of sound instruction, irrespective of the variations of system and the innovations current in other schools, should find common school pupils confirmed and ready for academic training. The arbitrary rearrangement of grade and high school years, now in vogue in other systems, does much to make our parish schools appear misfit, as indeed they can never and should never have the sole aim of conforming to other schools; but if we have a complete system of our own, all of our youth will be well served and need not fear comparison with others.

To II. Watertown and New Ulm, now two-thirds or more preparatory schools, if freed for their real tasks by the removal of the preparatory departments, will escape many disabilities and gain definite advantages. 1. They will escape the insoluble problem of administering dormitory discipline for a group that varies eight years and more in age. 2. They will escape the necessity of assuming responsibility for children that need much parental supervision yet are not at home except at long intervals. 3. The faculty members will escape the need of expending their energy on large classes, often too large by any standard, to the detriment of their more exacting duties with higher classes. 4. They will escape the task of culling and weeding out the large classes, which is an office that should be performed elsewhere if these higher schools are not to be charged, undeservingly, with severity and wastefulness. Incidentally, the Synod assumes the heavy burden of providing facilities for preparatory students scarcely 25 percent of which fulfill its expectations. 4. They will gain the opportunity to develop the more advanced studies for the benefit of the school and of the church. That alone would make a wider choice of studies possible.

To III. The machinery for administering academies could be found in different ways. In order to stimulate thought and discussion this report suggests three: 1. The congregations of one or more conferences are pledged to certain sums with which the institution is financed. The number of communicants might serve as a basis for computing the quota of each. The congregations elect a specified number of delegates which in turn elect the Board of Directors to manage the institution. All interested are kept informed by frequent oral and printed reports. The school should be located in populous Lutheran territory. It should be begun a class at a time and have ample and competent instructors; local or neighboring pastors could take over a few courses. It will not be, to begin with, a boarding school. Out-of-town students should be

housed with Christian families under supervision. Students should be encouraged to go home over week-ends as much as possible. For the first a building for the school could be rented; later on it would acquire its own property. A committee of the Joint Synod should exercise supervision over the course of studies so that graduates of the Academies would be suitable material for the higher schools. The directors of the two colleges should be ex-officio members of such a committee. All students should pay tuition fees; boards of directors could always exercise discretion in individual cases so that this would not prove a hardship on any family. When and if the academy satisfies the requirements of the Synod's advisory committee, it should receive a subsidy from the general treasury; an equitable way would be for Synod to pay 25 per cent, or some other amount, toward the salary of every teacher employed exclusively in the academy; for teachers who are chiefly busy in commercial branches, if there be such, no subsidy should be expected. A salary scale, as far as the Synod is concerned, should be agreed upon; if the local directors exceed such standard in any case, it would be their own concern but they could not expect more than the standard scale synodical subsidy. 2. A second method of organizing an academy would tally with the above in every particular, excepting that instead of the congregation as a whole pledging support, each congregation would organize a branch association in which membership would be voluntary, conditioned upon certain fees.

These branches would then elect delegates to select their governing body. The one great advantage of this system is that the academy would be managed entirely by its friends. 3. When these recommendations were discussed on the floor of the Synodical Committee a third method of organization was warmly urged by a number of speakers in preference to the preceding two methods suggested by the committee. It was urged that: A. Synod cannot allow too great a measure of independence to such schools, for that would invited dangerous departure from strict Lutheran, or at least from sound academic standards, as experience seems to have proven in some cases. The Synod should retain absolute control of all such intermediate schools. B. Because the schools should be placed according to need and not necessarily according to the willingness of certain localities to provide for their upkeep, Synod should not merely subsidize schools that are started by local enterprise, but it should first of all determine where such schools are most needed and then it should organize them and proceed to finance them from the general funds. Thus the schools most needed would be the first to be begun and in the course of time all districts would be served. C. Some speakers, agreeing to the foregoing two points, were of the opinion that even under this plan of complete synodical responsibility, local support could be stimulated to such an extent that Synod would not be overburdened by the expenses.

Note: The question of providing dormitory facilities at such schools was quite important in the minds of some. As the reader will have noted, this report does not contemplate the establishment of dormitories – certainly not on

the plan to which we are accustomed. But there would be a way to an effective compromise if students at any such locality would, as the needs of the case require, club together in boarding clubs, for which a house could be rented. Synod might provide and pay for the services of a responsible matron and might even buy the most necessary equipment, all other expenses to be prorated by the students who use the club.

Note: The financial burden of carrying a number of intermediate schools instead of building up our existing schools in the old way, would not be prohibitive. The per capita cost to the Synod for the students enrolled would be lower, we are sure. Railroad fares alone from distant points, as now required, converted into tuition, would materially reduce costs to the Synod without increasing costs to the parents of students.

To IV. Our schools of every grade can prosper only if they are manned by devoted, well-trained, Christian men and women. It should be our aim to offer our students facilities to prepare themselves for their calling as thoroughly and as adequately as possible. To this end it is suggested: 1. To establish a special course for women, extending over two years, to prepare them as primary teachers, for it is in this department that they are chiefly employed. They should, in consequence, be release from courses that are of value to men only, such as those for church organists, choir leaders, and others. 2. To extend the course for all men to three years. 3. To provide at some time in the future a fourth year for normal students so they can take a valid degree as Bachelors of Education and become available as teachers and principals of academies.

New Ulm stands in urgent need of an additional building and that need should be filled. But once having that it could carry out the program outlined for many years without further expansion.

To V. The building at Watertown would serve for purely college purposes for many years without the addition of anything excepting an adequate library building, which the school should have in any event. The development of its curricula would take care of itself, though it is apparent that it could offer courses in science and in letters that would qualify graduates to teach in our academies without putting Synod to expense.

### In Conclusion

The Saginaw institution, which is at present a synodical preparatory school, could continue as such. Eventually it could be developed into a college and the district could provide preparatory training in the fashion outlined above.

The possibility of co-operating with sister synods in the academy undertaking suggests itself, but such co-operation would have to be unofficial, as long as our Synod exercises supervision and grants subsidies. Some arrangement could probably be made to meet local conditions in every case.

– The Committee

Recommendation No. 1 was adopted unanimously, every parish in our Synod should have a Christian day school with the aim of providing eight years of instruction. The other recommendations were referred to a special committee, which submitted the following resolutions: –

1. The Academy to be established in the Dakota-Montana District is to be a synodical institution supported and supervised by Synod in every respect.
2. The Academy in Fond du Lac is to be supported (after being placed under supervision of Synod) temporarily by an annual allowance of \$1200.00.
3. To discontinue discussion of the Report of the Educational Committee and to refer further proceedings to the General Synodical Committee.
4. To instruct the Synodical Committee to appoint a sub-committee which is to deal with schools of this character in regard to synodical supervision and support.

Recommendations Nos. 1, 3 and 4 were accepted; No. 2 was tabled.

## Henry Melchior Mühlberg (1711 – 1787) The 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of his Birth

by James F. Korthals

It was a less than auspicious beginning. The sea voyage from England had been long and stormy. The last leg of the trip along the eastern coast of America had been brutal, leaving passengers horrendously seasick. Upon arrival in Philadelphia the energetic 31-year old pastor found Lutheran congregations in chaos. Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, in the absence of a resident Lutheran pastor, was working to gather all German-speaking Christians into a "Congregation of God in the Spirit," regardless of any former denominational affiliation. This was Henry (Heinrich) Melchior Mühlberg's introduction to ministry in colonial America. In spite of these difficulties Mühlberg prevailed. Today he is often called "the Father of American Lutheranism."

On September 6, 1711, at Einbeck in the German electorate of Hanover, Mühlberg was born into the pious family of a shoemaker who was active in the local Lutheran church. Young Henry attended the local classical school (1718 – 1723) and received a firm grounding in Latin. When his father died, he was forced to drop out of school and for nine years he spent his time as a day laborer. He studied privately with a local pastor for a time in 1732. The pastor also taught him to play the organ, which began a lifelong love of music. He became an assistant teacher in a neighboring village and continued his private study. Later, well-connected family friends, recognizing his talents, sent him to the University of Göttingen and then to the University of Halle, where he imbibed the theological legacy of the Lutheran pietist, August Hermann Franke (1663-1727).

At Halle he continued his studies in languages and music, helped found an orphanage, and taught. Although he considered going to India as a missionary, Mühlberg was ordained in 1735 and served as a deacon and second pastor at Großhennerdorf, Saxony, near the estate of Count Nikolaus von Zinzendorf. It was in September 1741, while on a visit to Halle, that Mühlberg learned of three forlorn Lutheran congregations that had appealed to Halle for help.<sup>1</sup> The three Pennsylvania congregations (Philadelphia, New Hanover, and Providence) had no church buildings and no pastors. Gotthilf August Franke (1696-1769), Mühlberg's former instructor and now president of Halle, convinced him that his calling lay in America. Starting his journey on December 17, Mühlberg arrived in London on April 17. After spending time with Pastor Frederick Ziegenhagen,<sup>2</sup> he set sail for America on June 13, 1742. The voyage lasted 102 days, arriving at Charleston, South Carolina on September 23.

As previously mentioned, the voyage to Charleston and then to Philadel-

phia took place amid one Atlantic storm after another. A different storm, however, awaited Mühlenberg upon his arrival in Philadelphia on November 25, 1742. The Philadelphia congregation, which originally requested a pastor from Halle, had recently split. Some of its members attached themselves to the recently arrived Count von Zinzendorf (1700-1760), who claimed a Lutheran background but now espoused beliefs that were Moravian. Meanwhile some had joined Mühlenberg's other congregation at Providence, which was now led by the Reverend Valentine Kraft, who had been relieved of his church position in Germany. His third congregation was served by an alcoholic charlatan known only as "Schmed."

Rather than confront these usurpers directly, Mühlenberg relied on his superior authority, for he had been sent by the king of England (ruler in the German electorate of Hanover as well) and was the official missionary of Halle to fill the congregations' long-standing request for help. Mühlenberg presented his credentials to the followers of Kraft and Schmed and assumed authority over these congregations. Zinzendorf, however, was a more difficult adversary. He was a man of social and religious stature who led a blameless life of piety and self-sacrifice and was an ordained minister. His goal of uniting Christians of all denominations under the ecumenical Moravian umbrella, however, was opposed by Mühlenberg, whose allegiance was to the Lutheran Church of his homeland. After a confrontation before the Philadelphia congregation in which Mühlenberg calmly held his ground, even the mighty Zinzendorf had to back down in deference to Mühlenberg's credentials and his official license to serve the Pennsylvania congregations. Early in the new year Zinzendorf returned to Europe.

Blessed with incredible tact, patient firmness, and the stamina to travel, Mühlenberg founded new churches and brought old congregations together. To rid the church of false and scandalous ministers, he kept up a steady correspondence with his patrons at Halle, focusing their attention on the colonies. His reports back to the pietist center in Halle brought helpers and funds, as many calls for ministers and schoolmasters continued to come in. He arbitrated church quarrels when tempers flared and he restored order to what had been a messy, complicated religious situation.

Throughout his ministry in America this "Father of American Lutheranism" was something of a paradox. Although Mühlenberg had been trained at Halle, he was different from traditional pietists. The emphasis which he placed on a personal and practical religion which tended to minimize doctrine was in keeping with Pietism. Yet he stressed infant baptism and catechetical instruction which were orthodox in orientation. Furthermore, when Mühlenberg was ordained in Germany, he had subscribed to the Formula of Concord. Once again this demonstrated an orthodox Lutheran leaning. In addition, he perpetuated traditional Lutheran worship. He observed the church year and its festivals. He used the historic gospel and epistle lessons and used the Lutheran rites of baptism and confirmation. In the preparation section of the

communion service he employed confession and absolution. Yet in spite of these positive characteristics, he tended toward unionism as he ministered in America.

He preached widely in German, English, and Dutch as the circumstances demanded, adapting the content and style of his preaching to the preferences of his audiences. At the same time Mühlenberg avoided all doctrinal controversies which might drive some away, instead focusing on teachings which were common to all factions. He catechized the unchurched and encouraged congregations to erect church buildings for regular worship.

Although he could have returned to Europe after a three-year term in the colonies, Mühlenberg became a permanent resident of America. It did not hurt his standing that in 1745 he married Anna Marie Weiser, the pious daughter of Johann Conrad Weiser, the commissioner of Indians affairs for Pennsylvania. They had eleven children, all of whom survived to occupy prominent positions in the church and society.

Henry Melchior Mühlenberg's motto was "*Ecclesia Plantanda*" ("The Church must be Planted"). Recognizing the need for an organized, efficient outreach effort on the American scene, his efforts took another step forward in 1748 when six Swedish and German pastors and twenty-four lay delegates met in Philadelphia to form the Pennsylvania Ministerium. With this action the Lutherans of America became independent of Old World control. Guided by Mühlenberg, the ministerium outlined a synodical organization and prepared a book of common prayer that lasted into the nineteenth century. There were, of course, disputes which Mühlenberg, as "overseer" of the united congregations, mediated with surprising success. And there were set backs when the ministerium did not meet for a half dozen years due to the press of the work at hand. In 1760 he joined a close friend, the Swedish provost Karl Wrangel, in reorganizing the Ministerium, composing written constitutions for churches, and laying the basis for continuing cooperation between these two national churches.

Mühlenberg remained a loyal Hanoverian subject of King George III until the Declaration of Independence was signed. During the Revolutionary War he supported the fight for independence and saw his sons do battle on the American side. He died in New Providence (now Trappe), Pennsylvania on October 7, 1787. Almost single-handedly he had joined the scattered and directionless Lutheran churches and forged them into an American denomination that could serve the flood of German immigrants in the latter part of the eighteenth century.

## Endnotes

1. In 1733, the Pennsylvania Lutherans began correspondence with the Halle pietists, led by Francke's son, Gotthilf, and Pastor Frederick M. Ziegenhagen, the representative of Halle's mission in London. *Negotia-*

tions, however, were slowed by disagreements over compensation. The Halle representatives wanted to know what the new pastor's pay would be so they could be assured he would receive a living wage. The Pennsylvania Lutherans wanted to see the man before they agreed on a level of compensation.

2. While awaiting transportation to the New World, Pastor Ziegenhagen began to instruct Mühlenberg in English. Ziegenhagen also provided Mühlenberg with his call documents and with a preaching robe, a black Geneva which was the common clergy garment in England.

## Looking Back

### 25 years ago – 1986

- It is reported that as of April 11, Reaching Out offerings received by WELS total \$20,011,962.
- The WELS Central Asia Radio Committee reports that since January 6, 1985, a half hour program, "Dies ist der Tag," has been beamed two times each Sunday into German-inhabited provinces in Soviet Central Asia.
- WELS Commission on Inter-Church Relations announces a proposal for a "new" Synodical Conference. This federation would involve WELS, ELS, independent churches around the world in our fellowship, and the "more organized" of WELS world mission churches. The proposal results in the founding of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC) in 1993.
- DMLC and NWC hold a recruitment conference, June 11-13, in Watertown with the synodical prep schools and representatives from the area Lutheran high schools. Even though there are unassigned graduates, concerns are expressed about declining enrollments and the need for pastors and teachers in the future.
- Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary dedicates a new auditorium/gymnasium on October 6. The new building provides needed space for graduation and call day services, Christmas and commencement concerts, as well as providing athletic and fitness facilities for the seminary student body.

### 50 years ago – 1961

- The Wisconsin Synod in convention receives a report from the Commission on Doctrinal Matters that an impasse has been reached with the Missouri Synod on the doctrine of fellowship. Upon the recommendation of the floor committee the synod votes to suspend fellowship with the Missouri Synod by a margin of 124 to 49.
- The Wisconsin Synod in convention adopts a pension plan for called workers.
- The Wisconsin Synod Manpower Committee reports that there are 61 pastoral vacancies, 19 male teacher vacancies, and 90 female teacher vacancies. The convention urges all pastors and congregations to make use of the newly developed recruitment materials and that a special "Manpower Week" be observed in the synod each year.

- Immanuel Lutheran College in Greensboro, North Carolina, is closed. This college was established by the Synodical Conference in 1903 to train pastors and teachers for the black community.
- On November 26 the Lumano Lutheran Dispensary is dedicated in Mwembezi, Northern Rhodesia (when independence is gained from the British in 1964 the country is renamed "Zambia"). This Central African Medical Mission is supported by women's groups throughout the Wisconsin Synod. Miss Barbara Welch is the first American nurse, and Benjamin and Zacchaeus Chindongo are the first national staff members. Mrs. Meta Hoenecke, herself a nurse, helps the medical mission get started.

### 75 years ago – 1936

- Dr. Henry Nau (1881-1956) begins the Synodical Conference Nigerian mission serving the Ibesikpo tribe. In 1937 the first permanent missionary team arrived consisting of Pastor William Schweppe of the Wisconsin Synod, Pastor Vernon Koepper of the Missouri Synod, and nurse Helen Kluck from Beaver Dam. Dr. Nau stays on with the missionary team as a mentor for six months offering invaluable training in cross-cultural mission work.
- Missouri Synod missions in South America expand into Paraguay, at Hohenau, a German colony.

### 100 years ago – 1911

- The English Synod of Missouri becomes the English District of the Missouri Synod. Unlike the other districts of the Missouri Synod the English District is a non-geographical district spread throughout the synod.
- A mixed chorus of seminarians and young ladies from the Lutheran High School in Milwaukee under the direction of Prof. J.P. Koehler (1859-1951) makes its first public appearance. The choir is organized specifically to promote good Lutheran church music.
- Missionary E. Edgar Guenther (1885-1961) and his bride Minnie (1890-1982) begin 50 years of service at East Fork on the Ft. Apache Reservation in Arizona.
- The Wisconsin Synod expands its work in Arizona. Tucson receives its first resident pastor.

### 125 years ago – 1886

- The Tennessee Synod joins the General Synod, South, to form the United

Lutheran Synod, South. The Tennessee Synod was founded in 1820 as a confessional Lutheran synod by Pastor Paul Henkel (1754-1825) and his sons but slowly drifted into a more unionistic stance in the late 1800s.

- Pastor Philip von Rohr (1843-1908) arrives at St. Martin's Lutheran Church, Winona, Minnesota. Within a week he has begun a school and a second church. Von Rohr serves as president of the Wisconsin Synod 1889-1908.
- The Minnesota Synod begins publication of *Der Synodbote* (The Synodical Messenger). After the Minnesota, Michigan, and Wisconsin Synods unite into a general body, the publication ceases.
- Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm has an enrollment of 80 with 12 in the seminary course.

### 150 years ago – 1861

- The American Civil War begins on April 12.
- Pastor Gottlieb Reim (d. 1882) presents an important convention essay on the young Wisconsin Synod's confessional stance, marking a noticeable turn toward greater confessionalism.
- Pres. John Bading (1824-1913) proposes a plan for establishing a seminary.
- Pastor Edward Moldehnke (1836-1904) is designated as a missionary-at-large by the German mission societies. He is stationed at Watertown and his position is funded by those societies. In two years he will be called as the first president of the Wisconsin Synod's seminary in Watertown.
- The Missouri Synod's periodical, *Der Lutheraner*, accuses the Wisconsin Synod of unionism because Wisconsin receives subsidies from the mission societies in Germany and the Pennsylvania Ministerium.

### 175 years ago – 1836

- The Pennsylvania Mission Society sends Lutheran pastor John C.F. "Father" Heyer (1793-1873) to do mission work in India. After serving two tours of duty in India Heyer returns to America and becomes one of the founders of the Minnesota Synod in 1860.
- The North German Missionary Society is founded as a union of six unionistic city societies. The Leipzig Mission Society is founded as a distinctively Evangelical Lutheran Mission Society.

### 200 years ago – 1811

- On October 25, C.F.W. Walther (1811-1887) is born in Langenchursdorf, Saxony. Walther is known as the “American Luther” because of his Lutheran orthodoxy and his tremendous influence on the development of confessional Lutheranism in America.

### 300 years ago – 1711

- Henry Melchior Muhlenberg (1711- 1787) is born. Muhlenberg is known as the “Father of Lutheranism in America” because of his contributions during the colonial period.

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: Individual: \$20.00; Husband/Wife: \$25.00 (2 votes but only one publication issue); Congregation, School, Library, Corporation: \$40.00; and Student: \$15.00. Fees may be sent to the WELS Historical Institute, 2929 N. Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, WI 53222.

The board members are: Prof. Robert Bock, president; Daniel Nommensen, vice-president; Naomi Plocher, secretary; Duane Kuehl, treasurer; Prof. Joel Pless, Steven Miller, Prof. James Korthals, Rev. Joel Leyrer, Prof. Aaron Palmer, and Rev. Raymond Schumacher. Advisory members are: Prof. John Hartwig, Prof. John M. Brenner, and Charlotte Sampe, display designer and museum curator.

**For membership information contact:**

Pastor Ray Schumacher  
(414) 615-5708 • schumacherr@nps.wels.net

**Correspondence may be sent to the editor:**

Professor John M. Brenner  
11844 N. Luther Lane • Mequon, WI 53092  
(414) 242 - 8138 • Email: brennerj@wls.wels.net