

WELS Historical Institute

# Journal

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WISCONSIN LUTHERAN COLLEGE  
2330 WEST BLUEMOUND ROAD  
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WELS Historical Institute  
**Journal**

VOLUME 8, NUMBER 1

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Cover photograph: The oldest extant building dating from 1857, associated with the Wisconsin Synod. See page 8, third full paragraph, for an explanation.

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## The President's Report

**T**HE SPRING 1990 MEETING of the WELS Historical Institute was held at Salem Lutheran Landmark Church, Milwaukee on April 29. Pastor Robert Hartman, administrator for evangelism, spoke on "The Growth of the WELS Through the Years." The meeting noted 140 years of God's grace on the WELS. Attendance was 68.

Those attending the spring meeting saw a number of changes at Salem. The original wood plank flooring and ceiling in the worship area are now exposed. In several places restorationists have also gone beneath the more recent coats of paint to show the original design around the windows and in the chancel.

The basement level at Salem now houses displays of early Apache Indian mission work, old German Bibles and other publications, a turn-of-the-century pastor's study, an early school room, and many other items of interest. If you have suitable display items, please consider submitting them.

Much more work can be done . . . if we have the funds. To restore the church proper to a nineteenth century appearance would mean replacing the pews and altar with authentic items, as well as returning to the original colors and designs on the walls. The cost of a complete restoration will be about \$90,000 more. Your contributions to this end are welcomed.

If you are interested in a tour of Salem, please contact Mrs. Evelyn Schafer, 8949 N. 97th St. D112, Milwaukee, WI 53224, (414) 357-6908.

The fall 1990 meeting will be held at Northwestern College in Watertown, WI, on Thursday, September 13, at 7:30 P.M. The meeting will help commemorate Northwestern's 125th anniversary. President emeritus Carlton Toppe will speak, focusing on curriculum changes through the years and how they may affect our synod's worker training program.

Try to attend the institute's meeting, if possible. You'll find them informative and interesting. And do what you can to support the institute's work. Your donations of museum items, archival materials, and monetary gifts do much for this important agency.

In Christ, the Lord of history,

Roland Cap Ehlke

## Historical Research and Early WELS Congregations in the Milwaukee Area

Bring the Scrolls When You Come,  
Timothy, If You Can Find Them

James G. Kiecker

**A**NYONE WHO DOES HISTORY knows how important sources are. The end product of historical research can only be as good as the sources on which that end product is based. There is so much we'd like to know about the past, but so much of the past is irretrievably lost. So many times the words "we just don't know" or something similar appear in history books.

For example, in church history, there is so much we'd like to know about the day to day life of the church in the period from about A.D. 500 to A.D. 900. What were the pastors like? What were the church buildings like? How often did people worship? And though there is enough evidence in existence to give us a rough answer to these questions, the available evidence tantalizes us for more, rather than satisfies our desire to know. Records were not kept at all, or not very well, or they were lost, which situations, having personally spent a number of years in the parish ministry, I don't find particularly unusual.

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, of course, look into the anniversary booklets which are regularly turned out in our congregations. But the historian within us immediately wonders how accurate they are. Heaven forbid that one should question the accuracy or the integrity of dear Pastor Schmedley. And, having been in his shoes, with a church anniversary to get ready for, I'm sure he's trying to do the best he can. Still one would like to know the sources he's using, to see how closely he's following them and how well he's interpreting them. Otherwise one might simply wind up copying his mistakes, and this is not doing history. This is typing.

One can turn to the granddaddy anniversary booklet of them all, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, by J. P. Koehler,<sup>1</sup> 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? Again, I don't want to suggest that Koehler is inventing anything. But I can't help feeling it would sure be nice to have the documentation to prove he's not.

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. A synod archive, kept in the house of Pastor Bading, is mentioned. Where is that material now? A description by Pastor Muehlhaeuser of his 1834 missionary trip through Austria is referred to. Where is this material, and, if found, how germane? Copies and extracts from the archives of a number of German missionary societies are mentioned. If located, how important would this be as a source of information for the founding of specific Milwaukee area congregations? An autobiography of J. P. Koehler's father is listed. A search reveals that part of this was translated and published in Faith-Life magazine,<sup>2</sup> the latest installment being in 1973. But just when the material seems on the verge of being helpful, the translator dies. Where is the rest of the material kept, and is it available for research? Nor is one cheered when Koehler mentions that he also made use of congregational anniversary booklets. One is then right back where one started.

Koehler does, however, list one source in the German edition of his work which is, thankfully, easily available. This is described as "a short history of the Wisconsin Synod, which President Muehlhaeuser, commissioned by the Synod, composed in 1860." This work was uncovered in the Northwestern College archives by Dr. Arnold Lehmann, professor emeritus, while engaged in other research. We owe Dr. Lehmann a debt of thanks for translating this material from the German script and making it available to us via publication.<sup>3</sup> In addition, Dr. Lehmann translated brief excerpts from a ledger used to record the minutes of the first eight synod conventions. The first of these excerpts is signed by the synod's first secretary, John Weinmann.

Here at last we have some primary sources. Prof. Koehler is no longer telling us what happened, nor is a pastor in an anniversary booklet perhaps using Koehler to tell us, but rather participants in the action are telling us. In Weinmann's case the records would be contemporaneous. In Muehlhaeuser's case the writing took place ten or more years after the events he describes. This, of course, always makes the historian cautious. A time-lag might imply errors due to memory lapses. And we must not forget that the subjectivity of an author always intrudes into his writing, telling us how *he* views things, even when he wishes to be objective. Nevertheless, with these cautions in mind, Weinmann's minutes and Muehlhaeuser's history are unquestionably very important in a specific way. We can compare them with Koehler, and learn how Koehler handled his sources. If Koehler is found to handle these sources well, the assumption may be reasonably made that he also handles other sources well. This would make Koehler a reliable secondary source for information.

Examining Koehler in the light of the minutes of Weinmann and the history of Muehlhaeuser does not clarify all problems. For example, in both the German and the English editions of his history Koehler has Muehlhaeuser, Wrede, and Weinmann deciding (on Dec. 8, 1849) to meet at Salem Church, Granville, on May 27, 1850. Then, without explanation, Koehler states they actually met on May 26, 1850.<sup>4</sup> Muehlhaeuser says the meeting was planned for May 26, 1850 and in fact took place on May 26, 1850.<sup>5</sup>

Weinmann, however, says the meeting was planned for May 27, 1850.<sup>6</sup> Weinmann's minutes stating when the meeting in fact took place are not available. Hopefully, future research will clarify an issue which has caused confusion. The frequently-used grade school church history book, *The Story of Our Church*, gives the meeting date as May 26, 1850.<sup>7</sup> The synod history book, *Our Synod and its Work*,<sup>8</sup> gives the meeting date as May 27, 1850. The more recent synod history book, *You and Your Synod*,<sup>9</sup> gives the meeting date as May 26, 1850. Perhaps not everyone, even in our synod, cares about this, but I would hope that our synod's historical institute would be quite interested in knowing exactly when this historic meeting in fact took place.

Incidentally, I feel a good case can be made for fixing our synod's founding on Dec. 8, 1849, since that's when the organization took place, officers were elected, and a name was chosen. Muehlhaeuser even refers to this as "the very small beginning of our synod."<sup>10</sup> The only thing missing was the constitution, which was adopted the following year, similar to our U. S. Constitution being adopted thirteen years after our nation's founding.

A problem which is clarified has to do with a candidate for the ministry named Casper Pluess. Koehler in his history says first that Pluess received his license to preach *before* the May 26/27, 1850 meeting.<sup>11</sup> Then, describing that meeting, Koehler remarks: "Pluess received his license."<sup>12</sup> Muehlhaeuser indicates that Pluess was licensed *before*, not *at*, the May 26/27, 1850 meeting.<sup>13</sup>

A new problem is raised. Koehler mentions Paul Meiss, who served as pastor of Salem Church during 1849, as being present with Muehlhaeuser, Weinmann, and Wrede at the Dec. 8, 1849 meeting.<sup>14</sup> Weinmann in the first ledger of synod convention minutes puts Meiss there also,<sup>15</sup> and quite possibly this is where Koehler got his information. However, Muehlhaeuser's history doesn't mention Meiss' presence. In fact, Muehlhaeuser gives the impression that it was *after* the Dec. 8, 1849 meeting when Meiss appeared on the scene.<sup>16</sup> Again, knowing precisely who was present at that meeting may not be important to everyone. But it should be to us.

Besides problems raised, solved, or not solved by the sources, a further matter should be considered. Historians have to be sensitive to the bias of the documents they handle. Even in a translation this bias will be apparent. As we read Koehler's history, we become conscious of a particular slant through, for example, his choice of words, and what is said or not said.

Keeping this in mind, we are told that the above-mentioned Meiss, Pluess, and a third candidate for the ministry, F. Beckel, became problems for the fledgling synod. Reading Koehler one gets the impression that Muehlhaeuser, Weinmann, and Wrede did not exercise much discipline in dealing with the three candidates. Koehler reports that Meiss, after staging a Reformed-type revival at Salem Church, had to face his church board, but no synod official is mentioned. Beckel is said to have "persuaded" Muehlhaeuser to license him, with the implication of wool being pulled over the eyes of a sleeping bishop. Pluess is simply said to have been licensed.<sup>17</sup>

One gains a far different picture from Muehlhaeuser's report. Meiss and the church council appear before Muehlhaeuser, confess their error and ask that they be accepted (presumably into fellowship), and further ask that Meiss be authorized to administer the sacraments.<sup>18</sup>

In Beckel's case, according to Muehlhaeuser, "after mature deliberation and examination we arrived at the resolution to accept Beckel into our small circle, because we were in dire need of workers."<sup>19</sup> Note the "we" and the "our." Apparently the entire three member synod ministerium discussed the issue. The "dire need of workers" suggests the rationale for taking a chance on Beckel, but only after all factors were carefully weighed. Can anyone do more? And later on, when Beckel turned out bad, Muehlhaeuser speaks with evident sadness about Beckel's "ill-practice," and shows a touch of anger over Beckel's dishonest retaining of his license "which was invalid on the day when he left us."<sup>20</sup>

Nor was Pluess merely licensed: Rather, says Muehlhaeuser, "we gave [him] a license after a scheduled examination."<sup>21</sup> One can sense the chagrin when Muehlhaeuser concludes: "These three miserable subjects made our beginning very difficult, and gave us much sorrow, shame, anxiety, and distress."<sup>22</sup>

Now, I'm not sure how far I'm prepared to go with this, but one certainly senses a different tone in Muehlhaeuser from the one in Koehler. The general impression in our circles, left us largely by Koehler, is that our founding fathers were theologically slipshod. Other evidence may still bear this out. But, assuming that Muehlhaeuser is telling things more or less like they were, not improving his own record, perhaps our impression of our founders should be revised. They may not have been so slipshod after all.

In view of the above, what conclusion may we draw about the reliability of Koehler as a secondary source? It would seem that caution would be in order. On balance it would seem that one might use Koehler for a generally accurate picture of the events he describes, yet all the time reserving the right to question him and to hold one's conclusion in abeyance pending the appearance of additional evidence. None of this is said to slight Koehler or his achievement, only to recognize his limitations and regard him realistically. And having reached this conclusion about Koehler, we should probably adopt a similar conclusion about all other secondary sources, many of which are, to begin with, based on Koehler.

With this attitude about the use of sources in mind, let us turn from our consideration of historical research to the general topic I was asked to speak on, the early WELS congregations in the Milwaukee area. With time and space considerations in mind, I have decided to limit my remarks to the four earliest congregations and their pastors.

A church which Koehler identifies simply as a "congregation on the Kilbourn Road,"<sup>23</sup> and which a brief search reveals to be St. John, in what was formerly called Oakwood, now Oak Creek,<sup>24</sup> was the oldest congregation of the later Wisconsin Synod in the Milwaukee area, though it was not accepted into the synod until 1857.<sup>25</sup> Besides Koehler there are two other sources of information. One is an anniversary booklet from 1968 when this church celebrated the 125th anniversary of its formal organization.<sup>26</sup> Presumably the author was the pastor in 1968, Karl Molkentin. The other is a brochure from 1983.<sup>27</sup> Since, as with Koehler, there is no documentation in these sources, one again has the feeling of flying blindly on trust.

These sources indicate that St. John, Oakwood, was founded something like this: In 1836 a number of Germans from various parts of Germany settled in the Oakwood area on then Kilborn(e) Road, at that time about

twelve miles south of Milwaukee. The author of the *Oakwood Booklet* indicates he is quoting from the 55th anniversary booklet, not now available. This earlier booklet adds dramatically that the church was "in the virgin forest in the midst of the Indians."<sup>28</sup>

In 1840 an unnamed missionary on horseback arrived at the home of a Daniel Goelzer and volunteered to preach the word. His offer was accepted, and the first services were held in Mr. Goelzer's log cabin located about one quarter mile south of the present church.<sup>29</sup>

Probably in 1841 a Lutheran pastor from New York named Schmidt arrived and conducted services at intervals of several months in the Goelzer log cabin, also instructing and confirming the first children. Under his direction the congregation was formally organized in 1843 on October 2, according to the *Oakwood Booklet*, on Oct. 1, according to the *Oakwood Brochure*, with 24 voting members. Shortly after its organization the congregation erected its first church building, made of logs. In 1844 Pastor Schmidt left the area for Michigan, according to the *Oakwood Brochure*.<sup>30</sup>

During 1845 a layman, Ehrenfried Seebach, conducted reading services and gave religious instructions to the children. He also addressed a letter to the Langenberg Mission Society in Germany, asking in the following words for a pastor:

There is a great field here for Christian mission, and splendid congregations might soon, under a good shepherd, prosper and become mission centers for other localities; for there is a desire among a great many for the word of God. But how shall they believe if it isn't preached to them?<sup>31</sup>

According to Koehler, Mr. Seebach also explained that a previous Lutheran pastor had "forfeited his position by scandalous conduct."<sup>32</sup> The only Lutheran pastor mentioned so far was Pastor Schmidt, so presumably he is the one to whom Mr. Seebach is referring.

About the time that Mr. Seebach was appealing for a pastor, an unnamed member was also making an appeal for a pastor to a Langenberg missionary in West Leyden, New York, named Schmidt. The *Oakwood Booklet* indicates that this is the same Pastor Schmidt who organized the congregation.<sup>33</sup> One is left to wonder if there was another Lutheran pastor involved, or if Pastor Schmidt repented his behavior, or if Mr. Seebach was mistaken about Pastor Schmidt, or some other possibility.

Just at that time, apparently towards the end of 1846,<sup>34</sup> the Langenberg Mission Society notified Pastor Schmidt that they were sending three new missionaries, Rauschenbusch, Wrede, and Weinmann, to New York (according to Koehler<sup>35</sup>) or to Baltimore (according to the *Oakwood Booklet*<sup>36</sup>—there are several other discrepancies between Koehler and the *Oakwood Booklet*). Pastor Schmidt immediately notified (a representative in ?) New York that one of these three should be assigned to the Oakwood Congregation. The one chosen was John Weinmann. He and the other two were met in New York by John Muehlhaeuser who had arrived in America already in 1837. Weinmann went with Muehlhaeuser to Rochester, New York, where Muehlhaeuser was serving, and soon after this to Wisconsin. On the way he was ordained by a Pastor Schmidt in Ann Arbor, Michigan. This sounds like it should be the pioneer Lutheran missionary in Michigan, Friedrich

Schmid(t),<sup>37</sup> but one wonders if there is any connection with the Pastor Schmidt who left the Oakwood church for Michigan, according to the *Oakwood Brochure* (above).

How long Weinmann served St. John, Oakwood, is uncertain. The *Oakwood Booklet* twice says his pastorate lasted two and one-half years. Then, in a later list of pastors, the same source sets his tenure at four years, from 1846-1850. This later figure is seemingly more likely. A two and a half year pastorate would be from the end (presumably) of 1846 to the middle of 1849. This would have Weinmann gone from Oakwood before the synod's organization meeting on Dec. 8, 1849.

To round out Weinmann's personal history, after Oakwood he served in Racine until 1853. Then he accepted a call to Baltimore, Maryland, where he served until 1858. In that year, while returning from a trip to visit his elderly mother in Germany, his steamship burned and sank, and he drowned.<sup>38</sup>

The log church of 1843 was replaced by a new frame church in 1857. In 1894 a third frame church was built. The cover of the *Oakwood Brochure* pictures another church building, or a radically remodeled building, in 1896, but neither the *Brochure* nor the *Oakwood Booklet* says anything about this. Perhaps this is just artistic license. The 1894 frame church is probably the present church. In 1894 the 1857 church was converted for use as a school and so used until 1931. In 1931 the road in front of the church, 27th St. (Highway 41), was widened. The 1894 church was moved back, and the 1857 church/school was moved (east?) on Oakwood Road where it was converted to a home. The *Oakwood Brochure* indicates this building is still standing, and if this is so, it is the oldest extant building associated with our synod.

The second oldest congregation in the Milwaukee area which later made up the Wisconsin Synod, and the oldest synod congregation in Milwaukee, though it was not accepted into synod membership until 1857,<sup>39</sup> was St. John, now located on the northwest corner of Eighth and Vliet Streets in Milwaukee. Besides Koehler, the earliest secondary source available is the *Souvenir of the Ninetieth Anniversary of the Founding of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin*,<sup>40</sup> presumably written by the pastor in 1938, John Brenner. Again one is handicapped by a lack of documentation.

St. John's origin apparently goes back to 1847.<sup>41</sup> That summer the Langenberg missionary H. L. Dulitz<sup>42</sup> arrived in Milwaukee and was asked to preach at the so-called Schmitz church on Fifth Street. According to the *Oakwood Booklet* Dulitz stopped first at St. John, Oakwood, but finding Pastor Weinmann already there, he continued north into Milwaukee.<sup>43</sup> The Schmitz church was a "united" church, composed of both Lutherans and Reformed. Dulitz's sermon found so much favor that a number of Lutherans, who had been meeting in the home of a Mr. Zuehlsdorf on Sundays to hear sermons read from Luther's *Hauspostille*, asked him to preach to them. Dulitz consented and organized regular services in the so-called Gruenhagen church on Prairie Street (now Highland Avenue) between Third and Fourth Streets.

About this time a pastor named Keyl (Keil) was called to Trinity Church, Missouri Synod, located at Ninth and Prairie. Dulitz sought fellowship with the Missouri Synod, even though he often spoke of the narrow mindedness of the "old Lutherans" (i.e., the Missouri Synod). Keyl did not rebuff Dulitz's

attempt at fellowship. However, when the Schmitz church became vacant in the spring of 1848, Dulitz accepted the call of this united congregation.<sup>44</sup> The sources do not say whether he discontinued his services at the Gruenhagen church.

But conditions at this united church were so bad that Dulitz soon left there in 1848 for Chicago. While there, the same group of Lutherans who had asked Dulitz to preach for them, and whom he served at the Gruenhagen church, called him back to Milwaukee.<sup>45</sup> *St. John's Souvenir* does not mention Dulitz's sojourn in Chicago. However, this book does indicate that, during Dulitz's absence, worship was held in the home of William Schroeder, the Gruenhagen church, and a hall on West Water Street.<sup>46</sup> When Dulitz returned to Milwaukee, a meeting was held at the home of Mr. Schroeder, and the result was the founding, in 1848, of St. John Church. Neither Koehler nor *St. John's Souvenir* gives the month and day of the founding. However, an article in our *WELS Journal* by Gary R. C. Haertel sets the exact date as Dec. 4, 1848. Mr. Haertel supports this date with a reference to an earlier paper by Jonathan H. Rupprecht, without indicating the page. I was not able to find where Rupprecht gives this date in his paper.<sup>47</sup>

In the fall of 1849 the congregation rented an Episcopal Church building on the corner of Fourth and Prairie, and purchased it on Jan. 30, 1850. A pamphlet entitled *History Notes*, published by St. John Church apparently in 1983, says this building was on the northwest corner of the intersection, and a picture indicates that it fronted on Fourth Street. This building was remodeled in 1858, 1863, and 1871, and finally replaced by the present church at Eighth and Vliet Streets (about four blocks to the northwest) in 1890. After this, the first church building was converted into a factory for the F. F. Bues Carriage Company (i.e., it became a shop where wagons were built), until it was finally torn down.<sup>48</sup>

To round out our remarks on Dulitz, he joined the Missouri Synod in 1856, and St. John twice applied for membership in that body. The request wasn't granted because St. John was located too close to an existing Missouri Synod Church, Trinity, at Ninth and Prairie. Dulitz then tried to merge these two congregations, causing a bitter strife in St. John. When the church decided, April 29, 1856, against a merger, Dulitz resigned and a number of members left the church.<sup>49</sup> Muehlhaeuser, writing about the 1857 synod convention, says Dulitz was "removed." It's unclear if he was removed from St. John rather than resigning, or if he was removed from the Wisconsin Synod, or both.<sup>50</sup>

If we accept the date Dec. 4, 1848, for the founding of St. John, Milwaukee, then the third oldest church in the Milwaukee area, which later made up the Wisconsin Synod, was Salem, Granville (now part of Milwaukee<sup>51</sup>), though it was not admitted to the synod until 1852.<sup>52</sup> Besides Koehler, one basic source for information is a booklet entitled *Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1847-1947, Centennial Booklet*.<sup>53</sup> The author was apparently the pastor in 1947, R. L. Wiechmann. Though he is apparently quoting from some earlier source for this booklet, he does not say what it is, so we have no way of checking the booklet's accuracy.<sup>54</sup>

The actual founding of Salem church took place on Dec. 25, 1847, though it's quite certain that the people involved were worshiping together before this date. It was founded as a union church of Lutherans and Reformed.<sup>55</sup>

According to a Salem Church brochure entitled *Welcoming Friends*, this arrangement lasted for ten years, though the source for this figure is not given.<sup>56</sup> After its founding, about seven months passed before the congregation received a pastor. On July 23, 1848, Pastor H. L. Dulitz was chosen as pastor for six months, until January of 1849. There is no record of where the services were held.<sup>57</sup> Keeping in mind Dulitz's connection with St. John, Milwaukee (above), the scenario would seem to be that Dulitz served Salem Church as a non-resident pastor after he returned from Chicago in 1848, and while St. John, Milwaukee, was being founded on Dec. 4, 1848. Dulitz was therefore the pastor who was instrumental in founding two of the synod's earliest churches, within about three weeks, if we accept all these dates.

On Jan. 21, 1849, Paul Meiss, referred to earlier, was chosen as pastor. He remained as pastor until December of 1849. Under Meiss, in June of 1849, the first church building was constructed of logs and dedicated on June 17, 1849. According to the Salem brochure entitled *Salem Lutheran Landmark Church*, this log building was across the street from (i.e., west of) the church building which followed.<sup>58</sup>

On Dec. 16, 1849, after Meiss had been dismissed as pastor, Pastor W. Wrede was called. He served from Dec. 1849 to July of 1853. Since there was still no parsonage, Wrede like Meiss was a non-resident pastor.<sup>59</sup>

As mentioned earlier, Wrede arrived in America with Weinmann in 1846. While Weinmann went with Muehlhaeuser to Rochester, New York, and shortly after this to Wisconsin, Wrede accepted a pastorate in Callicoon, New York.<sup>60</sup> It was apparently from here that Wrede came to Salem Church.

All sources agree that on Dec. 8, 1849, Wrede met with Muehlhaeuser and Weinmann to organize the First German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin. However, according to the *Salem Booklet*, Wrede was first called on Dec. 16, 1849.<sup>61</sup> Yet he is *present* at the meeting of Dec. 8, 1849. Hopefully, more research will clear up this problem. The meeting was in the hall used by Grace Church, and here one must note that Grace Church, still called Trinity Church, was meeting in a hall about three blocks from where Grace Church was finally built. At this meeting Muehlhaeuser was elected president, Weinmann secretary, and Wrede treasurer. They agreed to meet in May of 1850 at Salem Church at which time Muehlhaeuser was to submit a constitution. Recall here the problem with the exact date in May.

To round things out, Wrede remained the pastor of Salem Church until 1853. In that year, as we heard earlier, Weinmann left the Racine church which he had founded after he left St. John, Oakwood. In April or May of 1853 Wrede was called to that Racine church.<sup>62</sup> He returned to Germany in 1855. The log church of 1849 was used until a second church was built and dedicated on Oct. 28, 1863, across the street (east) of the log church. This second church is now designated the Salem Lutheran Landmark Church. The third and present church building, east of the second church, was dedicated on Nov. 13, 1977.<sup>63</sup>

The fourth oldest church in the Milwaukee area, which later made up the Wisconsin Synod, the second synod church in Milwaukee, and the first church admitted to the synod in 1850,<sup>64</sup> was Grace Church, founded by John Muehlhaeuser. As Muehlhaeuser himself relates, he arrived in America on Oct. 4, 1837,<sup>65</sup> the first missionary to be sent out by the Langenberg Society. He spent seven months doing mission work in New York City, received a

license to preach from the New York Synod, and was sent as a missionary to Rochester, New York, where he arrived on May 12, 1838. In the fall of 1838 he was ordained at the New York Synod convention.

Muehlhaeuser served the Rochester church for ten years. Then, as he describes it, the congregation being well-organized and able to support a pastor properly, and feeling strong and healthy, as well as being encouraged by Pastor Weinmann, Muehlhaeuser decided to take his family to Wisconsin to do mission work there.

Muehlhaeuser arrived in Milwaukee on June 27 or 29, 1848. The date is given as June 27 by Muehlhaeuser himself in his short history<sup>66</sup> and is accepted by Koehler.<sup>67</sup> However, a Grace Church 75th anniversary booklet from 1924 makes the date June 29.<sup>68</sup> The author of this booklet, apparently the pastor in 1924, C. Gausewitz, says he is following Muehlhaeuser's own record of the founding of Grace Church. A search of the Grace Church archives reveals just such a record, written in German script. In this record Muehlhaeuser gives the date as June 29, 1848, creating another problem to be dealt with by future researchers. As far as this writer is aware, this record of Muehlhaeuser has never been translated and seeing to its translation should be a high priority for our institute.

To support himself, Muehlhaeuser had made arrangements with the New York tract society,<sup>69</sup> which commissioned him as a "colporteur," or peddler of religious books. The Langenberg Society, according to Koehler, was displeased with his activities, though Koehler doesn't document this or explain why the society was displeased.<sup>70</sup> According to Koehler, upon his arrival in Wisconsin, Muehlhaeuser hiked through the countryside north and south of Milwaukee selling Bibles and devotional literature. Muehlhaeuser himself passes over all the details and simply says he came to Milwaukee where he soon founded a new congregation.<sup>71</sup>

According to Koehler, very shortly after his arrival, Muehlhaeuser became ill and realized his health was not up to the rigor of being a book peddler in pioneer country.<sup>72</sup> Conversely, the *Grace 75th Booklet*, which apparently follows Muehlhaeuser's own record, says it was sickness in his family, not personal illness.<sup>73</sup> Counseled by a Presbyterian pastor, A. L. Shapin, and an English Congregational pastor, J. Miter, Muehlhaeuser founded an "evangelical" congregation in October, 1848, as Koehler describes it.<sup>74</sup> However, the *Grace 75th Booklet* says that a number of people requested Muehlhaeuser to serve as a missionary among the Germans of Milwaukee and to gather a church, and does not mention these other pastors counseling Muehlhaeuser.<sup>75</sup>

The place of the founding of the congregation is described by Koehler as a hall rented from the English congregations.<sup>76</sup> Alternately, the *Grace 75th Booklet* says Muehlhaeuser was given free use of a hall in "Hustis brick block" on the northwest corner of Third and Chestnut (now Juneau Avenue) which had been rented by some English churches. About forty or fifty people attended the first service.<sup>77</sup> According to Koehler, at a second organization meeting<sup>78</sup> on May 13, 1849, the congregation chose the name "German Evangelical Lutheran Trinity Church." The *Grace 75th Booklet* does not mention the organization of the church as at first an "evangelical" church (see above), but mentions only this organization of May 13, 1849.<sup>79</sup>

According to Koehler, in the summer of 1850 Muehlhaeuser went east to collect funds for a church.<sup>80</sup> The *Grace 75th Booklet* gives the date of Muehlhaeuser's departure as June 3, 1850 (i.e., about a week after the synod's first convention), and suggests that Muehlhaeuser asked for funds elsewhere since he felt his congregation was too poor to build a church. Six months later he returned with \$2,106.17.<sup>81</sup> Koehler mentions no monetary details. However, he includes an article from the *Boston Puritan Recorder* of August 1, 1850, which mentions Muehlhaeuser's activities. Koehler ends with the acid comment: "That was the beginning of synodical soliciting of funds from outsiders when self-subsistence would have been a wiser policy even financially."<sup>82</sup>

Armed with this money, the congregation went site-searching. Though most Germans lived west of the Milwaukee River in what was called Kilbourn town, it seemed desirable to have a church on the east side also. There were already ten German congregations of several denominations over there, according to the *Grace 75th Booklet*.<sup>83</sup> Another consideration may have been the presence already of St. John Church located a few blocks to the west, across the Milwaukee River. Therefore on March 20, 1851, the congregation acquired a lot on the northwest corner of Main and Division streets (now Broadway and Juneau Avenue). On the west end of the lot there was a house which Pastor Muehlhaeuser bought for himself. For the rest of the lot the congregation paid \$700.<sup>84</sup> A brochure entitled *Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church* adds that this site was some three blocks east of the original meeting hall on the northwest corner of North Third Street and East Juneau Avenue.<sup>85</sup>

The church was legally incorporated on April 21, 1851, and since there already was a Trinity Lutheran Church, west of the river at Ninth and Prairie, the congregation chose the name German Evangelical Lutheran Grace Church. A contract was let, and the cornerstone was laid on July 15, 1851. Later that summer Muehlhaeuser went east and collected an additional \$700. The church building was dedicated on Christmas Day, 1851. This building was improved and enlarged several times, including a substantial addition in 1876. In 1900 it was torn down and the present church was built on the same site.<sup>86</sup>

It is time now to end this study of historical research as it relates to early WELS congregations in the Milwaukee area, and draw some conclusions. I would offer the following:

- 1) It should be apparent that sources, both primary and secondary, often don't exist, or at least aren't available. This is frustrating to the researcher.
- 2) It should be apparent that the sources which do exist are generally undocumented, again frustrating to the researcher. Furthermore, the sources that exist often contradict each other, even in such important matters as the exact date of the synod's first convention.
- 3) Therefore it seems clear that all existing sources must be handled cautiously, more so than we've often done. We've been too content to latch onto one source, say Koehler or some anniversary booklet, and follow it uncritically and without comparing it to other sources. Unthinking acceptance should not be confused with historical research.

- 4) We must learn to put questions to the sources we have. How accurate are they? Are they telling us more or less what happened? Is there some way that we can check their accuracy? Do they disclose a particular bias?
- 5) Above all, we must search tirelessly for additional sources, gather them, and make them easily available to researchers. This need is being met by our institute, and soon also will be aided by our new synod archive's location. Then, if the call goes out to Timothy to bring the scrolls, Timothy will have a good deal less trouble in finding them.

#### ENDNOTES

1. German edition, *Geschichte der allgemeinen Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Wisconsin und andern Staaten* (Milwaukee, Wis.: Northwestern Publishing House, 1925), English translation edited and with an Introduction by Leigh A. Jordahl (St. Cloud, Minn.: Sentinel Publishing Company, 1970).
2. Faith-Life XLV, 3:10; XLV, 5:1; XLVI, 5:1.
3. "The First History of the Wisconsin Synod," *WELS Historical Institute Journal*, Fall, 1985, pp. 10-21, hereafter cited as *WELS Journal*.
4. English edition, p. 40; German edition, p. 188.
5. *WELS Journal*, pp. 12,13.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
7. Adair Moldenhauer (published privately, no date), p. 106.
8. Prepared and published by the Board of Education, Wisconsin Synod (Milwaukee, Wis.: Northwestern Publishing House, 1947), p. 12.
9. Erwin E. Kowalke (Milwaukee, Wis.: Northwestern Publishing House, 1961), p. 11.
10. *WELS Journal*, p. 12.
11. Koehler, p. 40.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *WELS Journal*, pp. 12,13.
14. Koehler, p. 40.
15. *WELS Journal*, p. 10.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 12: "During the time up to the first convention three candidates for the preaching ministry [including Meiss] arrived on the scene."
17. Koehler, p. 40.
18. *WELS Journal*, p. 12.
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Ibid.*
21. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Koehler, p. 39.
24. The address is now 10302 S. 27th Street, Oak Creek, WI 53154.
25. *WELS Journal*, p. 17; Koehler, p. 39, makes St. John, Oakwood, the oldest church in the later Wis. Synod. Actually that distinction belongs to Salem, Ann Arbor (Scio), Mich. See *WELS Journal*, Spring 1984, p. 12.
26. *St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Oak Creek, Wisconsin, 125 Years of Grace* (Skokie, Illinois: Le Mann and Associates, no date), hereafter referred to as *Oakwood Booklet*.



27. *140th Anniversary, 1843-1983, St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Oakwood, Wisconsin* (no publisher, no date), hereafter cited as *Oakwood Brochure*.
28. *Oakwood Booklet*, no pagination.
29. *Oakwood Brochure*, no pagination.
30. *Ibid.*
31. Koehler, p. 39.
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Oakwood Booklet*, no pagination.
34. Thus Muehlhaeuser, *WELS Journal*, p. 11.
35. Koehler, p. 39.
36. *Oakwood Booklet*, no pagination.
37. See "Frederich Schmid: Pioneer Builder in Michigan," by Forrest L. Bivens, in the *WELS Journal*, Fall, 1985, pp. 22-35.
38. *Oakwood Booklet*, no pagination. See also *WELS Journal*, p. 15.
39. *WELS Journal*, p. 17.
40. (Milwaukee, Wis.: Northwestern Publishing House, 1938), hereafter cited as *St. John's Souvenir*.
41. Koehler, p. 39: *St. John's Souvenir*, p. 17.
42. *St. John's Souvenir*, p. 17, omits the initial "H."
43. *Oakwood Booklet*, no pagination.
44. Koehler, p. 39.
45. *Ibid.*
46. *St. John's Souvenir*, p. 21.
47. Gary R. C. Haertel, "History of St. John, Milwaukee," *WELS Journal*, Fall, 1986, p. 44. See also Jonathan H. Rupprecht, "How Are The Mighty Fallen," submitted as a Senior Church History paper, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, 1978.
48. *History Notes, St. John's Lutheran Church, 1848-1983*, p. 1.
49. *St. John's Souvenir*, p. 17.
50. *WELS Journal*, p. 17.
51. The address is 6814 N. 107th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53224.
52. *WELS Journal*, p. 14.
53. (West Granville, Wisconsin, no publisher), hereafter cited as *Salem Booklet*.
54. For a detailed study of the early years of Salem Church, readers are directed to "Salem Lutheran Church and the Town of Granville, 1830-1870," by Mark A. Jeske, *WELS Journal*, Fall 1985, pp. 28-49.
55. *Salem Booklet*, no pagination.
56. *Welcoming Friends* (published privately by Salem Church, no date), p. 3.
57. *Salem Booklet*, no pagination.
58. *Salem Lutheran Landmark Church, Inc.* (published privately by Salem Church, no date), no pagination.
59. *Salem Booklet*, no pagination.
60. Koehler, p. 39.
61. *Salem Booklet*, no pagination.
62. The conclusion of Jeske, *op. cit.*
63. Brochure *Welcoming Friends*, pp. 4,5.
64. Koehler, p. 40; Muehlhaeuser in *WELS Journal*, p. 13.
65. *WELS Journal*, p. 11f.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
67. Koehler, p. 39.
68. *Fuenfundsiebzig Gnadenjahre. Zum Jubilaem der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Gnadengemeinde zu Milwaukee, Wis., anno 1924* (no publisher, no pagination), hereafter cited as *Grace 75th Booklet*.
69. Koehler, p. 39. Koehler does not capitalize the "t" and "s," indicating this is not a proper noun, though the article "the" would lead one to think so.
70. Koehler, p. 39.
71. *Ibid.*; *WELS Journal*, p. 12.
72. Koehler, p. 40.
73. *Grace 75th Booklet*, no pagination.
74. Koehler, p. 40.
75. *Grace 75th Booklet*, no pagination.
76. Koehler, p. 40.
77. *Grace 75th Booklet*, no pagination.
78. Koehler, p. 40.
79. *Grace 75th Booklet*, no pagination.
80. Koehler, p. 41.
81. *Grace 75th Booklet*, no pagination.
82. Koehler, p. 42.
83. *Grace 75th Booklet*, no pagination.
84. *Ibid.*
85. Brochure, *Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church*, no pagination.
86. *Grace 75th Booklet*, no pagination.

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# A WELS Historical Profile

## Chronological Sketches of Our Synod's Past: 1940-1950

Arnold J. Koelpin

**I**N THE DECADE OF THE 1940s, World War II accelerated the pace of change on a global scale. Wartime contacts and cooperation between churches stimulated the quest for an inter-Lutheran union in the United States. One century after its organization, the Wisconsin Synod found itself in an unexpected role. Fresh from the agony of doctrinal controversy within the synod, clergy and congregations faced growing tension within the Synodical Conference. The one-hundred year old synod, itself a child of unionistic European mission societies, felt constrained to resist Lutheran union without doctrinal agreement. At the same time, an upsurge in the American economy put the synod back on its financial feet. Expansion and new initiatives in home and foreign missions necessitated construction of new synodical buildings. Enrollments in synodical schools reached record highs, not seen since the depression.

### 1940-1950

1940 Three new professors accept calls to Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. Professor Paul Peters from the Saxon Free Church seminary in Berlin/Zehlendorf, Germany, succeeds Professor Zich, who died the year before. Professor Adalbert Schaller of Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota, replaces Professor Brenner after his death in January.

Pastor Edmund Reim of Neenah, Wisconsin, takes over some classes of Professor August Pieper, whose teaching load is reduced because of his advanced age. In January of the following year, a broken hip causes Professor Pieper's teaching career to end, but he continues writing for the seminary's *Quartalschrift* (Quarterly).

1940 A third professorship created at Northwestern Lutheran Academy is filled by Pastor H. G. Meyer, who was serving as tutor at the school.

1940 Commissions of the United Lutheran Church (ULC) and the American Lutheran Church (ALC) continue to negotiate the Pittsburgh Agreement to resolve the differences between the two Lutheran church bodies, especially on such questions as secret societies and the inspiration of the Scriptures.

1941 On April 25, the Synodical Conference's Lutheran Church in Nigeria, Africa, celebrates its fiftieth anniversary. It now has 45

churches, 7,073 baptized members, and 2,576 communicants. The short-lived theological seminary (1939-40) is discontinued for lack of students. But the Central Schools of the mission have an enrollment of 260 pupils.

1941 Mission efforts in the population centers of Seattle and Spokane of the Pacific Northwest District begin when Pastor F. Stern is asked to serve as missionary-at-large.

1941 The Wisconsin Synod grants the requests of the Arizona and Colorado Conferences to attain the status of mission districts.

1941 Initial plans for the celebration of the Wisconsin Synod's centennial in 1950 are laid by arranging for appointment of committees for the occasion.

1941 The Missouri Synod in convention unanimously adopts a resolution to continue negotiations with the American Lutheran Church. This affirmation comes in response to requests from the Synodical Conference that the Missouri Synod earnestly consider the advisability of framing "one document of agreement" because of differences between Missouri's Brief Statement and the American Lutheran Church's Sandusky Declaration.

1941 Because the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in the Hawaiian Islands, the United States is drawn into World War II. During the war the Wisconsin Synod's Spiritual Welfare Commission serves men and women in the armed forces, as well as hospitalized veterans and German war prisoners.

1942 The Missouri Synod informs the constituent synods of the Synodical Conference that, following the resolutions of its Fort Wayne convention, it would resume negotiations with the American Lutheran Church despite tensions within the Synodical Conference over the question.

1942 The Wisconsin Synod authorizes the calling of a full-time institutional missionary to the Fox River Valley area, from Green Bay to Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Two years later the synod adds a second institutional missionary to cover this vast territory.

A similar position is also established to serve hospitals and institutions in and around Madison, Wisconsin. Larger communities, such as Milwaukee and the Twin Cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul, are served by missionaries of the Synodical Conference.

1942 The National Lutheran Editors' Association appeals to the National Lutheran Council for a study of the feasibility of setting up an "all Lutheran federation." The Wisconsin Synod joins in deploring the divisions in the Lutheran church in the United States but declines to participate because it is not convinced that such an effort would serve the cause of true unity.

The Missouri Synod agrees merely to send representatives. Its president, John Behnken, explains that his church body has reservations about "cooperation in externals" and could not accept the National Lutheran Council as an agency best suited to represent all Lutherans in our country.

- 1943 The Wisconsin Synod revises the structure of its General Mission Board by adding the position of mission director who is to serve as chairman of the General Mission Board. The district boards remain more or less autonomous and are coordinated under certain directives of the synod. Special boards, such as the boards of the Indian Mission, the Refugee Mission, and the Lutheran Spiritual Welfare Commission, report regularly to the General Mission Board.
- 1943 The convention of the synod authorizes distribution of Professor Scheweppe's essay on the military chaplaincy to each pastor and teacher in the synod and to all lay delegates at the convention.
- 1943 Because of a rapidly increasing cost of living, the Board of Trustees of the Wisconsin Synod recommends a 10 percent salary increase extended to all missionaries, mission teachers, and professors.
- 1943 The synodical Mission Board presents a practical plan for financing a sound mission and church extension program. The plan includes directions for chapel location and construction, regulations aimed toward missions becoming self-supporting, and a synod committee on building and architecture.
- 1943 Two churches in White Bluffs and Hanford of the Pacific Northwest District are disbanded because the United States War Department is taking 500,000 acres of land and therefore displacing many members.
- 1943 Professor G. Burke retires on November 10 after 59 years of uninterrupted service at Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm. He began his work on November 10, 1884, the day of the dedication and official opening of the institution.
- 1944 Committees of the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church issue a joint statement of doctrine entitled "Doctrinal Affirmations," but the Missouri Synod rejects the document.
- 1944 The executive committee of the American Lutheran Conference, a limited merger of five Lutheran bodies, adopt an "Overture on Lutheran Unity" and submit it to other Lutheran bodies with a view to establishing pulpit and altar fellowship.
- 1944 The boarding school in the Apache Mission at East Fork, Arizona, closes because of a lack of students and teachers, but it reopens in November with an enrollment of 14 grade-school pupils. In the next years, attendance continues to rise.
- 1944 Carl Lawrenz, pastor at North Fond du Lac, is called to serve at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.
- 1944 The Doctrinal Affirmations, a modification of the Missouri Synod's Brief Statement (1931), are presented to all pastors of the Synodical Conference.
- 1944 The Missouri Synod issues a statement on joint prayer and prayer fellowship, in which it declares that joint prayer at intersynodical meetings which ask God for guidance on deliberations aiming at

- unity does not constitute prayer fellowship and therefore is neither unionistic nor sinful.
- 1945 Beginning with the synod convention at New Ulm, a number of changes occur at Michigan Lutheran Seminary. A sixth and seventh professorship are granted. Two years later Professor Werner Franzmann asks to be relieved of duties as inspector and Dr. Einar Anderson, president of Luther High School in Detroit, is called to upgrade the music program.
- 1945 The Wisconsin Synod's committee on doctrinal matters voices its objections and misgivings concerning the Doctrinal Affirmations as a real settlement of differences between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church.
- 1945 The Board of Trustees of the Wisconsin Synod authorizes Dr. Martin Luther College to proceed with the construction of a "temporary structure" for housing young ladies because of a "crying need" for women teachers. The wooden building, known as West Hall, costs about \$27,000 and houses forty young women. It lasts almost forty years.
- 1945 Dr. Martin Luther College once again surpasses its previous high enrollment after years of decline because of the depression and war. The 1927 record enrollment of 261 is now topped by this year's enrollment of 314.
- 1945 The synod's Board of Education reports that it foresees a severe teacher shortage in the next year. Dr. Martin Luther College will graduate only six men and nine women to fill a total of 51 vacancies.
- 1945 The venerable professor, Dr. J. H. Ott, teacher at Northwestern College for 55 years from 1885-1940, dies.
- 1945 The National Lutheran Council revises its 17-year-old constitution to accommodate enlarged areas of responsibility and operation. Its eight constituent bodies make up almost 70 percent of Lutherans in the United States. Member synods of the Lutheran Synodical Conference do not belong to this agency.
- 1946 The city of Milwaukee serves notice on Northwestern Publishing House that the block in which its building is located is being planned for a sports arena. In this same year Mr. Julius Luening, a faithful manager of the Northwestern Publishing House for 47 years (1898-1946), is replaced by Mr. Herbert Schaefer.
- 1946 On December 23 Professor August Pieper, legendary professor at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, dies at the age of 89 years. He had served on the faculty of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary for 41 years (1902-1943).
- 1946 A committee to concern itself with relief for war sufferers in Europe is organized under the name The Wisconsin Synod Committee on Relief for War-Sufferers. Contact persons in each conference supervise such activities as shipping care packages, clothing, medical kits, and Bibles to the needy.
- 1946 The American Lutheran Church rejects the Doctrinal Affirmations as the way to Lutheran unity.

- 1947 The American Lutheran Church issues a Friendly Invitation, reiterating its position on church unity as expressed in the Sandusky Resolutions. The invitation stated that there is an "allowable and wholesome latitude of theological opinion on the basis of the teachings of the Word of God." For this reason the ALC holds that to make the production of a unified statement an absolute necessity "constitutes a threat to evangelical liberty of conscience."
- 1947 The Wisconsin Synod convention authorizes the building of a girls' dormitory at Northwestern Lutheran Academy in Mobridge, South Dakota.
- 1947 Memorials are submitted to the synod encouraging the establishment of Lutheran high schools in localities closer to the homes of prospective high school students. The schools are to be supported locally, and to serve as feeder schools to established synodical colleges.
- 1947 A synod committee is appointed to study the question of accreditation of the synodical high schools and colleges.
- 1947 President John Brenner, acting at the direction of the Wisconsin Synod's standing committee on church union, requests the Missouri Synod to clarify its 1944 stance concerning Scouting which gives the organization of Boy and Girl Scouts "a clean bill of health" despite Scouting's unionistic practices.
- 1947 Superintendent Bodamer and Pastor Al Maas, Executive Secretary of the former Polish Mission, report on conditions of the refugees after World War II. The diaspora mission now functions under the name of the Ev. Lutheran Refugee Mission in Germany. The reorganization occurred at a conference in Memmingen, West Germany.
- 1948 Upon the death of Teacher F. W. Meyer, the first executive secretary of the synod's Board of Education, Teacher Emil Trettin is called to take the position.
- 1948 The Synodical Conference extends full fellowship to the Ev. Lutheran Church in Old Prussia because the latter had established fellowship with the Ev. Lutheran Free Church of Saxony, a church body in Germany previously attached to the Synodical Conference.
- 1948 The enrollment at Northwestern College in Watertown, Wisconsin, once again rises to 311 students, one less than the previous high in 1924. Of the 311 now at the school, 49 are young women and 76 young men come from homes of pastors and teachers.
- 1948 Northwestern Lutheran Academy calls Professor Armin W. Schuetze to the fourth professorship at the school in Mobridge.
- 1948 After negotiations with the city of Milwaukee for its buildings on Fourth Street, the Northwestern Publishing House moves in November to its new location on the northeast corner of West North Avenue and North Thirty-Seventh Street.
- 1949 Director Otto Hoenecke asks to be relieved of his duties as president at Michigan Lutheran Seminary in Saginaw, Michigan. He has held the position since the school's reopening in 1910. He still continues to teach full time.
- 1949 The Committee of Thirty-four on Lutheran Unity, representing the constituent bodies of the National Lutheran Council, meet for the first time and agree that unity is desirable. A subcommittee is to pursue the goal of organic union.
- 1949 Doctrinal commissions of the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church produce The Common Confession—Part I, which both bodies adopt in the next year.
- 1949 The value of the Wisconsin Synod's Church Extension Fund increases rapidly during the decade. In May, the fund is worth \$848,000.00.
- 1949 The General Mission Board of the Wisconsin Synod decides to start work in California. Two missionaries begin in the Los Angeles area. On the eve of its centennial year, the Wisconsin Synod is now working in sixteen states.
- 1949 The Lutheran Synodical Conference officially opens the new Ev. Lutheran Seminary of Nigeria in the chapel at Obot Idim with a student body of ten. Pastor William Schweppe serves as president and Pastor J. Kretzmann as dean. Missionary Norbert Reim is called as theological professor.
- At this time the mission has 130 churches and over 16,000 members, a staff of 14 expatriate pastors, assisted by one American layman, two American women, and two native pastors. A large donation enables the building of a hospital and medical centers.
- 1949 The Wisconsin Synod's mission to the Apache nation is served by four missionaries in the southern San Carlos reservation. Of these, Pastors Edgar Guenther, Alfred Uplegger, Henry Rosin, and Francis Uplegger are veteran missionaries.
- Ten teachers instruct 385 Apache youth at Bylas, Peridot, and East Fork. The latter station has expanded into 9th grade (12 boys and girls) and plans to add 10th grade. Construction of a new school building begins and is finished for dedication by the next year.
- 1949 The Wisconsin Synod begins to celebrate the centennial of its organization in a convention held at Milwaukee from August 3-9. The convention votes to proceed with two centennial projects: a new science-library building at Northwestern College in Watertown, Wisconsin, and Centennial Hall at Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota. This dormitory, needed to house young women, is to be readied for occupancy for the following year.
- 1949 It is reported to the synod convention that the Ev. Lutheran Refugee Mission in Germany is served by nine pastors, three in the Russian zone of eastern Germany. The mission numbers 10,418

people and has a number of students studying for the ministry at the Theological Seminary of the Lutheran Free Churches in Oberursel, near Frankfurt on-the-Main.

1950 In the year of the centennial of its founding, the three original districts of the Joint Synod of Wisconsin register the following statistics:

	Northern Wisconsin	South- eastern Wisconsin	Western Wisconsin
Congregations & missions	145	136	166
Communicant members	44,122	47,891	47,767
Pastors	111	121	111
Elementary Schools	33	46	34
Elementary School enrollment	2,994	4,055	2,980
Teachers	83	126	84

During the years following the Wisconsin Synod's centennial, its relationship with the Missouri Synod continued to deteriorate. At issue were the questions of unionism and fellowship. After the dust settled, the Synodical Conference, a stronghold of world confessional Lutheranism for ninety years, dissolved.

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## The Development of Wisconsin Synod Parish Education 1850-1890

James R. Moeller

### The Beginnings 1850-1860

THESE AROSE IN GERMANY in the decades following 1830 and 1840 the desire to migrate to America. As the history of Germany is examined in those years it is seen that many Germans were restless. Some had been stirred up by the Revolution and continued to be stirred up by the "Romantic aspirations of the college youth."<sup>1</sup> What must also be considered was "the old German urge to settle new lands. When they heard that this country (the United States) offered them a life after their liking in a climate which was also to their liking, their enthusiasm could not be quelled."<sup>2</sup>

With these two references from the Wisconsin Synod's history and the history of one of the oldest churches in the synod, we have the background necessary to understand why these Germans came to America. Others had come in earlier years and sent back glowing reports of the opportunities available in this land. Many times in their reports the territory of Wisconsin was especially mentioned. This area was probably mentioned due to the similarities in climate and soil conditions between Wisconsin Territory and the German homeland.<sup>3</sup>

During the first four years of the decade following 1840 a great number of Lutheran Pommeranians and Brandenburgers came over from Germany.<sup>4</sup> They chose to settle to the north and west of a young and thriving city called Milwaukee. The farmland they settled in northern Milwaukee County and also in Waukesha, Washington, and Ozaukee counties was to their liking for their agricultural pursuits.

However, they brought with them more than their farming methods. Many of the Lutheran immigrants had been trained in their European homeland by their pastors and teachers to consider the preaching and teaching of the word of God an integral and essential part of their life.<sup>5</sup> Many of them would not go on without the church and school with which they had grown up in the old country. Therefore one of the traditions and institutions they brought to their new shores was the combined arrangement of church and parish school.<sup>6</sup>

As the immigrants became more familiar with their new home and state, it became apparent that the parish school would work well in Wisconsin.

Statehood for Wisconsin was first granted in 1848. Public education was but a mere infant. The common school would develop through a course that was undefined and vague.<sup>7</sup> And so it was that these parish schools developed as a necessity and as a means of avoiding the secularized atmosphere of the developing public schools of Wisconsin.<sup>8</sup>

As more German Lutherans and German Lutheran pastors entered Wisconsin, several desired to band together so they could spread God's word in a unified manner. It was in May, 1850, that the First German Ev. Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin was formed at Granville, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin. The minutes of the first meeting of this new Wisconsin Synod point out their support of Lutheran parish education. It was "resolved that every preacher belonging to the body devote himself especially to the youth and conduct a day school, Bible and mission classes, etc." Also at this meeting they adopted the rule that "the pastors are to teach week-day school outside of Sunday school."

The *Gemeindeschule* (congregation's school) had the basic purpose of providing catechism instruction in preparation for adult membership in the congregation. But since this goal could only be achieved if the pupils could read, the basics of an elementary school education were included in the program. The child was also expected to participate in the Lutheran worship service which used the German tongue. The student's pastor spoke German; his teacher taught in German. Therefore nothing could be expected but a Lutheran *German* education in the vernacular.<sup>9</sup>

Looking at the statistics of the Synod in 1860 at its tenth anniversary, it is noted that of forty-eight congregations twenty-three operated weekday schools. The German immigrant parents felt strongly about Christian education in their native tongue. The records of Salem congregation in Granville show how it was assumed that their parish would have a school. The minutes simply state: "The congregation was asked if they wanted a school. It was decided to have one."

### The Years of Growth 1860-1890

Deciding to have the school was one thing. Putting it into operation was another. From the early records it can be learned that it was not easy to organize a church and school in the Wisconsin wilderness. Its management required the services of either a pastor or teacher, one with at least a limited amount of professional education. The synod records show for the years following 1860 that personnel seems to have been no problem to the growth because there was a steady increase in the number of schools.

In the early years the pastor, in addition to being the shepherd of the flock, was also the teacher of the school. This must have been a great deal of work for these men. As early as 1868 the president of the synod urged "with the scarcity of preachers, that larger parishes call more teachers to release the preachers from the schoolwork and make them available for the services of more congregations."<sup>10</sup> This problem was still evident four years later since the editor of the *Gemeindeblatt* ("church news") called it "a widespread evil . . . that pastors must so often devote their time to teaching school." But the editor also recognized that "wherever such conditions have existed, there evidently were no competent teachers on the job."<sup>11</sup>

The problem arose from the fact that many of the early teachers came directly from Germany and they lacked special training. Many times they were found to be "inefficient and unfaithful in the performance of their duties." Then the pastor had to take over. There were exceptions among these early teachers, especially those men who were excellent teachers, musicians, and writers.<sup>12</sup>

Since some congregations were desperate, they would hire a teacher of doubtful ability. It also appears there may have been some teachers of questionable religious background hired since the *Gemeindeblatt* editorialized that "no teacher is to be engaged in our schools . . . unless . . . he be examined thoroughly by the pastor . . . and then be recommended to the synod for membership."<sup>13</sup> Eventually congregations were asked to engage only those teachers with good credentials and who were examined as to their confessional stand.

As more schools developed, the role of the male teacher within the synod also developed. By 1868 the male teachers were invited, in the same way as pastors and delegates, to synod sessions and to partake in the discussion. It was hoped that the congregations would give them vacation time to attend these sessions. By 1872 they were "to enjoy the same rights and duties as the pastors, except the right to vote."<sup>14</sup>

These teachers worked faithfully at their callings. Large classes (at times as high as 123 children per room), low salaries, and short summer vacations of four to six weeks were still the rule. Many, to make ends meet, had to supplement their salaries by doing some other kind of work on the side.<sup>15</sup> The synod gradually came to recognize the efforts these faithful men put forward in these early schools.

One way in which this recognition came was through a synod resolution in 1865 "that teachers should organize teachers' conferences."<sup>16</sup> This did not come to be until 1872 when nineteen teachers formed the *Allgemeine Lehrerkonferenz* (General Teachers' Conference). The early years of the conference show the struggle of getting this organization to prosper and grow. On occasion, few teachers would be present. At other times those who had been assigned papers did not appear at the conference at all, thus creating a void in the program. A variety of reasons given for the poor attendance which prompted the conference to ask permission of synod to drop the annual meeting in August and meet at the same time as the general synod convention. This was granted in 1884.<sup>17</sup>

Conferences for the next twelve years were conducted in a flexible way. Teachers arranged for two or three half day sessions of their own, held during the time the synod convention deliberated. It also appears that many of the teachers, instead of attending a general synodical conference, attended local conferences. Some of these met every month. Others met annually during the summer vacation in July.<sup>18</sup>

One of the questions the teachers' conferences were annually asked to consider was the language question. The medium of instruction taught to students, used by teachers, and requested by parents was still German. Already in 1872 the contention was made "that a good teacher should be qualified to teach all subjects, including English. Only then might he really be called a teacher." This was stated by the editor of the *Gemeindeblatt* in

the issue of February 15, 1872 where he also stated: "I believe that every child in our congregations ought to learn it (the English language) thoroughly, so that in future years our descendants will not be at a disadvantage among those who speak it fluently, but may be able to exert their influence upon our country." Over the years the teachers were gradually preparing themselves for changing conditions in regard to language.

Being willing to teach English was one thing; teaching it was another. Some felt the only effective way to teach English was through the medium of German. Others felt the children would learn more by hearing the language spoken and memorizing suitable passages from English readers. This group felt that the language must be a living thing.<sup>19</sup> There were also complaints about the English primer used. With the primers' ambiguous attitude toward the Christian religion the teachers did not want to use them. Therefore one of the faculty members of the synod's Northwestern College in Watertown, Wisconsin, was asked to prepare an English language book. In later years an English primer and a German and English reader were also authorized.<sup>20</sup> These were published by the synod's Northwestern Publishing House in Milwaukee.

As English was slowly coming into its own in the synod schools, a look must be taken at the training of the teachers. In the early years the teachers were obtained from Germany, but, as already seen, not always with the most pleasing results. By 1871 an arrangement was made to have the synod's teachers trained at the Missouri Synod's teacher seminary at Addison, Illinois.<sup>21</sup> Five years later it was realized that since the parish school had become such an important part of congregational life a teacher-training department was added at the synod's Northwestern College in Watertown.<sup>22</sup> In the five-year course that was eventually developed the necessary pedagogical skills and religious training were taught. But at Northwestern, which was and still is a pre-pastoral training school, teacher-training was a sideline. Many times the five years of study were completed in two or three. At this time the student became a full-fledged pedagogue upon passing an examination.<sup>23</sup>

Things greatly improved in 1893 when the Minnesota, Michigan, and Wisconsin Synods federated. The Minnesota Synod's building in New Ulm, Minnesota, became the teacher-training school of the federation, now called the Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States. Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm has continued as the synod's teacher-training school to this day with the sole purpose of preparing Lutheran teachers for the schools of the Wisconsin Synod.

Another development to further the professional growth of the teachers came at about the same time that the normal department was opened at Northwestern College. In February of 1876 a teachers' journal appeared called the *Schulzeitung*—the journal of the *Lehrerverein* (teachers' association) of the Wisconsin Synod. The first editor was Dr. F. W. A. Notz of the Northwestern faculty. He continued as the editor for twenty years. When Dr. Martin Luther College came to be the teacher-training school, two faculty members from that school took over as editor-in-chief and manager.<sup>24</sup>

The topics the *Schulzeitung* dealt with were of great interest to the teachers of the synod but even the editorial board realized it was running a

losing battle since "there were dozens of English-American school magazines which could offer twice as much . . . as the *Schulzeitung*." Its lack of subscriptions brought its downfall by 1905; there was no additional income to cover the cost of publication other than borrowing money from the general treasury.<sup>25</sup> It would be the late 1930s before another publication would be brought out for teachers by the synod. This was called the *Lutheran School Bulletin* and was the ancestor to the present day *Lutheran Educator*.

The modernizing influences of America were felt in one unusual way. The first women teachers made their appearance in the classrooms of the church schools after 1875. They were called *Lehrerinnen*. This prompted numerous papers on the subject (all from the male teachers) throughout teachers' conferences and meetings. Although discussed for years, it seems to have reached a head in the 1896 meetings. The synod meeting of that year said "it is not only regretted that congregations appointed women teachers because of the smaller salaries involved but disapproved of women teachers altogether and urged all congregations to appoint only men—the very best for the lower grades." Teacher Wedekind at one conference stated in a paper entitled "The Woman Teacher in our Congregational Schools"

Although German educators do not approve of teaching as a profession for women, many of our congregations appoint female teachers because the salaries are lower. Some even think it is best for little children away from their mothers for the first time to be under a woman teacher. But that is a big mistake. Every experienced teacher knows that the instruction of little ones—which must lay the foundations for the whole school—presents the greatest problem and requires the services of a trained schoolmaster.<sup>26</sup>

Teacher Schwartz, in another paper, is quoted by the *Schulzeitung* as stating:

For the instruction of little children the appointment of a woman teacher is permissible if a qualified male teacher is not available. But a woman ought never be permitted to teach older children, certainly not boys, for she cannot train them or be an example to them in later life. Anyway, teaching is not a woman's job.

Obviously more and more teachers in the twenty prior years to 1896 were female. A few had graduated from the Northwestern program and they were allowed in the program when it was transferred to Dr. Martin Luther College. This was a great shock to many of the older male teachers. But this did not stop the increase of the female teacher. By 1910 one woman was even invited to appear on the annual program at the conference. However, even in 1929 the synodical School Committee pointed out that the increasing proportion of women to men among the teachers constituted "a real danger to our schools and to our whole Christian life."<sup>27</sup>

By 1890 the schools and teachers were prospering. The previous thirty years of growth had been good ones. But even in 1889 events were brewing in

the state of Wisconsin that would make the problems of the conference, *Schulzeitung*, and the female teacher appear mild indeed. In the state of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Synod the controversy is known simply as the Bennett Law.

### The Bennett Law and Its Results

It was felt by many people in the nation that Lutheran schools had two faults: (1) they were German schools and (2) their main purpose was the propagation of the German language and culture rather than the teaching of religion.<sup>28</sup> There also arose in Boston around the late 1880s a group called the Committee of One Hundred. Its sole purpose was "to preserve our public schools and defend American institutions." The spread of this group spawned the Edwards law in Illinois and the Bennett law in Wisconsin.<sup>29</sup> In Wisconsin it was aimed at the foreign language private and parochial school. Its intent was to regulate these schools, particularly church schools. Thus this law becomes a pivotal point in the history of Wisconsin Synod schools.

It had been recognized by Governor Smith of Wisconsin, as quoted in the *Gemeindeblatt* of February 1, 1881, that "there exists a wholesome rivalry, but not unfriendly jealousy between the public and private schools of this state . . . the field is wide enough for all." This seems to have degenerated eight years later to the following statement quoted by the synod president, John Bading. President Bading stated that the school superintendent of the Manitowoc County schools had called the parochial schools a standing menace to the state schools.<sup>30</sup>

The situation is best understood by looking at the Bennett law. Passed in 1889, it required every child age seven to fourteen to attend some public or private school "in the city, town, or district in which he resides for not less than twelve weeks a year" and that "no school shall be regarded as a school unless there shall be taught therein . . . reading, writing, arithmetic, and United States history in the English language."<sup>31</sup> Thirdly, this law gave to the local school boards and magistrates the power to enforce these demands.<sup>32</sup>

This law set off a major explosion in the history of the synod. Within a year a vigilance committee of the synod's leading educators and pastors was formed. Among the tasks it was to perform was to study the effects of this law, to take the necessary steps which would make the synod's position known, and bring about a repeal of the law.<sup>33</sup>

The synod's position was quite clear. It felt that: (1) the antagonists of the church school would try to interfere with the church calendar by setting up a public school calendar not agreeing with the church festivals; (2) the law would hinder children from attending church school in another district (as quite a few were doing at this time); (3) the law would crowd German and religion off the school program; or (4) disqualify a school entirely; and (5) the idea of the heavy fine of \$3-\$20 for illegal school attendance was shocking when it was pointed out that both public and parochial schools were supported by the members of synod through taxes and offerings.<sup>34</sup> President Ernst of Northwestern College was quoted in the *Schulzeitung* as saying: "We cannot acknowledge the right of the state to train our children. The

state may and must establish schools if no one else does, but the decision whether these schools are to be used belongs to the parents." The constituency of the synod wholeheartedly echoed these views.

The synod wanted the law repealed. To that end it joined with the Catholics and other churches in opposing the law. It was agreed that the final recourse would be the courts or the ballot box. A state wide election campaign was mapped out. No candidate was to be supported unless he favored the repeal of the law. The synod would not have the parental rights and the free institutions infringed upon.<sup>35</sup>

Due in part to their concerted effort at the ballot box, a great turnover was experienced in the Wisconsin legislature in 1890. The Bennett law was repealed in 1891 and a new school law passed which gave "the most favorable consideration to the wishes and needs of the church circles."<sup>36</sup>

Naturally there had to be positive results after such an active campaign. Within synod circles and the sources read for this paper there seems to be some disagreement on whether the function of the school was readily defined as a result of the crisis. One source feels "when the crisis had passed by, the synod's parochial schools were on their way to becoming more than traditional confirmation classes in which reading, writing, and arithmetic were taught. . . . These schools intended now to justify their co-existence with public schools on a broader philosophic base."<sup>37</sup> A differing source says: "The natural thing would have been an accelerated pace in the increase of schools and the manning of more schools with trained teachers. . . . It did not arouse the church to a deeper study of the real function of the parochial school."<sup>38</sup> As the years have passed it would appear that both statements in their own ways would be correct. They intended to justify their coexistence with public schools and have also had an accelerated pace in the number of schools and trained teachers. Since that time the Wisconsin Synod has taken strenuous steps to ensure that its schools are neither integrated with public institutions nor placed under the control of any state board of education.<sup>39</sup>

There was also positive action in other directions. At the time of the initial appearance of the Bennett law, two other committees were appointed. One was to examine certain English texts to be published by the synod. The other was to work out a uniform plan of instruction for both one and four class schools (this is in time prior to the eight grades system). They were also to compile a complete set of statistics on the teachers and the courses of the synod's schools which were then to be published.<sup>40</sup> This committee became known as the School Committee.

It also developed that the synod created the office of school secretary and chose as the first secretary the long-time editor of the *Schulzeitung*, Dr. F. W. A. Notz. His main job was to annually gather the school statistics. It was also the hope that through the secretary and the above mentioned School Committee more uniformity in the conduct of the schools could be brought about.<sup>41</sup> As this committee developed over the years, it became the synod's Board for Parish Education, which assists in the direction of all aspects of the congregation's educational program. It also runs the School Visitation Program, a unique system where all schools and teachers are regularly visited to observe their functioning as individuals and as part of the school system.



The Bennett law, although not the death-blow to use of German in the school, was an agent that hastened its demise. The 1905 minutes of the local Milwaukee Conference state: "Ministers, teachers, and laymen still believed that German would continue as the medium of instruction in singing . . . and arithmetic . . . and that suitable texts would have to be supplied." But German was rapidly losing ground. On the whole, by the early 1900s, the schools had developed to the point where the change from German to English meant only an increase in efficiency. English was made part of the curriculum in the larger schools because the public school used it along with business and community interests.<sup>12</sup> The last German textbook published by the synod came in 1912.

Although the transition to English came about in the synod, there were farming communities where German was the primary tongue until the early 1950s. Even today there are still some churches and radio broadcasts where the services are conducted in German. Slowly these are fading away.

A greater degree of professionalism also began to surface in 1897 when the first meeting of the newly functioning and newly named *Staatslehrerkonferenz* (State Teachers' Conference) was held. This was a new development since it was felt that more time should be devoted to teachers' meetings than just the two or three half days during the synodical convention. The conference, to this day, remains a vital force, especially of the synod's teachers in the state of Wisconsin. The other districts of the synod have developed their own conferences over a period of time.<sup>43</sup> The conference has supported the synod in the producing of its own texts and through the years the conference has helped in the development of report cards, kindergarten materials, and other aids beneficial to the teacher.

Of great importance, the Bennett law showed the need for well-trained teachers. Two years after the repeal of the law the teacher-training course was established at Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota. The members of the synod saw the need for the school and supported it. The graduates of this school brought new blood into the ranks and there was a marked improvement in teaching methods and overall harmony. These new teachers were the driving force in reviving the *Staatslehrerkonferenz*.<sup>44</sup>

Women were permitted at New Ulm beginning in 1897, but few took this opportunity. For many years a number of the female teachers in the synod were trained at the Lutheran High School of Milwaukee. It appears they began teaching upon their high school graduation.<sup>45</sup> But one thought was clearly evident: Lutheran teachers of the synod must be trained within the Lutheran schools of the synod.

### Conclusion

It is well to call the Bennett law the pivotal point in the development of the Wisconsin Synod parish school. The effect it had on the synod with the results that followed still have some effect on the operation of our schools today.

The schools of the Wisconsin Synod are parochial schools. They are not private schools. They have been set up and maintained by the congregations of the synod since its earliest days to provide a Christian education for the children of the congregation. The Bennett law helped sharpen that

purpose. Not only would the parochial school teach the confirmation and religion classes from the viewpoint of God's word, but all subject matter would be taught in the light of that word. The schools have been called a family affair, run by the congregation to assist the parents of the congregation in the spiritual development of the child. Although the writers of the Bennett law never dreamed of that as a result, the law hastened the concept. The idea that all the subject matter is to be taught through the light of God's word is one that comes from the time of the crisis and continues to this day.

There have been other factors in the twentieth century that have affected our schools. Events in world and United States history have affected both public and parochial schools. The state of public education today also contributes to the growth of our schools. In time this too may cause some changes within our system. But none will have the affect on our system as the years 1860-1890. They cast the mold for decades to come.

### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>John Philipp Koehler, *The History of The Wisconsin Synod* (Leigh D. Jordahl, editor—"Faith-Life", the Protes'tant Conference, 1970).

<sup>2</sup>Salem Centennial Booklet (1847-1947), Town of West Granville, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, unnumbered pages.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup>*Continuing in His Word*, a centennial history of the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod 1850-1950 (Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, 1950) p. 209.

<sup>6</sup>Wayne E. Schmidt, *Wisconsin Synod Lutheran Parochial Schools: An Overview of the Years 1850-1890*. (Doctoral dissertation for the University of Wisconsin, 1968) p. 353.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 355,356.

<sup>8</sup>*Educational Survey for the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod 1962*, Volume I—*Dimensions of the Educational Task* (by the Bureau of Field Studies and Surveys, College of Education, University of Minnesota), p. 21.

<sup>9</sup>Schmidt, pp. 356,358.

<sup>10</sup>Koehler, p. 165.

<sup>11</sup>*Gemeindeblatt*, May 15, 1872.

<sup>12</sup>*Diamond Jubilee Booklet*—the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the Wisconsin State Teachers' Conference 1872-1947, (Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, 1947) p. 18.

<sup>13</sup>*Gemeindeblatt*, June 15, 1872.

<sup>14</sup>Koehler, p. 165.

<sup>15</sup>*Diamond Jubilee Booklet*, pp. 13-15.

<sup>16</sup>Koehler, p. 164.

<sup>17</sup>*Diamond Jubilee Booklet*, p. 14.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>21</sup>Koehler, p. 187.

<sup>22</sup>Silas Krueger "Teach Them Diligently", an essay delivered to the Biennial Synod Convention in 1973 at DMLC, New Ulm, Minn. unpublished, p. 13.

<sup>23</sup>*Diamond Jubilee Booklet*, p. 20.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 11,12.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>28</sup>*Continuing in His Word*, p. 214.

<sup>29</sup>Koehler, p. 214.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 183.

<sup>31</sup>H. Russell Austin, *The Wisconsin Story—The Building of a Vanguard State*. (The Milwaukee Journal—Milwaukee, 1948) p. 251.

<sup>32</sup>*Continuing in His Word*, p. 215.

<sup>33</sup>*Diamond Jubilee Booklet*, p. 17.

<sup>34</sup>Koehler, p. 184.

<sup>35</sup>*Diamond Jubilee Booklet*, p. 17.

<sup>36</sup>Koehler, p. 185.

<sup>37</sup>Schmidt, p. 360.

<sup>38</sup>Koehler, p. 187.

<sup>39</sup>*Educational Survey*, p. 21.

<sup>40</sup>*Diamond Jubilee Booklet*, p. 18.

<sup>41</sup>*Handbook for School Visitors—The Wisconsin Synod Program of School Visitation*, (Board for Parish Education—WELS, Milwaukee) p. 3.

<sup>42</sup>Koehler, p. 162.

<sup>43</sup>*Diamond Jubilee Booklet*, p. 21.

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 20.

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## The Church with a 158-Year Vow Schiffbruchsgottesdienst Trinity Lutheran Church, Jenera, Ohio

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“IF WE ARE SAVED, the 17th of each September shall be kept as a holy day by us and our descendants, even unto the third and fourth generation.” This vow was made by a group of German immigrants in the year 1831. When they made this vow, they were off the coast of Virginia in the midst of a treacherous storm. This storm had caused a large hole to be torn in their ship. As the ship filled with water, and as the storm raged on, they turned to their Lord as their only hope. They realized that their efforts were useless without the help of the almighty God, the same God who stilled the storm on the Sea of Galilee, the same God who gave his Son as a ransom for their sins, the same God who had led them to the coast of Virginia.

God saved them in 1831, and their vow is still being kept today, 158 years later. Every year during the second week of September, the descendants of these German immigrants gather to thank God for saving their forefathers. In the village of Jenera, Ohio, there is a special service, traditionally called the “shipwreck service,” in German the *Schiffbruchsgottesdienst*.”

The German immigrants had their roots in the Grand Duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt in the southern part of Germany. They lived in the wooded hills of the Odenwald just east of the Rhine River. Most of them came from the villages of Gadernheim, Lautern, Raidelbach, and Reichenbach, located along the Lauter River about fifteen miles west of the city of Worms.

Within this group of villages was a small church on a hill overlooking the village of Reichenbach. The church served the Lutherans from all four of the villages. The church was erected in 1426 and rebuilt in 1747. In 1540 the church followed Luther's reformation and turned Lutheran.

The church suffered a great deal during the first half of the 17th century. First there was the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648). Then the congregation was left without a pastor from 1634 until 1669. In the year 1630, the plague hit that part of Germany, taking the lives of 100 persons, among them whole

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families from Reichenbach. The Arras family, one of the families which came to America, was almost wiped out by the plague. Only one person was spared. This was Balthaser Arras, who was a forefather of John Peter, one of the leaders of the German immigrants.

The people of the Reichenbach congregation made their living from a number of different trades. The Tracht family, another forefather of the immigrants, ran a mill where they extracted oil from a certain variety of nut peculiar to that region. Later this mill expanded to a saw mill. Farming was the most common occupation. Many of these farmers were drawn to America by the cheap land and fertile soil.

In 1820 the economy of Germany was very poor. A pair of high-top boots cost as much as an acre of farm land. This was one of the reasons which motivated the people to migrate to America. They also wanted to get away from the forced military service. It was mandatory that once a boy was sixteen, he had to serve three years in the service. Other reasons for leaving Germany were high taxes and an unfair government.

Two men decided to organize a group of friends and neighbors to travel to America. One of these men was Johann Adam Tracht. According to a genealogy of the Tracht family, Johann Tracht was a military man. He was known as "der alte Soldat." He served a long and distinguished career. First he served three years in the regular army of Germany. He was a member of the body guard of Prince Ludwig of Hesse-Darmstadt. In 1807 he was drafted into the Grand Army of France. While with the Grand Army of France, he spent five hard years under Napoleon in the Spanish campaign. After Napoleon surrendered, Tracht returned to Germany. In 1815 and 1816 he was a grand ducal Hessian guard at Darmstadt.

During his time in the military he was imprisoned twice, but he was never wounded. He attributed the fact that he was never wounded to his faith in God. Mr. Tracht used Psalm 91 as a prayer every day at dawn and sunset until he died at the age of 91.

Tracht urged many of his relatives and friends to make the trip with him to America. Unfortunately, times were bad, and few people had enough money to make the trip. Apparently Tracht was a fairly wealthy man, because he paid for the passage of 18 adults. They planned to leave in 1830, but they had to postpone their trip twice. Tracht's sister and her family did leave for America in 1830 and later settled in Hamilton County, Ohio.

In 1831 Tracht and his group, numbering 162 people, started out on their journey. The other leader of the group appears to have been John Peter Arras. It is not known whether this number included the crew of the ship or just the immigrants. But it appears there were at least 150 people leaving Germany for America.

It is uncertain exactly what day they left their homes. It was sometime in June or July. The first leg of their journey took them through Darmstadt and Kassel to Bremen, about a 300 mile trip. They were leaving behind possessions, jobs, and the security of their homes.

They arrived at Bremen sometime in July. On July 29 they left for Bremerhaven, the seaport of Bremen. From here they would set sail. Two days later they loaded their belongings onto two ships. One of these was a British ship, the "James Beacham." Later it became known as the "Famous Dove" or the

"Famous Pigeon." This ship was sailing for Baltimore. The other ship was a Dutch ship, sailing for New York.

Since the British ship was newer and faster than the Dutch ship, everyone wanted to board it. This ship was 118 feet long, 28 feet wide and 20 feet high, with two masts and 24 sails. These sails were so big that one of the passengers said that the richest farmer didn't have as much cloth as was used for the sails. The ship was neatly arranged with sleeping rooms and other rooms for convenience. It cost about \$35,000 to build, and it could carry 7800 tons of cargo.

The ship was soon loaded with the possessions of the immigrants and provision for the voyage. An excerpt from a letter written by John Peter Arras tells what some of these provisions were.

We needed potatoes, beans, peas, barley, rice, white flour, tea, sugar, coffee, the herring are very good, eggs, cheese, sausage, vinegar, wine, white and dark Zwieback, the white is tastier than the dark. We could take bread for 15 days also beef for 14 days, you salt it some, or else it would sour and could not be eaten. The water was terrible. Pork kept better, it would not sour as fast.

After the provisions were loaded, the passengers went on board. Here is a partial list of the passengers. The number in parenthesis is the number of people in that family.

Arras, Adam (10)	Heldman
Arras, Peter (4)	Kruchbaum (Krichbaum) (8)
Arras, John (3)	Luniach (Luneack) (6)
Bauer, Heinrich (3)	Pifer, Peter
Bauer, M. (4)	Preis (Price), Christian
Bauer, John	Preis (Price), Nicholaus (4)
Bauer, Wm.	Repper, Gero
Bietsch (Beach)	Repper, Lich
Bosse	Repper, Peter (7)
Blumenschein (3)	Rettig, Adam
Dillman, Peter (3)	Rauch, Johannes
Essinger, Adam	Schaller
Essinger, Nick	Schmidt, George (5)
Fullhart, Jacob	Tracht (Traucht),
Gaszman (Gossman),	Johann Adam (12)
John (5)	Tracht (Traucht), Philip (4)
Griner, Philip (3)	Willisch (Wilch), John Peter
Gossman, A.	Willisch (Wilch), Michael
Haszman	Von Stein (2)

In his letter home, John Peter Arras reports that they left port on August 1. The captain said the trip would take 32 days. When they began the trip, it appeared as if they would make it in that time.

... We took off with a strong wind and traveled very fast, within a few hours some of us were seasick but in a few days we recovered. It took six days to go through the channel. When you get out to sea, you feel like you are traveling in a valley and you can't see very much.

Unfortunately, the trip didn't continue to go as well as it began. After a number of days, the travelers encountered problems. They had no wind for 12 days. For a couple of days the wind blew in the wrong direction. They were also hit by a couple of storms. It soon became apparent they were not going to make the trip in 32 days.

They also had other problems to deal with during the trip. Some of these had to do with the captain and the crew. The captain was young and inexperienced. (Some sources suggest that his name was Galt.) This was said to be his first trip at sea, and he had a taste for strong liquor. Some reports say that he was often drunk and that he stole some of the provisions from the passengers for himself and the crew. There were also complaints about the cook. Apparently, he didn't serve good meals or keep his kitchen clean.

While at sea there were two deaths. Heinrich Bauer lost a child, and Philip Griner lost a daughter. It is not known what caused these deaths.

The worst was yet to come. On September 16, their last day at sea, a strong gale struck. During the storm the ship hit a sand bar. The sand bar tore a large hole in the bottom of the ship. The ship quickly filled with water.

The story about the shipwreck has been handed down from generation to generation. After all these years it is difficult to separate fact from fiction. It was said that the captain had been drinking that evening. When the ship began to fill with water, he quickly sobered up. When he realized the ship was sinking, he ordered his crew to launch a life boat so that they could escape. They weren't concerned about their passengers.

When the immigrants realized what was going on, Johann Tracht took control. He took seven guns out of his trunk. (These guns were brought along to hunt wild game. This was a pleasure they were forbidden in Germany.) He armed six men and kept one gun for himself. He then gave orders to shoot anyone who attempted to abandon ship. The seven armed men easily persuaded the crew to stay on board.

In order to stop the ship from being tossed about by the storm, the brother of J. P. Arras ordered the men to cut down the mast. The violent tossing stopped.

The storm raged on. The ship was quickly filling with water, and it appeared that it would sink before the morning. As fear gripped everyone, Margaret Arras, Johann's 13-year-old daughter, reminded the people how Jesus quieted the waters of the Sea of Galilee and saved his disciples. "Maybe," she said, "he will save us also." One of the sailors told the people to slap the girl in the mouth for talking so foolishly. Then, according to reports, Margaret started to sing a hymn. Some reports say it was "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God." Others say it was Paul Gerhardt's hymn:

This I believe, yea, rather  
Of this I make my boast  
That God is my dear Father,  
The friend who loves me most.  
And that what e'er betide me  
My Savior is at hand  
Through stormy seas to guide me  
And bring me safe to land.

Soon all of the immigrants joined in the singing. It was said that even the hardened sailors joined in singing and praying.

"If we are saved," the immigrants vowed, "the 17th of each September shall be kept as a holy day by us and our descendants, even unto the third and fourth generation."

By the next morning the storm had stopped. When they looked out toward the west, they discovered they were only 100 yards from land, off the coast of Virginia just south of Cape Henry.

The only eyewitness account of the shipwreck is found in J. P. Arras' letter home, written in September 1831. He described the shipwreck:

On September 16th at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, there was a good, strong wind; seems as if it always started out strong. By nightfall the captain had drunk too much and was asleep, leaving the steering of the ship to the pilot. It was dark and all we could do was leave it in the hands of our Lord. At 11 o'clock that night the ship hit a beach and the sailor yelled we found land. Everyone jumped up to see, but it was too late. The ship started to thrust, knock, and crack. We believed here was our grave-site within two hours. Since everything was getting out of hand, my brother got out of patience with the captain. The masts had to be cut down. Within minutes the captain had the masts cut down and the sails were in the water so the wind had no power any more. The ship was buried in the sand and filled with water to the water line. We did not suffer any disaster. Everyone was saved by the hand of our Lord and Father. So as daylight came we took our belongings and headed for land in a boat. It was about 100 steps from land. If our captain had been alert, he would have seen all this about 8 o'clock the night before and saved the ship.

It is significant that he didn't make too much of the events which took place during the storm. One possible explanation is that this is only pious fiction. There is another possible explanation. The letter that J. P. Arras wrote home sounds like a good public relations letter. He spent a great deal of time describing the wealth which could be found in America. Perhaps he didn't make much of the wreck so that he wouldn't scare his relatives and friends. Many of them were planning on following Arras over to America in the coming years.

We also can gain some reliable information from a newspaper article which appeared in "The Norfolk Herald" on Monday, September 19, 1831.

The brig, "James Beascham," Galt, of and for Baltimore, from Bremen whence she sailed 1st August with 160 passengers went ashore about 15 miles to the south of Cape Henry on Friday night last at about 11:00 o'clock in a gale from the northeast. The crew and passengers have got ashore—vessel bilged and full of water. When our informant left the wreck, exertions were being made to save the baggage of the passengers, cargo, etc.

Many people had gathered on the shore to help the immigrants to land. (Among these were a number of black people. This was the immigrants' first

contact with blacks, and they were uneasy around them.) To get them to shore they fastened cables to the wrecked vessel, and then fastened the opposite end of the cable to trees along the shoreline. Using the cables, the immigrants made the trip by small boats to shore: first the families; then the single men. Johann Tracht, the organizer of the party, was the last to leave the ship. No one was lost.

When all were safely on the shore, they thanked God for saving them from the storm, and they repeated their vow.

Once ashore they were befriended by some well-to-do families. J. P. Arras describes them in a letter:

The people that lived in the area came and took us to their homes and gave us something to eat. Here we saw how these people lived. In the morning they took their guns and went horseback riding; they have colored people to help them cook and do housework. The wife does not do anything but set the table. When the cook brings in the meal, they sit down and eat. I did not see much other work being done.

They stayed in this area until September 21. Then they went to New York. Staying in New York for a day, they left for Baltimore on a steamship on the 23rd. In Baltimore they exchanged their German gulden for American dollars. Since they lost many of their possessions, the group decided that each family would have to earn its own way to Ohio. J. P. Arras writes that he left Baltimore on September 29 and went to Friedricktown. He was still there in November because a second letter was sent to Germany from there on November 7. From Baltimore the families worked their way to Ohio. For a while a number of the families settled in Pennsylvania and Maryland.

Many of them had to earn some money before they went on. Work was there for those who wanted it. J. P. Arras made this comment in his second letter home:

There is work to be had if you want to work. A day laborer can earn more here than a farmer can in Germany. Lich and Gero Repper are working as hand laborers, they laid railroad tracks, earning \$1.00 a day. They are building a new track to Friedricktown.

J. P. Arras lists the price which he paid for certain goods: a dollar for a bushel of apples, a dozen eggs for 25¢, butter was 20¢ a pound, a barrel of kraut was \$1.75, a bushel of potatoes was \$1.25. Beef was 4¢ a pound, and pork was 6¢ a pound. At this time land in Ohio was about two dollars an acre.

Travel to Ohio also presented a difficulty for the immigrants. They had no paved roads to travel on, and at times they didn't have even mud paths. George Price, the son of one of the immigrants, gave this report to the Findlay Daily Courier, describing the trip from Washington County, Pennsylvania, to their new home in Hancock County, Ohio:

Mr. Price was taking the lead when his team reached what was then called Potato Creek Swamp, near Mt. Blanchard. Here one horse sank to his sides in the mud and could not move. Darkness was already settling over the unhappy immigrants and,

surrounded as they were by a howling wilderness, the women broke down and cried in despair. But the animal was finally pried out of the mud and the travelers moved on to Mt. Blanchard and put up for the night. The next day they were able to get seven miles farther west and spent the night at the tavern on Eagle Creek, kept by Mr. John Diller.

The immigrants began to arrive in Hancock County in 1834. It is noted in an Essinger family history that Indians still camped in this area, but they didn't cause any problems. Twelve families arrived in the first year and their deeds went on record May 20. An example of this is found in the Hancock County record book.

Peter Pifer and C. Price, both of Penn. on the 20th of May, 1834, made entries of land, the one took up the northeast quarter of Section 8 and the other the east half of the northeast quarter of Section 9.

The following year 11 more families arrived, and then in 1836 three more finished their journey. All of the immigrants finally arrived with the exception of several families.

Much of the land bought by these families has been handed down from generation to generation. Many of the farmers still have the deeds which were signed by President Andrew Jackson. The population of Hancock County grew rapidly during this decade. In the census of 1830 there were only 814 inhabitants in the county. By 1840 that number grew to 9986.

At this time Hancock County was heavily forested. The timber consisted principally of walnut and different varieties of oak, ash, maple, and elm, with beech, sycamore, and buckeye. The soil on the lowlands was a black loam, on the uplands clay, but mingled and enriched by other substances as to be very fertile.

From this land the immigrants carved out the farms and built their homes. It was in this area they established a church. In 1834 the congregation organized and adopted a constitution. Zion was chosen as the first name. In 1853 the congregation split. Part of the congregation formed St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church (now ELCA) and the other part formed Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church (now WELS).

The vow which was made off the coast of Virginia was kept throughout the history of these two congregations. The first recorded shipwreck service was held September 17, 1836. This was probably held in the home of Jacob Vollhart or at the Funk's Mill. The early church services of the German immigrants were held at these two places until they built a church in 1852. The text for the first shipwreck service was Psalm 50:15: "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver you, and you will honor me." This same text was used in 1881 for the fiftieth anniversary. At that time ten of the original survivors attended the service.

The early days of the shipwreck service seem to have been festive events. Eva Grieser, 80, a fourth-generation descendant of John Peter Arras, said that as a girl she was often told the story of the shipwreck.

When I was a girl growing up, the observance of shipwreck day was just like a Sunday. It was a day of thanksgiving for the

safety of our forefathers. I have always had a deep feeling about the day. The children are now more foreign to the feeling than I am, I am sure. But it seems to be just as important and means as much in this community as it did when I was a girl.

Today the shipwreck service is still observed. The descendants of those German immigrants take time to remember how God rescued their forefathers. Many of the same family names from the passenger list of the "Famous Dove" are on the membership roles of Trinity and St. Paul today. Names such as Bauer, Beach, Essinger, Heldman, Rettig, Schaller, and Von Stein are still common in these churches and around the community of Jenera.

God willing, those descendants will also be able to celebrate the 200th anniversary remembering the power and grace of God who saved them from death in the storm, and more important, from eternal death through his Son.



The seal of the WELS Historical Institute depicts Salem Lutheran Landmark Church, built in 1863 on the site of the "birthplace of the Wisconsin Synod." (Salem now serves as the museum of the Wisconsin Synod.) In 1850 the Wisconsin Synod was born; in 1981 the WELS Historical Institute officially came into being. The German inscription is a reminder of the Synod's German roots. The words mean "Remember the former time." The cross reminds us of Jesus Christ, the Lord of all history.

#### WELS Historical Institute Board of Directors

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# Salem Lutheran Landmark Church (WELS Museum)

Located at 6814 N. 107th Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

## Tours

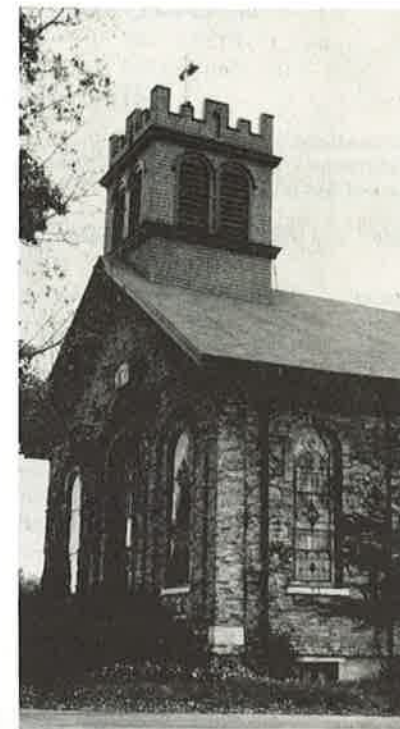
Numbers in parentheses indicate number of people in each tour.

### 1989

- May 2 Women's Guild, Risen Savior, Milwaukee, WI (19)
- May 3 Shoreland Lutheran High School, Somers, WI (38)
- May 20 Sts. John and Peter Church, Cleveland, WI (12)
- May 24 Atonement School, Milwaukee, WI (16)
- July 12 Mark and Sue Sprengeler and children, Kowloon, Hong Kong (5)
- July 29 St. Paul Church, Marshall, WI (22)
- August 1 St. John Church, Edgar, WI and Zion Church, Marathon, WI (4)
- August 4 St. Paul vacation Bible school students, Slinger, WI (11)
- August 14 Willow Lake Church, Willow Lake, SD (8)

To arrange a tour, please contact: Mrs. Evelyn Schafer, 8949 N. 97th St. Apt. D112, Milwaukee, WI 53224. Phone 414/357-6908.

## Views



# Monetary Donations

## Historical Institute

Donations by 94 individuals and organizations to the institute during the period 4/15/88 to 4/28/90 totaled \$3,525.85. Included in this total are the following donations of \$50.00 or more:

June	1988	Our Savior School, San Antonio, TX	\$142.62
		Salem Church, Milwaukee, WI	\$127.62
August	1988	Memorials for Hilda Schmidt	\$200.00
October	1988	AAL Branch 210, St. John, Wauwatosa, WI	\$100.00
January	1989	Mr. and Mrs. David A. Carow	\$100.00
		Mt. Olive Church, Detroit, MI	\$100.00
June	1989	St. Paul Ladies Aid, Algoma, WI	\$50.00
		St. John School, Princeton, WI	\$225.00
		Southeastern Wisconsin District Pastor/ Teacher Conference	\$453.00
September	1989	Lydia Society, Marshall, WI	\$50.00
		Salem School, Milwaukee, WI	\$520.00
November	1989	Rev. Roland C. Ehlke	\$100.00
		Immanuel Ladies Aid, Hutchinson, MN	\$86.50

## Archives

Donations from 580 individuals and organizations during 1988 and 1989 for construction of the synod's archives at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary totaled \$10,968.14. Included in this total are the following donations of \$100.00 or more:

February	1988	Max Lehninger, Jr.	\$100.00
		Norbert Manthe	\$100.00
		AAL Branch 155, West Allis, WI	\$250.00
		Roger Frey	\$100.00
		St. John Church and School, Red Wing, MN	\$200.00
		James Schaefer	\$100.00
		John Steudel	\$100.00
		Hilda L. Vogel	\$100.00
		Rev. Martin B. Petermann	\$100.00
March	1988	St. Peter Church, Milwaukee, WI	\$100.00
		Rev. and Mrs. Roland C. Ehlke	\$100.00
		Rev. and Mrs. Albert Lorenz	\$100.00
April	1988	AAL Branch 1413/Ladies Guild, Trinity, South Mequon, WI	\$425.00
		Doris Schoenicke	\$100.00
June	1988	St. Luke Sunday School, Vassar, MI	\$116.14
August	1988	AAL Branch 46, Neillsville, WI	\$100.00
		St. John Ladies Aid, Neillsville, WI	\$100.00
October	1988	Norbert M. Manthe	\$100.00

November	1988	Max Lehninger, Jr.	\$100.00
		David's Star Senior Bible Class, Jackson, WI	\$100.00
		St. Peter Ladies Aid, Weyauwega, WI	\$100.00
December	1988	Metro-north, Metro-south Pastors' Conference, Milwaukee, WI	\$152.00
May	1989	Rev. H. J. Lemke	\$100.00
		Stuart and Debra Freese	\$100.00
Grants:		Lutheran Brotherhood	\$45,000.00
		Siebert Foundation	\$25,940.00
		Lutheran Brotherhood (additional)	\$5,000.00
		WELS Gift Fund	\$20,000.00

## Museum

November	1989	Schwan Enterprises	\$10,000.00
May	1990	Mr. and Mrs. Wilbert Pipkorn	\$1,200.00

# Materials Donated to the WELS Archives

## May 1988—December 1989

The individual, congregation or organization listed before each item is the donor.

### 1988

May	Prof. Roland Hoenecke, New Ulm, MN: box of anniversary booklets, and family papers.
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### 1989

January	Waldemar Pless library: <i>Grace for Grace</i> (ELS history). Mrs. Ralph Solberg, Yakima, WA: 4 postcard views of WELS churches and Mequon area, 1907-1910.
May	Betty Numrich, Eagle River, WI: old cut paper valentine with Scripture verse. Prof. William Zell, Mishicot, WI: WLS class picture, 1947. Mrs. Richard Lauersdorf, Jefferson, WI: 2 issues of <i>Arizona Highways</i> (1962 and 1963) featuring Apacheland scenes. Mr. Orville L. Scharf, Sturgeon Bay, WI: 3 large lithographs of life of Christ. Rev. Winfred Koelpin, Canton, MI: box of anniversary and dedication booklets. Miss Penny Purtzer, New Ulm, MN: 3 boxes books, library of Rev. C. J. Albrecht.
July	Rev. Robert Sievert, Milwaukee, WI: 9 sets of photographic negatives of Wis. Luth. State Teachers' Conference and of synod conventions and Minnesota District conventions.



August University Lutheran Chapel, Oshkosh, WI: invitation to dedication of new campus ministry chapel, 1989.

September Salem, Escanaba, MI: centennial booklets and programs.

Rev. James Schaefer, Milwaukee, WI: photo of Edgar Hoenecke with E. A. Sitz.

Paul Prange, Saginaw, MI: 2 biographical sketches of MLS tutors.

Prof. Edward Meyer, New Ulm, MN: *Life and Work of Fritz Otto Reuter*; anniversary booklet and programs from WELS churches.

Mr. Clarence Kurtz, Eagle River, WI: box of personal effects of Rev. C. F. W. Allwardt.

Evelyn Campbell, West Bend, WI: photos of Grace, Milwaukee.

Erwin R. Troeller, Hartford, WI: anniversary booklet, Trinity, Hartford, WI.

Prof. David Kuske, Mequon, WI: church anniversary booklet, Immanuel, Elgin, N.D.; photos, WLS 125th anniversary.

Myrle Wagenknecht, Fort Worth, TX: South Central District records.

Prof. Delmar Brick, New Ulm, MN: slides, NWC, WLS, Northern Wis. District churches; anniversary and dedication booklets.

October Rev. Arnold Lemke, Excelsior, MN: dedication booklet, Faith, Excelsior, MN.

Rev. Nathan Retzlaff, Lomira, WI: conference minutes, 1898-1936, Dodge-Washington Conference, Southeast Wisconsin District.

WLS Library, Mequon, WI: WLS class picture, 1986 and 1989; booklet on Pastor Hy Vogel, 1842-1910.

Rev. Paul Lindloff, Oakley, MI: dedication and centennial materials, Christ, Oakley, MI.

Rev. Gerhard Cares, Centerville, MI: anniversary booklet, Zion, Columbus, WI.

Rev. Mark Zarling, Ft. Atkinson, WI: dedication booklet, Bethany, Ft. Atkinson, WI.

Rev. James Behringer, Penryn, CA: NWC commencement folder, 1907; church dedication material.

Anonymous: *Church Hymnal* (NPH publication).

Rev. Wm. J. Schaefer II, Minneapolis, MN: 1967 centennial booklet, St. John, Minneapolis, MN: pictorial directory, 1986.

Rev. Robert Mohrhardt: WELS 1949 centennial booklet; anniversary booklets, 50th (1944) and 75th (1969), Siloah, Milwaukee, WI.

Miss Gertrude Gieschen: 17 pictures (c 1911) of St. John, Wauwatosa, WI, WLS, and NWC Prof. Gustave Westerhaus.

Mrs. Eleanore (John) Jeske: copy of Milwaukee Journal article on history of St. Peter, Milwaukee.

Rev. Gerhardt Kionka, Milwaukee, WI: copy of picture of 1948 officers of Western Wisconsin District.

Dr. Milton Oswald: correspondence from Nigerian missionary Dr. Wm. Schweppe.

Rev. John Miller, Crete, IL: anniversary materials, Trinity, Crete, IL.

Rev. Allen Zenker, Brownsville, WI: photo of NWC c. 1890.

Mr. Donald Gieschen: biographical material on Rev. Gerhard Gieschen.

Mr. Alfons Woldt, Milwaukee, WI: copies of his "History of WELS Special Ministries."

Rev. Dan Drews: anniversary booklet, Shepherd of the Plains, Lubbock, TX.

Prof. John Jeske: church bulletins, St. John, Jefferson, WI, and St. Peter, Fond du Lac, WI.

Mrs. Arthur Ehlke: 1884-1898 records and 1946 anniversary booklet of Wisconsin Lutheran State Teachers' Conference; WLS library dedication booklet.

Anonymous: anniversary booklet, Gethsemane School, Milwaukee, WI; WLS 1939 Christmas concert program; newsletter, WLA, Fond du Lac, WI.

November Rev. Kurt Lueneberg, Memphis, TN: 7 items from Gloria Dei, Memphis, TN.

Prof. Herbert Jaster, Prairie du Chien, WI: obituary of Rev. Erhard Rupp.

Rev. Bob Hein, Appleton, WI: handbook and anniversary directory, St. Matthew, Appleton, WI.

Rev. Tom Trapp, Madison, WI: materials from WELS Lutheran Campus Ministry, Madison, WI.

Rev. Tom Knickelbein, Ann Arbor, MI: leaf from Geneva English Bible, 1588; anniversary booklet and directory, Salem, Ann Arbor, MI.

December Mr. and Mrs. Lorenz Jaeger: F. A. Moldenhauer's "Pilgrims of the Town of Lebanon, Dodge Co., Wis." 1943.

Mr. Ray Hafemeister, centennial booklet, St. Paul, Dale, WI.

Martin Wm. Johnson: microfilms of pre-WWI German gazeteers with locations of parish churches in Germany.

Rev. Joel Prange, Redding, CA: history, directories, and anniversary materials, 1964-1989, of Mt. Calvary, Redding, CA.

Rev. Joel Pless, Edgar, WI: News clippings and history/directories of St. John, Edgar, and Zion, Marathon, WI.

Anonymous: article in German on Zum Kripplein Christi, Iron Ridge, MI.

Anonymous: recordings of funeral and committal of Rev. O. J. Naumann at Mt. Lebanon, Milwaukee, WI, 1979.

Rev. Richard Kuckhahn, Gibbon, MN: organ dedication materials, Good Shepherd, Plymouth, WI, 1989; 1985 centennial booklet, Immanuel, Gibbon, MN.

Rev. Alan Siggelkow, Milwaukee, WI: 25th anniversary booklet, Gethsemane School, Milwaukee, WI.

Mrs. John Perschbacher: photos of NWC band and DMLC male chorus; photos of Philip v. Rohr and Adolph v. Rohr and others; 1950 newsclipping on Rev. Adolph v. Rohr; flyer for 1928 Lenten noonday services at Davidson Theater, Milwaukee.

Prof. and Mrs. Martin Westerhaus, Mequon, WI: box of newsletters, catalogs, brochures, programs, and booklets from WELS organizations, boards, committees, institutions, and congregations; biographical material on WELS individuals.

Anonymous: church council records from Ephrata, Milwaukee, 1933-40.

Prof. Martin O. Westerhaus  
WELS Archivist and Historian