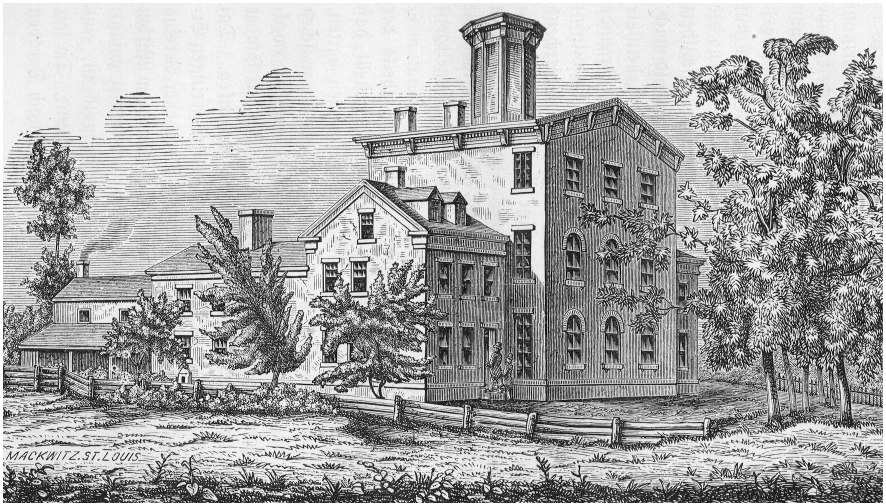


WELS Historical Institute

# Journal

Volume 36, Number 1

Spring 2018





# WELS Historical Institute Journal

Volume 36, Number 1  
Spring 2018

1. Johannes Strieter, Raconteur of Past Reminiscences  
Part 3: Becoming a Pastor  
*Nathaniel J. Biebert*
- 18 Childhood Memories of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary  
*Eleonore Pieper Jeske*
- 21 Looking Back  
*John M. Brenner*

Editor: John M. Brenner

The *WELS Historical Institute Journal* is the official publication of the WELS Historical Institute, N16W23377 Stone Ridge Drive, Waukesha, WI 53188. Copyright 2018 by WELS Historical Institute.

Cover picture  
Old institutional buildings at Concordia Fort Wayne

# Johannes Strieter, Raconteur of Past Reminiscences

## Part 3: Becoming a Pastor

By Nathaniel Biebert

In this installment, Johannes Strieter becomes a pastor in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod after only three months of pre-seminary training and less than two years of formal seminary training. But first a prostitute will try to entice him; a friendly sailor will try to persuade him to switch career paths; he will nearly exhaust himself with his studies; he and a friend will foolishly risk their lives in a swimming feat; he will undergo a rigorous examination; he will come a handbreadth away from dying in a horrible wagon accident; and his first congregation will tell him they don't need him.

### Recap

By November of 1849 at the latest, Missionaries Johann Friedrich Maier and Johann Jacob Friedrich Auch had left the first Michigan Synod due to its public and unrepented offenses against Articles 10 and 14 of the Augsburg Confession (Lord's Supper and public ministry, respectively) and repeated instances of doctrinal laxity and unionistic practice. They then joined the fledgling Missouri Synod, as their Franconian missionary neighbors to the southwest had a couple years earlier. The Chippewa mission Maier and Auch were running in Huron County, Michigan, also passed into the Missouri Synod's hands.<sup>1</sup>

In January of 1850, Missionary Auch's 20-year-old brother-in-law, Johannes Strieter, arrived in Sebewaing for an extended visit from his home in the town of Freedom, southwest of Ann Arbor, Michigan. In the spring Strieter helped with the construction of the new log mission house—half church-school, half parsonage—in Shebahyok.<sup>2</sup>

By June of 1850, Strieter had begun to entertain a serious desire to become a public minister himself; he was especially interested in mission work. When he informed his brother-in-law of his desire and could not be dissuaded, Auch said that he would talk to Pastor August Crämer about it at the next conference. Pastor Crämer was one of those Franconian missionary neighbors to the southwest, in Frankenmuth, Michigan. That conference probably began on Monday, June 24; it concluded on June 26.<sup>3</sup> Crämer told Strieter that he would be returning with him to Frankenmuth for pre-seminary evaluation and training.

On the morning of June 27 Auch ferried a "motley crew" of at least 18 people across an eight-mile stretch of Saginaw Bay from Sebewaing to Shebahyok for the installation of Missionary Maier as the pastor of the new church in the morning and the dedication of the new church in the afternoon. The occasion made a lasting impression on all who attended, including Strieter; it certainly strengthened his desire to become a minister. The traveling company could not refrain

from talking about it and singing some more on the return voyage to Sebewaing.<sup>4</sup>

On June 28, Auch ferried the other pastors, missionaries, and Strieter to Saginaw,<sup>5</sup> where Strieter continued on foot to Frankenmuth with Crämer and an old Indian doctor. There, for about three whole months, Strieter was instructed by Pastor Crämer in theology and by Teacher Pinkepank in reading, writing, and music.<sup>6</sup>

Around the beginning of August, however, Crämer learned that he had been nominated by the synod's Election Committee to fill the second professorship at the so-called practical seminary, in Fort Wayne, Indiana—the very school he was training Strieter and another young man named Kunding to attend. The synod's congregations had until the start of the synod convention in St. Louis on October 2 to nominate other persons or to protest Crämer's nomination.<sup>7</sup>

Crämer, a man whom some in his Frankenmuth congregation would have gladly replaced in the difficult early days of the colony's founding, was by now considered indispensable to the congregation and colony. The congregation sent a delegate to the synod convention to beg the synod not to call away their pastor.<sup>8</sup> But Crämer was called anyway. So when he returned, he told Strieter to “go home to [the town of] Freedom, bid [his] siblings farewell and adieu, and then meet up with him in Detroit for the continued journey to Fort Wayne.” In the meantime, Crämer had to attempt to obtain a peaceful release from his congregation.

Johannes Strieter, now 21 years old, was officially on the road to becoming a pastor—a road that would eventually lead him to Marquette County, Wisconsin. There his ministry would directly or indirectly influence the early development of a large number of congregations, including some that are members of the Wisconsin Synod today.

## **Journey to Fort Wayne**

Strieter shut most of his things in a trunk his brother-in-law had made him and left it in Frankenmuth for Crämer to take along with his own luggage. Strieter then hiked the 80+ miles back to Ann Arbor. There he hitched a ride to the town of Freedom and arrived at the home farm after dark. His 26-year-old brother Jacob Friedrich was now living and working on the farm with his wife Christiana (Nana for short). They had already gone to bed and their “large, handsome dog, white with large yellow spots,” named Penter, didn't recognize Johannes and started barking. Johannes quieted him, then knocked on the door.

“Who's outside?” Jacob asked.

“Your brother,” Johannes answered.

They both got out of bed to let him in. Penter came in too and sniffed him up. Once he reached Johannes' face, he recognized him, “let out a loud yap and started licking me all over; I couldn't escape.”

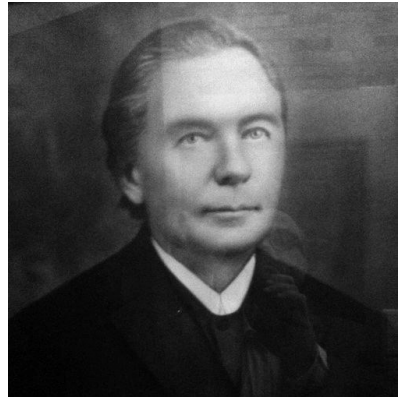
Strieter also visited the rest of his siblings who lived in the towns of Freedom and Bridgewater. They provided him with a number of other items, making it nec-

essary for Strieter to buy a hunting bag - somewhat similar to a messenger bag today - in which to put his additional possessions. His brother then drove him to Ann Arbor, where he boarded a train for the first time in his life.

He rode the train east to Detroit, arriving at night. At the station "some guys were standing in front of a chain and hollering dreadfully; they wanted people for their hotel." Strieter didn't wish to go with any of them. He waited till they were gone, then accepted the much quieter offer of a man who showed up later. The man even carried his bag for him.

We walked a good piece, then he turned to the side, opened a door, and there we were. I heard Irish voices coming from the kitchen. The man asked if I wanted to eat. I said sure. He went to the kitchen and soon came a piece of beefsteak with potatoes and bread. The steak was tough and bloody, but I was hungry and relished the meal. Pretty soon he asked if I wanted to go to bed. I said sure. Then he took a tallow candle - that's what people had back then - opened a door, and we went up the stairs. There stood a bed right in front and some more behind it. By the first bed he said I should undress. I lay my pants on the chair, hang my waistcoat with my pocket watch on a nail, and crawl in. He grabbed my pocket book out of my pocket, grabbed my watch, and laid both of them under my pillow for me and left. In the morning I ate again and paid 25 cents.

Crämer had told Strieter to make lodging arrangements with Pastor Johann Gottlieb Michael Schaller<sup>9</sup> while waiting for him in Detroit. Pastor Schaller had very recently accepted a call to the newly formed Trinity Lutheran Congregation; he had not even been installed yet. He was living on the second floor of "a large, simple, old frame house" on the slope near the Detroit River. A brother-in-law of Pastor Schmid from Scio lived on the first floor. When Strieter found Pastor Schaller and introduced himself, Schaller directed him to a journeyman cobbler and his wife who belonged to his congregation and were childless. "They lived quite a ways out, in the upstairs of a Catholic tailor's house."



*Johann Gottlieb Michael Schaller*

Strieter noticed that quite a few women would go in and out of the single-story frame house in the neighboring lot. One day Strieter was chopping some kindling for the cobbler's wife, and a fairly young woman came over and stood along the fence between the two lots, facing him. She "laid her hands on the fence and her chin on top, and stared at me without saying a word." Eventually

Strieter couldn't take it any more. He tossed his hatchet to the side, ran inside and asked the Catholic tailor, "I say, what kind of people are actually over in that place?"

The tailor responded, "Those are whores, who want to entice you over there." He then gave Strieter a lecture, warning him "never to get mixed up with bad women folk."

Strieter spent eight days in Detroit, and there was still no Crämer. So Pastor Schaller told him to head out on his own. He went down to the river and purchased deck passage on a ship sailing down the river and across the western shore of Lake Erie for Toledo, Ohio. On the way he befriended a sailor his age who tried to persuade him to become a sailor with him. Strieter "found the fellow extraordinarily pleasant" and always enjoyed his time aboard a ship. His favorite picture as a child was a ship with three masts in full sail. But when they arrived in Toledo and the moment of decision came, Strieter told him, "I'm still going to go to Fort Wayne."

He rode on a canal boat from Toledo to Fort Wayne. When he arrived in the city, he immediately went to find the seminary. Strieter didn't exactly strike the students as an impressive figure as he approached the campus.<sup>11</sup> "[Friedrich] Steinbach later told me that when they saw me approaching with my hunting bag, they said, 'What kind of hobo do we have here?'"

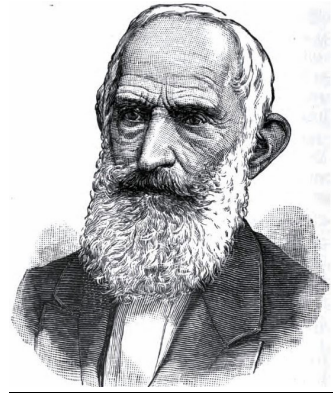
Strieter claims to have arrived in Fort Wayne on October 10, 1850. This seems unlikely, since the synod convention was scheduled to go from October 2-12. Even if it concluded early or if some pastors came home early, Strieter says that he was in Sebawaing keeping his sister company during the convention and that he didn't return to Frankenmuth until his brother-in-law Auch returned home from the convention. So he would have needed time to return to Frankenmuth, pack his things, hike to the town of Freedom, say goodbye to his siblings in the area, ride the train to Detroit, spend eight days with the cobbler there, take the ship to Toledo, and then take the canal boat to Fort Wayne—all between the time his brother-in-law returned from the convention and October 10. We do know for sure that Crämer himself arrived a) after Strieter, and b) on October 24.<sup>12</sup> Perhaps Strieter arrived around October 20.

## **Seminary Training**

The seminary in Fort Wayne had been founded in September 1846 by Dr. Wilhelm Sihler, a native Silesian who became one of the first men to immigrate to the United States in 1843 in response to Pastor Friedrich Wyneken's pleas for help. "The doctor," as Strieter calls him in his autobiography, became one of the founding members of the Missouri Synod in 1847, and his seminary in Fort Wayne was deeded to the synod in September of that same year.

The seminary was not intended to be "a theological institution in the traditional German sense, but a nursery of preachers and spiritual caretakers, whose study [would be] a rigorous preparation for the holy ministry itself." It was to fur-

nish pastoral training that was both “as thorough as possible, but also as expeditious as possible,” in order to provide the pastoral care urgently needed by the many German immigrants and fledgling congregations.<sup>13</sup> Its students were given instruction in confessional Lutheran doctrine and pastoral practice, especially preaching and teaching, but they received no mandatory instruction in the Hebrew and Greek of the Scriptures. For that reason it has been variously called an emergency helper seminary (*Nothelferseminar*), a preacher seminary, and a practical seminary.



*Wilhelm Sihler*

Starting in November 1846, the seminary had two professors on staff—Pastor August Wolter, the main teacher, and Dr. Sihler. Pastor Wolter died from cholera on August 31, 1849.<sup>14</sup> Pastor Adolf Biewend served as his provisional replacement, but he was then called to the newly established third professorship at Concordia College in St. Louis. Pastor August Crämer was then called to fill the second professorship in Fort Wayne permanently.<sup>15</sup> Although this call caused much sorrow in Frankenmuth, the congregation there did eventually grant him a peaceful release to accept the position. This transition came to define Crämer; he became known as “the father of the [Missouri Synod’s practical seminary] institution,”<sup>16</sup> moving with it first to St. Louis (1861), then to Springfield, Illinois (1875). Dr. Sihler taught pastoral theology, isagogics (introduction to the Old and New Testaments), catechetics, and probably symbolics (instruction in the Lutheran Confessions). Crämer taught the remaining subjects—church history, dogmatics (doctrine), exegesis (biblical interpretation), homiletics (sermon preaching), liturgics, etc. He may have also taught Latin, Greek, and even some Hebrew to exceptionally gifted students, as Professor Wolter had.<sup>17</sup>

By the time Strieter arrived, there had recently been some changes to the physical structure of the seminary:

Due to the strong growth of our institution in the fall of 1849, it now happened that the building that had been serving as the residence became too cramped, in that 6 pupils had to live together in the one room, and 4 in the other room, which is also a classroom in addition. Thus we were also compelled by the inner enlargement of our seminary to expand its rooms and to build a new house with 4 rooms and a large dormitory...<sup>18</sup>

The new building was dedicated on August 29, 1850, and was called “the Wolter House,” in memory of Professor Wolter.<sup>19</sup>



When Strieter arrived on campus, he was directed to Dr. Sihler in the original residence building.

He was sitting in the kitchen and was in the middle of fixing a pony for his son Christian; he was tying his colorful silk handkerchief on one of its wooden legs. I said who I was, where I came from, and why I was there. ... Dr. Sihler called upstairs, "Rauschert!" Above his small study the Dr. had a room that was also our lecture hall. Two students who boarded with Sihler lived in it, [Jakob] Rauschert and [Heinrich] Werfelmann. Rauschert came down. Sihler said, "Please bring Strieter to Mrs. Bornemann." She was a widow who foddered me for a while. "Do you have money, sir?" the doctor asked me.

No."

"Do you have anyone who can provide for you?"

"No."

"That's fine. Payment is due every quarter-year. When it's due, go to Mr. Griebel and he will give you money." That's what happened. Every quarter cost 3 dollars, which I would go and get from my patron. The people in the country brought us a bunch of stuff - whole or half hogs and so much fine sausage. I soon filled out at the seminary.

But now the studying really began. It was almost enough to drive a man insane. Crämer gave the 20 of us guys a dreadful amount of homework. Many a night I only slept for 2 hours. We soon contracted a lot of headaches. Classes started at 8; at 10 there was a piece of bread, but dry. At midday we got our beans; at 1 back at it until 4. Then we would head down to the [river],<sup>20</sup> behind the milldam for a bath. Occasionally the doctor would come and take one with us.

Strieter had once nearly drowned while bathing in a lake as a boy.<sup>21</sup> In spite of that, he and another student named Friedrich Ottmann were the best swimmers in the bunch. Once when the Maumee River was really high, Ottmann told Strieter they should try to swim all the way across. They made it to the other side just fine, but for the return trip they decided to see how close to the dam they could get. When they came to the middle of the millrace, the current tried to sweep them away. They basically had to face the current head-on, while gradually working their way sideways. They were completely exhausted when they made it back to shore.

That night the current drove "a tree trunk with roots and branches" up against the top of the dam. Another student, Wilhelm Sommer, heard about Strieter and Ottmann's feat and tried to replicate it the next day. But when he reached the middle of the current on the way across, it swept him downstream

and left him hanging in the branches of the trunk. After venting his relief to be alive, he made his way back to shore along the tree. “[O]nce he was on dry land he started in: ‘O you dear brothers, don’t do that again. That is putting God to the test. If the tree had not been there, the water would have taken me away, and death would have claimed me by now.’”

Sommer’s warning was, sadly, validated less than a decade later. Pastor J. Paul Kalb, who was to be installed as a professor at the teacher seminary that had been added to the campus by then, was bathing with Professor Philipp Fleischmann at that spot on June 8, 1858. Suddenly Fleischmann saw Kalb disappearing beneath the water. A skilled swimmer, Fleischmann quickly swam over and grabbed his friend. But “after he had already succeeded in expending all his energy in bringing his dear friend close to the shore, by God’s ordaining his arm suddenly became paralyzed on him and he was robbed of his senses in such a way that he could no longer hold on to, no longer see his friend, no longer tear him away from the deep into which he had now sunk.” Fleischmann was able to return to the shore himself “only with the utmost effort, more dead than alive,” and once he made it, he lay there spent “and could only still manage one loud, prolonged, agonizing cry from his constricted chest.” Kalb’s body had swept over the dam and over the large boulders below, and it eventually washed up on shore five miles downstream, where it was not found until ten days later.<sup>22</sup>

Strieter had only been in Fort Wayne for six weeks when he had to teach his first Catechism lesson on the Seventh Commandment.

We had to go over to Dr. Sihler’s residence several times each week. There the lectures and Catechism lessons were held up in Rauschert’s and Werfelmann’s room. The catechist in question had to go and get 6-7 youngsters from Teacher Wolf. They would go upstairs and sit down on a bench. The seminary students would stand around them against the wall, the doctor would sit on a chair, Mr. Catechist in front of his boys, and now we were ready to go. That gave us some angst.

I had already gotten to know the 7th Commandment pretty well from experience. I explored everyday life with the students and showed how all people in every station are thieves. At the conclusion the doctor would ask every row for their assessment. He himself went last. To my knowledge no one criticized me, not even Mr. Doctor; in fact, he praised me highly for being so practical. I was pleased and encouraged by that. Soon I also had to give a lecture on the false teachings about the Lord’s Supper. For that, however, I borrowed from a lecture by Ottmann, which I utilized well. Dr. Sihler praised me again, but he didn’t know that I had plowed with someone else’s heifer, and I didn’t say anything either.

The irony of this was not lost on Strieter.

The students were eventually also given opportunities to teach and preach in the surrounding area. For one of these opportunities Strieter had to borrow a young black horse from a farmer. The farmer forgot to tell him that opening an umbrella would spook the horse. It started to rain, Strieter opened the umbrella, and the horse took off. Thankfully, the horse got stuck in a quagmire up to his belly and by the time he got out, Strieter had his umbrella closed.

Professor Crämer also accepted a call to a congregation on the side, 12 miles to the northeast at a place called Notestein in Cedar Creek Township.<sup>23</sup> He made Strieter his vicar.

Every 14 days I had to go out there. In the morning I would head out on foot, preach and hold Catechism instruction with the little children, and head back in the afternoon. I was relieved by others twice; otherwise I kept my arrangement. One time the St. Joe River was very swollen. Behind Rudisill's was a small bridge over a brook that came from the marsh,<sup>24</sup> but now the Joe had taken the little bridge away, and the water was flowing in reverse from the river into the marsh, and with considerable strength. What now? I looked for a staff, found a branch, took it in hand, and started off into the water. In the middle it just about knocked me over, but I got across anyway; the water went up to my waist. I still had 2 miles to go, but now I ran.

Crämer also gave Strieter and another student named Edmund Röder private instruction in the Chippewa language.

[Crämer] had the book of Matthew in Chippewa, and there Röder would now take his seat on one side and I on the other, each with his [German] Testament open. Crämer would read to us in Indian and we would repeat it. Then we would copy down the dreadful words, and now were supposed to memorize them. Chippewa had long, difficult [*welsche*] words. But the reason for that was because the language had so few words and everything had to be paraphrased. [Ernst Gustave Hermann] Miessler, subsequently a doctor in Chicago, who became [Eduard] Baierlein's successor in Bethany [a Chippewa mission in what is now St. Louis, Michigan], told me when he left us (much to our chagrin) that Chippewa had its roots in Hebrew.

The hope was that the two of them would become Chippewa missionaries. But the Lord of the Church had other plans.

## **Serpentine Route into the Pastoral Ministry**

The 1852 convention of the Missouri Synod opened in Fort Wayne on June 23.<sup>25</sup> One of the attendees was Pastor Friedrich Besel, who had been sent over by

the Basel Mission in Switzerland and had subsequently colloquized and joined the Missouri Synod. He was serving in Holmes County, Ohio. He appears to have been headquartered outside of Mount Hope, though he served a broad field.<sup>26</sup> He had recently taken over a congregation near Coschocton, more than 30 miles south of Mount Hope. They had been served by a United preacher, but he stopped serving them once rumors began spreading, after some inappropriate behavior on his part during an overnight stay at the home of one of the congregation's administrators. (The label "United" refers to the Prussion Union, the forced merger of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches in Prussia.) The congregation now asked Besel to serve them, and he in turn requested a preacher for them at the synod convention.

Crämer sent for Strieter and told him he had to take his examination and go with Besel. Strieter asked not to be sent away yet, "but all pleading was in vain."

Probably at the beginning of July, at 8 o'clock in the morning, Strieter took his seat in front of Professor Crämer and Dr. Sihler. His schoolmates and several other men also attended. His pithy description of his examination is a classic one, and countless pastors, especially those with a "satis" diploma, can doubtless relate to it when recalling their seminary education as a whole, particularly the final sentence.

Crämer examined me until 10 o'clock; then, after a short break, the doctor tackled me. His first question was, "Strieter, what's in Matthew 13?" Fortunately I knew. But now I was also supposed to say what was taught in those parables. How that went I don't remember any more, but I received a certificate saying I was sufficiently qualified for the preaching ministry [*Predigtamt*].

On Independence Day, he and Besel "headed out from Fort Wayne on the canal amid fanfare," along with other pastors who had attended the convention and who were headed in the same direction, including the already mentioned Pastor Schaller and Pastor Heinrich Christian Schwan, who was serving Zion Lutheran Church in Cleveland.<sup>27</sup> In Toledo they boarded a steamboat for Sandusky, Ohio; from there to Monroe, Michigan; from there to Detroit; from there to Cleveland. In Cleveland, Besel and Strieter stayed overnight at Schwan's place. They then took the railroad "a stretch," perhaps to Akron, then continued on the canal, disembarking in Massillon.

There they were met by a Pennsylvania Dutch farmer named Johann Arnold. They were also accompanied by a young baker from the east, who was going to visit his mother, and a 14-year-old boy who worked for Arnold.

What happened next, as they rode from Massillon to Mount Hope, was another landmark in Strieter's life; I will once again let him tell the story.

Now the horses were retrieved - 4 splendid animals, the oldest 8 years old -

and harnessed to a wagon. The old father [Arnold] had brought a load of wheat to market. His wagon did not have a box, but planks on the side, with a small board across them on which B[esel] took his seat with Arnold. The baker set his trunk behind them and he and I sat on that. Behind us there was a plow and a barrel of salt. The back left horse had a saddle on his back, the front left horse had the reins, and the young lad took his seat in the saddle. I inquire, "Can the boy even drive?"

"Oh sure, he drove the whole way here."

We started out; the horses went at a walk. When we went slightly downhill, they trotted a little and then continued at a walk again. Arnold had a lot of questions about the synod convention and B[esel] told him about it. Now we went uphill, for quite a long time—the hill must have been a mile long, or high, I should say. The path wound up the hill like a snake. At the top we went straight again, then downhill. It wasn't long before the back left horse whinnied and bolted, and now we were off and running, all 4 as fast as they could.

B[esel] shouted Hoh.

Arnold shouted Hoh.

But the horses did not want to hoh.

Arnold shouted to the boy, "Hang on tight!" Arnold grabbed the pieces of wood in front of him and hung on and let the horses run as they wished.

At first I thought, "You should go to the end and drop yourself down; it's not that high." But then another thought came to me right away: "You are the only one who can maybe still provide some help. When the horse stops kicking out [*nausschlagen*], then you can make your way out on the tongue and get on the [back left] horse behind the boy and draw the front horses to the side." But the animal wouldn't stop kicking out. You could constantly see the shiny horseshoes on the bottom of his feet sparkling in the air. On the right the water had torn a deep ditch, in places at least 6 feet deep or so. The wagon often ran so close to this ditch that I thought, "Now it's going to tip over," but it always kept going past.

Finally we came to the climax. There was just one man who wanted to come up the hill with his load. "Now," I thought, "something's going to happen!" I was right. He quickly swerves out of the way once he saw us coming, but his back wheel was still stuck on the rut. Our back axle meets with his, and just like that I was lying over yonder, not far from the fence. A small sand-bank was there, runoff from the hill; I shoot like an arrow headfirst into the sand there, making a hole in the sand as big as a hen's nest. Right next to the hole I made, a handbreadth or so away, a stone is lying in the ground and protruding from the ground, as large as a plate. I sit up and rub the sand out of my ears and think, "Well, the good Lord sure protected you

from a sudden death.” For if I had landed on that stone, I would have knocked my brains out.

The baker had also suffered no serious injury. Besel had hung on to part of the wagon and was “dragged over the stones of the washed-out path” for a while, afraid that if he let go, the back-wagon wheels would crush him. But when he finally let go, he lay there untouched. He was beat up pretty badly; his head, shoulders, hips, and legs were bleeding. But he was able to limp back to Strieter and the baker. A man who lived nearby and had seen the accident took him to his house so that his family could tend to him.

After Strieter and the baker cleared the mess off the path, they went in search of the wagon. Down below a small bridge went over a brook.<sup>28</sup> “On the other side it immediately went up the bank at a steep angle. At the top it’s dug out and the path bends off to the left a bit. There the wheel ran up and flings the old father [Arnold] over the side, so hard that his shoulder turned yellow and black, and he had to carry his arm in a sling. But he still went after his horses.”

Eventually the saddlehorse tumbled and the 14-year-old boy fell, “right between the horses, who dragged him by the saddle strap up [another] hill over the stones. When they reached the top, the strap ripped, and my boy lies there.” A family living along the path there witnessed that too; they came out and carried the boy inside. After the man of the house had hitched up a stone drag, they laid the boy on it and the man drove him to the inn, “several miles or so further.”

In front of the inn, where the horses usually stopped for a midday rest,<sup>29</sup> stood a post and a water trough. The horses ran through between the post and the corner of the building. They still had the axle and one wheel on the tongue and they ran against the corner of the building so hard that they tore out a large stone at the bottom. The inn shook so much that the ladies inside thought there was an earthquake and ran outside, but they quickly saw what had happened. The one ran to the field to get the men; it was harvest time. The other one ran around the stall and grabbed the front horses by the head so that they would not race any further. They had run from the watering hole across the street along the stall towards the fence.

When my baker and I also arrived, the boy was lying on the floor. His mother was with him, a widow who didn’t live far from there. The doctor was also with him, and the others were standing around him, including old man Arnold, and he was holding his arm. The poor boy! His back looked like a piece of fresh meat, his arm was broken, his shoulder was separated, his leg was broken, and several ribs were broken.

When the doctor was finished, he said he did not know what he looked like on the inside, but everything seemed to be alright, and these external injuries would heal quickly. I comforted the wailing mother as well as I could.

After 6 to 8 weeks the lad was fine again.

Pastor Besel brought the bad news home to Mount Hope, and Mr. Arnold's four sons came on horseback to see their father at the inn. After they had gathered all the parts up and repaired the wagon, Mr. Arnold took his youngest son Jacob's horse back home, while Jacob (called Jack) took his seat on the saddle and Strieter and the baker on Strieter's trunk again.

Jack heads out. Right away the path goes somewhat downhill and my horse on the right whinnies again [apparently his position was switched] and starts to cut loose. But my Jack lashes him around the belly, so that it whistles. The horse jumps forward. Then he turns his whip around and whacks the animal on the forehead with the thick, yellow [i.e. brass] knob so hard that I expected the animal to collapse. If the horse jumped forward, it gets one on the forehead; if it jumped backwards, it gets one around the belly. "Just wait, I'll run off on *you!*" Jack said [in Pennsylvania Dutch]. He put them into a strong trot, shouted, "Hoh!" and bump, they stopped, and he repeated that a number of times. It didn't take long and the horses were like lambs.

Strieter had to preach for Besel two weeks in a row before he recuperated enough to take Strieter to his new congregation in the buggy. The congregation actually consisted of two stations near Coshocton, one in the village of Roscoe itself and one outside of Roscoe.

In Roscoe they turned in at the house of a Prussian Lutheran whom Besel had praised highly. But after lunch the Prussian scolded Besel for bringing them a candidate instead of an older preacher, as he had promised. They went to the other congregation in the hills, but discovered that they had taken their former preacher back in, since, even though he had acted inappropriately, he had confessed and, it seems, he had not actually violated the Sixth Commandment, physically speaking. Besel and Strieter did hold one service in the local schoolhouse the next day, Besel giving a funeral sermon and Strieter giving a regular sermon. But after the service they repeated that they had taken their former pastor back in, so Strieter wasn't needed.

Besel told Strieter to stay in Roscoe and preach there the next week; he himself returned home. Strieter did preach a week later, "but the Prussian Lutheran still wanted an older preacher," so Strieter wasn't wanted there either. Strieter rode back to Mount Hope by stagecoach and then wrote to Crämer, asking what to do. Crämer replied that he should go to Pastor Ferdinand Steinbach in Liverpool (today Valley City); "he had a congregation on the side that I could perhaps take over."

Strieter took the stagecoach the 40+ miles north to Medina, and from there

he went on foot to Steinbach, who was staying with a Mr. Haseroth. Strieter taught school for Steinbach for a few days while he went to ask Schwan's advice. When he returned, he brought Strieter to Elyria, fewer than 20 miles to the northwest, and then held an outdoor meeting two miles west of Elyria on the so-called South Ridge, in the schoolhouse across from what is today the North Murray Ridge Cemetery.

In Elyria there were two families. There was a dear Theisen family; he worked in the mill and her brother, Philipp Theiss, a tailor, was also in that family. And there was also a Böse family. Between Elyria and South Ridge lived a Württemberger, S., and then there were a few Bavarians and Hessians living in the area, 10 families or so. Steinbach drew up a short document, and on Sunday it is to be accepted and signed, and with that I would be called. But he told me, "There is a man here named B. Do not let him sign; he is an arch-drunkard."

Sunday came. I preach and now it's time for the signing. B. was first. I told him my orders; he left the schoolhouse. Then a man started in: "I demand bread at the Supper though, otherwise I will not sign."

I read: "The Holy Supper shall be administered according to the manner and custom of the Lutheran Church." I say, "In the manner and custom of the Lutheran Church, wafers are used." He stands up and leaves, and his wife follows.<sup>30</sup>

I am to have a salary of 60 dollars for the year and am to be fed on rotation; I am to go to someone different every quarter-year. On October 10, 1852, I was called and gave my first sermon.

On Wednesday, April 6 of the following year, Strieter was finally ordained by Pastor Schwan "and at the same time solemnly bound to all the confessional writings of our church...in the presence of his congregation and with Mr. Pastor Steinbach assisting."<sup>31</sup>

Schwan preached on Jesus the Good Shepherd for the occasion. Strieter thought it fit well, and he "earnestly made up [his] mind to become a good undershepherd."

The immigrant boy from the market town of Affalterbach in the Kingdom of Württemberg was, at last, officially a pastor. He was 23 years old.

*To be continued...*

## Endnotes

1. J. J. F. Auch and F. Maier, "Erwiderung" in *Der Lutheraner*, vol. 6, no. 7 (November 27, 1849), pp. 54,55. This article confirms my guesses in Part 1,



*WHI Journal*, vol. 35, no. 1 (Spring 2017), p. 12, and Part 2, vol. 35, no. 2 (Fall 2017), p. 13. I was able to fill out the missionaries' names, which have hitherto been abbreviated, thanks to information on [findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com) and a personal email from Rev. Michael Boyer of Immanuel Lutheran Church (LC-MS) in Sebawaing, MI, dated November 3, 2017, which included two pictures of church burial records. I hereby render Rev. Boyer my heartfelt thanks for his help. I also wish here to correct information I shared in Part 2, p. 22, endnote 10. It is true that Missionary Maier and a traveling companion, Johann Georg Haushahn, passed away prematurely and tragically in a storm on Saginaw Bay on November 15, 1850. But Herman Zehnder is incorrect when he reports that "the two bodies and the battered vessel were found by the Indians on the shore" (*Teach My People the Truth*, p. 79). A merchant had found both the vessel and its scattered cargo the same day as the accident. The next day, November 16, Missionary Auch rode out alone to the spot and found the overturned vessel with the broken mast. But both that day and the next, with the assistance of German settlers, he could not find Missionary Maier's body. On Monday, November 25, he went out again with his interpreter (Jacob Graverad, whose father was an Englishman and whose mother was a Chippewa), Missionary Maier's brother (who had come at the news of his brother's death), and another man (who may have been a Chippewa). The interpreter and the other man looked for the corpse in the shallows "in an Indian boat," while Missionary Auch and Mr. Maier searched along the shore. It was Missionary Auch who finally found Missionary Maier's body lying face-down "on the shore in water perhaps four inches deep" (J. J. F. Auch, "Missionsnachricht" in *Der Lutheraner*, vol. 7, no. 8 [December 10, 1850], p. 63).

2. Unless specially noted, all biographical information and quotations are taken from Strieter's autobiography, *Lebenslauf des Johannes Strieter, Pastor Emeritus, von ihm selbst erzählt und geschrieben* (Cleveland, OH: F. M. F. Leutner, 1905). The published autobiography was translated into English by his son Carl, and Carl's translation was reproduced through the efforts of two of Johannes Strieter's grandsons, but the translation is abridged and English was not Carl's first language. The Wisconsin chapters were separately translated by Orlan Warnke, but it too is abridged and inaccurate in places. At the time of writing, I am finished with a rough draft retranslation of the autobiography on the basis of the published book and Strieter's original manuscript. (Visit [redbrickparsonage.wordpress.com/tag/lebenslauf-des-johannes-strieter/](http://redbrickparsonage.wordpress.com/tag/lebenslauf-des-johannes-strieter/) to learn more.) The Concordia Historical Institute graciously made a digital copy of the manuscript available to me at a greatly discounted price, for which I hereby express my deepest gratitude.
3. August Crämer, "Lutherische Missionsnachricht. II." in *Der Lutheraner*, vol. 7, no. 3 (October 1, 1850), p. 23. This article, which I had not discovered or consulted for the previous installment, is invaluable in firming up the chronology in this portion of Strieter's life, in addition to being fascinating reading.

4. *Ibid.* This definitively confirms Strieter's report in his autobiography about the year the Shebahyonk mission house was constructed and dedicated, and corrects information on the registered Michigan Historic Site marker, labeled "The Indian Mission," outside the Luckhard Museum in Sebewaing. That marker reports the correct month and day of the dedication, but erroneously places the construction and dedication in 1849. Perhaps this mistake traces back to a misreading of Crämer's article, which gave the date as "des 27. Juni l. J." *l. J.* was perhaps misread as "letzten Jahres" (of last year); it actually stands for "laufenden Jahres" (of the current year). The proper abbreviation for "of last year" is *v. J.*, "vorigen Jahres."
5. *Ibid.*
6. This was covered at length in the previous installment.
7. Hermann Fick, "Zur Nachricht" in *Der Lutheraner*, vol. 6, no. 25 (August 6, 1850), p. 200.
8. Lawrence R. Rast Jr., "Friedrich August Crämer: Faithful Servant in Christ's Church" in *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, vol. 64, no. 1 (January 2000), p. 54.
9. This Pastor Schaller became the father of John Schaller on December 10, 1859. John eventually became a professor at and president of both Dr. Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.
10. G. Schaller, "Eine herzliche Bitte" in *Der Lutheraner*, vol. 7, no. 10 (January 7, 1851), p. 79. Schaller's move to Detroit was also documented in a brief "Veränderte Adresse" announcement on the back page of the October 29, 1850 issue (vol. 7, no. 5). See also "Historic Trinity History" at [www.historictrinity.org/our-history/church-history/historic-trinity-history/](http://www.historictrinity.org/our-history/church-history/historic-trinity-history/) (accessed 21 April 2018).
11. The location of the original campus is today occupied by the Indiana Institute of Technology. Only one of the seminary buildings remains, but it has been renovated and that building did not yet exist when Strieter was a student.
12. Strieter himself gives this date for Crämer's arrival, and it is confirmed by "Amtsveränderung" in *Der Lutheraner*, vol. 7, no. 7 (November 26, 1850), p. 56. Note that this corrects the information imparted by Rast Jr., *op. cit.*, who says that Crämer arrived on November 24.
13. "Kurzgefaßte Nachrichten von der Entstehung, dem Fortgange und dem dermaligen Bestande des luth. Prediger-Seminars zu Fort-Wayne, Ia. [sic]" in *Der Lutheraner*, vol. 7, no. 6 (November 12, 1850), p. 45.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 45,46.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 46; Hermann Fick, *op. cit.*
16. M. Lücke, *Zum 50-jährigen Jubiläum des praktischen evang.-lutherischen Concordia-Seminars zu Springfield, Ill.* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1896), p. 83.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 35,36,88.
18. "Kurzgefaßte Nachrichten," *op. cit.*, p. 46.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
20. Strieter erroneously called it “the St. Joe.” The St. Joseph River does flow into Fort Wayne from the north, but the river just north of the seminary campus, flowing out of the city to the east, is the Maumee.
21. Rf. Part 1, p. 7.
22. W. Sihler, “Zum Ehrengedächtniß unsers am 8. Juni beim Baden verunglückten lieben Bruders, weil. Past. J. P. Kalb” in *Der Lutheraner*, vol. 14, no. 25 (July 27, 1858), p. 193. Strieter had already been in the ministry for five years by the time the news of Kalb’s tragic death reached him. He could not have learned of it without pausing to reflect on the folly of his youth, to marvel at the mystery of God’s ways, to give thanks for his life, and to renew his determination and dedication to serve his Savior to the best of his ability.
23. There is still a Notestine Cemetery on a small hill on the river side of St Joe Rd, just north of the intersection with Notestine Rd in Cedar Creek Township. Even though it is only 8.6 miles from the site of the seminary campus today, there were doubtless fewer bridges over the Maumee and fewer roads in general, and the roads were much more primitive.
24. This was likely in the same location as the bridge on St Joe Rd just north of the intersection with Maplecrest Rd, one-and-a-half miles southwest of Notestine Cemetery.
25. *Der Lutheraner*, vol. 8, no. 20 (May 25, 1852), p. 160 (top of the middle column).
26. Strieter says that they headed to Besel’s home with a farmer named Arnold, who was one of Besel’s members. This is still an “Arnold Cemetery” that marks the former location of St. John’s Lutheran Church, Mount Hope, at the intersection of Route 618 and 362. Cf. Tami Mosser, “St. John’s finishing yearlong observance of 175th anniversary” in *The Daily Record* (September 15, 2017; [www.the-daily-record.com/news/20170915/st-johns-finishing-yearlong-observance-of-175th-anniversary](http://www.the-daily-record.com/news/20170915/st-johns-finishing-yearlong-observance-of-175th-anniversary); accessed 23 April 2018).
27. Today Zion is the second oldest church in the Missouri Synod. Schwan, in addition to being a model pastor, is also known for popularizing the use of the Christmas tree in American churches by placing one in Zion in 1851.
28. It is difficult to identify the places Strieter mentions, since the roads are *much* better today, and thus none of them fits Strieter’s description. However, this brook might be Pigeon Run, which runs more or less parallel to Highway 30 for a stretch. Route 241 crosses it just southwest of Highway 30, but a typical driver wouldn’t even notice that he is crossing a brook there anymore.
29. Perhaps this was the inn in West Lebanon.
30. This is somewhat unfortunate on both sides. On the part of the call document, it is unfortunate that Steinbach and Strieter flatly insisted on wafers. We do know for a fact that Jesus used matzah or unleavened bread when he instituted the Lord’s Supper, but *description* is not necessarily *prescription*. What Jesus through his Holy Spirit had his inspired Evangelists record was not a “Continue to do this” with unleavened bread (ἄζυμος), but a “Continue

to do this” simply with bread (ἄπροσ) (Mt 26:26; Mk 14:22; Lk 22:19; 1Co 11:23-24). Unleavened or leavened bread may be used. In fact, leavened bread was regularly used in the early days of the Christian Church, and the great Lutheran theologian Johann Gerhard wrote, “[T]he usage of leavened or unleavened bread in the holy Lord’s Supper is to be left to the discretion of Christian freedom and...no unnecessary conflict in the Church of God should be initiated on account of this” (*A Comprehensive Explanation of Holy Baptism and the Lord’s Supper*, Chapter 7). On the part of this particular man, however, it is unfortunate that he *demand*ed regular bread and would not give up his demand for the sake of peace. It seems that further conversation on this matter could and should have taken place. [ed. However, in America the use of unleavened bread became a distinguishing mark between the Lutheran celebration of the Lord’s Supper and the false celebration of the Reformed who used leavened bread. The use of leavened bread at the time was an indication that a Lutheran pastor or congregation was unionistic or went along with the spirit of the Prussian Union.]

31. “Kirchliche Nachrichten” in *Der Lutheraner*, vol. 9, no. 21 (June 7, 1853), p. 142.

# Childhood Memories of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

by Eleonore Pieper Jeske

**M**y association with the seminary goes back to the time it moved from its old home in Wauwatosa to its new home in Thiensville. My father, Paul Pieper, was a pastor in Milwaukee, and our family attended the dedication service in 1929. 15,000 Wisconsin Synod Lutherans gathered from all over the synod to praise God for this wonderful new school for training pastors. My grandfather, August Pieper ("Opa"), was on the seminary faculty at that time. Opa was a widower, and his daughter Margaret ("Tante Grede") and her family lived with Opa in one of the four brick English country homes designed for the professors. Living quarters for a fifth professor's family were in the main building to the left of the main arch (the *Pust-*



August Pieper

*loch*, as it used to be called). I remember thinking as a child: "What a beautiful place this is - high on a hill and close to heaven!" The air was fresh and sweet.

The only trees on campus were on the lower land near Pigeon Creek, a forested area. The upper campus had been a farm, with broad open spaces. Now each professor was responsible for planting trees on his property. The Pieper family asked David's Star Church for permission to dig out seedlings and small trees from the Kirchhayn woods. Dig and plant they did and beautified their yard. Cedars and pine trees were added along the west lot line as a windbreak. Those trees were an important addition, since the severe winter winds blew relentlessly across those bare acres and made being outside in the winter a test of fortitude. Prof John Meyer was one of the robust people who would walk past the Pieper home on his way to the interurban train to Milwaukee. Even on the coldest, blustery days of winter he wore no hat or overcoat. (He did, however, confess to wearing long underwear.)

The Pieper family loved ice skating on the lagoon, and many times we kids used pieces of cardboard for sleds and slid down the slope again and again. My sister Mitzi and I had a playmate our age who was the granddaughter of Prof. Zich. She and her family lived with the Zichs in the faculty apartment in the main building. One time in 1937 Mitzi and I were visiting at Opa Pieper's home, and during that visit there was a huge blizzard. It snowed for two days, and we were snowbound until several days later, when plows cleared away the 10-foot drifts. We didn't mind missing school. In the early years the sem employed the Barenz

family as stewards. They had a farm adjoining the sem property on the south. There was a path through the tall grass that Mitzi and I would take to visit the Barenzes when we stayed at Opa's home. For two little girls, the big attraction at the Barenz farm were the barn kitties, which we were allowed to play with. Climbing apple trees was another pastime which we enjoyed. One day Mitzi fell out of a tree onto her back. She really had the wind knocked out of her. After a while she was able to get up. We promised each other not to tell any grownups about the fall. In the early depression years, the seminary steward and maintenance staff people lived in the main seminary building, above the dining hall. Much of the food served in the dining hall was grown in a garden. Apples from the orchard were picked and stored in the walk-in cooler for use at winter meals. Much of the food preparation was done from scratch. Congregations throughout the synod provided truckfuls of produce each fall for the seminary kitchen. Some churches collected canned goods and other food items.

The student body in the 1930s and 1940s was small—like a big family living together. During the depression the students had difficulty finding jobs. In their spare afternoons they landscaped the sem grounds, and also carved out a little restful spot with a well known as "*Jakobsbrunnen*." The students liked winter sports and had a bobsled run down the steep hill to the river bank. I remember it as curvy and icy. In the early years there were two small islands in the seminary lagoon. The students built a log bridge from the shore, and another from one island to the other. It was another beauty spot on the campus. We kids used to wade in the lagoon, since it wasn't as mucky then as it eventually became.

Sometimes when we stayed overnight at Opa's house, we could hear coyotes and foxes howl. There was much undeveloped land in the area in the 1930's. Thiensville was just a crossroads with an old mill, a railroad depot (interurban stop), a post office, grocery store, a general store, a couple of taverns and a gas station. Prof. Adalbert Schaller lived across the street from my grandfather's home. I remember him as a gardener who had a beautiful perennial garden. He loved showing his flowers to us. My aunt, Tante Grede, had a large circular bed of petunias and zinnias which were a bright spot at the Pieper home. Getting from seminary hill to Milwaukee without a car was not hard in those days. You walked down the hill to the interurban train stop, and every few hours a train would come by on its way to downtown Milwaukee. It was a short, 40-minute ride through the countryside. The 1929 professorages had very small kitchens, since it was fashionable in those days to dine in the dining room. There was always a white linen tablecloth on Opa's large dining table. Those homes had modern gas refrigerators, and you could make your own ice cubes, and even ice cream, in the ice cube trays. This was a luxury for two girls who knew only about how the "ice man" would deliver chunks of ice for the icebox in our Milwaukee home twice a week.

My grandfather and my Dad, who was a pastor, would talk about synodical matters and have theological discussions. Sometimes we would eavesdrop on this

adult conversation. Professor Pieper's children and their families visited often, and there would be large family gatherings. Tante Grede would set up tables in the basement for serving. The small kitchen produced delicious meals for dozens of people at a time. The younger cousins would have to eat first at the "*Katzentisch*," after which the grownups would eat and visit. To make sure the younger kids wouldn't get into mischief, an older cousin or two would take charge of us.

The Pieper Christmas tree was always a small table-top spruce. The ornaments were old German glass ornaments, and tinsel completed the decorations. By the time January rolled around, you could hear showers of needles falling. Soon the beautiful tree looked sad and bare, and it was time to take it down. Opa Pieper kept his membership at St. James, Milwaukee. St. James was the "seminary church" when the seminary was located across the street, on 60<sup>th</sup> and Lloyd. That meant a drive into town whenever there was a service or a special occasion. A visit to Opa's house always had to begin with a special greeting by the children. Mitzi and I had to shake hands with our Opa, and recite a German verse expressing good wishes. He was always very pleased. Then we could run off and play.

These are some of my pleasant childhood memories of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

# Looking Back

John M. Brenner

## 25 years ago – 1993

- The Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference is founded on April 27-29, 1993, at *Deutsches Jugend Herbergs Werk* (a youth hostel) on the Rhine about an hour's drive from Frankfurt. It is formed "to give outward expression to the unity of spirit and oneness in faith and confession that bonds the members of the Conference... and to provide a forum for the members' mutual encouragement, spiritual growth and strengthening in faith and confession." The CELC is seen as a replacement for the old Synodical Conference.

Invitations are sent to several churches/synods including WELS and ELS missions. Some of the newer mission churches do not consider themselves ready for active participation in such an organization. Thirteen accept the invitation: Christ the King Lutheran Church (Nigeria), the Confessional Ev. Lutheran Church (Mexico), the Evangelical Lutheran Confessional (Finland), the Evangelical Lutheran Confessional Church (Puerto Rico), the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church (Germany), the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Australia, the Lutheran Church of Cameroon, the Lutheran Church of Central Africa - Malawi Synod, the Lutheran Church of Central Africa - Zambia Synod, the Lutheran Confessional Church (Sweden and Norway), Lutheran Evangelical Christian Church (Japan), and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

The convention elects Prof. Wilbert Gawrisch, president; Prof. Lyle Lange, vice president; Prof. Armin Panning, secretary; serving on the Planning Committee with the above officers are: Pres. Gerhard Wilde (Germany) and Pastor Duane Tomhave. Mr. Eugene Schulz (layman from Milwaukee) is appointed treasurer.

- WELS mission work begins in Bulgaria. The Lutheran Church in Bulgaria is based in Sofia, the capital city.
- John Hartwig and Robert Meister arrive in Thailand to investigate mission opportunities. They recommend that Thailand be made a permanent mission field. The Chiangmai area of Thailand is chosen as the first place for outreach.
- The Wisconsin Synod publishes *Christian Worship—A Lutheran Hymnal*.
- WELS mission work begins in the former Soviet Union. Within five years, four Christian Information Centers will be established, in Akademgorodok, downtown Novosibirsk, east Novosibirsk and Iskitim.



- Pastor Karl R. Gurgel, the president of the Western Wisconsin District, is elected president of the Wisconsin Synod to replace retiring president, Pastor Carl Mischke.
- The Wisconsin Synod in convention resolves to amalgamate Northwestern College and Dr. Martin Luther College on the New Ulm campus and Martin Luther Preparatory School and Northwestern Preparatory School on the Wattertown campus in 1995.

## **50 years ago – 1968**

- The Report of the Committee on Pastor-Teacher Recruitment (WELS Report to the Nine Districts) states, “Despite our best efforts and successes and record-breaking enrollments, our present full-time worker needs remain urgent! The graduating classes at our schools will not be able to supply the vacancies or the calls submitted to the Assignment Committee.”
- The WELS Committee on Inter-Church Relations reports that a German translation of the WELS’ doctrinal statement, *This We Believe*, has been published. A French translation will soon be available. Assignments have been made to produce Norwegian and Spanish translations as well (WELS Report to the Nine Districts).
- Rev. Timothy Lee, a graduate of Hong Kong Lutheran Seminary, is sent to Taiwan.
- The Wisconsin Synod begins funding confessional Lutherans in Mexico.
- The Institute for Biblical Research (Biblicum) is founded in Upsala, Sweden. Later served by Dr. Seth Erlandsson, this institute becomes the starting point of confessional Lutheran work in Sweden.
- The printing shop, The Lutheran Press, is dedicated in Lusaka, Zambia, Africa.
- John William Behnken dies on February 23. Behnken served as president of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod from 1935 to 1962.
- Wisconsin Synod missionary, William H. Schweppe, is killed in a tragic auto accident in Africa on July 15. Schweppe had been the first permanent Synodical Conference missionary in Nigeria. In the early 1960s he brought his wealth of mission experience to the Wisconsin Synod mission in Zambia.

## **75 years ago – 1943**

- The Wisconsin Synod publishes an essay by Professor Carl Schweppe, president of Dr. Martin Luther College, regarding the military chaplaincy and fellowship issues. The essay is distributed to every pastor and teacher in the Wisconsin Synod.

- Because of the rapidly increasing cost of living, the Board of Trustees of the Wisconsin Synod recommends a 10 percent salary increase for all missionaries, mission teachers, and professors.
- The Wisconsin Synod revises the structure of the 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.
- The Wisconsin Synod's Mission Board presents a practical plan for a financially sound mission and church extension program. The plan includes directions for chapel location and construction, regulations aimed toward new missions becoming self-supporting, and the establishment of a synod committee on building and architecture.
- Professor Gottfried Theodore Burk retires on November 10 after 50 years of uninterrupted service at Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm. He began his service on November 10, 1884, the day of the dedication and official opening of the school.

## **100 years ago – 1918**

- Thirteen pastors along with congregational representatives meet at the Lime Creek Lutheran Church just north of Lake Mills, Iowa, to form the Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church. These pastors and congregations had refused to participate in the 1917 merger of the Norwegian Synod, the United Norwegian Lutheran Church in America, and the Hauge's Synod because the merger was based on a compromise agreement which glossed over previous doctrinal differences, particularly in the doctrines of election and conversion. The delegates elect Pastor Bjug Harstad, president; Pastor John Moldstad, vice-president; Pastor C. N. Pederson secretary, and Pastor A.J. Torgerson, treasurer. In 1920 the "Little Norwegian Synod" joins the Synodical Conference. In 1958 the synod changes its name to the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS).
- The United Lutheran Church in America (ULCA) is formed by the merger of the General Synod, The General Council, and the United Synod, South. Frederick H. Knobel is elected its first president.
- The National Lutheran Council is founded to promote joint work among Lutherans serving in the armed forces and to speak with a united voice on issues of the day. Participants include the ULCA, Norwegian Lutheran Church, Augustana Synod, Lutheran Free Church, United Danish Lutheran Church, Danish Lutheran Church in America, Icelandic Synod, Ohio Synod, Iowa Syn-

od, and Buffalo Synod. The Missouri Synod and the Wisconsin Synod do not participate because they view the NLC as a unionistic organization.

- Professor Adolph Ackermann is forced to resign as president of Dr. Martin Luther College because of his anti-war activities. Pastor John Meyer of Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, who had formerly served as a professor at DMLC, is called to replace him.
- The first of the Intersynodical Committee meetings between Ohio, Iowa, Missouri, and Wisconsin Synods is held in attempt to resolve the election controversy.
- The Wisconsin Synod through Northwestern Publishing House begins publishing the *Junior Northwestern*, a magazine for the youth of the synod.
- In July pastors and congregational delegates meet in North Yakima, Washington, to organize the Pacific Northwest District as the seventh district of the Wisconsin Synod.
- Northwestern Publishing House publishes *Biblical Christology*, by Wisconsin seminary president, John Schaller. It is intended to be the first volume of a large English Dogmatics but will be the only volume published. Schaller dies suddenly in 1920.

### **125 years ago – 1893**

- Christoph Ludwig Eberhardt, charter member of the Michigan Synod (1860), president of the Michigan Synod (1881-1890), and founder of Michigan Lutheran Seminary dies on April 27.
- The Walther League is founded in Buffalo, New York. The league is the youth organization of the Missouri Synod, named in honor of C. F. W. Walther, who had encouraged organized work among the confirmed youth.
- The Federation of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, and Other States in convention ratifies the decision that the Wisconsin District is to retain ownership of the seminary in Wauwatosa under the Northwestern charter with the Northwestern board continuing to serve both institutions. The convention ratifies the proposal that the profits of Northwestern Publishing House will be given to the Federation. The Minnesota District offers the use of the college in New Ulm as the teacher training college for the Federation. Professor John Schaller is called as director (president).
- Dr. Martin Luther College opens on September 6 as the normal (teacher training) college of the federation.
- The Wisconsin Synod's theological seminary building in Wauwatosa is dedicated on September 17.

- The Michigan Synod's seminary in Saginaw continues to operate as a seminary in violation of the federation agreement.
- The Wisconsin Synod's Apache mission in Arizona is founded. Pastor George Adascheck and Pastor John Plocher make a mission survey of the Apache Reservation. They begin work in San Carlos on the southern reservation. Paul Mayerhoff arrives in 1896 and begins work on the northern reservation at East Fork. Adascheck returns to Wisconsin in 1894. Plocher takes a call to Minnesota in 1899 and is replaced by seminary graduate Carl Guenther.
- Walter A. Maier is born in Boston, Massachusetts, on October 4 (he dies suddenly on 11 January 1950). Maier is the founder and first speaker on the Missouri Synod's radio broadcast, *The Lutheran Hour*, gaining international recognition.

### 150 years ago – 1868

- The Missouri Synod and Ohio Synod meet in colloquy leading to a declaration of fellowship.
- On April 22 the Langenberg Society in Germany sends an official letter of severance to the Wisconsin Synod. The "question we deem necessary to submit for your serious consideration [is] whether or not your Lutheran synod after such resolutions can still with a good conscience and in sincere truthfulness continue its association with our unionistic society. . . *We do not think we can reconcile it with our conscience further to support your Lutheran synod* by the assignment of preachers, as long as it adheres to the unjustified protest against the [Prussian] Union."
- The 18<sup>th</sup> annual Wisconsin Synod convention meets in Racine on June 11-17. The synod considers that clarity on the "Four Points" (millennialism, secret societies, pulpit and altar fellowship) stands in the way of unity in the General Council and the Wisconsin Synod's remaining in the organization. In regard to the German mission societies, the resolution passes that *in recognition of the fact that the break of the unionistic societies with the Synod of Wisconsin is quite justified in view of their own stand; synod should once more extend its hearty thanks for all the help rendered it up to the severing of relations with it.*"
- The Wisconsin Synod breaks with the unionistic German mission societies.
- Relationships with Germany continue through the Hermannsburg Mission Society (Ludwig Harms) and through other confessional Lutherans in various state churches, including those of Bavaria and Saxony. The Wisconsin Synod still hopes for a Lutheran pre-seminary to be founded in the province of Mecklenburg, Germany, and for obtaining young ministerial candidates from the Lutheran Conference in Minden-Ravensburg.

- August F. Zich is born near Stargard, Pomerania, Germany, on June 10. As a youngster he emigrates to America with his parents. He is educated at Northwestern College (Watertown, Wisconsin), and at the Wisconsin Synod seminary in Milwaukee. Beside serving parishes in Sutton, Minnesota, and Green Bay, Wisconsin, he served as president of the Minnesota Synod and as president of the Northern Wisconsin District of the Wisconsin Synod. He was an associate editor of the *Northwestern Lutheran* for eleven years and was a member of the Intersynodical Committee on Hymnology and Liturgies, which prepared *The Lutheran Hymnal*. In 1931 he is called to serve as a professor at our synod's theological seminary in Thiensville, Wisconsin. Zich dies suddenly on June 25, 1939.
- Wilhelm Friedrich Henkel is born on July 2 in Brandenburg, Germany (d. 5 July 1929). He serves as a professor at our synod's seminary 1920-1929.
- The Minnesota Synod elects J. H. Sieker as its president. Sieker had been trained for the Wisconsin Synod at Gettysburg Seminary. After serving in Wisconsin he accepts a call into the Minnesota Synod. With his arrival in Minnesota the era of Pastors Fachtmann and "Father" Heyer passes. The Minnesota Synod numbers 22 pastors, 35 parishes, 53 congregations, and 3,000 communicants. Sieker will lead Minnesota into fellowship with the Missouri Synod and into the Synodical Conference as a charter member.
- The Missouri Synod theological journal *Lehre und Wehre* has words of commendation for the Wisconsin Synod. The Wisconsin Synod entertains a resolution to pursue relations with the Missouri Synod, because the differences between them were not "church divisive," but practical.
- On October 22, Wisconsin and Missouri representatives hold a colloquy in Milwaukee to frame an Accord which takes up both doctrine and practice. In the Accord both synods recognize each other as orthodox Lutheran church bodies. In the November 1 edition of *Der Lutheraner* Missouri's C.F. W. Walther declares, "All of our reservations about the dear Wisconsin Synod have not only faded but have been put to shame. God be thanked for his inexpressible gift!"

### **175 years ago – 1843**

- Philip Andreas von Rohr is born in Buffalo, New York on February 13. Von Rohr and others eventually leave Graubau's Buffalo Synod and form a Buffalo Synod of their own. When that synod dissolves in 1877 Philip joins the Wisconsin Synod bringing his large St. Martin's congregation in Winona, Minnesota, with him. In 1889 von Rohr succeeds Bading as president of the Wisconsin Synod.
- Old Lutherans from Stettin in Pomerania, led by Pastor Adolph Kindermann,

settle in Wisconsin at Kirshayn, and the towns of Lebanon (near Watertown) and Cedarburg.

### **200 years ago – 1818**

- The Ohio Synod is founded on September 14. The Ohio Synod will become a founding member of the Synodical Conference in 1872 but will break with that organization during the Election Controversy. In 1930 the Ohio Synod merges with the Iowa Synod and the Buffalo Synod to form the American Lutheran Church (ALC).

The WELS Historical Institute was given formal approval by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) in convention in 1981 to organize for the purpose of collecting and preserving historical data and artifacts that are related to the various periods of Lutheranism in America, especially of the WELS. In recent years the synod took over the responsibility of maintaining the archives. The Institute maintains a museum and publishes a *JOURNAL* and *NEWSLETTER*. Membership is open. Fees are as follows, including the cost of subscription: Individual: \$20.00; Husband/Wife: \$25.00 (2 votes but only one publication issue); Congregation, School, Library, Corporation: \$40.00; and Student: \$15.00. Fees may be sent to the WELS Historical Institute, N15W23377 Stone Ridge Drive, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53188.

The board members are: Prof. Joel Pless, president; Mr. Daniel Nommensen, vice-president; Mrs. Naomi Plocher, secretary; Mr. Ryan Haines, treasurer; Mr. Duane Kuehl, Mr. Steven Miller, Prof. Joel Otto, Rev. Joel Leyrer, Prof. Aaron Palmer, Rev. David Dolan, Mr. Kenneth Artlip, Mr. Carl Nolte, Rev. William Schaefer, and Rev. Benjamin Schaefer. Advisory members are: Mrs. Susan Willems, synod archivist, Prof. John M. Brenner, and Ms. Charlotte Sampe, designer and museum curator.

**For membership information contact:**

Mr. Carl Nolte  
(414) 975-0672 • cbnolte@gmail.com

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

Professor John M. Brenner  
11844 N. Luther Lane, Mequon, WI 53092  
(262) 242 - 8138 Email: john.brenner@wls.wels.net







---

## Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

N16W23377 Stone Ridge Drive  
Waukesha, WI 53188-1108

Address Service Requested

---

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. Postage

PAID

Milwaukee, WI

PERMIT NO. 2927

---