

WELS Historical Institute

Journal

SPRING 1986
WISCONSIN LUTHERAN COLLEGE
8830 WEST BLUEMOUND ROAD
MILWAUKEE, WI 53226



Pastor Johannes Muehlhaeuser
First Synod President
1850-1860



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." 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. The Seal was executed by Michael Smith of Madison, Wisconsin.

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In This Issue MILWAUKEE, WI 53226

- 2 Foreword
- 3 Why a Program in the Stewardship of History
Darvin Raddatz
- 8 The Pastor Who Possessed an All-consuming Love —
Johannes Muehlhaeuser 1803-1867 *Edwin A. Lehmann*
- 21 An American Lydia *Armin Engel*
- 24 Historical Development of Stewardship Practices in WELS
Edward C. Fredrich
- 37 Review of J. P. Koehler's "The History of the Wisconsin
Synod" *Victor H. Prange*
- 41 The President's Report
- 42 WELS Historical Institute Charter Membership as of April 5,
1983
- 44 Constitution and Bylaws of WELS Historical Institute

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Foreword

WE HEREWITH PRESENT to the members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and other interested readers Volume 1, Number 1, of the *WELS Historical Institute Journal*. Our plans call for two issues of the *Journal* annually, one in the spring and one in the fall.

The purpose of the *Journal* is to provide a vehicle for articles of historical interest about the Lutheran church with special reference to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, this year celebrating its 133rd birthday. It is also hoped that the *Journal* will stimulate WELS members to pursue research in Lutheran history.

The interest of the *Journal* is not simply the past for its own sake. In authorizing the publication of the *Journal*, the Institute's Board of Directors stated as one of the *Journal's* purposes to "contribute to understanding our WELS identity and background." Like Plato's shadows in the cave, some things can be seen only against the proper background.

Undertaking a new publication is always a risky undertaking. After the first two issues, funding will become the sole responsibility of the Institute. At the present time membership fees are the principle source of income. The fees alone will not be able to sustain semi-annual publication. In launching the publication, therefore, we are placing inordinate trust in the providence of God.

The first issue has been planned to have broad appeal. Leading off is a sensitive interpretation of Muehlhaeuser, father of the Synod. There is an essay giving the study of history its theological basis and a study of WELS stewardship growth. The issue would not be complete without a review of J. P. Koehler's magisterial *History of the Wisconsin Synod*. The issue closes with a report from the Institute's president, Rev. Roland Cap Ehlke. The issue was deliberately designed to appeal to pastor, teacher, and layperson alike.

There is one feature which does not appear in this inaugural issue. We believe there should be a forum for our readers to air their views and read their commentary into the record. This feature will appear in the fall issue of the *Journal*. We ask you to address your letters to *Editor, WELS Historical Institute Journal*, at the editorial office.

The *Journal* is the work of many. But there are some who should be specially thanked: Rev. Roland Cap Ehlke, Dr. Arnold Lehmann, Rev. Mark A. Jeske, and Thomas Schultz who were the planning committee for the format and contents of the first issue. It would be ungracious if we did not offer special thanks to the Aid Association for Lutherans of Appleton, Wisconsin. Through a generous AAL grant the first two issues of the *Journal* are being sent without cost to all the Synod's pastors, teachers, and congregations.

We undertake this new venture mindful of the admonition of Proverbs: "In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps." But we are equally mindful of the words of David: "With God's help I can advance against a troupe; with my God I can scale a wall." Many hours went into the planning and editing of the *Journal*. But all is vain if the Lord does not bless. And so we pray, "O Lord, bless!"

James P. Schaefer

Why a Program in the Stewardship of History

Darvin Raddatz

AT THE 1899 CONVENTION of the Wisconsin District Synod there occurred an unusual conjunction of interest in historical and financial stewardship. The meeting at Jerusalem congregation in Milwaukee authorized the writing of the history of the Synod for its fiftieth anniversary which would occur in 1900. Remarkably, it was expected that receipts from this book would result in a substantial profit to the Synod and would help to liquidate Synod indebtedness. In addition a special jubilee freewill offering was to be held on the Sunday preceding the 1900 Synod meeting to provide further help in reducing the indebtedness. Eighty-three years later few of us remember the results of the financial effort planned in 1899; but the planned historical project, though failing both in its deadline and in financial success, has been so far from forgotten that it remains, both as book and as shadowy symbol, somewhere near the vortex of intermittent intrasynodical controversies.

Reaching Back: A Crucial Program in Stewardship

A similar conjunction of historical and financial interests occurred in the 1981 convention of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Most of us may remember that convention as the meeting which authorized the multi-million dollar Reaching Out program. Few probably remember that the same convention approved the foundation of a WELS Historical Institute. But those few are probably ready to wager that the authorized stewardship of finances will not be a more significant or enduring contribution to the church than the stewardship of our WELS history as proposed to the same convention. If the WELS Historical Institute succeeds in attaining its objectives only half so well as Reaching Out, it will unleash constructive energies that will pulse through the Synodical bloodstream for years to come. Consciously, carefully remembered history is not a useless appendage to the church's mission. As the white corpuscles of the blood serve as silent sentinels against infection, so does church history serve the mission by hunting down and exposing old heresies under their new disguises. As the red corpuscles serve the body as the carriers of nutrition, so does church history serve as the carrier of tradition that is vital to common sense mission.

Church History: Its Warrant in the Word

Self-conscious church history, fortified by careful research, is as old as St. Luke's Gospel and his Acts of the Apostles. In the introductory words to

these documents St. Luke offers two kinds of warrants for church history. The first kind relates to the dynamics of church history, the second to its essence. By the term dynamics of church history we refer to its irrepressible power both to generate itself and to carry impact. Both aspects of church history's power are implicit in Luke's argument in the introduction to his Gospel. He wrote:

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, . . . so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught (Luke 1:1-4).

Since there were so many less-than-fully-reliable accounts of the church's founding through Jesus and the apostles, Luke proposed to write an accurate account. The past is easily misunderstood and misrepresented by the popular memory. This would make little difference if history were impotent, but history is dynamic. How we remember the past not only reflects current attitudes, it actually shapes them. That is why history courses are commonly used for developing and clarifying values in our schools today, particularly in the public education sector. Luke recognized the dynamic character of history and set about the task of providing the church with a history that would reflect the past faithfully, that would root the church's present in the truth, and that would help to generate a future consistent with truth.

Church history is dynamic in another respect, as Luke's introduction illustrates: history is always generating itself; the past refuses to be forgotten. Remembrances of the past are inescapable. They intrude themselves upon the present as naturally and insistently as a tree each spring remembers to send forth buds that it may bear fruit. Badly remembered, badly recorded history will also tend to bring forth poor fruit. Hence the urgency of the church's deliberately setting itself to the task of remembering the past and preserving the sources of information out of which the story of the past can be gathered.

An even more compelling reason for recalling the church's past is suggested by St. Luke when he writes in Acts 1:1: "In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach. . . ." St. Luke describes the gospel works of our Lord as the *beginning* of Jesus' works; the implication is that the works which he records in the Acts are a continuation of Jesus' own working in history. The church's works are Jesus' works and church history is the continuing record of Jesus' saving activity in the world. Thus the premier warrant for church history lies in its essence: church history consists in the precious works of our Savior as he works throughout all ages.

All past events, including the secular, are interesting to the Christian for in them he recognizes the hand of God at work. By faith he understands that the God who worked out creation is active also in the fallen world, working out its preservation in the interest of man's welfare. He is at work even in those strange works that characterize the world after the fall: weeds that

weary the tiller of the field and festering tensions that poison the relationships between man and woman (Gen. 3). By faith the Christian recognizes his God at work for him even in the devil's dirtiest tricks. Because he recognizes his God as the Lord of all history, he honors all history as a record of the wonderful works of God.

But church history occupies a very special niche in the heart of the Christian. Where the word is at work among men, there in particular God is at work to do the deeds that he prefers to do, deeds of purest grace and of salvation. There the mighty kingdom of God, which Jesus describes by charming parables, is realized concretely in the events of history. But God's kingdom being what it is, we see God at work more in suffering than in overpowering. Paul speaks of his sufferings as the completing of Christ's sufferings (Col. 1:24). Our Lord Jesus himself speaks of the sufferings of his children as his own experiences (Matt. 25:31-46). Therefore the church treasures and remembers not only its occasional moments of triumph but also its times of defeat, its shames and sufferings, when it hardly recognizes itself as the church of Jesus Christ. The church's crosses are precious because they are not only the church's sufferings but Christ's sufferings. Luther wrote of the church:

The devil can cover it over with offense and divisions, so that you have to take offense at it. God, too, can conceal it behind faults and shortcomings of all kinds. . . . Christendom will not be known by sight but by faith. . . . A Christian is even hidden from himself; he does not see his holiness and virtue. . . . (Luther's Works 35, 410).

To avert one's attention from those segments of church history which appear unlovely to us is to fail to appreciate the hiddenness of the workings of God and his will to triumph through weakness and foolishness. To study the struggling church is to lay one's hands so very close to the heart of God that we can sense the pain of the cross as it now throbs through his members, the church. Thus we have ample warrant for the study of church history, even when the memories it evokes are painful.

Church History: Luther's View

Luther regarded history so highly that he wrote: "Since historians describe nothing else than God's work, that is, grace and wrath, it is only right that one should believe them, as though they were in the Bible." Apparently Luther could regard proper history as edifying. There can also be no doubt that he regarded reflection upon the past as educative.

The very best way to teach is to add an example or illustration to the word, for they help one both to understand more clearly and to remember more easily. Otherwise. . . it does not move the heart as much, and is also not so clearly and easily retained. Histories are, therefore, a very precious thing. (LW 34, 275).

Every age, Luther argued, should take note of what happened in its midst. It is always likely something noteworthy has happened because Christ and his Father are at work in each age (John 5:17). "And although not everything can be collected, at least the most important events would be concisely preserved." (LW 34, 277)

Luther recognized that the remembering and the recording of the past presents a problem. It "requires a first rate man who has a lion's heart, unafraid to write the truth" (LW 34, 277). If such a man can be found, everyone profits for

It all adds up to this: histories are nothing else than a demonstration, recollection, and sign of divine action and judgment, how he upholds, rules, obstructs, prospers, punishes, and honors the world, and especially men, each according to his just desert, evil or good. And although there are many who do not acknowledge God or esteem him, they must nevertheless come up against the examples and histories and be afraid lest they fare like those individuals whom the histories portray. They are more deeply moved by this than if one were simply to restrain and control them with mere words of the law or instruction. (LW 34, 276).

While everyone may profit from history, the believer stands to gain the most. Luther is supposed to have remarked one day: "The remembrance of past events supplies faith with comfort and nourishment." Luther counted the task of remembering the past so useful to God's people that he urged the authorities should "never grudge the cost required to train and support people able to do this sort of work."

Church History in the WELS

The historical work mentioned in the introduction to this essay as having been commissioned in 1899 and as having been published in 1925 was Prof. J. P. Koehler's *The History of the Wisconsin Synod* (although sections of it began to appear in the *Gemeindeblatt* shortly after it was commissioned). To peruse his history is to come across frequent expressions of the importance of historical knowledge and frequent laments about the lack of historical insight and education in our Synod. In the introduction to his history he credits history with a capacity to alert its students to the imminence of judgment. Those who follow church history learn "how under God things take their course here on earth and thus with mature mind, [they] may be able to discern the signs of the times, pertaining to the judgment as well as to salvation." (Koehler's *History*, p. 1). He goes on to argue that thoughtful consideration of the course of history awakens man to the menace of materialism which always is at hand, threatening to bring the church under God's just judgment. It was Koehler's particular gift and insight, however, to argue that the child of God should use church history not only to ponder how God's judgment of worldliness has come upon the church, but he should seek to understand his own part in bringing about that judgment. When thus moved to contrition, he can work constructively with his church at remedying the church's ills by the gospel.

Prof. Koehler saw particular value in historical learning for students of theology. He wrote:

In the study of theology, dogmatics and history occupy parallel positions; the former presenting the inner connection of the divine purpose of salvation and its revelation in the Word of God, the latter telling the story of the working out of the divine plan on

earth through the ages. . . . But above all ranks the supreme and supernatural gift of the Spirit, faith, which through love leads us to understand God's thoughts to us-ward and to understand each other. That fact has been exemplified in history at different times and places, and we ought to learn to appreciate it. It is significant that such a great part of the Scriptures is devoted to history, which fact alone should suffice to assign history its rightful place alongside of dogmatics as a theological study. (Koehler's *History*, p 208).

Conclusion

The current renewed interest in the stewardship of WELS history is long overdue. The delay in vigorous gathering and careful storing of materials into the underfunded WELS archives has surely resulted in the loss of much worthwhile information. Prof. Koehler's description of the state of the archives already in 1899 is both humorous and foreboding. He wrote:

From the original reports [we] knew of the cabinet that the Synod had provided at the start as its archive. The cabinet was indeed at [President] Badings, but empty [!]. Jaekel's attic yielded a basket with carefully arranged packages of letters. At Badings finally bundles of letters were discovered wrapped in newspaper and stuffed between the roof and attic walls, evidently for insulation. (Koehler's *History*, p. 209).

Eighty-three years of WELS history have produced no dramatic change in the scrupulousness with which our roots have found their way into archival safe-keeping. A better stewardship of our sources is imperative.

More reflection on our part, by scrupulous historical research and writing, is another essential stewardship of the history which is God's gift to us. Not only is WELS history particularly interesting, it is also exceedingly important for our self-understanding. If even individuals can learn something about who they are by tracing their family trees, complex groups like the Synod stand to learn far more about themselves by well-written historical accounts which trace cause and effect. While such self-understanding does not begin to rival in importance the knowledge of Christ, it nevertheless serves to ensure not only Spirit-worked repentance but spiritual realism which is at once sober and hopeful. For history is the record of God's works and his works are done in truth. His continuing faithfulness to his unworthy people in their history is a lively source of hope for a sinful people, ably complementing the record of the Scriptures themselves. The ongoing crosses which our God lays upon the church and which church history records join the unique and holy and most precious cross of Christ in bearing witness to God's firm embrace of the lost, his passionate concern for their repentance, and his strong will to work their salvation.

A program in the stewardship of WELS history deserves the support of all who hear and bear Christ's cross within our Synod.

Professor Raddatz teaches religion and history at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota and is a member of the Historical Institute's board of directors.

The Pastor Who Possessed an All-consuming Love

Johannes Muehlhaeuser
1803 — 1867

Edwin A. Lehmann

A DETERMINED FIGURE walked the streets of Basel, Switzerland 156 years ago. It was the young Johannes Muehlhaeuser, barely 26 years old, bent on taking up an important task. It was not a task that would gain worldwide recognition for him, nor was it a task that would bring him much wealth. It was a task, though, that would drastically change the direction of his life.

And that is why on a February day in 1829, Johannes Muehlhaeuser was returning home to Notzingen, Wuerttemberg, in Germany. He had visited home many times before for short visits, but this time was different. He was about to start out on his life's work. That life was not to end until 40 years and thousands upon thousands of miles had intervened. It would not end in his hometown but in a small frontier city over 5000 miles away from his birthplace. It would end in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where his mission work finally took him.

Johannes Muehlhaeuser was born in 1803 at Notzingen, Wuerttemberg. As a young man, he had apparently dabbled in the shoemaker trade, since documents at one time designated him as a journeyman shoemaker. However, from his own accounts it appears that baking was more in his line of business.

It was while working as a baker in the shop of Frau Baeckermeisterin Bueng in Schmaeriken, Canton St. Gallen, Switzerland that Johannes felt the Lord had other plans for him. He had heard that a fellow baker of his from Wuerttemberg, Johann Jacob Weitbrecht, was being ordained for mission work in India after completing studies at a mission house in Basel. An exchange of letters followed between Muehlhaeuser and Weitbrecht concerning the difficulties of mission work, the result being that Muehlhaeuser was bent upon pursuing studies to prepare him for this work. A letter from Weitbrecht to Muehlhaeuser dated April 12, 1827 indicates that Muehlhaeuser desired "also to devote himself to the service of the Lord, if the Lord so will."¹

Most likely at the encouragement of Weitbrecht, Muehlhaeuser came into the association of Christian Friedrich Spittler, the founder of the *Baseler Missionsgesellschaft*. Spittler had organized a new training school that sought to make use of young craftsmen as missionaries. In his contacts with Christian societies, it had crossed his mind that common craftsmen on their occupational journeys would have greater opportunities to talk religion with fellow workers than the trained theologian would. Thereupon, he organized

the *Pilgermission* which trained young men for just such mission service. He would send them off with these instructions:

Endeavor, by faithful work in your trade, to penetrate into the dark spots of Christendom and do what you can to revive the lost faith in Jesus Christ among the people. Report off and on as to this work of yours in the Lord. . . . Zion's every pilgrim is a missionary, and vice versa.²

It is into this man's hands and specific training that the young Muehlhaeuser placed himself.

It is extremely vital that the twentieth century Wisconsin Synod historian understand this period of Muehlhaeuser's life. The individual who notes the type of training the young Muehlhaeuser received will be able to understand, although probably not agree with, the actions of the elder Muehlhaeuser in founding the *Gnadengemeinde* (Grace Church) in Milwaukee a quarter of a century later. These years of training, 1827-1829, greatly influenced Muehlhaeuser's later theological practice. The specific method of training deserves a closer examination.

Two qualities of Christian Spittler dominated the spirit of the training the men in the *Pilgermission* received. Although his colleagues apparently leveled occasional criticism at his practice, they never ceased in crediting Spittler as the one with the driving force behind the *Baseler Missionsgesellschaft*. That driving force was born of an all-consuming love for his Savior, a love that found outward expression in his care for all those who were in spiritual or physical want. Spittler was a man who not only knew the gospel's "Golden Rule," but he lived by it to his old age. Together with this all-consuming love for God went a complete trust in the Lord to provide for all financial concerns.

This spirit readily pervaded the philosophy of training outlined in the organization's charter. It was to be an institute

in which well reputed, religiously-minded young men of every creed and station might receive suitable instruction in foreign languages and simple Bible doctrine in order to go forth after several years as useful missionaries to the unnumbered heathen in foreign places and preach to them the saving gospel according to Christ's commission, Mt. 28:19.³

The training in such mission societies was not to be an exhaustive instruction in every facet of theology, but it was intended to be an intensive, practical training in mission work. The students' work, therefore, centered on a working knowledge of Scripture dealing in interpretation from the historical-grammatical sense of the text which brought out the doctrinal and moral teaching. Along with this were studies in German and English, homiletics and rhetoric, science with a stress on geography, church history which centered on mission endeavors, administrative practices, and an introductory course in medicine.

As can be seen from the course of studies and the purpose of the institute itself, no emphasis was placed upon the importance of the Lutheran confessions as being a clear exposition of Scripture. Whatever training in exegesis

and dogmatics that was received was taught in what seems to have been an isagogical study of Scripture.

It is not difficult to see why there was a void of sound Lutheran exegetical-dogmatical training in the students' instruction. Although every effort was made to give these men a thorough education with a broad base of knowledge, the purpose of the mission society was very simply "to get the Word out as quickly as possible." Together with this, the fact must be added that the Lutherans in the southern parts of Germany and the Calvinists in Switzerland were more tolerant in their practice.

These are important facts in Muehlhaeuser's training. Knowing them helps the individual to understand more clearly the tolerant theological attitude which characterized the *Gnadengemeinde's* early years. Lina Mayer, a daughter of one of the first families to belong to *Gnadengemeinde* alludes to this prevailing tolerance when she writes concerning the make-up of those first founders, "There was a contingent of Germans who came from Middle and South Germany who were used to the ritual of the Reformed and United Church of Hanover, Baden, Wuerttemberg, Saxony, and the Rhinelands."⁴ The *Gnadengemeinde's* first articles of incorporation filed April 21, 1851 also allude to this departure from traditional Lutheran practice:

*Beschlossen: Das sich unsere Gemeinde, auf den Grund der Apostel und Propheten, wovon Jesus Christus der Eckstein ist, gegruendet, zur Augsburgerischen Confession und Luthers kleinen Katechismus bekennt; dass aber nie ein Prediger derselben, weder bei Taufe noch Abendmahl, den Ritus der Alt-Lutherischen Kirche gebrauchen darf und soll.*⁵

(Be it resolved that our congregation, founded on the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, whereon Jesus Christ is the cornerstone, makes confession to the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism. However, never may or shall a preacher of the said congregation use the rite of the Old Lutheran Church, whether in Baptism or the Lord's Supper.)

This apparent tolerance in the *Gnadengemeinde's* early years might best be evaluated if one goes back to those early years of Muehlhaeuser's training in Basel. The spirit imparted there stressed an all-consuming love towards the Savior, evidenced by a love toward people that sought in every way to alleviate their spiritual and physical need as quickly as possible.

To finish the account of Muehlhaeuser's early years in Europe, the determined figure who walked the streets of Basel as a missionary student left those streets located near the *Pilgermission* in 1829 at the age of 26. During the ensuing years, he spent time in Munich, Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia. Much of his work was done in distributing Christian literature among the "rationalistic infidels" of the day. He made his livelihood by working at his baker's trade, thus fulfilling Spittler's idea that his students should seek to spread Christianity by utilizing the opportunities which arose in their occupations to talk religion with fellow workers.

During these years Muehlhaeuser also spent several months in prison because the rationalistic governments and police frequently stopped those engaged in evangelism efforts. Due to such opposition and the rise of cholera epidemics, mission work was not an easy task in the 1830s. However, Jo-

hannes Muehlhaeuser resolutely stuck to his task with an evangelical spirit that pointed many towards Christ with his simple testimony that reflected Spittler's personal training. Finally, in 1832 he returned to his parental home in Notzingen.

Commissioning by the Langenberger Verein to America

Muehlhaeuser did not remain long in Notzingen, and soon again took up his work as *Pilgermission*. By 1835 his journeys carried him to the Rhenish mission house in Barmen, a city located along the Rhein. Barmen was a part of the *Langenberger Verein* which had mission houses in several other cities. Previously, this mission society had been named the *Evangelische Gesellschaft fuer Nordamerika*. This name underscored its purpose. It was at the Barmen mission house that Muehlhaeuser devoted his study now towards overseas mission work.

Since Muehlhaeuser already had much practice working among the different Germanic people, the *Langenberger Verein* extended this call to him:

... it has been proposed to us that we designate from among our small number of seminarians a student who as a catechete and teacher will help the ordained theologian, likewise to be commissioned, to break the ground.

Gladly are we acceding to this wish and rejoice that our brother Joh. Muehlhaeuser from Notzingen is heartily willing to accept the proposal. This dear brother has spent about two years in our mission seminary. . . .⁶

Because Muehlhaeuser was to represent the *Langenberger Verein*, it would do well to note the spiritual influence this organization exerted on him as a student at Barmen. Again we note a great influence concerning tolerance in doctrinal confessions and practice upon the 32-year-old Muehlhaeuser.

The members of the board of the *Langenberger Verein* belonged to a variety of Evangelical church bodies, not necessarily Lutheran. In fact, this board stipulated that its representatives were

to remain unrestricted as to their Reformed or Lutheran or United-evangelical confession, and that every congregation founded by them was to be free to join the evangelical church of its choice. The aim of the evangelical society was solely to save the distant brethren and sisters from falling away, to lead the erring in the way of truth and instruct them with the Word of Life, so as to gather them into congregations and assure them and their posterity the possession of the treasures of evangelical doctrine.⁷

Clearly, this was not an organization whose doctrinal practice was based on the Lutheran Confessions. In fact, they would probably have rejected any missionary who sought to promote the particular confessional stand of his previous schooling. Here again Muehlhaeuser was exposed to the basic motto, "Get the gospel out as quickly as possible."

The influence of this evangelical tolerance on the part of the *Langenberger Verein* becomes evident later in Muehlhaeuser's own historical account of the founding of the *Gnadengemeinde* in Milwaukee. Muehlhaeuser

wrote on September 24, 1849 concerning his aim upon arrival in Milwaukee: "*Meine Absicht war zuerst eine evangelische Gemeinde zu gruenden, hatte beim Beginn 40 bis 50 Zuhoerer.*"⁸ [My aim at first was to establish an evangelical congregation, having at its beginning between 40 and 50 people in attendance]. It would seem that Muehlhaeuser viewed a strict adherence to his Lutheran Confessions as a barrier to serving the spiritual needs of all people.

On August 17, 1837 Muehlhaeuser boarded ship at Bremen as one of the two first missionary representatives of the *Langenberger Verein* to America. On October 3 he landed in New York. The other missionary, whose name was Oertel, was to do the pastoral work. Muehlhaeuser was to teach and act as the practical spiritual advisor. However, Muehlhaeuser's teaching attempts did not make much headway in New York City mainly because parents wanted their children to learn English in the public school system. As a result, after a colloquy with the representatives of the New York Ministerium, Muehlhaeuser was licensed as the head of a Lutheran congregation in Rochester, New York. The church belonged to the General Synod and was composed of both Lutheran and Reformed members. One year later he was ordained.

Muehlhaeuser remained at this pastorate in Rochester for 10 years. At the end of this 10-year stay, he received word from Johann Weinmann that conditions in Wisconsin cried out for pastors to come immediately to that state. Weinmann also had been educated at Barmen under the auspices of the *Langenberger Verein*. He had been sent to New York in 1846 to work with Muehlhaeuser. A close relationship between the two was formed at that time. Weinmann had shortly thereafter been sent on to the town of Oakwood near Milwaukee. Due to this urgent plea from his friend, Muehlhaeuser gave up his 10 year pastorate in Rochester, temporarily returned to his earlier vocation as a *Pilger* missionary, and came to Milwaukee on June 27, 1848.

Founding of the *Gnadengemeinde* in Milwaukee

Muehlhaeuser came to Milwaukee primarily to establish a congregation. At the same time he was to act as colporteur in the service of the *A. Trakt Gesellschaft* based in New York. However, according to his own brief history, a sickness in the family prevented him from undertaking the necessary travel into the backwoods of Wisconsin required of the colporteur. He resigned his post as colporteur and devoted his time to establishing a congregation in Milwaukee. It is interesting to hear how Muehlhaeuser described the spiritual condition of the people at this time:

*Da das kirchliche Verhaeltniss in diese Zeit in Milwaukee ein sehr zerreissenes und trauriges war denn neben den 5 alt luth. Gemeinden, und der Vereinigten Kirche, die im Zerfall war, bestand noch eine Albrechtskirche und Methodisten Kirche, und die hier wohnende sogenannt gebildete Klasse, meist Rationalisten, and ein andere Theil keinen kirchlichen Sinn hatte.*⁹

[The religious condition at this time in Milwaukee was one very distressed and sad condition. Next to the five old Lutheran congregations and the United Church, which was falling apart,

there existed an Albrechts Church and a Methodist Church. The so-called cultured class living here was for the most part rationalistic, and another part had no religious sense whatsoever].

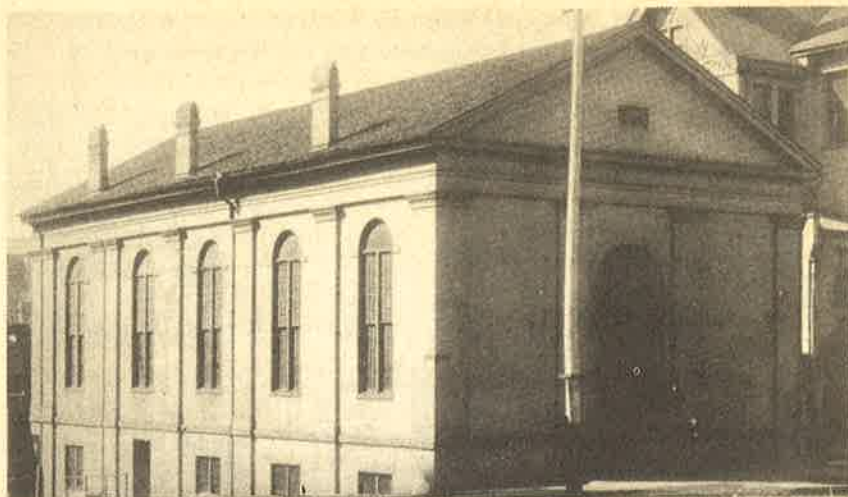
Due to this sad state of the spiritual life of the people, Muehlhaeuser notes that the Rev. L. Shapin, pastor of the English Presbyterian Church, and the Rev. J. Miter, pastor of the Congregational Church, invited him to establish a new congregation in Milwaukee. These two English churches rented out a hall in the "Hustis Brickblock" on the corner of 3rd and Chestnut Streets. They passed on the use of this hall for services free of charge to Muehlhaeuser. On May 13, 1849, the congregation organized itself under the name *Deutsche Evangelische Lutherische Dreieinigkeits Kirche* [German Evangelical Lutheran Trinity Church].¹⁰

If the recently organized congregation was to survive and grow, Muehlhaeuser realized that it must have its own house of worship. However, instead of waiting until the congregation could fully support itself and raise enough money from among its own membership to build a church, Muehlhaeuser undertook a journey back to New York to raise the necessary funds. He left on June 3, 1850. This was to be a typical practice of Muehlhaeuser, to return to the East or to Germany when funds were needed either for his church or for the young Synod now known as the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, of which he was the first president.

After a 6-month absence, he returned with \$2106.17. An additional \$1655 was contributed by the English churches in Milwaukee, the Presbyterian and the Congregational Churches in particular. On April 21, 1851 the articles of incorporation previously referred to were drawn up. Since there already existed a *Dreieinigkeits Kirche* in Milwaukee, the congregation decided to take the name "*Deutsche Evangelische Lutherische Gnaden Kirche*" instead [German Evangelical Lutheran Grace Church].¹¹

Construction was soon underway. The building proceeded so rapidly that by July 15, 1851 the cornerstone was ready to be laid. A very interesting dedication service followed. Present at the cornerstone laying were the English preachers J. Miter, R. Buchanan, W. H. Spencer, W. L. Parson, S. N. Steel, Th. Griffith, the German preacher Barth, and the Methodist preacher S. Conrad. Into the cornerstone were placed some rather curious articles along with the standard ones: the church letter, *The Lutheran Herald*, *The Jugendfreund*, *The Puritan Recorder*, *The English Temperance Journal*, the different English and German daily newspapers, *Luther's Small Catechism* with the Augsburg Confession, a New Testament, and a three-cent piece. According to Muehlhaeuser's account, "Theodore Blech, the contractor, gave an address, I followed him (Text: 1 Peter 2:6), Pastor Spencer and Pastor Miter gave addresses in English, and Jacob Conrad gave the closing prayer."¹² After the cornerstone laying, Muehlhaeuser returned once more to the East to raise additional funds.

On Christmas Day 1851 the new building was dedicated as "Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church to the glory of the Triune God."¹³ This time fellow Lutheran pastors presided over the festivities, at least during the morning services. Pastor Weinmann from Oakwood preached the dedication sermon on Zechariah 6:12. Pastor J. Wrede from Granville presided over the act of dedication. Muehlhaeuser spoke the prayer and notes that *die Kirche war*



The enlarged original Grace Church circa 1870.

voll Menschen (the church was filled with people).¹⁴ In the afternoon an English service was held. Again the Congregational Pastor J. Miter preached on Ps. 84:1. Pastor Spencer spoke the prayer.

Finally, in the evening service Pastor Wrede of Granville preached on 1 Kgs. 8:29. Muehlhaeuser closes his account with these words:

*Es war fuer mich und die Gemeinde ein Tag des Danks und der Freude gegen Gott, der aus lauter and freier Gnade, um Jesu willen, uns dieses Haus geschenkt hatte.*¹⁵

[It was for me and the congregation a day of thanks and joy towards God who, out of his pure and free grace for Jesus' sake, has bestowed this house upon us].

Lina Mayer comments about the pride and activity of the young congregation:

The new organization was named Evangelical Lutheran Grace Church, but hardly a member knew the name of the church because it was called "Our Church" and popularly "Muehlhaeuser's Church." They were an enthusiastic people and shortly organized a singing society at the church.¹⁶

Not only was a singing group organized, but Grace Church, under the leadership of Muehlhaeuser, was active in establishing a parochial day school and a Sunday school which often had over 200 children in attendance. From the beginning it was very active in helping other churches in Wisconsin to establish themselves. The church minutes available beginning in 1860 report that over 20 churches were directly aided by Grace. In the community the congregation was instrumental in starting such projects as the Protestant Orphan Asylum, the Sick Man's Aid Society, Passavant Hospital (now part of the Good Samaritan Medical Center), and other charitable organizations. If this list of early accomplishments is any indication of the charitable, religious fervor of the *Gnadengemeinde's* members,

Muehlhaeuser did well in passing along the gospel spirit of his former teacher in the *Pilgermission* in Basel, Christian Spittler.

Before leaving this subject, proper credit is due the man whose benevolent spirit did much to influence the activity of this young congregation in the 1850s. Perhaps the best tribute which can be paid Johannes Muehlhaeuser was made in an article printed by the *Milwaukee Journal* on March 16, 1963. A portion of that article follows:

A determined figure walked the streets of Milwaukee 110 years ago, a cane over his shoulder and a wooden washstand hanging from the crook end.

It was "Papa" Muehlhaeuser. He had begged the washstand from a furniture dealer and was delivering it to a needy family. "Papa" was the popular name that was given for years to the Rev. John Muehlhaeuser, a German missionary who founded Grace Lutheran Church in 1849. Among Milwaukee's early clergymen, there was perhaps none more colorful.

A stern face hid a warm and hospitable heart. . . .¹⁷

Lina Mayer recalls that during the cholera epidemic of 1852 Muehlhaeuser was a father to all the poor. He helped them in finding homes, work, and in caring for their sick. Mayer supplies us with this anecdote from his life:

I remember that he went to a butcher, Mr. Nunemacher on Market Place and just said, "Give me a piece off that quarter and give me that piece of meat; it is good for soup." He would take the package, wrap it up, and take it to the poor, and the same way with groceries and the bakery. He provided for the unemployed, and the care of the children was quite a task. One family arrived, the father and mother died, so Rev. Muehlhaeuser adopted the girl, who must have been six or seven years old.¹⁸

Finally, J. P. Koehler remembers him with these words:

At the 1855 Synod meeting in Grace Church, Milwaukee, the assembly, first of all, offered thanks and praise to the Lord for his protection in the cholera epidemic that had swept Milwaukee and vicinity during the year. In this trying period Muehlhaeuser, Synod's founder, had nobly acquitted himself in not, like many, fleeing the city, but fearlessly and with untiring devotion taking care of the sick and dying and ministering to their bodily as well as spiritual needs. The whole city at that time tendered him its grateful recognition and long after kept his memory green.¹⁹

Truly, Johannes Muehlhaeuser learned his lessons well from his Baseler teacher. He strove to pass that charitable, evangelical spirit on to the young *Gnadengemeinde* in Milwaukee. One can surely look to him as a model of a man whose all-consuming love for his Savior and all those in physical and spiritual want motivated him in all his work.

An Evaluation Of Muehlhaeuser's Theological Practice

A question that is frequently raised when evaluating the work of Johannes Muehlhaeuser regards the soundness of his confessional stand. It is vital when considering such a question to remember that he was bound by

the theological climate of the eighteenth-century, a century in which rationalism rose to the fore. However, he was not tied to rationalism. On the contrary, he was its staunch opponent. Muehlhaeuser may not have had a firm, thoroughly Lutheran theological training, but he was sound in regard to justification. For example, after hearing a Lutheran pastor in New York preach a sermon, Muehlhaeuser remarked that the preacher appeared "unclear and inexperienced in the main matter of the gospel, namely, the righteousness of God which is granted to men by grace through faith."²⁰

He obviously lacked a thorough scholastic foundation. It has previously been noted what his training in the *Pilgermission* entailed. It should be noted that this training in the *Pilgermission* was not directly influenced by the Prussian Union. His ease at mixing with Reformed-based churches arose from a brand of relaxed Swabian Lutheranism. His way was the way of Spittler, also a Swabian, whose chief characteristic was a good-hearted, untiring, unselfish concern for others. If a designation must be given to Muehlhaeuser describing his particular theological discipline, one would not be inclined to call him a dogmatician, nor an exegete, nor a church historian, but a practical theologian. This helps to explain his unionistic tendencies. In his practice he always remained a *Pilger* missionary in heart, soul, and mind.

This evaluation in no way seeks to deprecate Muehlhaeuser's character nor cast doubt on his religious sincerity. Muehlhaeuser always meant to be a Lutheran, even though he was filled with strong distaste of the "Old Lutherans." This distaste was born from his South German heritage with its emphasis on practical mission work. To him doctrinal controversies were fostered by the contentious spirit of people like the "Old Lutherans." Such controversies were nothing more than futile battles about words. They accomplished nothing but the hindering of the work at hand. Perhaps that is why he writes concerning his aim for the new congregation in Milwaukee to be this: "My aim was first to found an *evangelical* congregation."²¹ However, he in no way intended to do away with Lutheranism in favor of a liberal, indifferent spirit. No, he writes few lines later:

*Bei reiferem Ueberlegen, dachte ich mit dem groessern Theil der Gemeinde, dass es zweckmaesiger sein wurde, eine ev. luth. Gemeinde zu gruenden.*²²

[After mature consideration, I thought, along with the greater part of the congregation, that it would be more appropriate to establish an evangelical Lutheran congregation].

Muehlhaeuser never intended to be anything but a Lutheran. Koehler speaks of his fervor: "He was a simple hearted Lutheran from his youth and the idea of surrendering anything of his Lutheran faith would have filled him with consternation."²³ On the other hand, the front against unbelief was the all-compelling reason which convinced Muehlhaeuser that he must, if need be, unite with the Reformed, true to the unionistic practice of the time in Germany. It seems that to Muehlhaeuser a misunderstanding of Scripture's teachings was tolerable, since that could be corrected; acceptance of Rationalism was not. As a result, we see that on occasion he practiced fellowship with the English churches in Milwaukee up until the dedication of the *Gnadengemeinde's* new church building in 1851. After that there is no

extant record in present day Grace Church's archives which has been found that indicates he continued such unionistic practices after 1851.

Unselfishly, Muehlhaeuser dedicated himself to the cause of spreading the Gospel to the unbelieving and of alleviating the wants of the needy. He provided for them wherever he could in the congregation, in the synod, or in the city. Yet, it might have been better if he had concentrated more on teaching each of these, the congregation in particular, to attend to its own needs. Once the congregation goes outside of its confessional bounds, trouble may ensue. The danger is that help may soon be secured wherever it is available. A congregation needs to foster responsible stewardship practices within its own membership. Hence, instead of turning to churches in the East and to the English churches in Milwaukee for money and assistance, the congregation would have been better advised to draw upon its own resources. Thereby flirtation with unionistic practices might have been avoided in Grace Church's early history.

By and large, it is not difficult to see that the *Gnadengemeinde's* and Muehlhaeuser's practice did not follow the lines of strict confessional development as did the other midwest churches and pastors who belonged to such strongly confessional church bodies as the Missouri Synod. Koehler notes that Muehlhaeuser once referred to the Lutheran Confessions as "paper fences."²⁴ He aimed toward gathering souls and not toward obstructing them with confessional stands. Yet, Muehlhaeuser never opposed those pastors who were more intent on keeping the precise lines of Lutheranism intact.

No one can claim Muehlhaeuser as the founder of true Lutheran confessionalism within the Wisconsin Synod. He was not even instrumental in developing it. However, the first pastor of the *Gnadengemeinde* did much to shape a congregation that has for over 133 years always taken an active role in living its scriptural, its Lutheran beliefs. Koehler sums up Muehlhaeuser's contribution to the congregation and the Synod with this tribute:

So Muehlhaeuser was not the founder of the Wisconsin Synod's confessionalism, nor did he organize it as it developed. But what he represented was no less great: a personal living faith, a child-like trust in his Savior, and a burning zeal to build his kingdom and spend himself in the work. Like a father he provided in his congregation and beyond its bounds for all who were in need and infused the same spirit into his parishioners.²⁵

Muehlhaeuser's Influence on the *Gnadengemeinde*

Finally, a brief summary of Muehlhaeuser's influence on the congregation is in order. Much of his influence on the character and growth of the congregation has already been discussed. As Muehlhaeuser lived his beliefs, so he imparted that same spirit to the congregation. The *Gnadengemeinde* was wholeheartedly dedicated to mission work. Church Council minutes between January 23, 1860 and October 14, 1895 list 24 mission churches aided by Grace Church, and this may be only a partial listing. Furthermore, a parochial school was begun almost immediately so that not only would the members' children be educated in a Christian setting, but also the neighborhood immigrant children. Up until its closing in 1935, the

WISCONSIN LUTHERAN COLLEGE
8830 WEST BLUEMOUND ROAD
MILWAUKEE, WI 53226



Present Grace Church dedicated in 1901.

school was always considered a strong mission arm of the church.

Since in those early times there were no organized charities, it fell upon the churches to perform much of the work of philanthropy. Here again, Muehlhaeuser instilled his spirit into the congregation. The *Gnadengemeinde* always took an active role in the organization of many community projects, such as the establishment of orphanages, hospitals, war relief facilities.

It has been noted that Muehlhaeuser's confessional stand was weak at times. An example of that as it affected the congregation is evidenced by the wording of the constitution which downplayed the stand of the more conservative *Alt Lutheraner*. Although the confessional stand may not have been as strong as we would desire that it should have been, no evidence up until this time has been found that indicates the congregation ever gave in to those who deliberately watered down scriptural dogma. In fact, Muehlhaeuser and the *Gnadengemeinde* in particular grew more confessional as the years passed. The following accounts provide interesting examples of this. In the minutes of the quarterly congregational meeting held April 8, 1867 the following is recorded:

The fact that some of our members belong to lodges was discussed. The disadvantage of this were brought up according to the Word of God. These members were urged to leave the lodges.²⁶

Later, after Muehlhaeuser's death, on March 4, 1868 a resolution was passed prohibiting any member from belonging to a "secret organization."

This matter came to a head in 1869 as several members were released from membership. Also released were those who were in favor of practicing unionism with other church bodies. In the March 1, 1869 council meeting minutes we read:

Several members were absent during the debate about fellowship with other church bodies and asked for their release. They were Fried. Mayer, Poppert and son, Aug. Brush, Theo. Wettstein, Paul Binner, John Bush and son. These men were granted their release.²⁷

Interestingly enough the names Friedrich Mayer and Paul Binner appear on the roster of members who founded the Friedens Evangelical Church on February 28, 1869. According to that church's centennial booklet of 1969:

Friedens was the first congregation established in Milwaukee by the German Evangelical Synod of North America which denomination later merged with the Reformed Church of America and was called the Evangelical and Reformed Church and in 1962 joined with the Congregational Christian Churches to form the United Church of Christ.²⁸

We can see by these accounts that the *Gnadengemeinde* was not about to tolerate any member belonging to a lodge, nor would they tolerate any who sympathized with Reformed teaching. Although Muehlhaeuser and the *Gnadengemeinde* verbally denied the necessity of an orthodox Lutheran confessional stand, in practice they adhered to it, at least in these recorded cases.

Johannes Muehlhaeuser was dearly loved by his congregation for his strong Christian leadership during its infant years. Lina Mayer, summarizing their loss at his death, supplied a fitting closing tribute to "Papa Muehlhaeuser" as she described his last days in 1867:

The winter's work, then the Lenten services, and Easter, and confirmation following, absorbed all his strength. He was an invalid after that, and took to his bed during the summer. My parents asked me to go to visit him because they knew he could not live much longer. He received me kindly and after a short visit I said, "Goodbye," when he pressed my hand and said; "Lina, live so that we will meet again at the throne of God in white robes with palms in our hands." That was the last I heard of him, for shortly after, in September, he died. It was a great loss to our church, and he was mourned throughout the city. . . .²⁹

So ended the life of Johannes Muehlhaeuser. He died in a new land thousands of miles away from his hometown at the age of 64. He may not be long remembered for his staunch confessional stand nor for his fiery oratory. However, to those who know of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church's

history, he will be remembered as its founder whose all-consuming love for his Savior guided the congregation in living according to the gospel's "Golden Rule."

ENDNOTES

¹John Philipp Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, (St. Cloud, Minnesota: Sentinel Publishing Company, 1970), p. 29.

²J. P. Koehler, p. 22.

³J. P. Koehler, p. 21.

⁴Lina Mayer, "An Historical Sketch of the Earliest Years of the Evangelical Lutheran Grace Church," (personal recollections), 1932, p. 3.

⁵*Kirchen-Ordnung der Deutschen Evangelische Lutherische Gnaden-Gemeinde in Milwaukee*, (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Druck der Germania Publ. Co., 1851), p. 1.

⁶J. P. Koehler, p. 29.

⁷J. P. Koehler, p. 28.

⁸Johannes Muehlhaeuser, *Geschichtliche Entstehung und Gruendung der Deutschen Evangelischlutherischen Dreieinigkeitskirche in Milwaukee*, (personal recollections), September 24, 1849, p. 1.

⁹J. Muehlhaeuser, p. 1.

¹⁰J. Muehlhaeuser, p. 1.

¹¹Johannes Muehlhaeuser, *Nachschrift*, 1851, p. 2.

¹²J. Muehlhaeuser, 1851, p. 2.

¹³J. Muehlhaeuser, 1851, p. 3.

¹⁴J. Muehlhaeuser, 1851, p. 3.

¹⁵J. Muehlhaeuser, 1851, p. 3.

¹⁶L. Mayer, p. 3.

¹⁷David A. Runge, "Pastor Begged Food, Cash to Help Needy," *The Milwaukee Journal*, Saturday, March 16, 1863.

¹⁸L. Mayer, p. 5.

¹⁹J. P. Koehler, p. 48-49.

²⁰J. P. Koehler, p. 35.

²¹J. Muehlhaeuser, 1849, p. 1.

²²J. Muehlhaeuser, 1849, p. 1.

²³J. P. Koehler, p. 72.

²⁴J. P. Koehler, p. 45.

²⁵J. P. Koehler, p. 72.

²⁶Minutes of Congregational Meeting, April 8, 1867.

²⁷Minutes of Council Meeting, March 1, 1869, Julius Andrae, Sec.

²⁸*Friedens*, (Centennial History Booklet) 1969, p. 3.

²⁹L. Mayer, p. 32.

This paper was Pastor Lehmann's senior history thesis at the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin. A 1982 graduate of the seminary, Lehmann is presently serving an exploratory mission in Fort Worth, Texas.

An American Lydia

Armin Engel

THERE IS a historical marker in the center of the village of New Glarus, Wisconsin which pays tribute to the first settlers of that historic Swiss settlement. It reads:

In 1845 the Emigration Society of Canton Glarus, Switzerland sent Nikolas Duerst and Fridolin Streiff to the United States to purchase land for a Swiss settlement. They were joined in August 1845 by 108 settlers who began their homesteads in this beautiful valley. The culture of Old Glarus has not been forgotten; the Swiss-German dialect is still spoken and the traditional holidays are observed.

A pastor who did not come to the Wisconsin Synod from the German mission societies was William Streissguth. He studied in Basel, Switzerland and was ordained there before being sent as a missionary to New Glarus, Wisconsin in 1850 to serve the Reformed congregation which had been founded five years before.

In 1854 and 1855 Streissguth, who was distressed at the spiritual decline of his congregation, was present at the Wisconsin Synod conventions meeting in Milwaukee and in 1856 at the Manitowoc convention was accepted into membership. He received a call to Newtonburg, Manitowoc County, Wisconsin to succeed Pastor C. F. Goldammer who accepted a call to Manitowoc. After a year Streissguth accepted a call to St. John's congregation of Milwaukee at 8th and Vliet Streets. He served at St. John's from 1856 to 1868. In the later years of his ministry there an interesting incident took place involving an American Lydia (Acts 16).

Women are rarely mentioned in connection with mission work in the early years of the Wisconsin Synod. But there is one example of a remarkable woman who gathered the first 20 families that organized St. Paul's congregation at Winneconne, Wisconsin. The inspiring story first appeared in two issues of the *Gemeindeblatt* in February 1915.

Just before Christmas in the late 1860s a young couple came to Streissguth to make arrangements for their marriage. The groom, John Anderson, was a Norwegian Lutheran who spoke German fluently. The bride, Marie, who had come to this country from Bavaria, was a Roman Catholic. In the course of the conversation Streissguth pointed out how the marriage would be enhanced if they were of one faith and could attend the same church and take Lord's Supper together.

Quite unexpectedly Marie turned to the pastor. "How long would it take,"



Pastor Wm. Streissguth

she asked, "to become a Lutheran?" The pastor said that if everything went along according to schedule, she could be confirmed a Lutheran by Easter. "John," pleaded Marie, "why don't we wait with our wedding until then? I want to become a Lutheran." John — somewhat reluctantly — agreed.

During the next weeks Marie, who worked as a maid on the east side, came several times a week for instructions. She was ready for confirmation on Palm Sunday when a large class of children would also be confirmed. Since she was already in her twenties, Streissguth suggested that her confirmation be held privately after the service in the presence of the elders. "I want to be confirmed with the children," Marie protested. "I want to confess my faith publicly." And so she did. That same afternoon Marie and John were married. Not long afterward they moved to Winneconne.

Several years later Streissguth, then a pastor in St. Paul, Minnesota, received a letter from Rev. Philipp Brenner of Oshkosh. "Do you remember Marie Anderson," Brenner asked, "the woman you confirmed? She was unhappy without a church so she canvassed the whole village of Winneconne and the surrounding neighborhood and gathered 20 Lutheran families who were willing to organize a congregation. She asked me to serve them from Oshkosh. Because of her we now have a thriving congregation in that area for the Wisconsin Synod."

Streissguth was pleased that his confirmand had become a blessing to others. When he happened to preach near Winneconne some years later, he called on the Andersons. He learned that Marie had had her share of grief, but that she had remained cheerful and steadfast in her Lutheran faith.

More years passed. Marie and John both died. Streissguth, now 88, was living as a retired pastor when in January 1915 he read in the *Gemeindeblatt* that the Winneconne congregation had dedicated a new church. There was no mention of Marie in the accompanying historical sketch. Streissguth, determined to remedy the unfortunate omission, wrote a lovely tribute to Marie for the February 5 issue of the *Gemeindeblatt* with the title "An American Lydia."

But Marie's story does not end here. The next issue of the *Gemeindeblatt* carried the final chapter. It was written by Rev. Erdman Pankow, a member of the first graduating class of Northwestern College. An 1875 graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, he was installed as the first resident pastor of the Winneconne-Bloomfield parish. There he learned to know the Andersons. One day Marie told him the complete story of her conversion to Lutheranism.

On her way to Sunday mass before she knew John, she used to walk past Grace Church on Juneau and Broadway. At that time Rev. Theodore Jaekel, Muehlhaeuser's successor, was pastor there. One summer Sunday morning the door of the church was open and she heard the pastor preaching the sermon. She paused at the doorstep to listen for a minute. Soon she was so absorbed in what he said that she sat down and listened to the end. She was hearing something she had never heard before. She was impressed — but also troubled because she missed mass that morning. On several other Sunday mornings she yielded to the temptation to sit in the rear of Grace Church and listen to Pastor Jaekel's sermon.

Brought up a loyal Catholic, she struggled long with her conscience. But it was not until she sat in Pastor Streissguth's study with her intended husband that she found the courage to do what her heart told her was the right thing. But it was on the doorstep of a church, wrote Pastor Pankow, rather than in a pastor's study, that the Lord first opened her heart to the gospel. Just as he had done to "a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira," many centuries ago (Acts 16:14).

Armin Engel is a retired pastor and frequent author of vignettes of WELS history. He lives in Jefferson, Wisconsin.

Historical Development of Stewardship Practices in WELS

Edward C. Fredrich

AS BROAD A THEME as "Historical Development of Stewardship Practices in WELS" could easily become an excuse for a writing so long it would try your patience and stretch your schedule and so full of detail that it would end up obscure and pointless. Very much in order is some device for narrowing the theme and reducing the coverage without distorting or destroying the desired historical emphasis in the story of our Synod's stewardship developments.

What is proposed is a focus on four twelve-year periods in the Synod's history separated from one another by intervals of twenty-four years. The reduction of years of interest from 132 to about one-third of that will make possible some in-depth study and some attention to detail. The spacing of the four time spans to be scrutinized should make possible a decent attempt at the coverage desired.

In this organizational device key importance obviously attaches to the selection of the four twelve-year periods to be studied. They should be representative enough of other time spans so that the resultant study does not degenerate into a straw man of our Synods' stewardship practices or a sideshow freak far removed from the center ring. At the same time the twelve-year periods should be so chosen that they include all or most of the really important twistings and turnings in the development of our Synod's stewardship practices.

These four twelve-year periods have been chosen:

- I. 1858-1869, A Time for Charting Pathways
- II. 1893-1904, A Time for One Step Forward, Two Steps Back
- III. 1928-1939, A Time for Getting Out of the Woods
- IV. 1963-1974, A Time for Preparing for the Long Haul

No infallibility for the selection process can be claimed. The result is much more a matter of the educated guess than laborious research at the desk or divine inspiration from on high. Those minded to challenge the framework for this essay should, however, bear in mind their amateur status. The essayist is the professional. He is the one who is being paid for writing the essay and making the choices.

Two other preliminary remarks are in place. The essayist assumes the assigned title indicates that the main thrust should be in the synodical direction, rather than the congregational. He hopes his assumption is correct. The other point has to do with the definition of the main term in the

title. We all agree that the concept *stewardship* is broad and multi-faceted. It should be equally obvious, however, that the nebulous character of time or talent stewardships does not easily find its way into the historical record or admit of major treatment when historical developments of stewardship are under discussion. It is not so with the stewardship of treasure. Nothing is easier to report in synodical annals than the financial record and in some ways nothing looms larger in the annals than such recording. It was that way in 1850; it was that way in 1981. It will be that way in 1983 and *ad infinitums* or *ad nauseam*, whichever you prefer. Money talks. It will sound out loud and clear in this study of the "Historical Developments of Stewardship Practices in WELS."

I. 1858-1869, A Time for Charting Pathways

Before 1858 stewardship concerns were of minimal concern for the infant Wisconsin Synod. In 1857 the *Proceedings* state that the synodical treasury has a balance of \$60.89. They also report a year's intake of \$18.18 for what is specifically termed the *Synodalkasse* (Synod treasury). It is obvious that the "Administration Division" was not a major operation in those good old days.

This is not to imply that there was a lack of sacrificial giving on the part of Wisconsin Synod members but what there was, was directed to parish needs and home purposes. The records are hard to come by but those available tell a story of developing stewardship practice that is outstanding and exemplary.

The 1858 *Proceedings* that report a contribution of \$3.00 to the *Synodalkasse* from President Muehlhaeuser's Grace Church also indicate by asterisk that on the local level \$13.00 was gathered for widows and \$700.00 for an organ for the church building. In Kenosha in the same years members gathered \$125.00, as the record says, *fur eine eigene Kirche* (for a church for us).

A number of congregational histories report that the first church buildings were dedicated debt free. The people were poor. They were not trained for stewardship in their Old World state churches. But they were so appreciative of the Lord's gifts to them that they gladly contributed their nickels and dimes and, when these did not suffice, mortgaged their own properties to obtain funds to build their house of worship.

In those times pastors had to be content with meager salaries. In fact, if it had not been for a gift of \$300 from the Pennsylvania Ministerium, which Muehlhaeuser distributed to the pastors with most desperate financial needs, the work in some places could not have gone on. The 1858 *Proceedings* report: "In conclusion we still have the pleasant duty of expressing our heartiest thanks to the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Pennsylvania publicly for the support of \$300.00 which it granted us in the last year." The record says it all as it continues: "The more meager our own pecuniary support was, the more we had to acknowledge our gratitude to the Lord of the Church for having turned the hearts of the brethren there to us."

Stewardship needs were recognized in those early years, even if the sums gathered for them remained on the small side. The 1857 *Proceedings* list the

various treasuries and the sums contributed in the previous year in this fashion:

<i>Heidenmissionsgelder</i> (Heathen mission)	— \$112.69
<i>Synodalkasse</i> (Synodical)	— \$ 18.18
<i>Kirchbaukasse</i> (Church building)	— \$ 15.00
<i>Witwenkasse</i> (Widows)	— \$ 7.70
<i>Unterstützung armer Studenten</i> (Student support)	— \$ 7.50
<i>Traktatgesellschaft</i> (Tract society)	— \$ 1.00

The sums are small but the basic needs are all there, even if in embryo: world missions, church extension, administration, worker training, pensions and support, publishing. All credit to the fathers and to their efforts in the earliest years of our Synod's history. Perhaps their most exemplary stewardship practice was to put the lion's share of the work-at-large funds in the *Heidenmissionsgelder*. Translated into today's budgetary figures, that 70 percent of the work-at-large funds would today provide world missions with over \$9 million.

However the stewardship practices of the first years are evaluated, it is quite obvious that 1858 marks a sharp turning point for the young and small Synod. The period 1858-1869 placed before the church body greater fiscal needs and larger stewardship horizons. Several requirements confronted the growing Wisconsin Synod and transformed its nickel-and-dime synodical operation into something much larger.

At the 1858 Synod convention serious consideration was given to the need for a permanent *Reiseprediger* (traveling preacher). C. F. Goldammer, himself a missionary to the core, sparked the discussion in which he was supported by Philipp Koehler, Ph. Sprengling and others. Three questions were raised, says the secretary's report. The first dealt with God's will regarding such an arrangement. Early scruples about a synodical official without his own congregation gave way and there was general agreement that the Lord would approve of the appointment of a *Reiseprediger*. The two other questions were whether the Synod had a man with the necessary talents or the talents to salary him if one such could be found.

Previous ventures by G. Fachtmann had been on make-do financial arrangements. Present proposals envisioned a worker whom the Synod would have to salary. The *Synodalkasse* was still a long way from reaching three figures. Hero of the hour was a certain Pastor Binner, otherwise unknown in Synod's annals, who was able to point to some disastrous experiences of the Synod of the West with their *Reiseprediger*. The matter was tabled to the ministerial meeting and left tabled there.

But the proposal for a permanent, salaried *Reiseprediger* was an idea whose time had come. It would surface again and in four years become an accomplished fact. The Synod was growing and its needs were growing.

The greatest need, beyond any doubt, was that of ministerial training. European mission societies never supplied enough manpower for the burgeoning fields the Wisconsin Synod was working. Make-shift arrangements were a necessity. Aspirants with some talent and training were placed under the tutelage of veteran pastors for the transformation from aspirant to ordinand. Only in rare instances — Henry Sieker at Gettysburg comes to mind — was there actual training at a theological seminary.

Even the seminary in the parsonage study, however, presented problems and made demands. Books were the prime need. One finds in the 1859 *Proceedings* a plea to the mission societies in Germany at Langenberg and Berlin for help in establishing a synodical library joined to requests for trained workers and a *Reiseprediger*.

This one-time need was promptly met. Next year the presidential report to the Synod could contain the news that a library of 500 volumes would soon be assembled. The much larger problem remained. A worker-training school was definitely needed.

As the Synod entered its second decade the need was becoming more and more apparent. The 1863 convention finally came to grips with the issue. By that time it was no longer a question of *why* or *why not* but of *when* and *where*. When was 1863. Where was Watertown. The die was cast. The Synod had decided to fish, not just cut bait. Building programs were in the offing. A yearly operational budget would have to be met. Stewardship developments were inevitable.

What developments materialized? There is some good news and some bad news.

Perhaps the best news is the realization of many that liaison between Synod and individual congregation had to improve, that information had to flow freely from the one to the other and that then there would be a reciprocal flow in the other direction.

The 1858 convention that grappled with the *Reiseprediger* proposal resolved in connection with a report on relations of Synod to its congregation and vice versa: "The congregation is for its own sake obligated to send a delegate to the annual synodical convention along with a voluntary offering for the synodical treasury."

Obviously the collection is desired but the actual wording stresses congregational representation. A noble goal, each congregation represented by delegate and pastor at each annual convention! A good foundation for good stewardship!

The effort at closer relations between Synod and congregations peaked and aborted in President William Streissguth's proposal for a full-time synodical president-visitor who would be able to carry synodical concerns to every congregation every year. The proposal died aborning way back in 1867. But it represents the original die for the mold in which today's presidential and stewardship counselor posts are cast. It was an idea whose time had not yet come and would not come for another four score and twelve years.

There were other stewardship developments and devices somewhat less ambitious and honorable. One was the resort to collections beyond the synodical boundaries. To us this may seem utterly deplorable. Back in the 1850's and 1860's this was viewed differently. Muehlhaeuser even went beyond the denominational boundaries when gathering funds for a church building.

A century ago it was common practice for young Lutheran synods in the midwest to go to the greener pastures of the East and of the Old World when monies were needed for the first building ventures. Father Heyer of Minnesota, for instance, collected for the first Lutheran church building of the

Twin Cities out in the rich farmlands of Pennsylvania. The Iowa Synod found Lutherans in Russia to be generous benefactors.

This state of affairs should be borne in mind when evaluating the Synod's stewardship practices in the matter of funding the Watertown school. It was natural that the resolution to build the worker-training school should be followed promptly by a resolution sending President J. Bading on an extensive fund-raising tour of the Old Country, a tour that would extend beyond a year and reach into Russia. Enough direct gifts were collected to enable the Watertown school building to be erected. Endowment funds were also gathered to be used for scholarship or perhaps for a feeder school in Germany. But that is another story.

Even the operating costs of the new school put a strain on the available resources. The result was a host of hastily conceived and ill-advised money-raising gimmicks, not stewardship at all, but its very converse. About all the good the gimmicks did was teach the Synod by practical experience that first law of stewardship: Put not your trust in gimmicks.

At the top of the stupidity list is the Northwestern scholarship plan. Quick and easy money was to be derived from the sale of perpetual scholarships. It could have bankrupted the school. The forced backtracking was not all that graceful or easy. President Kowalke tells the whole story in detail in his book. (*Centennial Story, Northwestern College, 1865-1965*, by Erwin E. Kowalke, Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee).

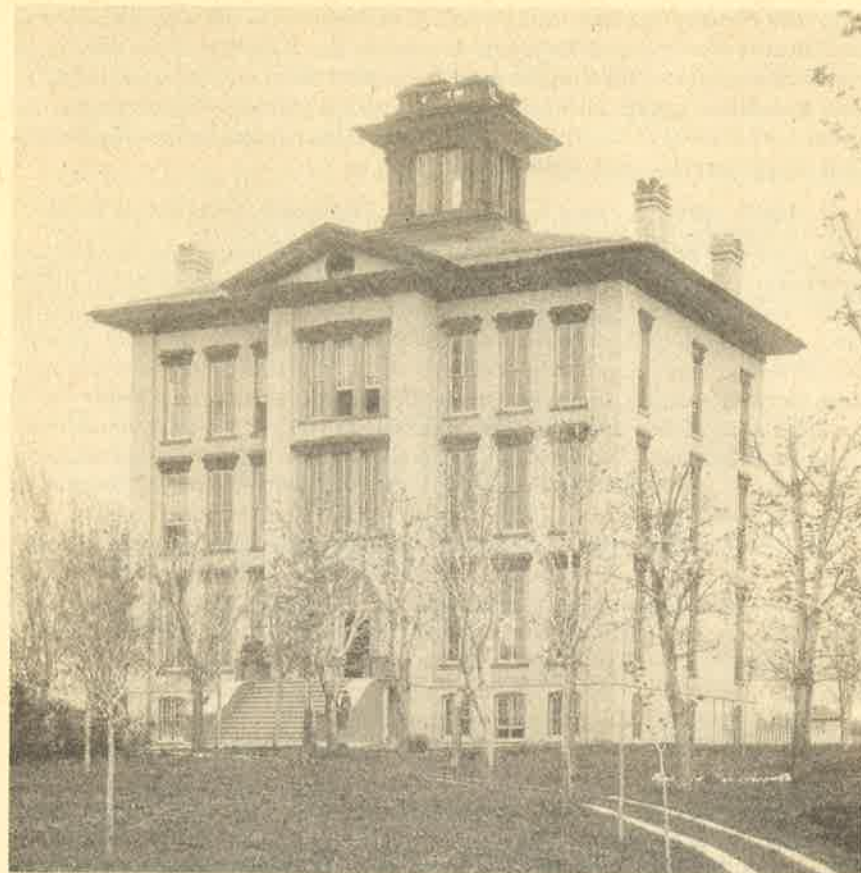
The book also describes some of the other schemes to fill the empty coffers of the struggling school. There was a venture in printing. There was planned a lecture series in the Chautauqua mode, although ante-dating it by some years. President Martin of Northwestern is more to be pitied than blamed for these ventures. The financial status of the school was precarious. In 1869, the last year of the first period being surveyed, the report indicates: *Mehr ausgegeben als eingenommen* (more spent than received) — \$2400.34. The debts amounted to \$3373.09.

In these days when subsidies to periodicals are a burden and periodicals are shut down because of them, it is of interest to note that our first periodical was a money-maker from the start. Publishing profits did not loom large in stewardship planning but it was gratifying for the fathers to find the *Gemeindeblatt* bringing modest returns to the treasury, instead of draining it.

Two resolutions of the 1869 convention close this account of stewardship developments in the dozen years 1858-1869. Both have far-reaching implications for that year and into our own time.

The one resolution states: "The Synod makes no claim on the funds collected for it in the Prussian Church and instructs its President to bring this information to the Evangelical Consistory in Berlin." The founding fathers were standing up to be counted on the side of responsible stewardship. The resolution was in a sense anti-climactic. It finalized and froze earlier decisions. The Synod was breaking the last ties with the Prussian Union mission societies for confessional reasons and biblical precepts.

What the 1869 resolution was declaring in a between-the-lines reading was this: we cannot let stewardship problems determine doctrinal and confessional decisions. The Synod still needed all the financial help it could get. But not at any price! Not at the big price!



The "Koffeemuehle" at Northwestern College which burned down in 1894.

Money talks, also in ecclesiastical councils. But it does not have the final word. Spell that last word with a capital letter! All credit to the fathers who saw clearly in a difficult situation and who stood firm in their testing time!

The other 1869 resolution to be considered fused the Wisconsin worker-training school with those of the Missouri Synod. The arrangement was that seminary training would be conducted only at St. Louis and that the Watertown *Gymnasium* would also serve Missouri students.

Arrangements in the worker-training field had put the biggest strain on Wisconsin Synod stewardship. The Synod was not at all adverse to lessening the strain. There were mixed results. Two of the very few outstanding theologians of the Wisconsin Synod were, under this arrangement, trained under Dr. C. F. Walther at St. Louis. You know who they were [J. P. Koehler and August Pieper-Ed.]. After eight years the Wisconsin Synod saw the need of transferring its seminary operation from St. Louis to Milwaukee. Not stewardship, but a state synod plan was involved. No more need to be said on that score.

The point to be stressed, it would seem, is that the founding fathers saw clearly that worker-training is not an end itself but a means to an end, that it

is not necessarily cast into one preconceived mold and that it is not beyond legitimate cost concerns. One who has spent the majority of his service in the worker-training field and is still therein involved and salaried is beginning to realize that the subject is getting touchy and that "discretion is the better part of valor." It is time to call a halt to this consideration of stewardship developments, 1858-1869. We move on to

II. 1893-1904, A Time for One Step Forward, Two Steps Back

By 1893 the Wisconsin Synod had changed considerably in its outward structure and appearance. For one thing the communicant count of about 13,000 had swelled to more than six times that number. It had been able to erect a new enlarged seminary at Wauwatosa, dedicated in 1893. A year earlier it had federated with the Minnesota and Michigan Synods for mission, worker-training and publication efforts. These changes will have to be considered as stewardship developments from 1893 to 1904 are considered. On the national scene it should be remembered that 1893 was a particularly bad "panic" year. The 1894 report indicated a drop of over 20 percent in synodical revenue from over \$23,000 in 1893 to about \$18,000 in 1894.

Just at that time the Watertown *Kaffeemuehle* (classroom building) burned to the ground. An enlarged replacement was dedicated within a year. The building at Wauwatosa and Watertown represents a heroic stewardship effort. During the building years special collections netted almost \$35,000, as the 1896 *Proceedings* indicate. It was a step forward when compared to previous efforts. But the synodical indebtedness meanwhile increased from some \$6000 before the building ventures to over \$40,000 by 1896.

That debt would become the object of special attention as the Synod neared its golden anniversary at the turn of the century. Year by year the Synod was running a deficit. In 1898 it was \$2057. In 1899 it was about \$1500. By June 1, 1899, the cumulative debt had mounted to over \$45,000. The annual budget was in the neighborhood of \$33,000. Adapted to today's budget and dollar figures the Synod owed some \$17,000,000 in today's kind of money.

A notable feature of the anniversary debt reduction effort was the leadership of laymen. The 1899 *Proceedings* report that the convention was presented with this writing:

In a meeting today, Thursday afternoon, the lay delegates to this year's convention of the Synod after lengthy and thorough consideration resolved almost unanimously to present to the Synod this memorial and to request its adoption:

1. Since through God's grace it will be granted us to celebrate next year the fiftieth anniversary of our beloved Wisconsin Synod, and since the heavenly Father in his great grace has presented and preserved for fifty years his pure Word and sacraments unto us, we certainly owe him for this adoration, praise and thanksgiving.

As evidence of our gratitude we request the Synod that in this anniversary year an earnest endeavor be made if at all possible to retire the synodical indebtedness in its entirety; especially also for the reason that God has again given us better times and has blessed us also in temporal matters.

2. We ask that a committee of 9 members be appointed by the President which should carefully consider ways and means for carrying out this resolution and if possible present to the Synod for discussion the result of its deliberations on Friday afternoon.

The report is signed by W. H. Graebner, a Milwaukee layman, who seems to have spearheaded the effort.

The special committee went to work and soon the Synod adopted a seven-point resolution with an addendum. Because the resolution provides obvious insights into synodical stewardship thinking at the time of the golden anniversary, the points are reproduced here in summary form:

1. All congregations should feel obligated to participate in the effort;
2. How they participate should be left to their discretion;
3. Synodical delegates, both pastors and laymen, should plead this cause when they return to their congregations;
4. An "agitation" committee should be appointed to draft immediately a circular describing the effort, to be distributed before the close of the convention;
5. Congregations should report their plans to this "agitation" committee as soon as possible;
6. Congregations desiring a special collector should be supplied one;
7. The "agitation" committee should encourage congregations that show a lack of interest.

The committee then adds the notation that in the future no such large offerings are to be resolved upon without three prior notices in the *Gemeindeblatt* so that congregations will be able to instruct their delegates to the Synod convention in the matter. Obviously the 1899 debt retirement plan was a marked departure from previous synodical stewardship protocol.

How did the ambitious undertaking fare? In the first year in some 100 of over 300 congregations some collecting had been done. The total sum was well over \$18,000. The next year brought in over \$9000 and the debt was down to \$23,500. In 1902 the report shows \$3000 collected but the debt figure stayed the same. Current deficits were by now absorbing debt retirement funds. The "agitation" committee was permitted to cease its agitation. By 1904, the last year of the period under survey, the debt was back up to \$27,000.

At that time the Synod's budget stood at \$46,000. Collections were up that year from under \$30,000 in 1903 to over \$37,000. In 1904 the Synod also resolved to undertake a \$50,000 building project at Watertown. Confronted by this special effort in stewardship, the Synod decided to call a pastor from his parish to devote full time to synodical collecting. This collector, Richard Siegler, on leave from his congregation, could report on dedication day at Watertown that the full building cost of \$50,000 was covered by responsible pledges. "Collector" Siegler continued on leave from his congregation until 1910 when he resigned his pastorate and became "Representative of Institutions."



John Bading



Richard Siegler

In this emerging stewardship development the Synod had to think hard and long about a policy that called a man from the pastorate into a full-time administrative post so much involved with the stewardship of money. Despite all argument raised against the arrangement, the end results showed that Siegler's personal, face-to-face pleading of Synod's causes provided rich returns. Perhaps this says more for the man than the method. His contemporaries regarded Siegler as a one-of-a-kind collector with a Midas touch.

By 1904 the Synod had advanced appreciably in the stewardship of giving. It had taken forward steps enlisting interest on the part of congregations and lay members and in enlarging its treasuries and holdings. Somehow, however, the progress was cancelled out by new problems and setbacks. A growing Synod implied growing needs but stewardship growth never seemed to catch up with the needs. Worst of all, large undertakings could be rather successfully carried through but almost every year income did not match expenditures. Annual deficits had become a way of life for the Synod by 1904. This would not see appreciable change in the years between 1904 and 1928.

III. 1928-1939, A Time for Getting Out of the Woods

During these years the item that loomed largest in any discussion of synodical stewardship was the debt with which the Synod entered the Great Depression and with which it had to cope in those difficult times.

How could good stewardship practice permit the accumulation of synodical debts that had to be reported to the 1929 convention in the amount of over \$700,000 in actual notes payable? No single and simple answer to the question can be given. It is actually much easier to counteract wrong explanations than it is to arrive at a more correct version.

The view persists that our Synod got into its financial mess because it fell for the "boom" philosophy of the Twenties, overextended itself in missions, borrowed money as though there were no tomorrow, built more than it could

afford, and had to face the rude awakening when the bubble burst. The record does not support this easy explanation.

There were building ventures, it is true: major undertakings at Mequon and New Ulm and smaller ones at Saginaw and other places. But these ventures were not undertaken blithely. They represented earnest efforts to meet real needs. And the Synod was debt conscious as it authorized plant expansions.

Already in 1923 the Synod resolved formally: "The building of the new Seminary shall not be begun until the present debts have been paid, and the full amount necessary for such building is at hand." Some think that a pay-as-you-go approach in any synodical expansions grew out of sad Depression experiences. The philosophy is older than that. The Seminary building program in the Twenties should not be viewed as the main cause of our debts at that time. Special collections for the Seminary and debt retirement may have made an indirect contribution by cutting in on the regular synodical giving which was always insufficient to avoid deficits.

In this connection some attention must center on the synodical leader, President G. E. Bergemann of St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, from 1917 to 1933. The Bergemann administration is generally viewed in a less than favorable light. He has the dubious distinction of being the only Wisconsin Synod president voted out of office while still willing to serve. Even Reim and Streissguth escaped such treatment by sudden resignations. In 1933 Bergemann was retired unwillingly and replaced by President John W. Brenner of St. John's Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The constituency was displeased with Bergemann's performance on two counts: he had let the huge debt accumulate and he had not been able to settle the Protes'tant Controversy.

It is pretty much a bum rap in both respects. Actually, Brenner wasn't able to settle the Protes'tant matter either. Nor was President O. J. Naumann. Even President Carl H. Mischke isn't doing all that great, when one comes to think of it.

And to blame one man for our sad financial situation in the Depression is short-sighted and simplistic. Given the national situation, given the synodical growth, it seems impossible that synodical expansion could be checked. It would not have been, in any event, by a man with Bergemann's vision and trust. His favorite sermon began: *Der Christ ist ein Optimist. Ich sage nicht dass er ein Optimist sein soll. Ich sage, "Er ist ein Optimist."* (The Christian is an optimist. I do not say that he *should* be an optimist. I merely say: he *is* an optimist).

Someday some keen student of WELS lore should begin the task of rehabilitating the reputation of the Bergemann presidency. Before this permissible sidelight lengthens into a regrettable digression, it should be broken off. Let one more remark suffice. It is the word of warning that this essayist has a hard time being totally objective on this subject. It was his good fortune to have served his first seven years in the ministry under the watchful eye and guiding hand of ex-President Bergemann. He has been a fan ever since.

The real *bete noire* of the problem was not any program or president. In the Twenties our congregations were moving from the old assessment sys-



Gustav E. Bergemann



John W. Brenner

tem to envelopes. Synodical appeals for a special collection or two from each congregation were being replaced by indications of need through a quota system. Simply defined, the synodical quota was the figure arrived at by dividing the total synodical budget by the total number of communicants. Like any system, this one could be abused. But it had the virtue of bringing precise information about synodical requirements to the average communicant. For most of the years under discussion the quota was \$3.00. In the early Forties it became "a cent a day."

The basic problem in the Twenties and in the Thirties, whether quotas were figured or not, was that synodical contributions were not covering synodical expenses. Deficits simply had to keep mounting. Stewardship giving was usually increasing, but not enough to cover growth needs. By force of habit the old nickel gift was being given but the nickel was no longer enough. The era of dimes and quarters had been ushered in.

The fathers in the Twenties saw this clearly enough. Our periodical literature of the times abounds with telling writings on the subject, much better than any being written today. The basic problem then, as now, was probably that those who needed *The Northwestern Lutheran* and *Gemeindeblatt* stewardship encouragements least were reading them most and the really needy weren't even on the subscription list. It was relatively easy for a pastor without synodical commitment and with some axe of his own to grind to hide from his flock the desperate financial needs of the Synod. There were still some stewardship problems to be solved and some stewardship lessons to be learned.

They were solved and learned the hard way. In 1929 the wolf was at the door. In another age the cry would have resounded, *Hostes ante portas* (Enemies are at the gates). Last-ditch measures were needed. The word was cutback, instead of expansion. Less-than-adequate salaries were slashed to the quick. Lines of potential but unemployed workers were forming on the right and, in some cases, were drifting to the left.

There were some rays of hope. In 1932 an Every Member Canvass Collec-

tion totaled over \$250,000.00. Again, however, it cut into regular gifts and so some of the gains went for loss.

In 1933 the Synod adopted a so-called "Michigan Plan," named thus because it arose in Michigan's Southeastern Conference that was becoming famous and would eventually become almost notorious for its memorials to synodical conventions. In essence the "Michigan Plan" called for uniformity in disseminating information, in budgetary collecting and in collection control.

A key feature of the plan was a series of bulletins that would blanket the synodical membership and even bypass pastors without heart for the venture. Seventeen monthly bulletins were published from December 1933 to May 1935 and thereafter on a thrice a year basis until 1941 when the chief writer, Pastor Edgar Hoenecke, of Plymouth, Michigan, begged off because of new Apache Indian Mission responsibilities. The bulletins have been lost to history. Not even Hoenecke has a full set. Their loss is a cogent argument for full support to the fledgling WELS Historical Institute.

Did the bulletins do any good? In the first fiscal year of their monthly dissemination, still a Depression year, synodical receipts jumped from \$173,000 to \$196,000 or 14 per cent. The basic problem, year-to-year deficits, was being energetically attacked. It would be years, actually 1944, before the quota would be reached and passed by some 2 per cent. But a beginning was being made in the way of an all-out effort to put the needs before the membership.

Meantime, the debt retirement program was going on. By 1939 the debt had been halved and, with the economic upturn underway, the goal was in sight. In 1943 the debt was measured in less than six figures. The next year complete liquidation could be announced.

A look back at those days notes that two basic problems that were as old as the Synod were being faced. More information about synodical programs was getting out to the membership. And more and more congregations and members were reacting to the information. What shortfalls there were, were shortfalls in "brotherly cooperation," as President Brenner put it in his 1937 Report to the Synod. Some still had to learn. Some still clung to burdens others had to help carry.

Perusing the literature of the time one is struck by the absence of the legalistic tone. The temptations must have been great to lean in that direction. The indifferent must have been a real thorn in the side for the diligent. The magnitude of the needs, the debts larger than the annual budget and deficits that continued year after year, surely were a temptation to use the big stick. The temptation was resisted. There was soft speaking instead, admonition and rebuke to be sure, stern admonition and cutting rebuke, but above all the call of the gospel that encourages and edifies. This took a little longer but thereby the Synod was made a little stronger.

The essayist is old and gray enough to recall the heady moments when in the waning years of World War II in synodical circles the word *million* began to be used for the first time. Many of those old at that time shook their gray heads in shock and disbelief. They said, "It can't be done." It was done and done promptly. The million and more dollars were gathered to meet overdue needs in church extension and school buildings.

It was great to be out of the worst of the woods.

IV, 1963-1975, A Time for Preparing for the Long Haul

The years between 1939 and 1963 were the time of our Synod's long effort to keep the Synodical conference on its old pathways. It was fortunate that what often had to be exercises in the negative could be counterbalanced by positive outreach in missions and stewardship. At home and in the world opportunities to spread the gospel presented themselves in ways that were marvelous to behold. Stewardship planning and programming endeavored to keep up with the growth and spread of the Synod. At this time the Board for Information and Stewardship came into being and the Pre-Budget Subscription system was devised. By 1963 the die was cast. The synodical conference for all practical purposes was no more. The Wisconsin Synod had to emerge from the shadow of "Big Brother." Friends and foes from without and within predicted a big fall. By grace and grace alone the old tasks and new tasks were assumed. Most of you remember those exhilarating years. Brief flash-backs will suffice to jog memories.

Building needs at the worker-training schools and mission opportunities at home and abroad sparked the Missio Dei Offering and involved extensively in the stewardship effort of James P. Schaefer. The pipedream of a million a score years back was far surpassed by a gathering of \$5.5 millions.

Every second year synodical conventions were faced by ever increasing budgetary demands. This was actually the most joy-bringing aspect of synodical stewardship developments. There was advance on all fronts. Sometimes the advances would outrun the pre-budget system that was to eliminate deficits and special collections. But that takes us beyond 1974.

To summarize the 1963-1974 years the essayist begs leave twice to quote himself, as William Wordsworth was wont and John Warwick Montgomery still is. He can recall commenting on a report of Lutheran giving in 1963 in these terms: "In seven different Lutheran synods the average total contributions per communicant ranged from a high of \$119.18 to a low of \$72.27. The \$72.27 figure was the Wisconsin Synod's." That was the all-purpose giving in 1963 for the first year of those under survey. For the last year, 1974, a writing reports that the WELS all-purpose total had more than doubled to \$148.81 to rank respectably very near the middle of the Lutheran column. The progress has been commendable. No one needs tell you that problems still remain.

That is the best news of all. Problems in stewardship in our Synod's history have for the most part been problems of growth. Stewardship boards are needed least when there are no problems. If there are no stewardship problems here on earth, then stewardship counselors are dispensable because the church has ceased to grow and its stewardship is dead.

This essay was prepared for the Stewardship Board of the WELS meeting in Milwaukee on April 21, 1982. Professor Fredrich is head of the department of church history at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin.

Review of J. P. Koehler's "The History of the Wisconsin Synod"

Victor H. Prange

NO READER of this initial issue of the *WELS Historical Institute Journal* should be surprised that there is included a review of John Philipp Koehler's *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*. For an organization which has listed as its first purpose "to promote interest in the history of Lutheranism, particularly of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod," no other single historical item is of such importance to our Institute.

But how to review this volume? It is not like a new book which comes on the market, given a quick reading by some busy professor or pastor, and then hastily evaluated. Most readers of such reviews easily forget what was said. They may or may not purchase the book. But Koehler's *History* is different. It's been around a long time. Many have read at least parts of it. Reviewing this volume becomes almost an act of confession.

First, if you don't own this book, buy it. You can order the second edition from Mr. Michael Meier, 1023 Colan Blvd., Rice Lake, Wisconsin 54868. The cost is \$10.50. This is not a book for your tea table. Those who like lots of pictures will be disappointed. There's only one, that of Prof. Koehler seated at his desk (the first edition had instead the pictures of the three Wauwatosa professors: Koehler, Pieper and Schaller). The print is small. The volume would run to 1,000 pages in a standard sized publication.

What one gets is more than just Koehler's history of the Synod carried up to 1925. There comes also a preface and introduction by the book's editor, Dr. Leigh Jordahl, head librarian at Luther College, Decorah, Iowa. The preface in the second edition has been slightly revised, a bibliography and chronology of significant dates has been added (2 pages), and the index expanded compared with the first edition.

An immense amount of information has been packed between the covers of this book. The first 60 years of the Synod's history are covered much more thoroughly than the period 1910-1925. What strikes me about Koehler's work is that here is raw history. One finds documents, personal reminiscence, observation, and criticism laid side by side. At times there is repetition. Common themes are repeated. Here are field notes not all of the same worth and value. There has not always been a sorting out of what is truly significant and what might have been omitted. The reader is left to make such decisions. In part this is a value of Koehler's work; but it does make for dull reading at times.

When I read the first edition over 10 years ago, I made this notation in the front cover: "Beginning on page 180 Koehler becomes less objective in his



John Philipp Koehler

account of the Synod's history. This is the time when he took up his professorship at Northwestern College." I don't think that Koehler would lay claim to being an "objective historian" or even consider such a label as a compliment. His outlook is always from the heart out; here is spirit and life. He is critical of externalism in all its manifestations.

One cannot resist just a few very quotable Koehler observations. About the way church and government differ in their roles: "The affairs of this world are governed purely by force; in times of peace, by formal law; in times of war, by arbitrary brute force. In it all, the Christian church is ordained to produce right-minded men by the preaching of the Gospel and thus to become the salt of the earth" (p.10).

On achieving unity in the church: "It is the heart, the seat of faith and love, that unites and by its very firmness of conviction will find the way to

agreement. And that has no kinship with unionism. Unionism is marked by mental exhaustion and resignation" (p.33).

On faith and unbelief: "Faith is freedom, according to the Scriptures; unbelief is bondage. The world thinks just the opposite. Faith, in the world's eye, is a hard chore that makes life hard; unbelief is real freedom. The Bible and the Christian know the latter for what it is: foolishness and wickedness" (p.246).

On the use of forms in the church: "All forms in the church, if they are to retain their life, must be studied anew, even as the doctrine, by each individual and each generation, in order that they become truly at home in them" (p. 229).

And finally an observation which indicates why synodical officials may have considered Koehler a thorn in the flesh: "It is only rarely that men in executive office have original ideas. They don't attain to office in that way. They are the leaders or the puppets of the majority, which expects them to execute the wishes of the party and thus make good as 'executives.' Naturally such officials are men of the opportunity and by it live and have their being" (p. 184). Perhaps this will whet your appetite for more of JPK!

One of the crucial questions raised especially by the preface and introduction is whether the theology of Koehler was repudiated by the Wisconsin Synod. In order to adequately answer this question one must first understand exactly what the term "Wauwatosa Theology" means. In the preface to his second edition Jordahl says of the Wauwatosa Theology: "It was a valiant, though finally brutally repudiated [reviewer's note: Jordahl does not use this expression in his first edition], attempt to redirect theological reflection, pastoral ministry, and in fact to revitalize the life of the church. . . . At heart it was an attempt to rediscover the gospel in its fulness and to find a way out of the seventeenth century dogmatic orthodoxy indiscriminately transplanted to American soil." I must say that I was very surprised that Jordahl writes later in the preface about Koehler's *History*: "There is relatively little explicit discussion of the Wauwatosa Theology and Koehler's own summary of it is hardly satisfactory." He then includes a quotation by Koehler which obviously does not define the Wauwatosa Theology.

But what Jordahl seems to overlook is a very concise summary of what Koehler understands by the Wauwatosa Theology on page 191 of his *History*: "There is only one gospel, and no school or synod has a monopoly on it; but the historical-exegetical approach to it of what has been called the Wauwatosa Theology has given the Wisconsin Synod a distinct educational character among its sisters. That needs to be recorded as a matter of its history." Koehler comes back again and again to the importance of the historical-exegetical method. Read for example on pages 161, 190, 208, 210, and 220. How can Jordahl say that there is relatively little explicit discussion of the Wauwatosa Theology and that Koehler's own summary of it is hardly satisfactory?

Can one make the judgment that the Wisconsin Synod has repudiated the Wauwatosa Theology if so little perception is shown as to what Koehler understands by this term? My own experience at the seminary, in conference and circuit meetings, and in contacts with pastors of other Lutheran synods has convinced me that what Koehler understood by the Wauwatosa

Theology has not been "brutally repudiated" by the Wisconsin Synod. Our pastors are by and large very much attuned to the historical-exegetical method especially as compared with pastors of other church bodies. We do need to practice self-criticism in this matter. But one is not required to accept another person's negative verdict when it is so unconvincing.

In the preface and introduction Jordahl deals extensively with the Protestant Controversy. One cannot argue with the recital of documented facts. But again and again one comes up against the judgment that the Wisconsin Synod has repudiated the Wauwatosa Theology. A few samples: "There is little to indicate that the life of the Wisconsin Synod as such was in any significant sense determined by the Wauwatosa Theology." "There is much to indicate that the Wauwatosa Theology never struck root within its denomination." ". . . the Protestant Controversy represented a decisive break by the Wisconsin Synod with the Wauwatosa Theology. . ." And finally one must question the statement that "the Wauwatosa Theology had for years been a bone of contention within the Wisconsin Synod" (prior to the Protestant Controversy). In my study of the events which precipitated the Protestant Controversy I don't recall much debate over the merits of the historical-exegetical method.

A final comment about the introduction (one which I several years ago communicated to the editor): I am sorry that the history of the controversy did not include mention of the action of the Western Wisconsin District in 1962 of lifting the suspensions of those individuals from that district who were Protestants. The second edition would have furnished the opportunity to add this significant item to the record of the controversy.

A few personal impressions on Koehler and his view of church history and life: Koehler shows an appreciation for protestantism; one misses an equal appreciation for that which is catholic. Koehler speaks of how the life of the church so easily "becomes materialistic." At times one gets the feeling that Koehler would have felt right at home in a Zwinglian church building cleansed of all distractions so that in that plain and bare setting the Word alone could impact the soul. Koehler appreciated hymnody; I find little evidence that he cared much for the liturgy. The liturgy is catholic; hymnody is protestant. It was Koehler's decided view that the New Testament never uses the word "faith" in an objective sense: "that which one believes." Dogmatics is just that: an exposition of "that which one believes." Koehler was generally critical of dogmatics.

The church needs to listen to those who protest against externalism, materialism, dogmatism, bureaucracy, and formalism. But at the same time we need to balance this view with a genuine appreciation for that which is material, that which follows a form and pattern, that which administers the mission of the church, that which systematizes the results of exegetical study. For finally God deals with us in a very material way: "the Word became flesh." We praise God for giving our Synod this theologian and historian, this man of faith, John Philipp Koehler. We can learn from him. But we can also learn from others.

Pastor Prange is at Peace, Janesville, Wisconsin, and a regional editor of the WELS Historical Institute Journal.

The President's Report

"THE REMEMBRANCE of past events," wrote Martin Luther, "supplies faith with comfort and nourishment." This thought is central to the WELS Historical Institute. Rather than a mere collector of dusty artifacts and yellowing documents, the Institute is an important arm of Christ's church. It seeks to preserve our God-given heritage. With the Lord's help the Institute will enable many generations of believers to look into the past, see God at work in history, and so find "comfort and nourishment" for their faith.

The roots of our young Institute go back to October 1978. During a bibliographic conference at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota, the idea of such an agency came up. It was only a suggestion. But the suggestion led to a committee. The committee conducted a survey, which indicated interest among WELS members. Resolutions at the 1979 and 1981 Synod conventions resulted in the formation of the WELS Historical Institute. Special thanks are due to the Commission on Higher Education and its executive secretary, Rev. Robert J. Voss. Without their support during this period the fledgling organization would not have gotten off the ground.

The Institute held its first meeting on October 28, 1981 at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee. Seventy-five people were in attendance. Rev. Voss informed the group about the background of the Institute. Prof. Edward Fredrich spoke on "Designing a WELS Memory Bank." He urged the assembly to be "keepers of the flame."

In 1982 two more meetings were held: 1) May 5, at Salem Lutheran Landmark Church. At this meeting the constitution was adopted and Mr. Thomas Ziebell presented a talk on "The Michigan Synod and Its 'School of the Prophets' in 1889." Attendance 50. 2) October 28, at Grace Lutheran Church in downtown Milwaukee. Mr. Martin Selle gave a slide presentation, "The Church — An Architectural History of the Wisconsin Synod." Attendance 76.

The most recent meeting was April 20, 1983, at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon, Wisconsin. Prof. Fredrich spoke on "The Parting of Prof. Koehler and the Seminary," connected with the Protestant controversy. Mr. Bill Kramer and Mr. Eric Hansen gave a multi-media presentation, "A Century with Christ," depicting how one WELS congregation (St. John's, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin) celebrated its centennial. Attendance 112.

The Institute hopes to develop a museum of WELS history. The use of Salem Lutheran Landmark Church for this purpose is being discussed.

Another important discussion involving the Institute has to do with moving the Synod's archives from the Synod Administration Building to the

Seminary. To have the archives on the same grounds as the Seminary library would encourage and facilitate research.

If you have materials of historical significance you wish to submit to the Institute, please contact the Synod Archivist, Prof. Martin Westerhaus, 6604 W. Wartburg Circle, Mequon, Wisconsin 53092.

The Institute has a board of directors consisting of ten members. Five have been elected by the Institute's membership: Mr. A. Ray Ellsworth, Rev. Mark Jeske, Dr. Arnold O. Lehmann, Mrs. Margaret Lehninger, Mr. Paul Unke. Five have been appointed by the Synod's Conference of Presidents: Prof. Richard Balge, Rev. Roland C. Ehlke, Prof. Gerhard Franzmann, Rev. Winfred Nommensen, Prof. Darvin Raddatz. Prof. Martin Westerhaus is an advisor to the board.

As sketchy as this report is, it wouldn't be complete without an invitation. If the WELS Historical Institute is to continue to grow and prosper, it will need support. And that means *your* support. If you are not yet a member, please join. We invite you to share in "the remembrance of past events."

Roland Cap Ehlke

WELS Historical Institute Charter Membership as of April 5, 1983

CONGREGATION

Woodlawn Ev. Lutheran Church,
West Allis, Wis.

HUSBAND/WIFE

Beck, Rev. and Mrs. John
Braun, Rev and Mrs. Mark
Buechner, Quinten and Helena
Curia, Rev. and Mrs. Rick
Fehlauer, Mr. and Mrs. Adolph
Feld, Mr. and Mrs. Reuben
Frey, Mr. and Mrs. Roger
Jeske, Prof. and Mrs. John C.
Kienetz, Rev. and Mrs. Alvin
Kujath, Rev. and Mrs. Mentor
Kulenkamp, Mr. and Mrs. Wendal
Lehmann, Rev. and Mrs. Richard W.
Lehninger, Rev. and Mrs. Paul D.
Tullberg, Mr. and Mrs. Keith
Keil, SSG Bruce and Rhonda

INDIVIDUAL

Albrecht, Michael J.
Albrecht, Quentin
Becker, John
Berg, Carl E.

Biedenbender, Mrs. Gerhard
Blum, Herbert E.
Brinkman, Fred J.
Brunner, Mark
Deutschlander, Prof. Daniel
Dunsmore, Laura
Ehlke, Bruce F.
Ehlke, Mrs. Roland Cap
Elston, Mrs. Margaretha
Freese, John R.
Fritze, Rachel
Geisendorfer, James V.
Grundmeier, Rev. David A.
Hagedorn, Doris E.
Hafemeister, Raymond
Heise, Rev. Donald
Henkel, Mrs. Hilde B.
Hintz, Rev. Stephen C.
Huebner, Rev. Elton
Huebner, Mrs. Elton
Huebner, Mrs. Robert
Jensen, Mrs. Daniel
Jones, Diane
Kelm, Rev. Daniel

Krueger, Rev. Wilbert
Kuhn, Eleanor Grunwald
Lehmann, Rev. Edwin A.
Lehmann, Philip A.
Lehninger, Rev. Ernst
Lehninger, Mrs. Ernst
Lehninger, Robert
Meyer, Rev. Henry
Moeller, James R.
Mueller, Rev. Wayne
Nass, Thomas P.
Oswald, Kurt F.
Pasbrig, Rev. Robert
Perkins, Judith
Prange, Rev. B. F.
Punke, Rev. Leland H.
Pussehl, Joel J.
Reinke, Ronald F.
Revoir, Phil
Romberg, Harvey
Rosendahl, Steven
Rosenow, Rev. David D.
Saar, David P.
Schink, Rev. W. F.
Schultz, Thomas
Schulz, Rev. Reuel
Smith, Rev. Stephen A.
Solberg, Mrs. Ralph
Sommer, Rev. Orvin
Sonnemann, James
Speckin, Mrs. Herbert
Struck, Gerhard L.
Thrams, Prof. James
Unke, Paul
Unke, Mrs. Paul

Vilski, William J.
Westerhaus, Mrs. Martin
Zarling, Tim F.
Ziebell, Thomas
PATRON
Schneider, Mr. and Mrs. E. W.
SPONSOR
Arnison, Mrs. Leonard W.
Balge, Prof. Richard D.
Ehlke, Rev. Roland Cap
Ehlke, Rev. and Mrs. Roland W.
Ellsworth, Mr. and Mrs. A. Ray
Engel, Rev. Armin
Flenz, MSGT. Edward R.
Fredrich, Prof. E. C.
Henning, Peggy
Jeske, Rev. Mark A.
Kiesling, Mr. and Mrs. Ormal
Klinke, Rev. Walter W.
Kretzmann, Rev. A. T.
Kuehl, Duane W.
Lehmann, Dr. and Mrs. Arnold
Luft, Mr. and Mrs. Wayne
Manthe, Norbert M.
Nass, Paul W.
Nommensen, Rev. and Mrs. W. B.
Prange, Rev. Victor
Schaefer, Rev. and Mrs. James
Schuetze, Prof. and Mrs. Armin
Siggelkow, Rev. Alan H.
Stuedel, John D.
Thompson, Rev. and Mrs. Donald
Voss, Rev. Robert J.
Westerhaus, Prof. Martin

Charter membership will be held open until
October 31, 1983. Charter membership will be
appropriately recognized with a memento.

Constitution and Bylaws of WELS Historical Institute

ARTICLE I Name and Purpose

1. The name of this organization is WELS Historical Institute, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as the institute).
2. The purpose of the institute is:
 - a. To promote interest in the history of Lutheranism, particularly of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (hereinafter referred to as the Synod);
 - b. To stimulate historical research and to publish its results;
 - c. To collect and preserve articles of historical value, especially as outlined in Article IV of this constitution;
 - d. To serve as the official department of archives and history of the Synod;
 - e. To serve as general advisory and correlating agency for the historical interests within the Synod, including significant Lutheran and synodical anniversaries;
 - f. To serve as official depository for such other groups or individuals as designate the institute as their depository of Lutheran materials.

ARTICLE II Non-profit Organization

It is expressly declared that the institute is not organized for profit and that no salary, compensation, or emoluments shall be paid to its members.

ARTICLE III Affiliation with the Synod

The institute shall operate under the control of the Synod as a separate corporate entity organized under the laws of the State of Wisconsin and shall be operated by a separate board of directors responsible and accountable to the Synod for all transactions and decisions in accordance with the provisions of its corporate charter and bylaws.

ARTICLE IV Acquisitions

The institute shall accept the following:

1. Correspondence, records and other papers from the respective offices of the president, the officers, and all official boards, committees, commissions, organizations, and agencies of the Synod and its districts, when they are no longer of current operational value;

2. The Synod's protocols, records, correspondence, and other material of archival value at the expiration of not more than ten years, unless such records are still open;
3. All records and material relating to the work of ad hoc committees of the Synod and its districts upon dissolution of such committees;
4. Historical materials of the Synod's institutions, congregations, and organizations that are marking significant events and major anniversaries;
5. Records and other historical material of institutions, congregations, and organizations that are disbanding permanently (not merging);
6. Articles and materials of archival significance from individuals.

ARTICLE V Membership

Any communicant member of the Synod, or of a synod in fellowship with the Synod, may become a voting member by payment of dues. Any other individual or any organization interested in the work and purpose of the institute may become an associate member with no voting privileges by paying associate membership dues. Any individual or organization may subscribe to its publication.

ARTICLE VI Bylaws

The management of the affairs of the institute shall be governed by such bylaws as the institute may from time to time adopt, as long as they are not inconsistent with these articles or the constitution and bylaws of the Synod.

ARTICLE VII Dissolution

Upon dissolution and liquidation of this corporation all assets of the corporation remaining after all liabilities and obligations of the corporation shall have been paid, satisfied, and discharged, or adequate provision made therefor, shall be transferred, conveyed, and distributed to the Synod.

ARTICLE VIII Amendments

Upon recommendation of the board of directors this constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the members voting at any regular meeting, provided that due notice has been given and the proposed changes have been ratified by the Conference of Presidents of the Synod.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I Board of Directors

1. The board of directors of the institute shall consist of ten members. Five members shall be appointed by the Conference of Presidents: one professor from Dr. Martin Luther College, one professor from Northwestern College, one professor from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, one editor from Northwestern Publishing House, and one member from the praesi-

dium of the Southeastern Wisconsin District. Five members shall be elected by the membership of the institute: three lay persons, one teacher, and one pastor. The members of the board shall serve terms of six years. Each two years, three, respectively four, members shall retire after their successors shall have been elected or appointed and shall have qualified. A member may succeed himself or herself.

2. The board shall elect the officers of the institute from its midst, consisting of a president, a vice-president, a secretary, and a treasurer.
3. The Synod historian and archivist shall be advisory members with no voting privileges.

ARTICLE II Meetings

1. For the purpose of elections and for transactions of all necessary business, the institute shall meet annually. Members unable to attend the meeting may vote by absentee ballot upon request for such a ballot.
2. The board of directors shall designate the time and place of the annual meeting.
3. Reports shall be made to the annual meeting by the president, the historian, the archivist, the treasurer, and committee chairmen.
4. Special meetings of the institute shall be called by the president if requested by a majority of the board of directors.

ARTICLE III Elections

1. The five elected members of the board shall be elected in alternate years in the following order: one lay person; one pastor and one lay person; one teacher and one lay person.
2. The board of directors shall appoint a nominating committee which shall present a slate of candidates for each vacancy to be filled.
3. All elections shall be by ballot.
4. Non-elected members shall be appointed in the order of two — one — two in alternate years agreeing with the elections of board members.

ARTICLE IV Duties and Privileges of Members

1. The members of this institute shall advance its objects by attending its meetings and taking part in the discussions, by participating in the election of officers, by contributing to and reading its publications, by increasing its membership, by sustaining its work, by payment of dues, and by adding, if possible, to its historical collections.
2. Only voting members may hold office.
3. Associate members may attend meetings, and may contribute materials for the archives and offer suggestions for the furtherance of the objectives and purposes of the institute. They have no voting privileges.

ARTICLE V Membership Dues

1. The board of directors shall establish membership classifications, and determine the dues on an annual basis, reporting changes at the annual meeting for ratification.

2. Dues shall be payable in advance and shall entitle members to receive all periodical publications of the institute.

ARTICLE VI Duties of the Board of Directors

1. Duties of the board of directors are:
 - a. To provide for the development and growth of the institute's collections by such purchases and acquisitions as it may deem proper;
 - b. To accept donations and loans of historical materials and keep a record of them;
 - c. To publish reports of the work of the institute and to render a report at every regular meeting of the institute;
 - d. To meet whenever necessary;
 - e. To submit an annual budget for adoption at the annual meeting of the institute;
 - f. To arrange for the annual audit of the institute's accounts;
 - g. To fill any vacancy occurring in one of the elected positions on the board, with the appointee completing the term of the member being replaced.

2. A majority of the board members shall constitute a quorum.

3. The duties of the president:

The president shall be the chief corporate officer of the institute and shall preside at the meetings of the board and of the institute and shall perform such other duties as may be entrusted to the office by the board of directors of the institute.

4. The duties of the vice-president:

The vice-president shall perform such duties as may be entrusted to the office by the board of directors of the institute, and shall conduct meetings of the board of directors and of the institute in the absence of the president.

5. The duties of the treasurer:

The treasurer shall have charge of the financial affairs of the institute, subject in all matters relative thereto to the control of the board of directors. The treasurer is authorized to receive and receipt for and, upon vouchers duly authorized by the board of directors, make disbursements from all funds of the institute. All funds shall forthwith be deposited with the financial institution designated by the board of directors. Regular and faithful accounts of all moneys thus received or disbursed must be kept, and all accounts must be submitted annually for audit.

6. The duties of the secretary:

The secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings of the institute and of the board of directors. Such minutes shall be duly signed by the secretary and presented at the opening of the succeeding meeting for approval. The secretary shall also have charge of the seal. In case of the absence of the secretary at any meeting, the president shall appoint a secretary pro tempore who shall present the signed minutes to the elected secretary of the board.

7. The president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer shall receive no salary for their services. Any board member may be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the discharge of assigned duties.

ARTICLE VII

Amendments

Upon recommendation of the board of directors these bylaws may be amended by a majority of the members voting at any regular meeting of the institute, provided that due notice of proposed changes has previously been given to all members and that the changes are consistent with the constitution and bylaws of the Synod.



Planning the first issue: (left to right) Thomas Schultz, Rev. R. Cap Ehlke, Dr. Arnold Lehmann, Rev. James P. Schaefer and Rev. Mark A. Jeske.